

THE RHETORIC OF HOMILETICS:
PREACHING, PERSUASION, AND THE CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the rhetoric of preaching. The project entails understanding and overcoming pejorative perspectives of rhetoric and limited perspectives of preaching that imbue public discourse, scholarship on homiletics, and historical accounts of preaching and preachers. This dissertation focuses on the fourth-century homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers (Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa). The argument is made that preaching is profoundly rhetorical in nature, both practically and theoretically. Three internal chapters support this argument and construct this dissertation as both a rhetorical history and a rhetorical criticism research project.

Chapter One introduces the aims, perspectives, and approaches of the project. Chapter Two presents broad and specific historical context necessary for understanding the rhetorical insights, arguments, and theories advanced in the subsequent chapters. Chapter Three illustrates in fine detail some of the *practical* implications of acknowledging the rhetorical nature of preaching and preachers. Chapter Four further pursues the *theoretical* corollary of the argument by establishing the deeply rhetorical origins of the preaching role and form. Chapter Five summarizes the findings, contributions, and limitations of this dissertation and outlines directions for future research. Combined, these chapters comprise a dissertation that is intended to enrich scholars' and practitioners' knowledge of the relationship between rhetoric and homiletics.

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Above all, though, I give my thanks to God. Through this dissertation, He has taught me invaluable lessons in hope, patience, and faith.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD,
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

NOMENCLATURE

For the purpose of brevity, the in-text citations of homilies within this study follow the pattern of citing an abbreviation of the source name, followed by a homily identification and page number. To identify homilies and avoid confusion, I use the label they are given in the volume cited, which most often is a number but occasionally is a name only. Because only some volumes include sectional numeration of homilies, I have opted to refer to pagination. This allows for all homily citations to be both clear and consistent.

- B Gregory of Nyssa. *Homilies on the Beatitudes*. Trans. George Stuart Hall. Ed. Hubertus R. Drobner and Albert Viciano. London: Brill, 2000. Print.
- CDP Basil. *On Christian Doctrine and Practice*. Trans. Mark DelCogliano. Popular Patristics Series, No. 47. Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012. Print.
- E Gregory of Nyssa. *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*. Trans. Stuart George Hall and Rachel Moriarty. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1993. Print.
- EH Basil. *Exegetic Homilies*. Trans. Sister Agnes Clare Way. The Fathers of the Church Series, Vol. 46. Washington DC: Catholic University of America, 2003. Print.
- FF Basil. *On Fasting and Feasts*. Trans. Susan R. Holman and Mark DelCogliano. Popular Patristics Series, No. 50. Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2013. Print.
- HC Basil. *On the Human Condition*. Trans. Nonna Verna Harrison. Popular Patristics Series, No. 30. Crestwood, NY: St, Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005. Print.

- LP Gregory of Nyssa. *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*. Trans. Hilda C. Graef. Ancient Christian Writers Series of Catholic University of America, No. 18. New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1954. Print.
- SJ Basil. *On Social Justice*. Trans. C. Paul Schroeder. Popular Patristics Series, No. 38. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009. Print.
- SO Gregory of Nazianzus. *Select Orations*. Trans. Martha Vinson. The Fathers of the Church Series, Vol. 107. Washington DC: Catholic University of America, 2003. Print.
- SOG Gregory of Nazianzus. *Select Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*. Trans. Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow. In *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Ser. 2, Vol. 7. Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007. Print.
- SS Gregory of Nyssa. *Homilies on the Song of Songs*. Trans. Richard A. Norris. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012. Print.
- WL Gregory of Nyssa. *Select Writings and Letters of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa*. Trans. William Moore and Henry Austin Wilson. In *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Ser. 2, Vol. 5. Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979. Print.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Along the coast of California lie twenty-one Catholic missions, nearly all of which my family visited during my elementary school days. When not traveling, we regularly attended our own local parish, and I occasionally went to protestant churches with friends after sleepovers. Years later, when studying abroad in college, I visited Christian churches in a variety of countries and languages. From a religious perspective, these experiences underscored for me a wonderful sense of global unity. The church services were all different in style but also alike in their effort to, one way or another, move the audience. From a rhetorical perspective, these experiences continue to fascinate me. The churches' preachers all shared a similar rhetorical vocation, but they executed their preaching roles in a variety of ways. Their preaching differences, I suspect as a rhetorician, are significant in terms of how their messages are interpreted and how their audiences are affected.

In this dissertation I investigate the rhetoric of preaching. This investigation entails understanding and overcoming limited perspectives of rhetoric and preaching that imbue public discourse, scholarship on homiletics, and historical accounts of preaching and preachers. Within this context, I argue that preaching is profoundly rhetorical in nature, both practically and theoretically. To ignore the holistic rhetorical nature and roles of preachers is to limit one's understanding of their vocation and, more importantly, their effects on surrounding communities.

To support this argument, this dissertation is comprised of three separate chapters. Chapter Two, a historical account, provides the context necessary to understand the situation in which a particular set of preachers preached and, with their rhetoric, effected change. The second chapter uses theory and textual criticism to illustrate in fine detail some of the *practical* implications of acknowledging the rhetorical nature of preaching and preachers. Again using textual criticism, the third chapter further pursues the *theoretical* corollary of my argument by establishing the deeply rhetorical origins of the preaching role and form. Combined, these studies comprise a dissertation project that is explicitly intended to enrich scholars' and practitioners' knowledge of preaching, as I shall later note.

Because there exists such a wide variety of preaching today, this project goes back to the dawn of Christian preaching. The fourth century is the first century from which we have *numerous* extant homilies, many of which have even been translated. As William Howden explains, "there are few extant sermons from earlier than the middle of the third century. Origen is the first preacher whose sermons have survived in any number" (940). Not until later, then, does a wider selection of extant homilies exist: "The fourth and early fifth centuries are generally recognized as a 'golden age' of preaching, in both the eastern and western church" (940). The preachers of this era "attracted large crowds," and many of their homilies were recorded, circulated, and preserved as "influential models for later centuries" (940).

Studying early homilies of the fourth century offers the opportunity to identify early rhetorical characteristics of a now established but continually growing genre of

speech. A rhetorical study of early homilies is also particularly insightful given early preachers' and especially bishops' common rhetorical educations, which I later discuss. Although not all or even many preachers today are specifically trained in rhetoric, the homiletic tradition in which they are trained has a profoundly rhetorical history. Bringing the holistic rhetorical nature of the homiletic tradition to light will better inform preachers' practices and scholars' portrayals of rhetoric and preaching.

In a more specialized and modern context, studying early homilies is also significant given that since Vatican II (1962-1965) the Roman Catholic Church has returned its focus to early Christian homilies as models for simple, conversational exegeses of biblical text (compared to intricate theological expositions) (Waznak 16). Understanding the rhetorical nature of historical generic models (e.g., those by Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and the Cappadocian Fathers among other early preachers) can help explain the nature and roles of modern homilies. Moreover, plainly illustrating the preacher's role as practically and theoretically rhetorical can help contemporary seminarians, preachers, and professors of homiletics reemphasize in their practices the rhetorical tradition that underpins their vocation—a practical religious objective of this otherwise theoretical and rhetorical dissertation.

To conduct this historical and rhetorical research project, it is necessary to select preachers and preaching whose contexts are clearly documented. Being able to understand a rhetors' context is an essential part of conducting rhetorical criticism, largely because rhetorical texts can only be fully understood once their rhetorical situation—the surrounding exigence, audience, and constraints—are understood (cf.

Bitzer 6). As Herbert Wichelns explains, only a scholar who has first studied history can fully understand oratory's language and context (2). Thus, in choosing which early homilies to examine for this project, it was necessary to consider not only the available manuscripts but also the available contextual information.

In general, fourth-century Christianity is notably well documented compared to earlier centuries. Many extant texts showcase the then inchoate, growing, and volatile nature of Christianity, which was simultaneously flourishing (with decreasing imperial persecution) and fracturing (with increasing sectarian dissent) (Hinson 199, 224-226; Schwartz 36; Gywnn 1). Of these texts, Christian leaders' homilies, in particular, evidence their attempts to shape individual communities' norms, beliefs, and behaviors. Their leadership and, as I will show, their constitutive rhetoric had the potential to further divide or unite communities of Christians.

Among the regions that Christianity had spread to by the fourth century, Cappadocia, now modern-day Turkey, is particularly well documented due to the survival of many texts and artifacts and due to the recovery efforts of historians and archeologists. In the fourth century, Cappadocia was one of many "Micro-Christendoms" that comprised Christianity and operated as regional subsets under the guidance of leaders who made sense of Christian beliefs in sometimes similar sometimes contrasting ways (Brown *Rise* 13). Historian Raymond Van Dam describes Cappadocia as "one of the best documented regions in the later Roman empire"—a quality he attributes to the survival of much of the Cappadocian Fathers' works (e.g., letters, treatises, and speeches) (*Becoming* 3). Given the availability of Cappadocian texts and

their well-documented historical context, which I present in Chapter Two, the Cappadocian Fathers are appropriate for a study of early Christian preaching.

Beyond their understandable context, the Cappadocian Fathers are well suited for this rhetorical study of preaching because Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend Gregory of Nazianzus served as a finite group of leaders who worked closely with one another to interpret Christian teachings and lead Christian communities. Their close relationship with one another suits this project's exploration of the rhetorical nature of not just individual preachers but preachers as a collective. While the Cappadocians may be just one particular collective, they are nonetheless useful to study to draw theories about the rhetorical roles of collective groups of preachers, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Three.

In addition to their close relationship, like many early bishops, all three of the Cappadocians received rhetorical educations before entering religious life, and as preachers they were well spoken leaders with a strong grasp on rhetoric, as discussed in Chapter Two (Cameron 138, 156). Their homilies demonstrate that they were acutely aware of the persuasive role of language in their leadership roles. That their rhetorical background and skills are plainly evident in their homilies helps make a clear case for the rhetorical foundation of preaching. Together, the Cappadocian Fathers' early and accessible context, close relationships, and rhetorical backgrounds make them relevant subjects for a study that seeks to understand the foundational and shared rhetorical nature of preachers and preaching.

To support the argument that preaching is theoretically and practically rhetorical, I rhetorically analyze the extant homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers that have been translated into English. Excluding possibly inauthentic texts, the project includes 138 homilies (cf. Appendix A). An assortment of alternative translations were also cross-referenced to verify findings (cf. Appendix B). The contexts and dates of the homilies are not always clear. Many are certainly exegeses of scripture, some are funeral orations, and still others seem like public explanations of actions. In all cases, though, the Cappadocians spoke plainly as Christian leaders and in religious settings; in short, they spoke as preachers to surrounding communities. Thus, this study includes all the translated orations that are commonly included in the Cappadocians' published homily collections, even those orations whose exact contexts are somewhat vague. Although inconvenient, this occasional lack of information does not hinder this project's broad objective of understanding the rhetorical nature of not singular homilies but collective homilies and preachers.

To trace the rhetorical nature of preaching, I explore the form of the homily and the character of the preacher.¹ These approaches naturally lead to consideration of the rhetorical nature and effects of the homily and the preacher. I begin with a historical overview of Christianity, Cappadocia, and the Cappadocian Fathers, I next present a collective rhetorical analysis of all the homilies, and I conclude with a close generic analysis of a single homily. Throughout the project I continually seek to identify the

¹ This essay employs the word "homily," which I shortly discuss, to refer to the orations of preachers given (usually) during a church service.

multi-faceted rhetorical nature and roles of early preaching and preachers. The open-ended nature of this research endeavor has allowed for rich and nuanced findings—findings that have made this project a joy to undertake and a challenge to conclude.

Rhetoric and Christianity

Before closely examining the rhetorical nature of preaching, it is helpful to more generally examine the relationship between Christianity and rhetoric—a discussion which actually starts with the Greeks. In the beginning were the Greeks, and the Greeks were with rhetoric, and the Greeks were rhetoric; or at least, the Greeks were the inventors of Western rhetorical theory. For many Christians in the first four centuries, this meant that rhetoric, a creation of the pagan Greeks, was likewise pagan and need be abandoned. Preachers agonized over their life choices, especially many early bishops who previously worked as teachers of rhetoric. Clement, Tertullian, Basil, Justin, and Cyprian all condemned rhetoric, at least in part, as incongruent with Christian life (Murphy “Saint” 207-211; Ellspermann). Jerome’s torment was so great that he dreamed he was denied entrance to heaven because he was not a Christian but a “Ciceronian.” Gregory of Nazianzus pressured Gregory of Nyssa to give up the ways of the world, his profession as a rhetorician, and devote himself to a Christian clerical life (Van Dam *Families* 69). Such dilemmas, however, were false dichotomies.

For, “All things were made through [God], and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). This Augustine reminded Christians around 400AD, when he identified skillful interpretation and preaching as a “special gift of God” (3). To combat fear, guilt, and even disdain of rhetoric, Augustine reimagined rhetoric to fit the

needs of Christianity and helped create “a new society, a new EKKLESIA . . . a distinctly verbal religion based on a book” (Mongeau 372; Press 120). Augustine’s handbook on preaching, *On Christian Doctrine*, theoretically ended centuries of Christian debate about rhetoric. The first three internal books (circa 390) helped preachers understand scripture’s meanings, and the fourth book (circa 420) provided instruction on how to present Christian truth; together all four books illustrate the “practical utility of rhetoric” (Augustine *Christian 7*). Moreover, together the books encouraged Christian leaders who had sworn off “pagan” rhetoric to clear their consciences and more strategically approach their preaching responsibilities.

Yet, as is often the case with teaching and preaching, Augustine’s words were not entirely heeded. The homilies and writings of early Christian leaders, before and after Augustine, evidence continued suspicion of rhetoric. This lingering suspicion is significant given that the works of early Christian preachers serve as examples for seminarians today (USCCB 7-14; Waznak *Introduction 3*; Benedict viii). The way early Christian leaders talked about rhetoric directly informs modern seminarians’ and preachers’ understandings of rhetoric’s role in their vocation. Moreover, the homilies and ideas of early Christian preachers form the foundation of Christian Tradition, or the successive transmission of Christian belief “to the successors of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound, and spread it abroad by their preaching” (cf. *Catechism* “Tradition” 81). This successive transmission of information informs and influences the beliefs and scholarship of contemporary religious scholars and practitioners. Early negative publicity of rhetoric has thus been

passed along, preventing religious clergy, teachers, scholars, and even the public, including church congregants, from fully acknowledging the rhetorical nature of preaching and preachers. Although some religious scholars and practitioners today acknowledge the inherent link between rhetoric and homiletics, as I shall later note, much more can be done to re-discover and re-emphasize the relationship between the two arts.

In the Cappadocians' era and now, Christianity continues to be a profoundly rhetorical religion. Classicist George Kennedy describes it as a religion "of the word" (*Classical* 137). Historian Williard Jabusch describes it as a religion "of preaching" (33). And the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes Christianity as a religion founded in the words of Christ (101-108). In all stages, even when merely a "sect of Judaism," Christianity has relied upon rhetoric, upon the persuasive use of words, to grow and fulfill its missions; the fourth century was no exception (Hinson 18). The reigns of Constantine and Theodosius allowed Christianity to prosper, while ongoing alleged heresies produced dis/unity but also regular deliberative meetings among Christian leaders (cf. D. Gwynn 7-8; Schwartz 36; Kennedy *Greek* 199). At such meetings Christian leaders used rhetoric to defend and propagate their theological beliefs.

While attending such gatherings and when back home in their local churches, Christian leaders used their persuasive skills to preach. The important role of early preaching—perhaps the most regular form of Christian communication—is, John O'Malley argues, plainly evident "to anybody who has studied [homilies] even superficially" (4). In Late Antiquity, homilies were highly popular, garnering fame for "a

number of priests and bishops” who demonstrated “rhetorical skill and charisma as speakers” (Maxwell 1). As weekly and even daily forms of discourse, homilies remain perhaps the most frequent form of Christian rhetoric with the largest regular audience. Through homilies, Christians have and continue to receive catechesis, make sense of situational exigencies, and understand the greater community of which they are a part. Homilies, in turn, help shape the reality in which Christians live—a rhetorical process I intend to trace. Although more mundane than, for example, papal encyclicals, homilies have a rhetorical value at the grassroots level of growing Christianity, which historians like Daniel Schwartz and Lisa Kaaren Bailey have begun to trace.

Present research underscores the rhetorical nature of various Christian speech forms. The rhetorical importance of letters, for example, has been established through studies of Paul’s epistles (e.g., Mueller; Stanley; Reid “Paul’s”). Likewise, the rhetorical roles of the apologetic works of Origen, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian have been outlined by a number of scholars (e.g., Duncan; Hollon; Sider; Timothy). Early homilies, however, have generally evaded rhetorical analysis despite their scholarly potential.

Despite inattention to early homilies, a small but steady stream of communication research continues to be conducted on homilies in general and their rhetorical role. In a recent review of all 389 articles published in the *Journal of Communication and Religion* since its first issue in 1974, Janie Fritz, Robert Woods, and Margaret Mullan document a distinct line of research on the “Rhetoric of Preaching” and another on “Homiletics (preaching and/as communication in general)” (10). Robert Reid, for example, has examined the theoretical relationships between theories of preaching

and theories of rhetoric as they pertain to T/truth (“Faithful”). Reid has also worked to identify a contemporary “Christian ethos” within “self linguistically configured oral or written texts,” which include but are not limited to preached texts (“Rhetoric” 113). Still, few studies focus on preaching prior to the eighteenth century or on the rhetorical role (not just characteristics) of homilies in a broad Christian context.

Some notable exceptions exist, including O’Malley’s study of Renaissance preaching and Kennedy and Murphy’s investigations of the role of classical Greek rhetoric in the Christian rhetoric, including preaching (Kennedy *Classical; Greek*; Murphy “Saint”; *Rhetoric*). The many studies of Augustine’s handbook *On Christian Doctrine*, including those in Enos and Thompson’s edited volume, also unite discussions of rhetoric and homiletics. Beyond these few historic accounts, the majority of the slim number of rhetorical studies of homiletics focus on the invention or style American-era preaching. This dissertation on the homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers joins these few but significant conversations pertaining to the rhetoric of homiletics and other more general discussions of religious rhetoric. Moreover, this dissertation responds to Martin Medhurst and Margeret Zulick’s claims, made nearly fifteen years ago, that rhetorical criticism on Christian homiletics was both limited and warranted (Medhurst “Contemporary” 502; Zulick “Rhetoric” 132).

Another conversation that this dissertation joins and builds upon is that of homiletics scholars and practitioners themselves. Joel Gregory, for example, is a preacher-practitioner whose work illustrates the inherent connection between rhetoric and homiletics. Gregory emphasizes the importance of a preacher’s education,

understanding of Greek, and awareness of how words work to signify meanings (Old 558). In a similar vein, Robert Reid along with Jana Childers and Charles Bartow all contribute to the edited volume *The New Interpreter's Handbook on Preaching*, which argues that homiletics necessarily builds from many disciplines, including rhetoric (cf. P. Wilson). However, rhetoric unfortunately constitutes the second shortest section in the book, which subtly downplays its significance. Likewise, many modern Catholic homiletics handbooks and homiletics syllabi remain noticeably quiet about the subject of rhetoric.² The limited nature of these conversations does not indicate that they do not exist or should not exist; rather the situation indicates that there is significant room for contribution.

Most obviously, this project connects with existing practical and theoretical (and sometimes rhetorical) studies of relatively modern preaching. In addition, however, this project generally builds upon present understandings of fourth-century Christianity that are informed by a wide array of scholarship, which I discuss in Chapter Two.

Theologians have traced the heresies, debates, and concerns that occupied the minds of early Christian leaders (e.g., Dodd; Satterlee). Historians have documented the social and political trends that played key roles in the spread of Christianity (e.g., Pelikan; Schwartz; Bailey; Cameron). Classicists and rhetoricians have outlined the influence of Greek rhetoric in early Christian writings (e.g., Kennedy *Classical*). This dissertation extends this work, using all three of these lines of inquiry to comprehensively establish a

² In a survey of 2014-2015 homiletics syllabi from Catholic seminaries across the US, I have discovered that the term rhetoric is largely absent; it is mentioned in just six of forty-one syllabi.

renewed historical understanding of the rhetorical nature of preaching, both in theory and in practice.

Although drawing from three lines of inquiry, this dissertation is particularly focused on the rhetorical. The preachers examined are understood as theologians and leaders but are studied as rhetors and rhetoricians. In a similar vein, their homilies are critiqued as, not simply exegeses and historical documents, but as rhetorical texts potentially capable of moving audiences and effecting palpable change. These foci are made possible by this dissertation's core foundation on rhetorical scholarship.

Methodology

To thoroughly examine the profound rhetorical nature of homilies, this dissertation employs two rhetorical research methods. Namely, it is comprised of both rhetorical history and rhetorical criticism. Employing both research methods augments the types of findings produced by the project and allows the general argument of the dissertation to be more comprehensively supported.

Conducting rhetorical history entails seeking “to understand the context through messages that reflect and construct that context” (Turner 2). Often rhetorical histories are projects that cover a historical subject in a new way, “not because existing histories were inaccurate” but because “existing histories defined the [subject] in a way that limited it” (Walzer and Beard 25). The limited number of existing studies on the rhetoric of homiletics—a complex, multifaceted, enduring subject—warrants additional research. Thus, this rhetorical project serves to better understand the *rhetorical* context and content of preaching and preachers.

A rhetorical historical approach also allows this project to respond to another gap in literature on preaching. Many existing studies of early Christian preaching, including the Cappadocians, tend to focus on the intentionality of the discourse (e.g., a rhetor's assumedly intentional style or rhythm, etc.) rather than on the discourse's potential rhetorical effects on the immediate and secondary audiences (e.g., Oberhelman, Ruether, and Stein). On this topic, James Jasinski and Jennifer Mercieca have argued that both lines of inquiry merit attention because of the complex nature of texts:

Intentionally, texts exhibit constitutive potential through the invitations inscribed in various discursive forms (tropes, arguments, etc.). Extensionally, texts exhibit constitutive force through the cultural circulation and discursive articulation of its textual forms in ways that enable and constrain subsequent practice. (315)

Yet, of these possible research trajectories, Jasinski and Mercieca explain that the latter trajectory “is much less fully realized at present” (320). Thus, this dissertation builds upon this call to expand histories to include broad constitutive understandings of rhetors and rhetoric.

To achieve this endeavor, a number of approaches could be taken. In his essay categorizing four types of rhetorical histories, Zarefsky includes two that are particularly relevant to the goals of this dissertation. First, he lists the study of the “history of rhetoric,” which entails tracing the developments and trajectory of rhetorical practices and theory (“Four” 26). For example, George Kennedy’s study of the transmission of the Greek rhetorical tradition through the evolution of Christian rhetoric importantly documents rhetorical trends throughout history while theoretically establishing a link

between two traditions (*Classical*). Second, Zarefsky also outlines “the study of historical events from a rhetorical perspective,” which entails studying “how, and how well, people invented and deployed messages in response to the situation” (“Four” 30). For example, David Howard-Pitney has examined African-American leaders’ use of jeremiads in response to perceived social exigencies in the nineteenth century.

This dissertation includes both approaches to *comprehensively* outline the rhetorical nature of early Christian preaching among the Cappadocian Fathers. Chapter Two presents general historical and rhetorical context, including the composition of early Christianity and Cappadocia, and the backgrounds of the Cappadocian Fathers. However, Chapters Three and Four, both rhetorical criticism pieces, work implicitly as *rhetorical histories* to document rhetorical trends and developments of early Christian preaching. Chapter Three broadly illustrates the constitutive relationship between the preachers’ preaching and their contexts, which also serves as a rhetorical study of historical events. Chapter Four closely critiques how Basil crafts and deploys a single homily in response to his position as a presbyter leading within a social crisis; this study also serves as a history of generic rhetorical trends within homiletics.

To present a strong and reliable rhetorical history, I have followed the research methods outlined by Kathleen Turner and David Zarefsky. As these scholars advise, I have continually returned my readings, considerations, and evaluations to matters’ of broad rhetorical significance, both theoretically and practically. The care I have here taken to conduct rhetorical historical research has helped ensure that this dissertation is a reflection of not just my historical and religious interests but my research ability as a

scholar of *rhetoric*. Accordingly, this project has been conducted and written with the intention of joining and building upon existing rhetorical conversations as a peer researcher—an endeavor necessitating careful and learned rhetorical research methods.

The rhetorical aims and methods of this research project have not, however, been implemented as means of limiting this project to a rhetorical audience. Rather, I have incorporated sources beyond the field of rhetoric to ensure that the rhetorical history here presented is substantial and useful as a resource for others. For example, I have consulted and included sources in which historians, classicists, theologians, and even practitioners have written on rhetoric, homiletics, and early Christian preaching. Although undoubtedly more sources exist than those I include, I am confident that the sources referenced within this dissertation will prove valuable to others interested in the rhetoric of preaching.

The rhetorical history advanced in this dissertation is strengthened by the chapters' foundation on rhetorical criticism. Criticism supports this dissertation's overarching argument through detailed analysis that adds substance and detail to the project. Conducting rhetorical criticism entails close examination of texts to understand the processes of persuasion at play—to discover who is being persuaded, of what, by who, within what context, and especially how and to what potential effect. These inquiries can be bound in the immediate context or expanded to include consideration of a text's lasting effects or legacies. Regardless, the answers to these questions, Michael Leff explains, largely lie in the language of a speech, in “the finished text rather than the person who intends to make one”—a point that returns us to Jasinski and Mercieca's

suggestion that scholars consider not just an author's intention but a text's potential (Leff "Things" 223-224; Jasinski and Mercieca 320).

Closely examining the language of a text to uncover its rhetorical potential allows rhetorical scholars to postulate how texts can move an audience, at least an audience of the persuadable (Black "Second" 113). As this is a literary endeavor, the burden of proof is textual, theoretical, and bound in language. Texts under rhetorical examination, in this case homilies, provide the words and the interpretive possibilities needed to explain and support rhetorical theory. At the same time, rhetorical theories that have already been established and supported by other texts help support new rhetorical research, including this project on homilies, personas, and constitutive rhetoric. The theories applied, tested, and extended by rhetorical criticism ultimately contribute to new understandings about rhetoric. For example, this dissertation uses criticism to understand the persuasive effects of the Cappadocians' preaching (a specific reality) while extending generic understandings of homilies and constitutive theories of their rhetoric.

Through such research, rhetorical critics generate previously unrealized insights about rhetorical artifacts and rhetoric in general. As David Zarefsky explains, "broadly speaking, rhetorical criticism offers accounts of rhetorical works. It assumes that the works (whether products, artifacts, or processes) are not transparent in meaning, implications, or significance" ("Knowledge" 633). These nuanced understandings may then be used by critics "to render aesthetic, artistic, ethical, or metacultural judgments" about given artifacts (Gronbeck 314-315; Jasinski "Status" 249). The production of such judgments allows rhetorical critics to illuminate realities about the composition and

operation of rhetorical artifacts and their impact within and on rhetorical situations. Such findings are unique to *rhetorical* research and valuable for other scholars. Other scholars can use, test, and extend the findings of rhetorical research in their own social or historical studies. Such studies (e.g., those conducted by political scientists and rhetoricians) may work together to further explain a greater reality, such as the rhetorical role of preaching and preachers in fourth century Cappadocia.

To conduct reliable rhetorical criticism, I have adopted specific modes of rhetorical criticism that are both appropriate and productive for the present project. Following the initiative of Edwin Black, I approached the Cappadocians' homilies with an open mind, "not to measure . . . discourses dogmatically against some parochial standard of rationality but, allowing for the immeasurably wide range of human experience, to see them as they really are" (*Rhetorical* 18, 131). Based on rhetorical characteristics I began to repeatedly see (e.g., reoccurring themes, distinct tones, and figurative choices that both distinguished and united the preachers and their preaching) I chose to conduct generic analyses of the Cappadocians' homilies.

To conduct reliable *generic* research I looked to the generic criticism of other scholars who have rhetorically analyzed sets or genres of texts as "defined by their pragmatic ends and typified by their substantive, stylistic, and strategic similarities" (Campbell and Jamieson *Presidents* 9). In particular, the work of Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (*Presidents Creating the Presidency*) and of Vanessa Beasley (*You, the People*) provided excellent examples of insightful critiques that explore the rhetorical, especially constitutive, properties of generic sets of texts. As

these preceding scholars have explained, good rhetorical criticism acknowledges messages' complex natures as more than stagnant information but as rhetoric that can, among many things, shape, create, challenge, question, and beget reality. Exploring the distinctions within and among rhetorical genres enables scholars to better understand processes of creating meaning and persuading within specific contexts. Thus, this dissertation, which focuses on the rhetorical, the persuasive nature of homilies, appropriately adopts a generic approach to criticism.

This dissertation also benefits from generic rhetorical analysis methods because they are so strongly connected to the same classical understandings of rhetoric that inform the Cappadocians' homilies. As Eugene Garver notes, since Aristotle identified three genres of rhetoric, scholars have classified and defined numerous genres "by their purposes and ends, by their practical and conventional contexts, and by the methods they usually employ to accomplish those ends" (55; Harrell and Linkugel 262). The Cappadocian Fathers' were rhetorically trained, as I discuss in Chapter Two, and were likely aware of generic constraints of and within their homilies. For example, their panegyric homilies are notably different from their exegetical homilies, and their homilies collectively are notably distinct from the substance, style, and situation of their treatises. It is the distinct rhetoric of their collective homilies that I am interested in investigating.

The approach of this dissertation was generally aided by some existing generic understandings of homilies. Existing scholarship denotes "the homily" as one of two forms of Christian preaching (the other being "the sermon"). James Murphy, a

rhetorician, defines homilies as simple, informal, text-based, conversational speeches that derive from the early Christian practice of reading and discussing scripture in private homes (*Rhetoric* 298). Their form, Murphy suggests, avoids strict style or arrangement “in favor of Scriptural closeness” (299). George Kennedy, a classicist, echoes this but adds that in the middle ages the term “homily” was often used to refer to “all kinds of Christian sermons except panegyric” (*Greek* 182; Caplan 43). Speaking generally, Kennedy also differentiates homilies from “sermons” depending on their text-based nature, which modern Catholic handbooks do as well (*Classical* 156). Sermons, Kennedy explains, focus more on explaining a doctrine or teaching (and may draw from a variety of scriptural passages) rather than simply working to expound meaning from a limited set or passage of scripture. In a modern context, Robert Waznak, a professor of homiletics, notes that Catholic “sermons” rarely incorporated references to the scripture reading prior to the Catholic Church’s return to “homilies” in the 1960s (*Introduction* 4; Coyle 9).³

Based on these and other (albeit sometimes contradicting) definitions of terms, this dissertation employs the term “homily” to refer to the preached speeches of the Cappadocian Fathers. Although not all, many of the speeches here studied meet Waznak’s and Kennedy’s descriptions of a text-focused speech and Murphy’s definition of scriptural closeness. The term is derived from the Greek word “*homilia*,” which was

³ In contrast to these definitions, James Murphy differentiates homilies and sermons by their level of structure and style. Homilies, he states, “avoided the usual arrangement and style recommended by contemporary rhetoric,” while later sermons, following what he terms a “homiletic revolution” (circa 1200), embraced highly standardized structures (*Rhetoric* 299, 310).

used in early Christianity to mean “a being together or a communion” (Waznak 25, 2; Davis 162). This contextual Greek definition nicely illuminates the situational context of the Cappadocians’ preaching, which took place in religious social settings such as Sunday and daily church services, funerals, and important meetings of church leaders. The examination of early homilies within this dissertation deepens knowledge of the Christian homiletic genre, its substance, style, and situation.

With these generic clarifications and methodological understandings in mind, I analyzed the Cappadocians’ homilies until my rhetorical observations began to repeat and support themselves, thus providing responses to my initial research questions about homilies as rhetoric. Following the established process of productive rhetorical criticism, I then formed evaluative judgments, or arguments, based on my observations and the critical perspectives employed in my reading (cf. Zarefsky “Knowledge” 631). The specific arguments made within each chapter of the dissertation support the overarching argument that preaching, especially early Christian preaching, is profoundly rhetorical in nature.

Contributions

This rhetorical dissertation contributes a number of theoretical, historical, and practical understandings, which are especially expounded in the final sections of Chapters Three and Four. Theoretically speaking, this dissertation extends generic and constitutive theories of rhetoric, especially pertaining to homiletics. By studying homilies as a set of generically constrained and contextualized rhetoric, this project reveals how preachers shape their homilies, as a generic form, by adapting various

rhetorical components (e.g., distinct preaching personas) and even other forms of rhetoric (e.g., the jeremiad) to meet their contextual exigencies.

In addition, studying the rhetorical nature of a collection of homilies from peer preachers grants the opportunity to examine the constitutive properties of peer rhetors' rhetoric, which are otherwise difficult to collectively examine. As a specific example, this project provides the opportunity to learn how preachers and their homilies helped constitute Christian communities separately and collectively. The theoretical extensions produced by this research are helpful for other scholars of religious rhetoric, rhetorical scholars in general, and scholars whose research may overlap with discourse and social realities.

Beyond this project's theoretical contributions, the historical contributions of this dissertation particularly exemplify the projects' utility for non-rhetorical scholars. Studying early Christian preaching, studying preachers' linguistic processes of persuasion, subtly informs historical understandings of early Christian leaders, followers, and societies. Although a complete picture of these entities is impossible to acquire from the study of one set of speeches, the speeches herein examined nonetheless contribute to our knowledge of perceived and potentially constituted relationships among leaders and audiences (e.g., Black "Second"). The words and persuasion within each homily also reflect the exigencies, the urgent realities, as perceived or at least persuasively reflected by each preacher to his audience. These and other more specific historical contributions, products of rhetorical research, augment the interdisciplinary merit of studying history from a rhetorical perspective.

Finally, this dissertation also proffers practical implications. For example, although modern Christian churches and other organizations are far removed from fourth-century Christianity, the generic findings of early Christian preaching help explain some communicative practices among modern preachers. The rhetorical study of preaching can also help modern Christian preachers reevaluate the nature and productivity of the persuasive processes within their own preaching. Although this dissertation speaks to an immediate academic audience, modern Christian preachers can and should acknowledge the applied value of academic research; as such, modern Christian preachers serve as an intended secondary audience for this dissertation. “Universities,” Pope Francis says, “are outstanding environments for articulating and developing” new approaches to evangelism and “new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetics” (67). This dissertation, which reviews the rhetorical nature and role of Christianity’s most enduring, most common form of communication, realizes what Pope Francis has already acknowledged as possible. Within this largely historical and theoretical dissertation, modern practitioners, modern preachers, can find practical means of understanding, reevaluating, and even improving their rhetoric.

Arrangement of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of three related studies of early Christian preaching. Throughout the project I draw support from the work of many historians, classicists, theologians, and preachers. Without the knowledge established by these preceding scholars, the present project could never have come to fruition.

The second chapter in this dissertation brings together the work of scholars in multiple fields to present the rhetorical and historical context of the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies. Here I trace the growth, influences, and constraints on Christianity during its first few centuries. I outline the geographical, cultural, political, and theological composition of fourth-century Cappadocia, and I present the familial, educational, and leadership backgrounds of the Cappadocian Fathers. This chapter, in short, provides the context necessary for understanding the rhetorical insights, arguments, and theories advanced in the subsequent chapters.

The third chapter in this dissertation includes three separate rhetorical analyses of the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies. Together, these analyses trace the preachers' individual rhetorical personas and their constitutive natures. Although a number of rhetorical elements are evident in the homilies, the preachers' distinct personas increasingly stood out as significant as I read and analyzed the texts. Based on the conducted analyses, I argue in this chapter that distinct rhetorical personas, when adopted by peer rhetors, present serious challenges but also offer potential argumentative and constitutive potency. In addition, I argue that *complementary* peer personas can enrich peer rhetors' abilities to move their audiences.

The fourth chapter in this dissertation builds upon the idea of a preacher's persona to explore the ethos and form of a single preacher in a single homily. Through generic analysis of Basil's homily, "In Time of Famine and Drought" I support the argument that, as a presbyter, Basil constitutes a new middle ground between a strategic rhetor and an inspired prophet to meet the evolving needs and nature of early

Christianity. This chapter, in particular, illustrates the utility of closely examining early Christian homilies to discover more about the rhetorical nature of religious rhetoric, including modern preaching.

In the final chapter, I review the overarching findings of this dissertation. I also discuss present-day implications of more fully understanding the rhetorical nature of preaching and preachers. Subsequently reviewed are limitations of this dissertation and future directions of research.

The studies and conclusions of this dissertation together underscore a simple truth: that preaching and preachers are profoundly rhetorical. This argument is made in the context of the fourth century and the Cappadocian Fathers. However, it does not take much imagination to compare the ideas and findings of this project to a modern context. Today, across denominations and across the globe preachers continue to present themselves, express their ideas, and move their audiences in an assortment of ways. By illustrating how early Christian preaching and preachers are rhetorical, this dissertation implicitly brings to light how modern preaching and preachers are still rhetorical—a reality masked by enduring limited notions of rhetoric and preaching. Understanding the rhetorical nature of preachers and preaching illuminates shared approaches and effects but also potential challenges, which I will explore in the subsequent chapters. As the Cappadocian Fathers collaborated to review their ideas and even share their homilies, so it is hoped that preachers and scholars alike may collaborate around a renewed understanding of preaching as rhetoric to enrich their vocational work.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANITY, CAPPADOCIA, AND THE CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS

To gain a robust understanding of any rhetorical texts, including the homilies of the Cappadocians, it is necessary to first understand their formative historical context. As Herbert Wichelns explains, oratory's "occasion, its terms, its background, can often be understood only by the careful student of history" (2). Studying a text's context reveals the exigencies, audience, and constraints that brought it into existence (Bitzer 6). With a contextual understanding, the rhetorical critic is better able to see the persuasive processes operating within a rhetorical text and within a given historical and rhetorical situation. With a contextual understanding, the rhetorical critic is also better able to form and support arguments and theories pertaining to the nature and roles of rhetoric.

For the present project on the Cappadocian Fathers and their homilies, this necessitates examinations of broad and specific contexts. Broadly speaking, it is important to perceive the Cappadocians' setting within Christianity's early cultural, regional, and theological development. Early Christianity and its leaders demonstrate a notably malleable nature; just as they reshaped existing societies into Christian ones, so existing societies and their cultures shaped Christianity, its leaders, and their rhetoric. The prominence of Greco-Roman education, for example, influenced the upbringing, careers, and works of Christian leaders. Within Cappadocia specifically, Roman practices of patronage and governance blended with Christian social structures. The Cappadocia's agrarian roots likewise influenced the language and analogies of the

Cappadocian Fathers' homilies. These and many other examples illustrate the importance of understanding the broad contextual settings of the Cappadocian Fathers, which not only influenced their leadership but in many cases begot the shape and content of homilies.

In addition to a broad understanding of the Cappadocians' early Christian and Cappadocian contexts, it is also necessary to more narrowly understand their individual lives. For example, by understanding the education differences between Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, who were trained in Athens, and Gregory of Nyssa, who was trained more locally and influenced by the works of Origen, we may better understand the rhetorical distinctions among their homilies. Likewise, by understanding the familial and vocational backgrounds of the Cappadocian Fathers, we may make better sense of the relationships they project in their homilies (including with each other and their congregations) and of the preaching personas they adopt, as I discuss in Chapter Three.

Because this and other contextual information contributes significantly to the rhetorical criticism of subsequent chapters, the following pages of this chapter are dedicated to presenting context that affects and informs our understandings of the Cappadocian Fathers and their rhetoric. I have organized the following pages to begin with the most general and conclude with the most specific context. On the most general level, I loosely trace early Christianity—its formative influences, growth and constraints, fourth-century atmosphere, and its churches. Although *much* more could be said on these broad topics, I have included just that which is necessary to understand the Cappadocian Fathers and their homilies as parts of a greater Christian tradition.

The second section of this chapter outlines regional characteristics of Cappadocia, especially pertaining to the Cappadocian Father's fourth-century context. I briefly discuss the geography of Cappadocia, as well as its cultural, political, and religious composition. The third and final section of this chapter discusses the personal contexts of Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend Gregory of Nazianzus. To best inform the subsequent rhetorical criticism chapters, I have chosen to focus on their families, educations, and leadership roles. Although this background information is the most specific of all the context included in this chapter, it also neatly reflects the broad early Christian context of the Cappadocians' lives, which I next present.

Early Christianity

Greek Influences, Growth, and Constraints

Before the Cappadocian Fathers were introduced to Christianity by their families and to rhetoric by their tutors, Christianity and rhetoric were joined by others elsewhere. The area in which Jesus, his disciples, and subsequent followers spent much time reflected the cultural influences of the Greeks (Kinneavy 56). In Galilee, for example, the Greek language was widely used in trade, industry, and other aspects of society. In Palestine, "Jews participated actively in the political life of the majority of the Greek cities . . . [and] the education of the Jews . . . would ordinarily have included an introduction to some Greek rhetoric" (57). Early Christian evangelists, like the apostles and later Paul, emerged from this Hellenized context and made it a part of the Christian culture that they spread. James Murphy and George Kennedy both support this transitive theory by tracing how Christian rhetoric developed from Greek, Roman, and Judaic

rhetoric (Kennedy *Classical; Greek*; Murphy “Saint”; *Rhetoric*). Gerard Watson and Craig Gibson both agree that Aristotle had a direct influence on many early Christian leaders, including Augustine and Basil (Watson 250; C. Gibson 99).

The writings of early Christians reflect both the influence of the Greek language and the Greek rhetorical tradition. Paul’s letter to the Romans, for instance, evidences his learned ability to adapt his language and persuasion to his audience; the letter is highly sophisticated in comparison to his other letters, which suggests Paul’s assumptions about that particular audience (Kennedy *New* 154). In addition, as James Kinneavy has discussed, the Christian concept of *pistis*, or faith, is strongly influenced by the Greek concept of *pistis*, meaning persuasion (57). These early Greek influences on Christianity were retained as Christianity spread.

The expansion of Christianity in the first two centuries had a notable impact on particular areas, but more broadly “it had a limited effect on the empire as a whole” as suggested by the fact that “persecution [of Christians] remained local, spasmodic, and unofficial until the third century” (Hinson 59). By the year 180, however, Christianity had “succeeded in scattering the seed of their religion all over the Mediterranean world and were beginning to attract an educated and cultured constituency that had once despised this ‘alien’ cult” (59). In nearly every direction from Palestine Christianity grew. In the east, Christian communities were established and nourished in Palestine, but also Antioch, Asia Minor, Mediterranean islands, the Balkans, and Greek peninsula. In the West, Christianity grew to Gaul, Rome, the Iberian peninsula, and Roman Africa (60-63).

Christianity spread in two notable ways: through words and through acts. Letter-writing was a common form of evangelism, faith formation, and encouragement, as exemplified in the many letters of Paul, included in the canonical Bible, and other letters, including those of Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp (cf. M. Holmes). When evangelists were able to be physically present in various cities, preaching was commonly relied upon to grow and strengthen local faith communities. George Kennedy notes that four preaching forms initially emerged in early Christianity: “the missionary sermon, prophetic preaching, the homily, and the panegyric sermon,” examples of which can be found in the Book of Acts (*Classical* 155). Christian preaching developed additional structural elements with the influence of Origen (184-254), who “abandoned casual structure” and emphasized allegorical interpretation (Kennedy *Classical* 158). While other developments characterized Christian preaching, which I discuss elsewhere, it is of particular importance for this project that homiletic developments mostly began to emerge beginning in the third and then late fourth centuries. With the evolution of Christian preaching, Christian leaders found new ways to tailor their messages and move their audiences.

In addition to preaching and writing, acts of charity played a significant role in the spread of Christianity. Cicero might as well have been speaking of some Christians when he advised: “And he will do himself a great deal of good if he shows that he himself, when in power, was merciful and inclined to pardon others” (*De Inventione* 2.35). Historian Glenn Hinson notes that Christians “astounded the ancients with their charity,” surpassing the provisional welfare of the Roman Empire (64). They cared for

widows, orphans, the sick, poor, and disabled; offered ransom for prisoners and captives; buried the poor and other dead; redeemed slaves; employed the jobless; and helped others bear their sufferings (65). The external charitable ethos established through these acts was crucial for Christianity's self-preservation and growth. Establishing their competence and character through charity allowed Christians to build a positive public image. Moreover, practicing charity gave Christians a united purpose, which enhanced their sense of community and established their role in society.

At the same time, it must be noted that the spread of Christianity, at least by the fourth century, also led to violence—thus beginning a millennia-long pattern of being persecuted and persecuting others. As another approach to self-preservation and growth, some early Christians committed acts of violence against pagans and Jews; this approach, then and now, negatively affected the image of Christianity. This history is especially important to understand in the context of the fourth century, when imperial protection was finally offered to Christians by Constantine and subsequent emperors, which allowed Christian pleas for and emphases on toleration to fade (Hinson 223).

A closer look at the constraints on Christianity in the fourth century provides a wider understanding of how and why the faith spread in this era. Intermittent Roman persecution, especially prior to the fourth-century often prevented Christians from directly soliciting new members. Consistent persecution followed by intermittent episodes also made *disciplina arcani*, or a culture of secrecy, an institutionalized norm among many of the earliest Christians (Schwartz 66). Such secrecy, however, focused largely on the ritualistic aspects of faith; the Christian message and its application to

everyday life still circulated plainly or under the guise of parables, following the example of Christ (66).

Finally, in the early fourth century Christians experienced some relief (Hinson 197-214). The emperor Constantine (313-337) converted to Christianity and protected and even favored Christians. Thereafter, Constantine's sons, who shared the empire, continued to reign as Christian emperors and fight paganism. The subsequent reign of Julian (360-363), however, brought great suffering, especially to Cappadocia. Julian restored paganism, forced Christian clerics into the army, and confiscated the property and funds of city and suburban churches, making the practice of Christianity difficult and, to some, unappealing (Holman 69-70).

Upon Julian's death the Christian emperor Jovian reigned (363-364), followed by Valentinian I (364-379) who also exhibited tolerance and non-interference of Christians' and superstitiously outlawed some pagan practices. Valentinian shared his early reign with his brother Valens (364-378), who controlled the East and did *not* practice noninterference but instead advanced "a form of Arianism and [threatened] opponents with harassment and exile" (Hinson 214). His ideas and influence contributed to what is now labeled the Arian controversy among Christians and contributed to the occasion for the Council of Constantinople, which I later discuss. Valens and Valentinian shared their reign with Gratian (367-383), who generally avoided interference with Christians and eventually shared his own reign with Theodosius (379-395).

Theodosius' reign proved to be a turning point for the spread of Christianity; not only did he declare the religion to be "the one true form of religion as represented by

Rome and Alexandria,” he also worked vigorously to counter and suppress perceived heresies, as later discussed along with the Council of Constantinople (Hinson 215). The support of Theodosius concluded nearly a century of fluctuation between imperial persecution and protection. With the elimination of many political constraints, Christianity in the fourth century was better able to grow and address internal concerns, like theological unity.

The Atmosphere within Fourth-Century Christianity

The perceived “inter-connectivity” of Christianity today, in reality, was slow to develop (Brown *Rise* 9, 15). In the fourth century, Christian unity was yet faint. Even when Christian leaders from diverse areas got together, such as at the Council of Nicaea (325), discussion of theological disputes “produced deep divisions that resulted in further religious and political turmoil for most of the fourth century” (Schwartz 36; D. Gwynn). The reality of the era was that Christianity thrived largely through the evolution of “Micro-Christendoms” within which regional churches grew under the guidance of regional leaders, who made sense of Christianity in sometimes similar, sometimes contrasting ways (Brown *Rise* 13).

In some cases, “Micro-Christendoms” existed among leaders within a region, as is the case with the Cappadocian Fathers who lived within relative proximity to one another and who shared theological perspectives. “Micro-Christendoms” can also be viewed from a larger context; for example, the Cappadocians were united with other leaders of their time who shared similar views on divisive theological topics, such as the nature of the Trinity—the most prominent debate within the Cappadocians’ context.

Today, “Arianism” is the general label given to Christian sects who opposed the view of the Trinity espoused at the Council of Nicaea—the same view the Cappadocian Fathers held. However, in reality Arianism was made up of many different sects who all advanced slightly varied interpretations of nature of the Trinity, specifically of the relationship between the Father and the Son. Four general perspectives existed: that of the Nicaeans, which is still upheld today by the Roman Catholic Church, and those derived from Arius’ Trinitarian perspective:

(1) Nicaeans, led by Athanasius, insisted that the Son is “of the same essence” (*homoousios*) with the Father. . . . (2) On the opposite extreme, thoroughgoing Arians contended that the Son is “unlike” (*anomoios*) the Father. He is a created being, above humans but not truly God. Between these two positions stood (3) those who were prepared to say that the Son is “like” (*homoios*) the Father according to the scriptures but not “of the same essence,” and (4) those who tiptoed toward the Nicene position by saying the Son is “of *like* essence” (*homoiousios*) but would not go so far as to concede the Nicene position. (Hinson 236)

Decades of debate over these words constituted the “Arian Controversy” and contributed to tension within Christianity as it grew and developed. The Arian Controversy and the Nicene teaching, which the Cappadocian Fathers fervently defended their entire lives, are important to note as the subjects are addressed in a number of their homilies.

Beyond Christian sects surrounding the nature of the Trinity, other sects challenged other issues and in other places (Hinson 224-226; Murphy “Saint” 206-207;

D. Gwynn 1). While Rome and Alexandria were occupied with Arian sects, Asia Minor attended to Anti-Christian Semitic cults, and Roman Africa dealt with Donatists. In addition, Macedonians, Sabbatians and Novatians, Apollinarians, Eunomians, Montanists, and Sabellians formed, in a variety of regions, sects surrounding various interpretations and practices (Hinson 239). Tetradites, for example, controversially celebrated Easter on the Jewish Passover. On the one hand, all of these sects hampered the theological unity of Christianity and, in many cases, became sources of palpable tension between cities and Christian communities. On the other hand, the troublesome presence of Christians sects became an exigence that led Christians and Christian leaders to come together to discuss, debate, discern, and preach about what constituted orthodox Christian theology and practice (e.g., CDP “Not Three”; “Against the Sabellians”; SO 20; SOG 27; 28, 29; 30; 31; 33). At once divisive and unifying, Christian sects were none the less a reality of fourth-century Christianity, and dealing with them occupied the actions, politics, and homilies of many fourth-century leaders, including the Cappadocian Fathers.

Competition among Christian sects made so that “Christian leaders in Late Antiquity could not afford to be indifferent to their followers. . . . A sincere belief in the necessity to instruct people inspired many priests and bishops” (Maxwell 2, 61). Instruction was necessary because not just bishops but all people in the fourth century had a role in the debates over Christian doctrines (Van Dam *Becoming* 9). In their preaching and writing, bishops led the debates. However imperial emperors and magistrates “often imposed decisions, either cautiously through their patronage, or

sometimes more implacably through edicts” (9). To these bishops and magistrates ordinary laypeople offered support or opposition; thus it was important for leaders to instruct and even persuade the public of their theological positions. It was, after all, only a matter of argumentative support that distinguished “orthodoxy” from “heresy.”

The political and social significance of instruction and argumentation returns us to our earlier discussion of the Greek influence on early Christianity. As will be shortly discussed, the educations of elite and moderately elite individuals, which included many bishops, were grounded in Greek schools of thought. For example, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Augustine, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, Hilary, and Jerome all received excellent rhetorical educations. In addition, the former seven all professionally taught rhetoric before entering religious life (Kennedy *Classical* 167). Thus, when they faced the responsibility of addressing theological disputes, defending their positions, and countering others, they possessed and clearly utilized their Greek and rhetorical erudition. Although many examples could be pointed to, the homilies analyzed in Chapter Three suffice to exemplify how Christianity’s early influences became significant given the theological disputes that pervaded the religion.

Churches in the Fourth Century

Although, today, the debates and divisions that occupied early Christians exist primarily on paper, in the fourth-century these disputes were lived out in communities and churches. When comparing fourth-century churches with the churches of today, many similarities remain. In most cases, there is still a preacher and preaching, still a

congregation, and still the incorporation of scripture. Yet, when comparing the ceremonial composition of the church service and the physical church composition of the structure, a number of noteworthy similarities *and differences* arise.

The Christian church service of the fourth-century, much like the modern Catholic mass, centered around two events: the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist. By the middle of the second century the liturgy of the word involved the recitation of excerpts from scripture by a reader (Howden 941). This was followed by preaching, which lasted a few minutes or up to an hour. Although preaching also occurred in other contexts, most often it was a part of a church service, which was held on Sundays but also daily and on the occasion of special events including festivals, funerals, marriages, baptisms, and meetings of Christian leaders (941).

In Christianity's first century, preaching could be asked of anyone in the congregation. Later, bishops became largely responsible for preaching, delegating the task to a presbyter, and/or providing prepared homilies to outlying churches, which were read by presbyters or deacons (Howden 942).⁴ In all of these cases, only ordained ministers could preach lest controversy ensue, as was the case when Origen preached without ordination (942). Attendance during this first half of Christian church services was open to catechumens and other interested individuals, regardless of baptism (941).

⁴ By the fourth century, both the Greek *presbuteros* (elder or presbyter) and *hiereus* (priest) were used interchangeably for a person who held a Christian preaching position below a bishop (Gardiner 285-287). To parallel much literature on early preachers and to reflect the early and evolving roles of Christian leaders, this study employs presbyter instead of the now common term priest.

After the third century and until much later, this became the *only* portion of the service that unbaptized individuals could attend.

The liturgy of the Eucharist, the second half of the service that followed the preaching, included the “consecration and communion of bread and wine as a memorial of Christ’s death and resurrection” (Ferguson 393). The general order of the Eucharistic celebration, as recorded in the fourth century, is as follows: (1) the washing of the celebrant’s hands, (2) a kiss shared among congregants as a sign of love and peace, (3) preface, (4) thanksgiving and declaration of the Lord’s holiness / singing of *sanctus*, (5) elements changed to body and blood, (6) intercession for the living and dead, (7) Lord’s prayer, (8) invitations to communion, (9) communion received and “Amen” replied, and (10) benediction (Ferguson 395-396). In the context of church services, both the liturgy of the Eucharist and the liturgy of the word generally occurred within physical churches.

The fourth century gave rise to a great number of church structures, in part because so many needed to be replaced after their destruction by emperors preceding Constantine and in part because the newly unfettered growth of Christianity warranted more meeting and worship spaces (Grant 150). Constantine established dozens of new churches, including seven in Rome and two in the newly renamed city of Constantinople (151, 154). It was during the fourth century that cities with large Christian populations “such as Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, or Constantinople, and Jerusalem . . . became centers of church architecture” (Hinson 241). Thus historians have frequently turned to them for records of structural elements of church designs.

During the late fourth century, Christians began to convert pagan temples into their own places of worship; however, this did not prevent them from building their own structures (Hinson 243). Two styles of church structures generally prevailed in the fourth-century: the circular, convergent martyrium and the rectangular basilica (241). Both styles “avoided the ornate style of temples adorning the typical Greek and Roman forum and imitated instead the common public buildings called basilicas” (241). The martyrium was a circular structure with a dome roof in the center. Outward from and around the dome was a circle of columns, followed by a section of open floor space that was itself surrounded by columns, which separated this open section from an aisle along the surrounding circular wall.

The basilica, in contrast, was a rectangular structure with rows of columns running lengthwise. At one end was the entrance and at the other end was the apse, where the bishop and clergy sat (Bainton 40). Beginning in the mid-fourth century, basilicas were constructed “with their apse facing east, since prayers were said facing that direction” (Hinson 242). The forward half of the basilica was for the choir in the center and the congregants and along the walls. Catechumens, or those still learning their faith, occupied the back half of the basilica; they stood in the covered court, or narthex, around the perimeter and the open court, or atrium, within the center (Bainton 40). In general, although Christian churches were not like the magnificent pagan temples, they were often quite beautiful with painted colors, gilded features, and displayed relics (40; Hinson 242).

Within a church were a variety of significant structures, most notably an altar and an ambo. The altar, where the eucharist was celebrated, was made of wood, a solid stone, or a martyr's tomb (Sahas 40). Stone altars especially increased in popularity in the sixth century, when wooden ones became prohibited (Hinson 242). Attending clergy sat around the altar and, in eastern churches, a canopy also surrounded the altar so that it could be privatized at necessary moments (Sahas 40).

In contrast to the altar's privatized setting, the ambo (the Latin term for pulpit) was given a more publicized presence in a church. The ambo was located in the front half or the "nave" of a basilica, "sometimes in the center along the east-west axis of the building and sometimes slightly on one side, to the south or north" (Armstrong 41). In contrast to today's practices, preaching did not generally occur in the ambo (although John Chrysostom's practice is an exception); instead, the ambo was primarily used for scripture readings and preachers often preached from their seats to a standing congregation (41; Howden 941).

In the context of discussing general church components and structures in the fourth-century, it should also be noted that architectural preferences varied slightly from region to region. Extant records and surviving structures from Cappadocia, for example, suggest that Christians here preferred the basilica and free-cross style of churches throughout the fourth through sixth centuries (Cooper and Decker 149). Here we can see that the Cappadocians' architectural taste contrasted that of Constantinople in the late fourth century where basilicas had become less popular. Attention should also be given to the fact that churches under episcopal control were not the only Christian churches.

By the fourth century private churches and chapels were quite common in rural and urban areas. Gregory of Nyssa mentions a private church in Cappadocia, and Gregory of Nazianzus served at such a church in Constantinople (154).

The variance of church structures, community atmospheres, and theological positions, together suggest the necessity of closely examining Christian regions to gain a more holistic picture of early Christianity and its characteristics. Many volumes of books have already been dedicated to this general endeavor. In the context of this project on preaching, persuasion, and Cappadocian Fathers, looking closely at Cappadocia serves as an appropriate opportunity to better understand the geographic, cultural, political, and religious composition of a single “Micro-Christendom.”

Cappadocia

Of the urban and rural, distant and near places that Christianity gradually spread to, Cappadocia was most notably a mountainous one. Located today in what is central Turkey, Cappadocia occupies a high plateau within the rugged area of Mount Argaios (*Van Dam Kingdom 1*). In Late Antiquity as now, the greater part of the Taurus mountain range blocked Cappadocia from the Mediterranean, while to the opposite side a seemingly endless steppe stretched on (*Van Dam Kingdom 13*). Cappadocia’s particular location was significant given imperial pressures from the East, where the Goths in the Balkans and the Persian Empire in the Near East warranted attention from the Roman Empire. Cappadocia’s location also served as a suitable pass-through between Constantinople in the northwest and Antioch in the southeast. When roads were not blocked by snow, emperors, soldiers, merchants, and drifters frequently stopped in

and visited the area (Holman *Hungry* 70). While convenient on a map, the geographic location of Cappadocia posed serious challenges given the freezing winters, which Basil lamented as a common cause of death (Van Dam *Kingdom* 14). The notorious Cappadocian winters were labeled “a night that lasted six months” with “indescribable snowfalls,” which earned Cappadocians the characterization of “reeking with snow” (as quoted in Van Dam *Kingdom* 14).

Nestled within the difficult and “wild” terrain of Cappadocia was a small number of cities connected by short journeys of several days. Nine cities hosted episcopal sees “under the general jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Caesarea,” though not all were of equal size and distinction (Harakas 202). These cities, for this project’s purposes, included the small and fairly insignificant Nyssa in the northwest, Nazianzus and Sasima in the south, and the region’s capital of Caesarea in the east (Magie 200). The area surrounding Caesarea was relatively “poor and marshy,” but Cappadocians could store grain here in dry caverns for extended periods (Magie 201). This was made possible largely by the presence of “manmade and natural caves” within “conical croppings of rock, 20 to 30 feet high” (Holman *Hungry* 70). It was storehouses of grains such as these that would eventually run low during the Caesarean famine and drought of 368 to 369.

Despite its difficult terrain, the Cappadocian region was able to produce numerous goods for the Roman Empire and host a number of imperial estates and factories (Van Dam *Kingdom* 1). In particular, Cappadocia supplied the empire with horses, armor, and clothing. The terrain of the area also offered wood, salt, onyx, silver, iron, lead, translucent marble, and crystal alabaster (15; Gwatkin 23). In addition, despite

its harsh winters, hot summers, and landlocked location, Cappadocia was “at times rich in olives, grapes, grain, and livestock” (Holman *Hungry* 70). So much was agrarian life a part of Cappadocia that the Cappadocian Fathers made frequent analogous references to it in their preaching so that their local audience might better understand their messages (Van Dam *Kingdom* 16). Usable land within the rough region was dedicated to growing grains and raising large flocks, herds, and especially horses—agrarian pursuits that supported the regional economy (15; Gwatkin 22). Although a small portion of these commodities were exported, exports were only sent to adjacent areas and the majority of agrarian products stayed within Cappadocia to sustain the generally poor population that lived within the relatively slow-to-develop region (Van Dam *Kingdom* 15-16, 26).

Although Cappadocia’s agrarian products were sufficient for the era, the region could not boast of abundant cultural development. Of the region’s slow cultural growth, Van Dam notes:

The influence of classical culture and the emergence of municipal and imperial institutions appeared in Cappadocia, consistently and predictably, centuries later than in neighboring regions, Hellenization, the spread of cities and Greek culture, came to Cappadocia only in the later Hellenistic period and under the early Roman empire. Romanization, participation in the Roman administration, came only under the later Roman empire with the creation of smaller provinces and the promotion of Cappadocians into the imperial bureaucracy. As a result, despite the seductiveness of Greek culture and the might of Roman rule, local notables were often able to dictate the terms of the encounters. (14)

Officially, Cappadocia became a province of the Roman Empire in 17 A.D. (Gwatkin 17). During this first century Cappadocia contained notably fewer cities and with less administrative structure than other acquired Roman provinces and instead retained an abundance of villages (Cooper and Decker 15, 19). By Late Antiquity Cappadocia had eventually grown (and embraced Christianity), boasting of as many as forty sees from which bishops in designated “cities” oversaw religious, social, and political matters as municipal councilors of sorts (18; Van Dam *Becoming* 70). Still, by the fourth-century, it was certainly to metropolises like Constantinople, not cities like Caesarea, that bishops and other social leaders travelled for important meetings, such as the Council of Constantinople in 381.

Thus, even as Cappadocia grew, it still remained a modest secondary region within the Empire. An estimated 900,000 people occupied Cappadocia during Late Antiquity (fourth to sixth centuries), with an approximate 50,000 people in sixth-century Caesarea. Then and now, however, a majority of people lived in more rural locations (Cooper and Decker 47). For example, during Late Antiquity many Cappadocians resided in small villages and “burrowed into the ground to create their living space, which was more efficient than quarrying stone for a built site, and excavated tufa made good fertiliser [sic]” (19, 45). This style of living conflicted with Roman urban planning, yet it was not until perhaps later Late Antiquity that unsuccessful attempts were made to bring Cappadocian subterranean dwellings (which hosted anywhere from dozens to perhaps hundreds of people) closer to the standards of a Roman city, with plumbing and intra-city networks (20, 46). Cappadocian villages remained small and physically close

but comparatively disconnected, which contributed to patchy governance and regular banditry (20).

Within Cappadocian villages and cities resided a wide range of individuals. From the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies and their contextual references we may gather that Cappadocia was home to a mixed population of farmers, elite individuals, and slaves, who represented up to one-third of the population (Schroeder 16). Historians Cooper and Decker note that Cappadocia was predominantly, though not entirely, Christian by Late Antiquity and that the population adhered to a Christian calendar year "organized in the rhythmic cycle of saints' days and a religious progression of feasts that competed with and had in part supplanted the old polytheist celebrations" (159, 160). A number of these feast days and the communities' celebrations of them are reflected in the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies (e.g., SOG 3; 38; 39 40; 41; 44; 45; SO 15; 24; WL "Baptism"; FF "Holy Birth"; "Martyr Julitta"; "Martyr Mamas").

In addition to revolving around (Christian or pagan) festivals, like many societies within the Roman Empire and Late Antiquity, Cappadocian society was characterized by social relationships and patronage. Basil acknowledged that "wealth assured reputation," and Cooper and Decker note that Basil himself "was a natural patron for ecclesiastics in his territory" (180; cf. Brown *Power* 77-78, 180). Such patronage was given not only to individuals trying to rise in status but also to the notable number of widows, orphans, and otherwise needy individuals, including beggars, who resided in Cappadocia (e.g., SJ "Against"; SJ "Rich"; SJ "In Time"; SS "Preface" 3; SO 14; SOG 16).

Care for poor and vulnerable Cappadocians became a responsibility of Christian bishops, who, as patrons, were a crucial part of the cities' social structures. Speaking in general of fourth-century Christian social structures, Peter Brown explains:

Nowhere was the Christian representation of the church's novel role in society more aggressively maintained than in the claim of Christian bishops to act as "lovers of the poor." . . . In fourth-century conditions "love of the poor" took on a new resonance. It was an activity that came to affect the city as a whole. . . . In the name of a religion that claimed to challenge the values of the elite, upper class Christians gained control of the lower classes of the city. (*Power* 77-78)

This system of patronage was thus at once part of a bishop's religious duty, civic duty, and city structure, and it is documented in a multitude of ways (Holman *Hungry* 18). The homilies of Gregory of Nazanizus, for example, served as opportunities for him to not only explain scripture but directly apply its meaning and comment on surrounding social situations (SO 6; 14; 17; 22; 23; cf. Van Dam *Becoming* 70 on social advice in Gregory's letters). Likewise, as will be explained in Chapter Four, Basil responded to his duties by establishing a charitable hospital-like structure for the poor (cf. SJ "In Time").

While it is clear that Christian bishops, as patrons, held significant roles in Cappadocia, it is unclear when Christianity arrived in Cappadocia. We do know that there was a thriving Jewish community at the time of Pentecost (Acts 2:9) and that by the third century there was a functioning Christian hierarchy in Asia Minor in general (Cooper and Decker 139). Historical and familial references within the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies suggest that two generations prior, Christianity was still struggling to

gain a foothold in Cappadocia (e.g., SOG 18, 265-266; SOG 43). This timing makes sense at least in light of the Roman Empire. Maximus II (308-313), for example, posed serious hardships on Cappadocian Christians, including Basil's grandparents who were fortunate enough to have "escaped with their lives, and appear to have retained, or recovered, some of their property" (Jackson xiii; Van Dam *Friends* 1). Not until Constantine's reign (313-337) was Christianity accepted by a Roman emperor; even then, Julian's brief reign from 361-363 brought additional burdens, including heavy taxation, to Christian societies (Hinson 197-214). Compared to these previous generations, the Cappadocian Fathers were born into a Cappadocia that was relatively Christianized; physical persecution had subsided and the Council of Nicaea (325) had already established some Christian doctrine, helping unite a growing but disjointed Christian population (Jackson xiv).

Throughout the fourth century, Cappadocia was largely governed by its bishops, who retained religious, social, and gubernatorial control, much like a local magistrate and were the highest point of regional authority (cf. Cooper and Decker 142). Cappadocian bishops not only served as patrons, they oversaw civic responsibilities including marriages, domestic disputes and divorces, poverty control, and even taxation—in the sense that they had some power to appeal to higher Roman magistrates for releases and waivers. Bishops of smaller country sees were appointed by metropolitan bishops, thus the latter were subordinate to the former—as was the case when Basil appointed Gregory of Nazianzus to be bishop of Sasima and Gregory of

Nyssa to be bishop of Nyssa (144; SO 9). In some cities, including Nazianzus, the episcopate had familial lineage.

Following the bishops in order of authority were presbyters (*presbyteroi*). These figures attended to daily religious duties at local parishes, including presiding over the liturgy, marriages, and baptisms. Compared to the episcopate, the priesthood was relatively open to “any male over 30 years of age. . . . Formal training was unnecessary, but candidates were expected to lead a blameless life and have a clear knowledge of the faith and the church canons” (145) In addition, men could marry prior to but not after entering the priesthood. Priests were generally of modest social status and lived in relative poverty; they were paid menial wages by their bishop or the estate they served (145-146). Although priests lacked the broad influence of bishops, they did possess social influence over their immediate vicinity, especially given their close involvement with their local community; in fact, “the higher echelons of the church often had a limited influence or presence in the Cappadocian countryside” who likely felt rather removed from their bishop (148).

While priests and lower clergy fulfilled important roles on a local level, bishops dealt with more metropolitan concerns as well as broad theological debates. Bishops of the late fourth century, for example, gave much attention to the Arian Controversy, which augmented divisions between some bishops while solidifying the union of others, as was the case with the Cappadocian Fathers (D. Gwynn 7-8). The theological turbulence produced by the decades-long Arian Controversy, discussed previously, only added to the normal turbulence that characterized Cappadocia and occupied its leaders.

Within this context, the Cappadocian Fathers, like other leaders, had to navigate political lines of influence, address social concerns of importance, and consider basic geographic challenges, like the reality of snow and the risk of drought.

The Cappadocian Fathers

More than other bishops, the Cappadocian Fathers were notably united theologically and socially. All three Cappadocians spent time together before entering religious life. All three Cappadocians received rhetorical educations. All three Cappadocians shared similar issues on contemporary issues of theology. And all three Cappadocians helped one another through times of strife. Although during much of their later lives they lived in separate Cappadocian cities, Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend Gregory of Nazianzus maintained regular communication with one another. Their many letters, preserved over the centuries, document their communication and collaboration; combined with their homilies and treatises, these writings provide a foundation upon which historians can piece together their roles, relationships, and influences within fourth-century Cappadocia and the surrounding area (cf. Van Dam *Families* 2). Their writings also provide much background information about their families, educations, and leadership roles.

The Families of the Cappadocians

Although Basil and Gregory of Nyssa's family was not initially close with Gregory of Nazianzus family, the two families were relatively alike. Both families were of high (but not the highest) status in their respective communities. Both families converted to Christianity. Both families possessed notable wealth, though their sons

espoused lives of poverty. And both families attempted to propel their sons forward socially and politically, through education and religion, even when the sons resisted.

Basil and his brother Gregory of Nyssa were the grandchildren of “a Christian gentleman of good position and fair estate in Pontus, and Macrina his wife” who together suffered persecution under Maximinus II (308-313). This couple had two surviving children who we know as Gregory, who became bishop of an unknown see, and Basil the Elder. Basil the Elder worked as a rhetorician, and was “reputable enough to attract students from neighboring regions such as Armenia who subsequently went on to study at Athens” (Van Dam *Friends* 18). He married “an orphaned gentlewoman named Emmelia, whose father had suffered impoverishment and death for Christ’s sake, and who was herself a conspicuous example of high-minded and gentle Christian womanhood” (Jackson xiii).

Together Basil the Elder and Emmelia retained estates in Cappadocia, Pontus, and Annisa or Annesi near the River Iris (Schroeder 16). They also had five boys and five girls. The eldest was Macrina (b. 320), who grew to be a pious woman of great significance through her model life as an ascetic (cf. Kraemer on early Christian women and asceticism). The youngest was Peter, who was eventually ordained a priest by Basil, although he remained in Pontus until being appointed bishop of Sebasteia (Van Dam *Friends* 68). The eldest surviving son and the third child, was our Basil (b. 330); the third son and fifth child was Gregory of Nyssa (b. 340).

Basil and Gregory of Nyssa’s family was notably pious. As Paul Schroeder explains, Basil’s “family lineage constitutes a veritable ‘household of saints’: his mother,

Emmelia, was the orphaned daughter of a [martyr], while his paternal grandmother, Macrina the Elder, had been instructed by disciples of St Gregory the Wonderworker. His grandmother, his father, and his mother all became saints of the Church,” as did four siblings (15). Macrina the younger is particularly noteworthy, not only for being the first ascetic in the family, but for the example of piety she offered her siblings in their own religious lives (15; Van Dam *Friends* 105-108). Toward the end of his life Basil credited his pious family for the spiritual and theological direction of his own life (Rousseau 23-24; Schroeder 15).

In comparison to Basil and Gregory of Nyssa’s large family and long pious history, Gregory of Nazianzus’s family was relatively small and, initially, not unitedly Christian. His maternal grandparents were Philtatius and Gorgonia of whom little is known. Together they had Nonna, who married Gregory the Elder around the year 320. The latter “belonged to an obscure sect called Hypsistarians or Hypsistians. . . . [who] seem to have held a sort of syncretist doctrine, containing elements derived from heathen, Christian, and Jewish sources” (Browne and Swallow 187). That Gregory married a Christian woman may have been the cause of a known rift with his own parents (Van Dam *Friends* 200). Eventually he converted to Christianity perhaps due to the influence of Nonna or the realization that Constantine favored Christian social leaders (42; Browne and Swallow 187). Upon his conversion and at his baptism, the bishop of Nazianzus, in accident or inspiration, proclaimed Gregory his successor (SOG 18, 258; Van Dam *Friends* 42).

Gregory the Elder and Nonna remained in Nazianzus and had three children: Gorgonia, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Caesarius. As was common practice, Nonna dedicated Gregory's life to God before he was born and after Gregory the Elder became a priest (Browne and Swallow 188). Gregory of Nazianzus was likely born around 330, near the time of his future friend Basil's birth. Unlike Basil who was raised by a wet nurse and then his grandmother, Gregory of Nazianzus was raised by his own mother who took care to provide his first "teaching in the faith" (Van Dam quoting Gregory, *Friends* 41).

Although the piety of Gregory of Nazianzus' paternal family was lacking compared to that of the other Cappadocian Fathers, the piety of Gregory's *maternal* family is noteworthy. Gregory of Nazianzus recalls that Christianity was part of a legacy of his maternal ancestors, and notes that his mother consistently acted in accord with her beliefs. For example, "she never shook hands with a pagan, and she never kissed a pagan woman on the lips, even if the woman was most distinguished in other respects or even a relative" (Van Dam quoting Gregory, *Friends* 88). His mother also maintained a fervent prayer life and experienced what Gregory describes as miracles (88-92; SOG 18). While Gorgonia and Caesarius seem to have lost contact with their mother in later years—the former left Cappadocia and the latter became a physician or an imperial administrator—in contrast, Gregory stayed close with and looked up to his mother and her piety (90; Browne and Swallow 188).

All three Cappadocian Fathers effectively ended the known lineage of their families by becoming bishops. None had children, and only Gregory of Nyssa married

prior to entering religious life—a decision he perhaps regretted given his general avoidance of the subject and his emphatic praise of virginity in a treatise (Van Dam *Families* 116, 124). Still, their families were extended through the Cappadocian Fathers' embrace of, not biological children, but their parishioners, whose “father” they became “through the gospel” (SJ “In Time” 73). Likewise, the wealth and prestige of their families were preserved, not through inheritance, but through the Cappadocian Fathers' contributions of theology that, even today, continue to be significant within Christianity. The intellectual values of their families too were advanced, not through offspring, but through the Cappadocian Fathers' examples of rhetorical excellence.

The Educations of the Cappadocians

The early educations of the Cappadocian Fathers are marked by similarities; most notably, they were all trained explicitly in rhetoric. Much is known about the Roman-era education system in general. To begin, a two-tiered system of education existed, which was, like many things in Rome, influenced by the Greeks (A. Gwynn 22-23). On the basic level, men were educated at a “school of letters,” which taught literacy. Men receiving a higher level of education generally studied rhetoric and philosophy, in addition to “a literary training of *paideia*” or cultural “appreciation for the words and texts of classical antiquity, [which] was acquired through an expensive and time-consuming process of education that not only taught literature but also allowed men of culture to master a code of socially acceptable behavior” (Watts 2; cf. Schwartz 3).

To receive the most esteemed version of this higher level of education, elite individuals often travelled or were sent abroad by their families to prominent cities, such

as Alexandria, Constantinople, and Athens, where renowned teachers resided, delivered lectures, and accepted students (cf. Bonner 90). Of these distant centers of education, “Athens possessed a set of cultural institutions almost unmatched in the Mediterranean world” (Watts 24). Not only did Athenian schools generate more revenue than any other local industry, they “brought great fame by attracting wealthy teachers and students to the city” (25). At Athens and under the instruction of esteemed teachers, long-term students eventually studied philosophy but founded their education first in rhetoric.

Students’ early rhetorical educations consisted of practicing linguistic arts by going through the *progymnasmata*, which were handbooks with exercises in prose composition and rhetoric (cf. C. Gibson; Kennedy *Greek* 25). Such exercises were valuable in the sense that they provided students with “techniques of presentation and argumentation, with flexible patterns on which to model their own compositions, and a set of common narratives, personae and values to appeal to . . . [which could be] adapted to the task at hand” (Webb 290-291). The variety of exercise subjects could include fable, narrative, chreia, maxim, refutation and confirmation, common-place, encomion, synkrisis, ethopoeia, ecphrasis, thesis, and law—all of which were included in the *progymnasmata* of a pseudo Hermogenes (Gorman 51). Exercises on refutation (ἀνασκευή), for example, are defined by the pseudo Hermogenes as ““an overturning of something that has been proposed,’ and confirmation (κατασκευή) as the opposite” (quoted in Gorman 59). Students would practice by refuting or confirming “something or someone: the unclear, the impossible, the not-at-all natural, the incredible, the inappropriate, the unbeneficial, the deficient, the false . . .” (59). Other exercises

similarly helped students of rhetoric strengthen their argumentation by learning language skills that could be applied to a wide variety of topics and contexts.

That the Cappadocian Fathers were familiar with such exercises is nearly certain given that the skills and other marks of this rhetorical education evidence themselves in their homilies. Gregory of Nazianzus heavily incorporates narratives and narrative frames into his homilies; Basil constantly employs analogies and small fable-like structures; and both preachers exhibit extremely strong refutation skills in their homilies dealing with apparent heresies and defending Nicene Trinitarian theology (SOG 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; 33; FF “On Baptism”; CDP “Not Three”; “Against the Sabellians”).

Upon learning and mastering the exercises included in the *progymnasmata*, students of rhetoric in Athenian and other Late Antique Roman schools would continue working with a rhetorician but move onto a more advanced method of study:

Literary allusions mentioned by the grammarian were expanded and their moral and historical significance was re-emphasized. At this stage in the training, students were expected to know these anecdotes and write expositions about their meaning. When they left school, it was assumed that students would be perfectly able to apply the morals of these short stories to their daily conduct. As the student progressed in the rhetorician’s school, he was expected to produce his own full-length compositions of increasing difficulty. Each of these was done according to the specifics of each rhetorical genre. (Watts 4)

Given their lengthy stay at Athens (over ten years) and the mastery of rhetoric that they later display in their Christian works, it is evident that Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus

both advanced to high levels of rhetorical education. Not only do their homilies evidence rhetorical skills like refutation, confirmation, and narrative, their homilies also demonstrate their awareness of generic constraints, which I discuss in relation to Basil's homily "In Time of Famine and Drought" in Chapter Four.

When recounting the backgrounds of the Cappadocian Fathers, it must be regretfully acknowledged that while much is known about the informal and formal educations of Basil and his friend Gregory of Nazianzus, almost nothing is known about the education of Gregory of Nyssa or even about his first three decades of life (Norris xv). Given his generally poor health, it is likely that Gregory of Nyssa was educated at home, and it is almost certain that he was not educated abroad. He was, at the very least, educated for several years his brother by Basil, before following the footsteps of their father and another brother (Nectarius) and becoming a rhetorician (Moore and Wilson 2). Gregory of Nyssa's homilies and their rhetorical characteristics suggest that he did indeed receive a rhetorical education, though of a likely lesser quality than the other Cappadocians. His extant letters and works "exhibit an acquaintance with the biological, medical, and physical science of his day . . . with the Greek philosophical tradition . . . and, needless to say, with the theory and practice of Greek rhetoric" (Norris xv). In addition, Gregory of Nyssa's particular penchant for allegorical interpretation suggests that influences distinct from those on Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus led him to embrace hermeneutic methods that the others chose to generally avoid.

Gregory of Nyssa's unknown education is contrasted with the documented and nearly parallel educations of his brother Basil and their friend Gregory of Nazianzus. As

previously mentioned, Gregory of Nazianzus obtained an early religious education from his mother. When he reached an appropriate age, he was sent to Caesarea to be educated by Carterius, who perhaps also later taught John Chrysostom and oversaw monasteries in Antioch of Syria (Browne and Swallow 188). Like Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil was taught religious basics domestically, from his grandmother (Jackson xv). When Basil was about fourteen, he left a small village, his family's estate in Annesi, and his grandmother's care to return to his parent's home in Caesarea (xiv). Here his early formal education was administered by his own father, a renowned rhetorician who shortly died and left Basil "a considerable fortune" (Schroeder 17). It is during this time that Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus likely first became acquainted.

Soon, however, Basil was sent to Constantinople where he studied rhetoric and philosophy. Although it is not entirely clear who Basil studied under, "Libanius was at Constantinople in 347, and there Basil may have attended his lectures" (Jackson xv; C. Gibson 99; Gorman 49). Meanwhile, Gregory of Nazianzus was sent to "the Palestinian Caesarea; probably as much for the sake of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, as for the advantage of the schools of that learned resort" (Browne and Swallow 189). Gregory stayed at the Palestinian school to study rhetoric and art until traveling to Alexandria for a short time. Around the age of eighteen he moved on to Athens, which he recounts in his father's eulogy (Browne and Swallow 189, 191; SOG 18, 265).

In 351 Basil's education likewise took him to Athens, where he was reunited with Gregory of Nazianzus (Jackson xv). Extant writings suggest that "At Athens the two young Cappadocians were noted among their contemporaries for three things: their

diligence and success in work; their stainless and devout life; and their close mutual affection” (xv). Amongst the “dangerous distractions” in Athens were the “feasts, theatres, assemblies, wine parties,” competition, and rivalry between competing schools of teachers and followers (Browne and Swallow 190; Jackson xv). Nonetheless, both Cappadocians succeeded; Basil especially was received with high regard, although fellow students’ sentiment later turned to jealousy and attempts were made to destroy Basil’s “reputation . . . [by] harassing him with disputations upon hard and sophistical questions” (190; SOG 43). When Gregory of Nazianzus eventually defended Basil, he too became unpopular among other students, but this helped solidify the growing friendship between the Cappadocians. The friendship and education that Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus gleaned from their Athenian years had an impact on their subsequent careers. As will be subsequently discussed, Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus spent the next years of their lives living as ascetics on Basil’s family property, working as bishops in adjacent Cappadocian sees, and, together with Gregory of Nyssa, serving as leaders who defended and shaped what is now orthodox Christianity.

The Roles of the Cappadocians

Upon receiving their educations, all three Cappadocians avoided immediate ordination into the priesthood or episcopate. Although all three were raised as devout Christians and maintained their beliefs as young adults, their personal interests and influences initially took them in directions that greatly differed from their later lives. Gregory of Nyssa initially followed a secular path and became a rhetorician. His brother Basil did the same, although he quickly chose to instead embrace monasticism. And

Gregory of Nazianzus, influenced by his love for both his parents and friend, split his time among them as an assistant to his father and an ascetic alongside Basil.

As is the case with his upbringing and education, relatively little is known about Gregory of Nyssa's life (compared to the well documented lives of his peers). Most scholars believe that Gregory of Nyssa married, although it is unclear whether he later kept his wife given the scant references to his marriage in his extant texts (Moore and Wilson 3-4; Norris xv). At any rate, we know that after completing his education he worked for an extended period as a rhetorician in Caesarea. He began this career perhaps around 364 "when the emperor Julian's decree forbidding Christians to teach the classical subjects was repealed" (Norris xv).

For many years, it is clear that Gregory of Nyssa resisted his family and friends' suggestions that he enter religious life. He was, however, baptized sometime before his ordination at the urging of his mother and sister (Moore and Wilson 3-4). In addition, even before entering religious life, it is known that he spent much time studying the works of Origen, which would later influence his own works (4). By Easter 372, Gregory agreed to allow Basil to make him the first bishop of Nyssa. Although Nyssa was a town of little significance, establishing a bishopric here helped Basil strengthen his regional authority, augment support for the Nicene Trinitarian view that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were "of the same substance," and respond "to an imperial effort to diminish [his region and authority] both by splitting the province of Cappadocia into two and assigning the southern sector of it to the metropolitanical jurisdiction of the Arian bishop of Tyana" (Norris xvi). Here Gregory remained as bishop, despite being

(according to Basil's in/accurate descriptions) administratively, financially, and hermeneutically naïve (xvi; Van Dam *Friends* 68, 70).

Prior to Basil's death in 379, little else is known about Gregory's leadership and his production of works. However, upon his brother's death, the near concurrent death of the Arian Emperor Valens, and the rise of the Emperor Theodosius who supported the Nicene cause, Gregory seems to have intensified his leadership. Not only does his extant literary output from this period increase, but his "new-found prominence as a leader in the Nicene cause" is well documented (Norris xvii). Although he had previously lived under the shadow of his brother, now he built significantly upon his brother's works and produced a notable number of his own treatises and homilies, which retain theological significance today. Gregory also fiercely defended the Nicene cause, as the other Cappadocian Fathers had begun to do before him. For example, Gregory of Nyssa participated in the Council of Constantinople in 381, and he was invited to speak at subsequent councils there in 385 and 387 (Norris xix). After this time, there is again a lapse in what is known about Gregory of Nyssa's life. His presence, at least, is documented at a synod in Constantinople in 394, where he delivered his last extant homily (Moore and Wilson 7-8). His subsequent death is estimated to be around 395—more than a decade after that of his brother.

Like his father had done and his brother Gregory, Basil taught rhetoric upon finishing his education in 356 AD. He did so until a pivotal point in life when he realized, "I had wasted much time in vanity and had spent nearly all my youth in the vain labor in which I was engaged, occupying myself in acquiring a knowledge made

foolish by God” (Basil “223” 127). At that point, Basil cast down his “unfulfilling” career as a rhetorician and became a hermit (A. Holmes 262). Nonetheless, his rhetorical knowledge would prove fruitful.

While leading an ascetic life on his family’s property, Basil occasionally traveled to discuss theology with Christian leaders. What Basil witnessed during these excursions alarmed him: “On the one hand, a world being torn apart by seemingly intractable theological divisions; on the other, an unbalanced social structure enriching a few while leaving many without the means to meet their daily needs” (Schroeder 20). This recognition foreshadowed Basil’s aptitude to marry theological and practical matters in his writings and homilies. Moreover, the recognition proved to be the call necessary to urge Basil from seclusion.

In 357 Basil was made a reader and in 360 he was made a deacon in Caesarea by the bishop Dianius (DelCogliano 16; Jackson xi). At this later time, Dianius also charged Basil with the responsibility of accompanying him to “a church council in Constantinople to avail himself of both Basil’s theological advice and rhetorical power” (DelCogliano 16-17). By 365 Basil had completely left seclusion and had his own parish in Caesarea. During Basil’s time as a presbyter and eventually bishop (which began in 370), he composed an exceptional number of homilies, letters, and theological works, many of which are extant. His rhetorical background undoubtedly informed the composition of these texts. For their wisdom, rhetorical savvy, and eloquence, Basil’s homilies were highly regarded in his day and continue to be circulated, especially those on the Psalms and the Hexaemeron (Way ix, vii). Until his death in 379 at the

approximate age of 49, Basil served as the bishop of Caesarea. Although he did not live to join other bishops at the Council of Constantinople, Basil's ideas and theology were well represented by his friend and fellow Cappadocian, Gregory of Nazianzus.

Just as the education of Gregory of Nazianzus parallels that of Basil, so too does his transition through religious roles parallel that of Basil. Altogether Gregory of Nazianzus seems to have spent about twelve years at Athens, from the approximate ages of eighteen to thirty. When Basil left Athens in 356 to begin an ascetic life, Gregory quickly followed. From that point on, "Gregory divided his time between his parents and his friend; living partly at Arianus and partly with Basil in Pontus, in monastic seclusion" (Browne and Swallow 191). Both Gregory and Basil appear to have been baptized in the immediate years following their retreat from Athens. Although Gregory was drawn to monasticism, he dutifully continued to assist his aging parents and especially his father "in the duties of the Episcopate" (191).

After approximately three years of moderate seclusion, in 360 Gregory was called forth to return to Nazianzus and more actively assist his father in various contextual controversies, of which Gregory speaks in his first oration on peace (SO 6). Upon Gregory's return to Nazianzus, he was ordained by his father during a festival in the year 361. His ordination was brought about by Gregory the Elder's increasing dependence upon him and by urging of the community for the Elder to secure an assistant and successor (Browne and Swallow 193). Although it was common for individuals to express resistance to ordination, Gregory's distress appears to be genuine for upon being ordained he fled to Pontus for at least several months before returning to

Nazianzus (193). In the subsequent homilies he delivered, Gregory does not simply present a humble appearance, but he painfully speaks of his emotions and experience of being ordained against his will (SO 1; 2; 3).

Gregory remained in Nazianzus, helping his father. In 372 he was ordained (again against his will) by Basil to be bishop of the new see of Sasima, but this he rejected fervently, which is further discussed in Chapter Three (Hinson 238; Jackson xxv; SO 9; 10; 11; 13). Eventually Gregory succeeded his father as bishop of their home see in 374. He remained in Nazianzus as bishop for approximately a year before withdrawing to Seleucia in Isauria for three or four years (Browne and Swallow 196). Of this period of his life very little is known except that it must have been then that he received word of Basil's death. Two years later in the Cathedral of Caesarea Gregory of Nazianzus delivered an excellent panegyric on Basil, which subsequently became a model of the panegyric speech form (cf. SOG 43).

In 379, Gregory traveled to Constantinople where his help was requested. For nearly forty years prior, Arian archbishops had dominated Constantinople, and Christianity had been “nigh crushed out of existence by the multitude of other heresies, Eunomian, Macedonian, Novatian, Apollinarian, etc, which Arian rule had fostered” (Browne and Swallow 196). However, the new emperor, Theodosius, resisted these cults and aimed to suppress them by entreating the help of bishops. Thus, Gregory went to Constantinople where he was given a church, and eventually in 380 he was consecrated the bishop of Constantinople (198-199; Vinson xvi). Although during this time he occasionally left his responsibilities in Constantinople for various reasons, he ultimately

presided over part of the Council of Constantinople (381), addressing the one hundred and fifty bishops in attendance (Browne and Swallow 385). He stayed for one year of the Council, however, before returning to Nazianzus. After spending a number of years devoting himself to a return to the quieter life he generally preferred, Gregory died in 391—coincidentally the same year that Augustine was ordained into religious life.

Thus were the Cappadocian Fathers born, educated, and occupied until their lives' ends. Their contexts of Cappadocia and fourth-century Christianity, in which they lived, were ripe with socio-political and theological exigencies. These exigencies led the Cappadocians to write and preach with care and vigor. Their rhetorical educations, no doubt, aided their endeavors and influenced their approaches to persuasion. As will become clear in the subsequent chapter, the collective preaching of Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa, was profoundly rhetorical in nature. Not only was their preaching reflective of their Greek educations, not only did it respond to their surrounding exigencies, but it also held the potential to constitute the shape of their local and global Christian communities.

CHAPTER III
OF PEER PERSONAS:
RHETORICAL SELF-REPRESENTATIONS OF PREACHERS

An acquaintance once confided in me that she was displeased with her pastor. “He gets up there when he preaches and puffs up his feathers.” She continued, “but we had a visiting priest last week and he was just as nice as could be.” The variance this acquaintance describes is not new or unique. For centuries audiences have noted differences among preachers, with pleasure or with pain. For centuries, preachers have tried to appease or evade disgruntled audiences. And for centuries, the rhetoric of preachers has driven away certain individuals and drawn in others. By the first and especially by the fourth century, records indicate that preachers received varied receptions. Historian Raymond Van Dam explains that, “In hundreds of cities people either attended or boycotted services and sermons; sometimes they took to the streets and rioted; but always, whether bustling about in the markets or relaxing at the baths, they talked and gossiped” about preachers (*Becoming* 9; see also Maxwell 61).

Such documented reactions underscore the obvious: when congregants attend church services they hear not just *what* a preacher has to say but *how* he says it (Satterlee 91). And often the choice to not attend, to not hear, is equally effected by the words of a preacher. These ideas underscore the rhetorical nature of homilies. Yet much remains to be understood about *how* preachers preach and the resulting effects. This study begins to address this question by examining how the rhetoric of preachers varies. By examining

preachers' projected personas, or metaphoric self-characterizations portrayed through their rhetoric, we may begin to understand the rhetorical impact of the shape of homilies.

The texts here examined include all of the extant homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers that have been translated into English. This includes 46 from Basil, 43 from Gregory of Nazianzus, and 38 from Gregory of Nyssa (cf. Appendix A). The topics of the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies strongly reflect many external factors including the liturgical calendar, festivals, heresies, deaths, natural disasters, and ecclesiastical appointments. While some orations are part of homily series and were clearly delivered on consecutive days, many others purport to be isolated speeches that happen to have been preserved. In addition, some homilies were delivered while the preachers were priests, and others while bishops. The audiences of these homilies also varied. While we cannot be absolutely certain of each audience's composition (a historical concern which Maxwell has addressed), it is clear that not all homilies in this collection were given to the preachers' local congregations. Instead, some were given to other laity while traveling, to the public while presiding over funerals in other towns, and even to gatherings of bishops while at the Council of Constantinople.⁵ Relatedly, the manuscript type of the extant speeches may only be guessed at; in some cases textual clues do at least indicate that certain texts are recorded versions of delivered speeches (cf., Holman "Introduction" 11; e.g., FF "First Fasting," 59; "Martyr Julitta" 111).

⁵ Additionally, the actual delivery of a small number of homilies is still debated; while I refrained from drawing upon these homilies in the analysis, it should be noted they too were nonetheless crafted for an audience.

Regardless of these textual circumstances, however, the texts function as rhetoric, written and preserved for an audience in and around Cappadocia. Accordingly, we may critique the texts as parts of a broad rhetorical situation and as attempts to affect audiences of the persuadable—points previously discussed in Chapter One. Moreover, despite substantive and situational variance among the homilies, they gradually illustrate overarching characteristics that distinguish the rhetoric and leadership of each preacher. Combined, these traits shape unique personas, which I will shortly define, that imbue the Cappadocians' homilies throughout their preaching tenures. The subsequent analysis documents this variance among the preachers' personas, with Basil as a teacher, Gregory of Nazianzus as a conductor, and Gregory of Nyssa as an interpreter.

These observations support the argument that subtle distinctions among the Cappadocians' personas have constitutive effects on the development of Christianity, the establishment of their relationships with their congregations, and the argumentative potential of their rhetoric. More generally, this study supports the argument that distinct rhetorical personas, when adopted by peer rhetors, present serious challenges but also offer potential argumentative and constitutive potency. In short, peer personas *that are complementary* can enrich peer rhetors' abilities to move shared audiences and audiences exposed to complementary personas.

An examination of the constitutive effects of the Cappadocians' homilies and the personas they adopt is appropriate in light of the texts' and rhetors' public contexts. Then and now, preachers and especially the Cappadocian Fathers served important public, partisan, and pragmatic roles through their preaching. As Van Dam notes,

“People had always watched and listened to the Cappadocian Fathers. Always they had lived in public” as praised students, as interceding patrons, and as published ascetics (*Becoming* 101). As such, their homilies, too, played important and prominent roles.

Through their preaching the Cappadocians:

articulated their own theology, criticized rival doctrines, offered hortatory advice about proper morality, commemorated new buildings, honored saints and their cults, and consoled people over their misfortunes. Sometimes they commented on current events, a devastating drought, the fire that almost destroyed a church “yesterday,” the heavy drinking that filled long winter nights. Their sermons were hence not simply theological treatises, moral homilies, or laudatory panegyrics. In the small towns of eastern Asia Minor they were the equivalents of today’s newscasts and editorials. (*Becoming* 101)

As they responded to exigencies, the homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers, and other churchmen including Augustine, Ambrose, Athanasius, Jerome, John Chrysostom, and even those of preachers less favored by history, all helped spread Christianity and, as I will demonstrate, shape the communities around them. Although the basic utility of homilies is easily understood, less understood is *how* homilies function rhetorically. As such, this study aims to examine the rhetorical composition and effects of homilies.

The examination of the Cappadocians’ rhetoric is part of a larger endeavor to understand the rhetorical roles of preachers. Although a handful of communication studies have examined *homiletics* and *the rhetoric of preaching* (two lines of research traced by Fritz, Woods, and Mullan in their survey of religious research trends), few

studies focus on homilies prior to the eighteenth century, as I have previously discussed. Without deeper historical research it is difficult to understand the rhetorical origins of more recent preaching. Accordingly, this analysis of ancient homilies helps bridge understandings of preaching and religious leadership with understandings of rhetoric.

Rhetorically critiquing the Cappadocians' homilies helps direct scholarly attention to the dynamics within, beyond, and as a result of the texts—a goal of rhetorical criticism that I have already explained in Chapter One (Leff “Things” 223-224). The futility of using criticism to investigate constitutive rhetorical theory in particular has been demonstrated by scholars including Karolyn Kohrs Campbell, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, and Vanessa Beasley; the works of these and other scholars, especially that of Jamieson, have provided important theoretical underpinnings for this project, as I will shortly discuss.

This chapter endeavors to extend existing rhetorical knowledge in several ways. Theoretically, the study builds from existing discussions of personas as isolated rhetorical constructs and observes their rhetorical and constitutive qualities when utilized by peer rhetors within a shared context. The theoretical implications here provided help extend the present understandings of personas, ethos, and constitutive rhetoric. Moreover, this project is intended to serve as part of a greater rhetorical history. As David Zarefsky notes, rhetorical histories take many shapes and have many aims and can produce many fruits. This chapter in particular, aims to study rhetorical discourse in order to find “patterns in groups of discourses that suggest a rhetorical trajectory” (“Four” 29). Understanding a rhetorical trajectory of the Cappadocians' homilies can

enhance present understandings of preachers as rhetoricians and as peer rhetors and can give nuance to existing understandings of early religious rhetoric. The theoretical findings of this blended rhetorical criticism and history project, as the conclusion will indicate, hold practical significance for preachers, practitioners, and other peer rhetors.

This project is organized into three main sections. First, I provide a literature review pertaining to the roles of the preacher, namely his liturgical, social, and metaphorical roles. This discussion combines historical context of the Cappadocian world with rhetorical context on ethos, personas, and metaphors' constitutive roles. Subsequently, I separately rhetorically critique the homilies of each of the Cappadocians. Each analysis begins with a brief portrayal of the preacher and his homilies, followed by an examination of the rhetorical traits that comprise each preacher's persona. Finally, the conclusion offers an extended discussion of the rhetorical implications of the preachers' personas. In addition, the conclusion provides practical implications and directions for future research. Although this study examines fourth-century homilies, the conclusion highlights the findings' practical relevance to a number of rhetorical contexts beyond preaching and beyond Late Antiquity.

The Preacher Persona

Liturgical Role

In the most literal sense, fourth-century preachers were interpreters. They dissected select biblical passages and participated in sense-making; they clarified the obscure (Augustine *On Christian* 114, 117; Tracy 286). In early Christianity as now, this interpretive role was both extremely important and fairly controversial. It was important

because, allegedly, without preachers' explanations hearers may not have been able to fully grasp the truth of scripture. It was controversial because individual preachers' competing biblical interpretations constituted many of the great theological debates that divided early Christianity.

Competing interpretations of biblical passages and related theology deeply divided early Christians and have continued to do so long after the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Restoration. In the fourth century, the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus often incorporated his perspective on the nature of the Trinity—a direct response to the theology preached by Eusebius of Nicomedia and other leaders of Arian sects (cf. D. Gwynn 6). Differing interpretations of biblical text produced strong responses among clergy and deeply divided metropolitan populations. Popular discord in Constantinople and especially Antioch, for example, was palpable. Christians of competing sects were openly hostile to competing theologians and their followers to the extent that attempts were made to overthrow clergy, such as the bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius (Vaggione 13). This context makes clear that as exegetes, preachers were potential sources of controversy, challenging other leaders' scriptural interpretations and rallying support for their own theological and hermeneutic perspectives.

Social Role

Preachers' roles as exegetes informed their more basic positions as leaders of Christianity. Christ himself conferred this role upon his disciples, calling them to go forth into the world, changing it not through writing but preaching (Mark 16:15; Pelikan 87). Local priests and especially bishops, whose jurisdiction spanned an entire see, were

positioned to make decisions that affected the laypeople and the shape of Christianity. When Constantine (306-337) began to grant bishops judicial authority in civil and criminal matters, this especially helped expand their social roles (Rapp 243). Such civic authority likely added nuance to how preachers of rank were viewed by the laity both within and without the preaching context. As Christianity grew, so did the number and roles of preachers. Increasingly in the fourth century, and certainly by the fifth century, “all major cities had their own bishop, and additional bishops, *chorepiskopoi*, were assigned to smaller rural settlements in remote areas”; in addition a number of priests worked within each region at smaller churches (Rapp 172-173). As their numbers and roles grew, so did preachers’ and especially bishops’ rhetorical presence.

The Council of Constantinople (381) is a fine example of the religious and organizational leadership of bishops. At this meeting, the bishops of the East met to determine the nature of the Trinity and finish much of the theological work started at the Council of Nicaea (325). Not only did the bishops debate the Trinity, a theological endeavor that ultimately shaped laypersons’ understandings, but they also preached homilies on the Trinity and other concerns. Nearly twenty of the homilies by Gregory of Nazianzus included in this study were delivered in Constantinople at Anastasia, a private chapel not overtaken by Gregory’s theological opponents. Here Gregory addressed other bishops, laypersons, and even visiting Egyptians. Through such opportunities, by shaping dogma and directly addressing individuals, bishops led.

If one considers the mundane aspects of social life, preachers’ influential roles are all the more evident. Basil, for instance, preached on a number of common life issues

including drunkenness, anger, envy, and humility. Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa likewise incorporate everyday experiences and precepts into their homilies as will be shortly highlighted. Even in action, preachers served significant social roles. During his early priesthood, for example, Basil was able to construct Basiliad—a model community establishment, somewhat like a hospital, which cared for the sick, elderly, and poor (cf. Holman *Hungry*). Through this establishment, Basil led by example, emphasizing the importance of charity. He further underscored this message in his homilies during the Caesarian famine and drought (368-369). As will be highlighted in the third study, Basil uses his homily to call attention to the Caesarean's social and spiritual failings and to lead them to repentance—a form of *rhetorical* leadership. Although preachers' influences may not always have been effective (e.g., Basil expresses annoyance and exasperation regarding the futility of his past messages against drunkards), their preaching role is nonetheless one of intended social influence (FF “Drunkards,” 83). As preachers interpreted Christian beliefs and communicated them to each other and the laity, they directly and indirectly shaped Christianity and its surrounding context—a rhetorical influence to which we will later return.

While fulfilling their social roles, Christian leaders widely differed on an individual basis. Although accomplishing similar tasks, the leadership of one preacher could be starkly different from the next. Basil, for example, can be described as a serious leader who maintained an ascetic lifestyle and a rigid focus on heaven; his homilies reflect this (cf. Wagner x; Schroeder 20-21; Jackson xxvi). Gregory of Nazianzus, on the other hand, comes across in his homilies and writings as a highly personable and loyal

individual who paid careful attention to his earthly relationships with others. Gregory of Nyssa lived under the great shadow of his brother but seemingly maintained an optimistic and determined spirit (Van Dam *Families* 70; Norris xiv). Such historical portrayals are derived from extant writings by and about the Cappadocians, which illustrate their particular characteristics or at least their distinct rhetorical choices.

Metaphorical Role

Preachers' individual self-presentations are compounded with the already complex liturgical and social facets of their roles. From a rhetorical perspective, we might better understand preachers' self-presentations by thinking of them as metaphoric roles, separate from a more authentic ethos. Just as scripture portrays Christ in many different ways (as a preacher, teacher, shepherd, human, son, counselor, savior, and prince of peace, among others), so too can the rhetoric of preachers paint them as having distinct roles, despite their shared title.⁶ As Thomas Long has already suggested, preachers approach their homilies with conscious or unconscious self-perceptions. Long posits that preachers view themselves as “shepherds,” “prophets,” “enablers,” “evangelists,” or “wounded healers,” which can be deduced down to several “master” metaphors (24). To this Robert Waznak adds that homilies reflect preachers' metaphoric self-perceptions and that several strengths and weaknesses surround their various metaphoric roles (32). Still, it remains to be understood *how* such roles come across through the language of a preacher.

⁶ e.g., Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 4:23, John 10:11; Matthew 5:9; on Christ's personas see Smith “Persona.”

From a classical perspective, we understand that the ethos or character of a speaker is constituted through the words of a speech and external actions (Aristotle I.2.3; Cicero *De Inventione* 2.35). Different ethos and the different rhetorical traits that shape them, hold significant rhetorical potential. Aristotle describes ethos as almost “the most controlling factor in persuasion” (Smith “Ethos”11; Aristotle I.2.4). As a result of a speaker’s projected self, the audience is “disposed in a certain way” toward the speaker and the issue (II.1.3). Thus, various rhetorical styles and un/intentional self-portrayals adopted by speakers can produce rhetorical effects on a given audience. Studying rhetorical texts helps explain the linguistic processes through which such persuasion can occur.

How closely a speaker’s ethos reflects his or her “true” person is unresolved and may in all likelihood be a subjective variable (Elliot 13; Garver 197). Preaching handbooks today recognize preaching as an act that is at least “to some extent self-disclosure by the preacher” (Craddock 23; Waznak 31). Studying the artistic (i.e., in-text) and inartistic components (i.e., behaviors and beliefs expressed externally from a speech) of a speaker’s ethos is a productive means of *holistically* understanding their rhetorical self-presentation.

Barbara Biesecker, building upon Foucault, explains that presentations of the self work within sets of constraints to gain autonomy and promote subjectivity. In a preaching context, we might understand this to explain how preachers work within their set liturgical contexts while still acknowledging their individuality, regarding interpretations, personalities, and local leadership. Such individuality is often showcased

through rhetors' rhetorical styles and can carry a political impetus (Biesecker 358; Vivian 311; Phillips 311). As Bradford Vivian explains, "styles of speech, modes of thought, gestures, expressions, movements, corporeal comportment, rhythms, forms, [and] intensities" are all "constitutive of our being" and expressive of our projected self (311). These basic assumptions, however, do not alone adequately account for alterations of a speaker's portrayed character, alterations which may depart from competing notions of a more authentic ethos or self (if such a concept even exists).

What classical notions of ethos cannot explain, the concept of a rhetorical persona can. Ware and Linkugel's early definition of persona illustrates this distinction. They distinguish a speaker's personal ethos from a speaker's *assumed* rhetorical persona within a text (51). "Persona, in its strictest sense," they write, "is a Latin word referring to the masks worn in Greek and Roman theater" (50). From this Ware and Linkugel define a rhetorical persona to be "the character assumed by the actor when he dons the mythical mask," which often reflects "the aspirations and cultural visions of audiences" (50). Subsequently, other scholars including Jasinski have defined persona as "the term used to identify a human presence that saturates a text," which is also labeled an "implied author" or a "second self" (Jasinski *Sourcebook* 429; Booth 150; Tillotson 23, 27). Still others define persona as a consciousness *behind* and an image of a person *in* a given text (W. Gibson 19). Among these variations, however, the simple Latin definition of a mask worn in theater provides both nuance and interpretive potential for our broad understanding of the concept of persona.

Rhetorical understandings of persona have been augmented by the critical work of scholars who examine the persuasive roles of personas. Bonnie Dow and Mari Tonn, for example, identify the effects of a nurturing “feminine” persona. Similarly, George Wright compares and contrasts the persuasive effects of “passionate virgin” versus “woman warrior” personas. Paul Campbell traces the existence of a persona within scientific discourse. He argues for its relevance to and influence on one’s “critical stance toward such discourse,” which supports the idea that personas are rhetorically significant (391). In addition, Stephen Browne uses generic analysis to explore the rhetorical functions of the pastoral voice. His critique of John Dickinson’s *Letter from a Farmer* reveals the pastoral voice’s rhetorical ability to potentially redirect an audience’s values and “perception of time from the immediate world to an artistically created past”—a finding that complements this project’s inquiries regarding personas and their constitutive effects (46). Together, these and related studies argue that the implementation of specific personas, separate from other perceived “authentic” notions of the speaker, can produce significant rhetorical effects.

To these rhetorical effects, Edwin Black adds the suggestion that a speaker can subtly shape an audience, even to the point of ideological influence, through careful presentation of his own persona and a “second persona.” The second persona, Black explains, is the persona the rhetor attributes to the audience through his or her speech. Because personas often have implied counterparts (e.g., teacher-pupil, friend-friend, parent-child), a rhetor’s persona projects upon the audience certain characterizations, which become their “second persona.” For example, although an audience may feel

inferior to an esteemed rhetor, by adopting a colleague-like persona that rhetor may be able to project upon the audience a persona that casts them not as inferior individuals but as colleagues, altering the audience's self-perception and potentially enabling the rhetor to rhetorically affect the audience in a desired manner. Applied to a religious context, Black's theory of a second persona may help explain the rhetorical effects of a preacher's adopted persona (e.g., a shepherd) as it subtly projects a persona onto an audience (e.g., the sheep).

Although many personas and second personas may exist, each offers a distinct set of characteristics to help speakers distinguish themselves and their audiences in rhetorical situations. Thinking about different personas as different metaphors may help us understand their ability to beget different rhetorical effects. As Michael Leff explains, metaphors operate rhetorically by attuning audiences' attention, through associations and images, to a particular linguistic space ("Topical" 216). Accordingly, depending on the language a rhetor employs, audiences may be guided to understand and make sense of a single concept in a variety of ways. If, for example, an individual is described metaphorically as a teacher versus a headmaster, the audience would come to acquire quite different perspectives of him or her. Different metaphors, Leff explains, effectively give an audience different seats, different perspectives, in a theater, which shape not only their understandings but also their experiences in the (rhetorical) context (216).

Building upon the work of Leff and others on metaphors, Robin Jensen and Leah Ceccarelli have recently identified how mixed metaphors, such as barren and sterile, dictate corresponding language use by the public and ultimately constitute the

perspectives that frame a given issue. Metaphoric understandings relayed by a rhetor to an audience, they suggest, shape how an audience conceives of a given subject. If, for example, preachers are portrayed metaphorically as teachers or as interpreters, audiences will resultantly have mixed understandings about the nature of preachers and possibly go on to experience their interactions with preachers in different ways. This notion is further supported by Michael Osborn and Max Black, who both argue for metaphors' ability to gradually change an audience's perspectives on a given subject by *actually* creating (rather than simply formulating) a relationship of similarity, of synecdoche (Black 285; Osborn "Trajectory" 84). Combined with existing understandings of constitutive rhetoric, these explanations of the metaphor's rhetorical potential hold significance for our study of personas' (i.e., metaphoric self-presentations') constitutive qualities within homilies.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson has already begun to explore the constitutive qualities of metaphoric rhetoric. In her study of metaphoric clusters within the rhetoric of Pope Paul VI and Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Jamieson argues that clusters of related metaphors "can reveal the rhetor's projected relationship with his audience" (52). Her study is particularly important to this study as it provides a bridge between personas and constitutive rhetoric and implicitly sets up the call to consider these matters in a plural context. Jamieson concludes, for example, that Pope Paul VI's "self-expressive metaphors" constituted a situation in which he "*could not* approve artificial methods of birth regulation" and constituted a world in which doctrinal change "is not merely unlikely, it is inconceivable" (66, original emphasis). These findings regarding papal

rhetoric subtly call *peer* rhetors' language into consideration; Pope Francis' self-portrayals, after all, have been critiqued as having quite the opposite effect of Pope Paul VI's. One might ask, does this perceived language difference matter rhetorically?

Jamieson's argument and analysis fundamentally underpins the present study. Her work demonstrates how public (in this case lay) understandings of reality are shaped by the "self-expressive metaphors" of the Pope, which underscores the present project's investigation of metaphoric personas as constitutive. Although Jamieson investigates metaphors' roles within the contexts of single rhetor-audience relationships, the derived theories and explanations are nonetheless useful for the present project on *peer* rhetors. If metaphoric clusters can reveal projected relationships between a single rhetor and audience, then they may also be able to reveal projected relationships between multiple rhetors and audiences, which may or may not be complementary. Still to be understood are new rhetorical challenges that arise when peer rhetors employ distinct personas.

Unlike isolated rhetors, the notion of peer rhetors involves speakers who may speak individually but operate (to varying degrees) as associates given their positions within some larger social or organizational structure. Regional bishops, collectively, are peer rhetors, as are local priests of similar rank and tenure. Beyond the religious arena, peer rhetors may include spokespersons for a large corporation who often work together to ensure their discourse is compatible. Likewise, teachers at a given institution may operate as peer rhetors given their similar positions in an academic entity and their similar relationships with others, including students and administrators. In these and

other situations, the individual rhetorics of a collective group of peer rhetors may, I argue, hold rhetorical, constitutive significance for the greater community.

Combined, scholarship on personas and metaphors suggests that whether desired or not, speakers' linguistic presentations of themselves can shape audiences' responses to their message. This effect exhibits a constitutive nature, as Jamieson has already argued. As the speakers un/intentionally shape themselves, they potentially also shape the audience's character, perceptions, and responses. Maurice Charland and Edwin Black both posit that the very identity of audience members can be shaped through the language used by speakers; an audience may literally come to embody an identity as if going through a process of conversion. For example, Charland explains that the People "Québécois" constituted their own distinct identity through their language use; using language, they transcended "the limits of their biological individuality" and distinguished themselves from surrounding Canadians (142). Accordingly, the Cappadocians' language and the distinct preaching personas linguistically created potentially shaped not only their own ethos but also that of their audience and their local church communities.

This theory of linguistically constituted communities is supported by James Jasinski. Building upon James Boyd White and William Booth, Jasinski explains that communities are constituted by specific characters who enact and express particular norms, values, and beliefs. The norm of intimacy among individuals, for example, "eliminates, or at least greatly reduces, the need for reflection, argumentation, and moral advocacy," thus influencing how those individuals or even an entire (intimate)

community interact (“(Re)Constituting” 481). Both Jasinski and White explain that these values, beliefs, and norms (such as intimacy) are largely constituted by the narratives within a community (479). Correspondingly, we may posit that reoccurring discourse of a leading community member could also influence the norms, values, and beliefs of that community. For example, the teacher persona constructed by Basil’s discourse can help constitute an audience of pupils and a community of learning, where precepts, occasional chastisement, and (ideally) the pursuit of growth are common and expected components.

Craig Smith and Michael Hyde further support the idea of constituted community by adding that shared emotions can help constitute a given public. Building from Heidegger they articulate that how we spend our time with others, the emotions involved, dictates our “emotional orientation” and helps us “disclose the situations of which we are a part”; in short, our emotional experiences with others constitute our perceived experienced reality (448-449). This rhetorical understanding of emotion’s constitutive effects on community building returns us to our initial discussion of metaphor’s constitutive potency. Metaphors that carry different emotional impetuses (e.g., friend vs. headmaster) can potentially produce different rhetorical effects on audiences, related relationships (e.g., speaker-audience), and communities. Because emotion is constitutive and because emotional language, as I will later illustrate, is not uncommon in homilies, it is important that we account for emotion when we consider the constitutive roles of metaphoric personas in homilies.

Although we already know from studies like Jaclyn Maxwell's that Christian preachers of Late Antiquity used their homilies "to shape entire communities to moral ideals," much more remains to be discovered about *how* preachers attempted to effect such change (11). This broad inquiry combined with the preceding scholarship on ethos, personas, metaphors, and community constitution lead to yet another question: how do speakers' simultaneous adoptions of different characters, different personas, within their homilies complicate the constitution of a collective community? Studying a religious community like that of Cappadocia, affords the opportunity to explore the constitutive effects of peer rhetors' distinct personas on and within a given community.

The Cappadocians' Personas

As separate people and separate speakers, the Cappadocian Fathers were naturally distinct from one another. Even in their letters the Cappadocians portray distinct characteristics. Van Dam, for example, describes Basil as "quite proper and matter-of-fact with his correspondents, sometimes even distant, remote, almost emotionless"—a description which contrasts Gregory of Nazianzus' "intimacy and emotional connection with his correspondents" (*Families* 151). While we cannot determine the "authenticity" of the Cappadocians' self-portrayals, we can understand their composition and function as rhetoric.

Together the Cappadocians shared the responsibility of preaching and leading the Christian Cappadocian community. Studying how they present themselves as preachers, the personas they adopt, will provide insight into the nature of their relationships with their audiences. The rhetoric of Basil, his passive language, natural and scientific

analogies, and general applicability, all help establish his persona as a teacher. In contrast, by directly speaking to multiple sides, including personal references, and using inclusive and direct language, Gregory of Nazianzus comes across as a conductor. Meanwhile, the internal references to preaching and the allegorical interpretations of Gregory of Nyssa construct his persona as an interpreter. Analyzing how the Cappadocians crafted these distinct personas will further our knowledge of the rhetorical nature of homilies. Moreover, this study will address the theoretical question regarding the constitutive effects of peer rhetors' personas on a collective community.

Basil the Teacher

Basil's approach to preaching reflects a teacher's approach to educating. His homilies repeatedly convey a strict dichotomy between himself as the learned and the congregants as the learners. Among the Cappadocians' work, Basil's homilies are the most formal and his language the most distant. This, in part, may be due to the fact that Basil spoke for nearly a decade as a metropolitan bishop of the largest city in Cappadocia, Caesarea. His role was more formal, more elite than that of bishops of smaller regions, and he spoke to a wide audience, including elite Caesareans, artisans, and lowly workers (Way x). However, even his homilies as a priest exhibit a similar formal, distant, and didactic nature. These general attributes convey themselves in a number of ways, as will be illustrated shortly. To better understand Basil's persona and his relationship with congregants, clergy members, and Christianity in general, it is first important to understand several perspectives that informed his life.

Although Basil ultimately became a prominent figure within Eastern Christianity, his initial religious objective was to retain an ascetic life as a hermit (A. Holmes 262). His advanced education and his early familial exposure to piety engrained in him a love for knowledge, especially pertaining to religion. As a hermit from approximately 358 to 362, Basil was free to ponder the nature of profound theological concepts; the ascetic works Basil produced remain respected documents on Christian theology (Schroeder 20; DelCogliano 15-20). Even when he returned to society, Basil retained an ascetic lifestyle, both relationally and materially. Despite his affluent background, Basil ate little, possessed minimal goods, and continually preached against excess (Sterk 232; Silvas 172). Excess in all forms, Basil argued, was futile and detracted from one's focus on Christ.

Basil's homilies also suggest he viewed relationships as earthly constructions that could potentially distract from one's religious duties. Although he ceaselessly served the poor, the sick, and the widowed, and he was ardently loved by the Caesarean community, Basil did not make an effort to maintain many close relationships. His interactions with his parents and siblings, for example, were starkly limited compared to the social standards of the period (Van Dam *Families* 18-24). In his extant writings, even, he never directly mentions his father and only once provides an indirect reference when collectively mentioning his "parents" (Basil *Ascetical* 37). Basil's correspondence with his friends, too, were often distant, cool, and formal (Van Dam *Families* 151). This, Van Dam speculates, is possibly due to his own lack of relationships early in life. Separated from his family and initially raised by a wet nurse then nanny for several

years, Basil failed to develop intimate relationships, which he could then have emulated in other facets of his life. Instead, Basil maintained comparatively distant and shallow relationships, even with his brother Gregory (Sterk 230; Rousseau 6-8). Van Dam goes so far as to argue that Basil even used his friends to maintain and expand his own authority within Christianity (163).

The counterargument can be made, however, that Basil's seemingly shallow relationships are a result of his rather severe focus on heavenly concerns. Gregory of Nazianzus, too, suggests this perspective if at least to assuage his own frustration with Basil's cool, distant demeanor. Gregory, still struggling with relational hurt, nonetheless concedes that Basil's intentions all along were "superhuman" and "superior to worldly influences," leading him to sacrifice friendships "when they were in conflict with his paramount duty to God" (SOG 43, 414). This perspective is also supported by Basil's own words. His repeated emphases on God, God's creation, and God's design downplay human affairs. This (perhaps zealous) emphasis at times comes across as cold and heartless, as in several homilies where Basil downplays the emotional pain of losing a parent, spouse, or child. He says, for example, "Why is the death of your child such a surprise? . . . if it is a human being, then it is obviously going to die. What is so offensive when a mortal dies? Don't you see the sun rise and set?" (FF "Martyr Julitta," 114; see also 116 and "Giving Thanks," 106). Although he elsewhere acknowledges "it is inevitably painful to experience such a division," Basil's cool words clearly illustrate the extent of his heavenly focus (FF "Martyr Julitta, 115).

Occasionally, Basil's homilies also directly call attention to Christians' necessary heavenly focus. For example, in his introduction to homily 19, on the possible purposes of mankind, Basil explains, "Some declared that the end was knowledge, others, practical activity; others, a different use of life and body; but the sensual men declared that the end was pleasure. For us, however, the end for which we do all things and toward which we hasten is the blessed life in the world to come" (EH 19, 311). From an ascetic perspective, concern for the praise of God and the expansion of Christianity could arguably trump concern for mere friendships. If an individual, like Gregory, could strengthen Christianity by being appointed bishop, then that outcome (not personal sentiment) was of upmost concern to Basil as the appointing bishop.

Basil's homilies illustrate an ascetic worldview and unyielding drive to fulfill his divine duty. And, the role of a preacher is approached by Basil as an instructional role. His homilies demonstrate his rigid devotion to teaching congregants what they needed to know in order to better love God and love one another—two main tenets of Christianity (Matthew 22: 34-40). As a preacher, Basil instructs his congregants from a distance. He adopts a teacher-like persona in which he maintains care and concern for his students, but does not establish an intimate parent-like relationship with them. This move potentially eschews the norms that Jasinski suggests accompany relationships of intimacy, including reduced needs for reflection and argumentation; instead, Basil's persona helps build a more distant relationship with his audience in which mutual reflection, argumentation, and discernment (i.e., self-censoring) are requisite ("(Re)Constituting" 481).

Although teacher personas may include a variety of elements, Basil's persona emphasizes his hierarchical position and his concern for congregants' spiritual well-being. Although on occasion Basil compares himself to a father or caretaker (e.g., SJ "In Time," 73), Basil's language is rarely the close, comforting language of a nurturer; instead his homilies are often stern messages of tough love, and he seems uninterested in the congregants' material and relational comforts. Just as his own father was more of a teacher than a parent to Basil (Van Dam *Families* 20), so he became a teacher not a parent to his own dependents. Even Basil's brother identified Basil as "our teacher" in respect to not only his homilies but his leadership example (Sterk 232; Stein 21). This persona makes sense in light of Basil's ascetic worldview; it allows him to fulfill his instructional duties without the complicated involvement of apparently futile, excessive relations. As a teacher Basil could break down scripture, often word by word, for his congregants, providing for them essential knowledge pertaining to the Christian faith, and then send them home to apply their newfound knowledge.

Basil is neither the first nor the last rhetor to adopt a teacher persona. By the fourth century, bishops commonly compared themselves as teachers, following Christ's example as a teacher (Rapp 61, 62). Although Basil does not often explicitly compare himself to Christ as a teacher, his language implicitly evidences such a persona. Today, this trend continues among preachers. In a survey of modern Catholic priests' communication, Sean Horan and Father Peter Raposo suggest that "the *teacher* role may be the most apparent [role] when preaching" ("Teacher I" 74). This notion is also supported by the early research of Mary Reilly which found that parishioners often

identify teaching as one of priests' most important responsibilities (354). If congregants continually identify a teacher persona or at least a teaching responsibility with preachers, then it is important that we understand the composition and effects of such a persona.

As previously mentioned, a number of characteristics can be associated with teachers and their styles. For example, in his study of classrooms, Jason Teven identifies a wide variety of characteristics and behaviors pertaining to the immediacy, responsiveness, and assertiveness of teachers. In the fourth century as now, individual teachers' positions within these categories vary greatly. For preachers as teachers and for scholars studying religious rhetoric, it is important that we understand preachers' (communicative) teacher-like attributes to better identify their effects. Research suggests, for example, that students' "perception of and affect for [their] teacher" (two elements that are influenced by teachers' attributes) can predict their engagement and learning success (Teven 159; Cristophel; Kelly and Gorham; Teven and McCroskey). In the context of a religious classroom (e.g., a church), this may mean that congregants' rhetorically constituted relationships with their priests influence the success of their learning. Teven argues that "it is essential for teachers to develop a good relationship with their students, because the rapport established between teachers and students, in part, determines the interest and performance level of the students" (159). Regardless of a teacher's individual style, characteristics, or quirks, a healthy rapport with the audience is essential for learning.

Beyond scholarship, the teacher persona is also prevalent in New Testament descriptions of Christ, which suggests the persona's religious and rhetorical importance.

The teacher persona as well as the other personas portrayed by Jesus in the gospels importantly establish Christian rhetorical traditions of leadership; thus, alongside a review of preacher's contextual roles, it is also helpful to consider potential biblical sources of rhetorical influence on their leadership examples and ethos. The gospels writers, for example, refer to Jesus as "Rabbi" and describe Jesus venturing "about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues" (John 3:2; Matthew 4:23). Elsewhere they mention he "taught . . . from the boat" to crowds who "were astonished at his teaching" (Luke 5:3; Matthew 7:28).⁷ The title of Rabbi and the characterization as a teacher lend a sense of authority to Jesus and warrant respect based on appointment and greater knowledge. Yet, as Christian leaders would later do, Jesus emphasized that his teaching was "not mine, but his who sent me" (John 7:16). Jesus and later Christian teachers evoke a notion of divine inspiration by implying that their knowledge has been given to them by God, their higher Teacher. In addition to references to Christ as a teacher, scripture also includes passages in which Christ directly instructs his disciples to become teachers themselves, to go among all nations "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded" (Matthew 28:20). This original call to action grants a sense of duty and authority to later Christian preachers who, as disciples, essentially receive their charge directly from Christ. Aware of such scripture passages, congregants have and may

⁷ Additional references to Christ as a teacher include: Matthew 5:2, 7:29, Mark 4:2, 6:34, Luke 4:15, 24:27, John 3:2, 7:14, 8:2, 2 John 1:9. All scriptural quotations in this study are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

continue to view their preachers as teachers, although (as we will later see) other dominant preaching personas may eclipse a preacher's apparent role as a teacher.

As teachers, disciples and later the clergy were entrusted with the responsibility of instructing the masses in their respective regions. As the disciples at Pentecost were gifted with the ability evangelize to foreigners, subsequent clerics too were endowed with the responsibility and ability to instruct the laity (Acts 2). These abilities and responsibilities, Paul explains, are bestowed by God: "It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose" for through Christ Christians are given strength to "do all things" (Philippians 4:13; 2:13). As divinely ordained and equipped teachers, the apostles and subsequent leaders used their positions to instruct. For Basil, the responsibility of instructing others was a grave matter that could mean the difference between his audience's eternal life or death.

Regardless of the topics of Basil's homilies, their rhetorical qualities all reflect Basil's persona as a teacher. His homilies on the Hexaemeron, of an undetermined date, his homilies on the Psalms, delivered during his priesthood, and his remaining moral homilies, delivered at a variety of known and unknown dates, all exhibit particular rhetorical qualities that distinguish Basil as a teacher.⁸ First, Basil's distinct pronoun usage creates a formal, instructional tone. Second, his incorporation of knowledge and examples beyond the scope of scripture, especially of science and nature, enhances his

⁸ On dates see: Way ix. For a complete list of Basil's homilies and their English translations see: Radde-Gallwitz 151-159 and DelCogliano 307-308. For a discussion of the moral homilies as a cohesive collection see: DelCogliano 21-25.

professorial and didactic tone. And third, the general applicability of his homilies creates the perception that they are lessons given by a teacher to pupils who may continue to apply the provided knowledge repeatedly in the future. Together, these rhetorical characteristics shape Basil's persona as a learned teacher and cast his audience as his pupils. Upon outlining how Basil's persona and the other Cappadocian Fathers' personas are linguistically crafted, the constitutive effects of their combined personas will be investigated.

General Language

To begin to understand Basil's teacher persona, let us first examine his distinct use of pronouns. Basil frequently uses first person plural (e.g., "we") and nonspecific third person pronouns (e.g., "one"). While the former has the rhetorical effect of engaging in dialogue with his audience, the latter, used in the body of his descriptions, frame his homilies as general universal lessons. Together, such language functions to invite his audience into a conversation of learning (e.g., "let us") and then to present to them general lessons or precepts (e.g., "one should" or "those who"). Basil comparatively rarely uses first person singular and sparingly uses second person, only to attract the attention of his audience. Although seemingly small details, such uses of language, repeated throughout his homilies, help distinguish Basil's rhetoric and persona from that of other preachers and help constitute a distinct relationship with his audience, shaping in turn his local community.

Basil's use of nonspecific general language avoids accusing his congregants of disobedience or ignorance. He simply shares knowledge that *may* apply to them and that

they may or may not already know. In his homily on Psalm 45, for example, Basil begins a passage with “They who recognize God err in the judgment of their affairs, making demands for useful things foolishly, asking for some things as good, which frequently are not for their advantage, and fleeing others as evil, though at times they bring great assistance to them” (EH 18, 298). Likewise, in his homily on Psalm 33 Basil declares, “The cry of the just is a spiritual one, having its loudness in the secret recess of the heart, able to reach even to the ears of God. Indeed he who makes great petitions and prays for heavenly favors, he cries out and sends up a prayer that is audible to God” (EH 16, 268). These and many similar passages, which likewise include general third person language, abound throughout Basil’s homilies, enhance his persona as a knowledgeable teacher, and cast his audience as pupils receiving a general lesson (e.g, HC “Cause of Evil,” 77; CDP “Humility,” 108; CDP “John,” 251).

Adding to Basil’s teacher persona is his infrequent but pointed use of second person, which is reserved for emphasized passages that command his audience’s attention. For example, in the homily “I Will Tear Down My Barns,” Basil directly chastises his audience saying, “Recognize your Benefactor! Consider yourself, who you are, what resources have been entrusted to you, from whom you received them, and why you received more than others. . . . Do not suppose that all this was furnished for your own gullet!” (SJ “I Will,” 61). Throughout his homily “On Baptism” Basil also uses notably pointed and direct language to call out his audience for delaying baptism, a particularly problematic issue in the Cappadocian context that Gregory of Nazianzus also preached about (see SOG 40). Basil even goes so far as to uncharacteristically state:

“We are calling you—yes, you!—to life” (FF “On Baptism,” 43). Here and elsewhere, Basil uses otherwise reserved direct language like a teacher to startle, accuse, and cajole his audience to get them to hear and accept his instruction. In the conclusion of his homily against worldly things he uses second person to emphasize his congregants’ charge: “I will tell you how, but you will have to do it” (CDP “Worldly Things,” 176). In his homily on the creation of lights he beseeches his audience to see scripture’s wisdom, saying “I beg you,” and elsewhere promising “I myself shall guide you” (EH 6, 99; 84). The reserved use of second and even first person in these and several other passages stands out and draws the audience’s attention as re-entrance points into the ongoing conversation. Although second person is not the norm across Basil’s homilies, like first person plural it is utilized periodically throughout each text to have an engaging rhetorical effect. Upon engaging his audience, Basil returns to relaying general lessons.

The general nature of Basil’s homilies, crafted largely by his language, grants a conversational tone to his preaching. A conversational quality is a common characteristic among many early Christian homilies; however, the nature of such a quality varied widely among preachers (Kennedy *Classical* 156; Murphy *Rhetoric* 298). Basil’s particular use of pronouns lends a professorial tone to his homilies; his language is inclusive and conversational enough to indicate an atmosphere of collective learning, but distant and formal enough to signify his learned stance, distinct from his congregants. Combined with other rhetorical qualities of his homilies, such language constitutes a particularly formal church environment compared to the homilies of the other Cappadocians. While particular rhetorical traits shape rhetors’ different personas,

Basil's general language, his distant but conversational tone, fosters his distinct persona as a teacher.

Natural Language and Analogies

Basil's teacher persona is further established by his incorporation of knowledge beyond the scope of scripture. In addition to periodic references to Greek scholarship (a common trait among the Cappadocians' homilies and a remnant of Basil and Gregory's education at Athens, cf. Way xi; Vinson xx; Moriarty 23), he often employs nature-based language and analogies. These inclusions suggest that Basil's audience was somewhat familiar with the Greek rhetorical tradition, or at least that Basil viewed them as likely receptive to such examples and styles of teaching. Basil's nature-based teaching, in particular, advances a sort of expert persona reminiscent of an educator. He instructs his audience on concepts they don't understand by explaining them in terms of ideas they do understand. From a bee's sting and subsequent death Basil teaches of necessary repentance and eternal life (EH 8, 124). From the cycles of the moon Basil teaches of the instability of earthly life (EH 6, 100). From a mother bird and hunters Basil teaches of evasive hopes (FF "On Baptism," 51). Basil surmises that from nature we are taught what "we were not taught by books" (EH 9, 141). Basil's natural analogies serve as forerunners to Augustine's explanations of "natural signs" (cf. Augustine *On Christian* 1.2; 2.1-3). Moreover, the scientific lessons Basil derives from nature complement his professorial language and establish his role as a learned teacher in a number of ways.

To begin, Basil's natural language and analogies together lend a didactic tone to his message. What would otherwise seem like a subjective interpretation, Basil presents as science-based fact, as undeniable as the observable cycle of the moon or life of the tree. At times, Basil incorporates nature into his explanations through simple language and short metaphors: "When life is tranquil, expect stormy circumstances to arise at some point"; "the desire to glorify God is naturally planted in all rational beings"; and "as if stung on all sides by a gadfly . . . their temper struggles and leaps within them" (CDF "Proverbs," 76; CDF "Faith," 234; HC "Anger," 82). Elsewhere Basil employs lengthy and detailed nature-based analogies, such as the following passage from his homily on crawling creatures, in which Basil instructs his audience how to behave in marriage:

Let the husband also listen to proper advice for himself. The viper, through respect for his marriage, disgorges his venom. Will you not put aside the roughness and cruelty of your soul though reverence for the union? Or, perhaps, the example of the viper will be useful for us in other ways also, because the union of the viper and the sea lamprey is an adulterous violation of nature.

Therefore, let those who are plotting against other men's marriages learn what sort of reptile they resemble. (EH 7, 114)

This and other examples of natural language and analogies help make the instructional purpose of Basil's homilies obvious. Especially given the continued prevalence of rhetorical education and the widespread popularity of public discourse, Basil's fourth-century audience members would have been familiar with Greek rhetorical constructs

like analogies and fables and would likely have realized their didactic purpose (Kennedy *Greek* 52; Van Dam *Becoming* 103; Maxwell 1). Recognition of these constructs would have helped the audience identify the homilies as instruction and Basil as a teacher.

Second, beyond providing a didactic tone, Basil's natural analogies also augment the argumentative potential of his message. By complementing his moral precepts with descriptions of naturally occurring phenomena, by essentially making nature a premise within his arguments, Basil builds arguments that are more difficult to reject (e.g., FF "Drunkards," 85; HC "Attentive," 95). Because observations and explanations of nature have the appearance of being real, arguments incorporating nature likewise retain a sense of realism or veracity (cf., Finnegan 135). For example, in his homily against drunkards, Basil's natural analogy for the adverse effects of excessive drinking lends the notion that the adverse effects *will* come: "For just as ravines appear full while running with torrents of melted snow, but are left dry once all the water has passed by, so too the body of an intoxicated person" (FF "Drunkards," 89). Basil's audience can no more stop the natural events of spring and summer than they can stop the "dissipation," "licentiousness," and "arrogance" that come with drunkenness (FF "Drunkards," 89). Here and elsewhere, natural analogies help Basil present precepts in such a manner that his audience would find them difficult to counter and *natural* to accept.

Third, the repetition of natural language, especially scientific and medical language, also enhances Basil's apparent competence. Basil teaches, "For as the harm caused by poisonous drugs can be overcome by antidotes . . . so too the death that dominates in human nature is obliterated by the presence of divinity" (FF "Holy Birth,"

30). Elsewhere Basil instructs, “Be cheerful since the physician has given you sin-destroying medicine” (FF “First Fasting,” 55). In another place Basil explains, “Just as the bones by their own firmness protect the tenderness of the flesh, so also in the Church there are some who through their own constancy are able to carry the infirmities of the weak” (EH 16, 272). And still elsewhere Basil uses medical language to teach the merits of moderation and fasting and to simultaneously rebuke his audience:

Beware of spitting out water now and later desiring a drop, like the rich man. No one experiences a hangover from drinking water. No one’s head hurts if it is saturated with water. No one needs another’s feet if he spends his life drinking water. No one trips over his own feet, no one loses the use of his hands, if he imbibes water. For digestive problems, which are the necessary consequence of self-indulgence, produce terrible maladies in the body. (FF “First Fasting” 65)

These and other medical passages are insightful and articulate Basil’s wisdom. Especially considering that Basil delivered his homilies extemporaneously (Way ix), his ability to think of, apply, and articulate detailed medical analogies in an impromptu manner showcases his rhetorical competence and the natural profundity of his theological thoughts. This initial challenge and many subsequent preaching occasions were met by Basil with rhetoric rich in natural analogies and medical language.

Of medical language Basil states the following: “When medical precepts are to the point and accord with the art’s teachings, their usefulness is demonstrated above all from experience; likewise spiritual injunctions, above all when the precepts receive testimony from their outcome, they are manifest as wise and useful for the correction of

life” (HC “Anger” 81). What is interesting to note is that Basil’s praise of medical precepts at once relates to all humans (to whom the precepts apply) and separates him (as a teacher or provider of precepts) from his audience. By providing lessons, examples, and explanations that his audience members assumedly cannot themselves produce, Basil puts himself in an authority position marked by knowledge and rhetorical competence. His knowledgeable and competent portrayal enhance his credibility with the audience, potentially increasing his ability to persuade them of his message (Aristotle II.1). At the same time, as will be later discussed, his learned language and implied distance from the audience potentially constitute a relationship and community notably distinct from that of the other Cappadocians.

Fourth, Basil’s natural language and evidence, which biographers and editors frequently note, also function to buttress his interpretations and establish his persona as a teacher. Basil directly disavowed allegorical interpretation of scripture, including that of his brother, saying such an interpreter “considers himself wiser than the revelations of the Spirit and introduces his own ideas in pretense of an explanation.” Therefore, Basil concluded, “let it be understood as it has been written” (EH 9, 136). Nonetheless he frequently uses analogies, including the previous viper passage, to teach lessons about the interpreted text. Paired with biblical exegesis, these lessons often resemble allegorical interpretation. As his translator, Agnes Clare Way, explains, Basil borrowed from the Greeks, especially Herodotus and Aristotle, to make fables that described the nature of God’s creatures, from which Basil could then draw a lesson related to the text. This is true to the extent that, in Basil’s homilies, “no class of persons and almost no

vice was left without its fable, and the people listened and understood for he was speaking of things with which they were familiar in their daily life” (xi). On seemingly every subject Basil provides a natural analogy and strengthens his scriptural interpretation and the applied argument he infers. His choice to include even pagan references demonstrates his breadth of knowledge and his ability to apply it (as a teacher and critical thinker); the choice possibly also showcases an attempt to include references that cater to a broad audience, as I further discuss in Chapter Four.

Finally, Basil’s nature-based content helps make his homilies not only instructional but also simply engaging. Although Basil does not assign homework as would a teacher, he periodically reminds his audience of their responsibility to dwell upon and apply his daily lessons, which his rhetoric makes quite memorable. For example, he concludes homily 7 with the following instructions: “While partaking of your food, may you discuss at table the stories which my words reviewed for you early in the morning and throughout the evening; and falling asleep while engaged in thoughts of these things, may you enjoy the pleasure of the day, even while sleeping” (EH 7, 116). Although we cannot know for certain whether Basil’s pupils completed their assigned task, it is clear that Basil maintained his instructional role and rhetoric.

The aforementioned effects of Basil’s natural language and analogies overall help shape his persona as a teacher. Combined with his general language and his reserved usage of direct speech, Basil’s nature-based content allows listeners to discern for themselves a more personal lesson. This approach teaches without offending and allows Basil to reserve more direct language or admonishment for matters of greater

urgency, such as we see in his homilies on social justice and on baptism. Even in these more direct homilies, Basil's use of natural analogies helps suspend his most direct (and admonishing) teacher language until more crucial points in the speech. Rather than directly stating that his audience's actions are dangerous and, quite frankly, stupid, Basil instead says, "No one continues to eat what is harmful and excessive if they are trying to clear the body of bile" (FF "Baptism" 48). At the same time, Basil also uses carefully placed natural analogies to harshly call out his audience, as he does in his homily against drunkards: "The drunkard is worse than every beast. For what beast's vision and hearing is as distorted as a drunkard's" (FF "Drunkards," 85). Basil's various tones of instruction are emphasized by his careful implementation of natural language and analogies. Correspondingly, his persona as a teacher, specifically as a teacher with varying means and tones of instruction, is gradually crafted.

General Applicability

Basil's persona as a teacher is further enhanced by the general applicability of his homilies, which is fostered by three rhetorical traits. First, the homilies' contextual disconnect helps *connect* a wide audience or, at least, make the homilies seem like generally applicable lessons. On the one hand, this suggests that Basil may have perceived his audience as capable of learning and later applying concepts. On the other hand, such rhetoric may have been a strategic attempt to urge the audience to perceive themselves as *capable of* learning and applying the lessons. By projecting what Edwin Black terms a "second persona," by portraying his audience as capable pupils, Basil's rhetoric helped realize a learning, growing church community (113). Second, Basil's

general descriptions of ordinary and observable events, people, animals, phenomena, etc. likewise enhance the widely applicable nature of his “lessons” and appeal to his audience as relatable and applicable information. Finally, the organizational structures of his homilies operate to constantly remind his audience that they are listening to not just interpretations, but points of instruction.

To begin, let us examine how the wide applicability of Basil’s homilies is shaped by their contextual disconnect. Like a teacher’s general precepts about school subjects, Basil’s homilies present information as general knowledge, applicable to any context, rather than as situation or person-specific instructions. For example, his homily on Julitta, a local Caesarean martyr of the pre-Constantine era (i.e., prior to 306), could be a context-specific homily. Yet, in the panegyric Basil makes no reference to a Caesarean setting. His references to her stolen property, her ill treatment, and her trial could be set anywhere Christians were or are persecuted. Moreover, Basil’s account of Julitta herself make her a model Christian for any individual, male or female, in any era. Approaching a fiery death, Basil describes that Julitta “hurried forward quickly to the fire, as if running to some sweet pleasure. . . . She exhorted the women who were standing nearby to be willing to suffer misery for the sake of the faith not to tremble like weak women, and not to yield [to frailty] . . . ‘We are made of the same stuff as men,’ she said. ‘We are made in the likeness of God just as they are’ (FF “Julitta” 110-111). Accordingly, Basil exhorts: “Men: Do not fall short of the example of this woman in your piety!” and “Women: Do not prove yourselves weaker than her example” (111). Speaking directly to each gender, Basil generalizes his derived lesson to relate to the potential faults of all.

Basil's panegyric of the martyr follows tradition, praising and making a lesson of the martyr's example; however, the language he uses to do so is characteristic of his particular preaching and teaching style. By disconnecting Julitta's story from historical details, Basil helps connect present and even future audiences with the martyr and the message. Even if they do not actually make this connection, the contextual disconnect makes the homilies sound like general knowledge, general lessons. Basil's other homilies, as will shortly be seen, likewise establish a contextual disconnect and favor language that makes lessons and examples more widely applicable.

The general applicability of Basil's homilies is largely enhanced by his descriptions of individuals, actions, events, and emotions in general terms. Basil's moral homilies, for example, are some of his more contextually specific homilies, yet their general language and precepts remain relevant today. The vivid descriptions of Caesareans in "In Time of Famine and Drought"—starved corpses, greedy citizens, and sleepy apathetic parishioners—still remain relevant today because these descriptions trace trends that all people, then and now, can recall or at least understand. Basil's depictions of these human experiences resonate with modern readers, as do many of his nature-based analogies. Not only does such rhetoric resonate with any audience, it can also instruct any audience. General applicability increases Basil's ability to resonate with and move any audience member, whether he spoke to visiting congregants, whether he visited other congregations, whether his messages were circulated, or whether his messages were shared indirectly by word of mouth. Through all such exchanges of

information, Basil's general rhetoric continues to aid his portrayal a teacher and his ability to instruct.

Another example of Basil's general language can be found in his homily on money lending, in which Basil offers context-specific (but still widely applicable) instruction:

Dogs, when they have received something, are pacified, but the money-lender, on receiving something, is further provoked. He does not stop railing, but demands more. If you swear, he does not trust; he examines your family affairs, he meddles with your transactions. . . . For, the loan does not provide complete deliverance, but a short delaying of your hardship. (EH 12, 185)

Here Basil begins and ends the lesson with general language to convey universal precepts. The use of second person is particularly noteworthy because it can sound hypothetical to any audience, while also directly addressing his primary audience about an issue that then plagued Caesarean society. Such language and such descriptions, which characterize Basil's homilies, make his rhetoric, his lessons more widely applicable.

Finally, the general applicability of Basil's homilies is subtly aided by their organizational structures. Basil's homilies on the Hexaemeron, likely given in daily succession as a series as was then customary, are organized around the topics of subsequent scriptural passages. The content and organization of the homilies are dictated primarily by scriptural order of verses and words, and primarily reflect biblical context. Although Basil's organizational pattern is notably rigid (sometimes performing word-by-

word exegesis of a biblical passage), his homilies are still remarkably fluid—a likely remnant of his rhetorical training. This is in part due to Basil’s incorporation of transitions, such as rhetorical questions or quotations of scripture that indicate their arrival at a new point within the lesson. For instance, in his homily on the lights of the heavens two transitions read, “But, what are the results obtained?” and “Let us return to the words which follow: ‘Let them serve,’ He says, ‘as signs and for the fixing of seasons, days, and years’” (EH 6, 92, 95). Although Basil’s moral homilies, including those on the Psalms, do not always have rigid organization by word nor such obvious transitions, they nonetheless are clearly organized to reflect Basil’s thoughts on the issue at hand, often simply using scriptural quotations to turn a homily’s focus.⁹ In general, Basil’s organization patterns continually remind the audience that they are listening to points of instruction.

Between his transitions, the length of time Basil spends on certain topics and tangents but not others also contributes to his portrayal as a teacher. Like teachers who make instructional choices based on the determined scholastic needs of their students, so Basil’s homilies reflect rhetorical decisions based on the spiritual needs of his congregants. For example, Basil devotes the first half of the first homily to explaining the meaning of “In the beginning”—a notably long time that possibly reflects his audience’s perceived struggle with the “instantaneous and timeless act of creation” or at least Basil’s professorial affinity for the topic (EH 1, 11). Only after fully extrapolating

⁹ Mark DelCogliano accompanies his translations of eleven of Basil’s moral homilies with excellent introductions that explain Basil’s various organizational patterns. See CDF.

this does he move on to explicate the idea of “God created.” Several pages later, he finally arrives at an explanation of “the heavens and the Earth.” This and other organizational patterns and content distributions frame Basil’s rhetorical choices as pedagogical decisions aimed to enhance the effectiveness, the applicability of his homilies.

Together, these rhetorical choices make Basil’s homilies understandable by and even relatable to audiences beyond his fourth-century Cappadocian context. The general applicability of Basil’s homilies contributes to his portrayal as a teacher. While specific instructions, specific homilies may have shaped him as a personal mentor or counselor, collectively his general and widely applicable messages subtly portray him as not just a preacher of a church in a large city, but as a teacher of a large and varied class. This particular persona, which imbues Basil’s homilies, gives rise to a number of significant implications.

Combined Effects

The substance and style of Basil’s homilies creates an overarching impersonal, instructional tone. His homilies’ general and reserved direct language, nature-based precepts, and general applicability amplify their educational nature and downplay any underlying case or person-specific motivations. Correspondingly, Basil comes across as a teacher of a large group of students rather than a personal counselor. The homilies’ tendencies toward mass education allows them to retain instructional value and resonance for secondary audiences, including audiences reading them in a significantly different context today. Although the style and substance of the homilies may have

limited Basil the teacher's ability to establish a close, personal relationship with each primary audience member (in contrast, for example, to the rhetoric of Gregory of Nazianzus), these same elements help relate Basil's message to a more global audience, who might not relate to or understand specific fourth-century personal crises or conflicts but can relate to greater nature-based concerns and precepts. That Basil's homilies speak to a more global audience is an insightful discovery for two reasons.

First, his homilies' tendencies, in both substance and style, toward *general* instruction support the idea I previously posited that Basil's leadership was largely motivated by concern for his Christian (e.g., catechetical and evangelical) responsibilities, not by power or personal relationships as some historians have posed. This reading is supported by Kenneth Burke's suggestion that understanding a rhetor's identity as an agent, in this case a dedicated teacher, can provide insight into his or her motivations, "drives," and "instincts," as I previously discussed in Chapter Two (Burke *Grammar* 20). Accordingly, the persona crafted through the rhetoric of Basil's homilies suggests that his preaching, and perhaps even his pastoral leadership, was motivated largely by concern for his flock's learning over concern for social and power relationships. In addition to the support provided in the preceding critique, additional textual support of this reading is readily available.

Repeatedly, for example, Basil underscores the fleeting nature of life, as in his homily on Psalm 1 where he explains life as a heaven-bound journey: "So we also, as the time of our life flows on, are hurried along as if by some continuous and restless motion on the unheeded course of life, each one toward his proper end. . . . Such is life [like the

journey of a traveler] which hold neither lasting pleasures nor permanent afflictions” (EH 10, 159). This perspective, derived from scripture and informative of Basil’s asceticism, possibly influenced Basil’s rhetoric to the point that he valued ensuring the education of his audience over a personal connection with them, which could be seen as comparatively futile in their ultimate journey to heaven. This focus and the teacher-like persona Basil espoused may have complemented or reinforced other personas he potentially adopted in other clerical roles, which together would have constructed his greater ethos as a bishop. In any case, the preceding rhetorical analysis deepens our understanding of Basil’s motivation(s) and helps clarify the rhetorical methods of his preaching.

Second, the homilies’ ability to instruct a more global audience suggests that while impersonal homilies *may* immediately hinder a congregation’s sense of personal connection to the preacher, in the long run impersonal homilies allow a preacher to connect more easily to a larger secondary audience (which I further discuss in Chapter Four), assuming the messages are recorded and transmitted. Keeping the homilies fairly general and indirect allows them to retain relevance for secondary audiences in different places and times. The word of mouth transmission of homilies’ lessons, for example, would have been aided by the general, didactic style and substance of Basil’s homilies. Because he incorporates nature-based evidence and explanations that can resonate with anyone, because he uses language that has nature-based argumentative impetus, because he uses general language that does not exclude any particular group, because he expands upon even the simplest of concepts to engrain them in his audience’s minds, Basil’s

messages are memorable and transmittable. Such rhetoric distinguishes Basil's homilies from those of his fellow Cappadocians. As will subsequently be illustrated, the rhetoric of Gregory of Nazianzus is starkly different than that of Basil and thus differently reflects and affects his relationship with his audience.

Gregory of Nazianzus, the Conductor

In contrast to the general and impersonal rhetoric of Basil, the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus are notably personal and acknowledge individuals as instruments involved in a greater plan, a greater orchestra. That his rhetoric would contrast that of Basil, and even that of Gregory of Nyssa, is not surprising given their individual personal differences, including their backgrounds and life philosophies. Their different homilies and personas, however, are significant in light of their constitutive effects, especially pertaining to relationships.

For Gregory, relationships provided means of instructing and encouraging one another and thus were important to preserve (Van Dam *Families* 151). Even though Gregory bemoaned his ordinations, he reasoned that Basil, Gregory the Elder, and even Gregory of Nyssa were all urging him to be a better Christian by supporting his ordinations (SO 11, 32; see also Browne and Swallow 194). This he concludes in the closing of homily 10: "You refused to let the *lamp*, by which you mean my light and my mission in life, remain concealed under *the bushel* for long." He continues, "This is why you bring me back into the world and, despite my reluctance, take my hand and seat me next to you. . . . This is why you anoint me. . . why you escort me. . . why you lead me to the Holy of Holies for initiation and make me a minister of the true tent, which is set up

not by man but by the Lord” (SO 10, 28). Gregory here and elsewhere acknowledges the didactic value of his own relationships, how friends and family were placed by God in his life to continually challenge him to be a better Christian and to fulfill his own role as an instrument in God’s ensemble (e.g., SOG 12, 245; SO 11, 32; 9, 23).

Like the other Cappadocian Fathers’ homilies, Gregory’s homilies demonstrate specific characteristics that make them distinct from the messages of other preachers. Rather than providing general messages derived strictly from scriptural context, Gregory crafts messages that are reflective of scripture but also topically organized around his personal concerns surrounding people, relations, and exigencies. The homilies are organized topically, albeit loosely, and the topics of each homily range greatly, reflecting a variety of his thoughts—a stark contrast to Basil’s constant and meticulous dissection of scripture. The homilies address a variety of audiences, including laity and clergy, on a variety of occasions, including controversies, councils, holy days, and funerals. While the first seven or eight homilies were delivered during his priesthood, the remainder were delivered during his episcopate both in Cappadocia and in Constantinople (see Browne and Swallow’s introductions in SOG; Vinson xiii-xxiii). And, with the exception of his theological orations (SOG 27-31), a pair of homilies on the Epiphany (SOG 39 and 40), and possibly a pair of homilies on Easter (SO 44 and SOG 45), Gregory’s extant homilies are not part of series but are isolated and tailored to *directly* address contextual events. Even Gregory’s non-serial homilies have tailored emphases on unity within society and Christianity, which itself is a characteristic of his rhetoric.

The rhetoric of Gregory of Nazianzus collectively portrays him as a leader who listens to and even engages with multiple individuals and perspectives but ultimately advances upon others his own interpretation of events and beliefs. Like a musical conductor, Gregory leads by “communicating to the performers” his own “interpretation of the music” and then guiding them to follow his lead (cf. “conduct”). As a conductor knows instruments, parts, and potential melodies, so too does Gregory’s rhetoric evidence his awareness, engagement, and attempted sense-making among the (at times cacophonous) voices within his community. Although this persona distinguishes Gregory from his audience, his knowledge and involvement level (his rhetoric) *also* place him as a member of the orchestra, a member of the Christian community. Only *together* can they turn noise into music. Such a persona contrasts Basil’s persona as a distant teacher; likewise it is different from Gregory of Nyssa’s emphasized position as an interpreter. The rhetoric of Gregory of Nazianzus portrays him as a leader but also a member, a preacher but also a fellow Christian. Such a portrayal would have nicely served Gregory in the context of vicious, mean-spirited, and petty quarrels that accommodated the era’s theological disputes. Crafted through rhetoric, Gregory’s conductor persona facilitates the ability to simultaneously befriend, engage, banter, and even argue with fellow Christians—all important components for a community and social relationships. At the same time, the conductor persona allows Gregory to still assert interpretations and decisions with authority.

Although perhaps not as common as the teacher persona, the conductor persona that Gregory loosely adopts has received some attention by scholars. In specific, the

conductor metaphor is frequently used in business and managerial contexts (cf. Mintzberg 140; Kramer and Crespy 1025). In a close leadership study of conductors, Henry Mintzberg notes that, more than anything, conductors employ “covert leadership” (141). Conductors, he observes, are neither in absolute control nor are they powerless (144). Like preachers and interpreters, conductors are “constrained by the music that has been written, by the degree to which it can be interpreted, by the sounds the audience will be receptive too, and by the ability and willingness of the orchestra to produce the music” (143). That said, the work of conductors is influenced by many “interpersonal concerns” pertaining to their work with others (144; Kerres 33). Interpersonal concerns and communication are likewise part of Gregory’s leadership style. For example, his inclusive language and personal substance help foster a close relationship with his audience. Although interpersonal concerns may not dictate Gregory’s interpretations of scripture and Christian belief, they do influence *how* he discusses these things and *how* he attempts to conduct and even harmonize the ideas, the voices, of those with whom he works and leads.

Again, although perhaps not as prevalent as the teacher metaphor, variations of conducting and harmonizing metaphors are present in scripture. A common theme running throughout scripture regards the value of harmony and accord. Hebrew scripture teaches that peace, not dissonance, is loved by God: “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Proverbs 16:7). In addition, Hebrew covenants are often termed “covenants of peace,” illustrating God’s leading, peaceful way (e.g., Numbers 25:12). When Hebrew communities are punished by God it

is often because they have become dissonant, fighting with one another and disregarding the covenant of peace (e.g., Jeremiah 8:11). These Hebrew values and characterizations of accord are carried into Christian teachings.

Jesus not only presented himself as a teacher but embodied the role of a peacemaker, thus setting yet another example of leadership for his disciples and future Christians. Though his teachings may have been revolutionary, his submissive and docile actions emphasize peace and harmony (e.g., Luke 22: 49-53). Some of his teachings, too, explicitly praise relational accord. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount lists peacemaking as a beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). Elsewhere in Matthew, Jesus reminds of the sin of relational turmoil: "But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment" (5:22; see also 1 Peter 3:11). The epistles, too, in their discussion of Christ's example repeatedly refer to the "Peace of Christ" and emphasize that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace," which remind of the gifted nature of peace and the importance of peacemakers (e.g., Colossians 3:15; 1 Corinthians 14:33). These messages, brought forth by Christ and later disciples, illustrate how peacemakers can lead by example. Although Gregory does not exhibit a "peacemaker" persona per se (his homilies address and contribute to many contentious debates), he does exhibit a harmonizing persona through which he tries to reconcile, reason with, and appease multiple parties while asserting his own perspectives. As the language of a conductor, Gregory's rhetoric works to approach cacophonous situations (and many existed in the

context of fourth-century theological disputes) and realize “a joyful noise to the Lord” (Psalm 100:1).

In many ways, Gregory’s homilies seek to harmonize relationships, harmonize factions, and harmonize otherwise divisive discord within Christianity and society in general. Although as Andrea Sterk notes, Gregory “was particularly acerbic in condemning bishops he judged unworthy of episcopal office,” he does not condemn without offering a path to resolution (239). In addition to strong negative language, Gregory also often includes positive examples and expectations, providing a path to improvement and social or ecclesiastical harmony. Gregory acknowledges the importance of theological debate (consequently, he is one of two saints given the name “the Theologian”), but he continually works to not just win debates but ameliorate the tension they produce (Browne and Swallow 187). For example, heretical concerns briefly threatened the credibility of his father and led local monks to ordain their own clergy, further inhibiting the cohesion of Christians (SO 6). Likewise, cacophonous disagreement over the nature of Trinity divided Christians, cities, and churches for decades during Gregory’s episcopate (see especially his homilies on peace: SO 6, 22, 23; and his theological orations: SOG 27, 28, 29, 30, 31). Gregory’s conductor persona helps symphonize in these and other contexts of discord. Three distinct rhetorical traits of Gregory’s homilies contribute to his persona as a conductor: (1) his personal substance, (2) his inclusive language, and (3) his effort to engage dissenting parties. By preserving and establishing harmony through these traits, by working with other Christians while still asserting his authority, Gregory nurtures the growth of Christianity.

Personal Substance

Perhaps the most notable quality of Gregory's rhetoric is its interpersonal nature. Regardless of the subject of his homilies, Gregory always includes personal substance. In turn, this substance has a constitutive effect on his relationship with the audience and the community they form. His personal anecdotes foster a close, personal relationship between the audience and the speaker. His references to dissonance in his own relationships reinforce this intimate connection and establish his goodwill. Finally, his references to his own relationship maintenance set an example for his audience and help create a cohesive community. Together, these rhetorical elements foster Gregory's rhetorical role as a conductor. Moreover, they contribute to the constitution of a distinct church community.

To begin, let us examine Gregory's regular sharing of personal anecdotes, which solidify his own relationship with the audience. Personal anecdotes and self-references imbue Gregory's homilies. From personal anecdotes Gregory derives lessons of piety, faith, endurance, and other virtues. Homilies 2 and 3 include accounts of his agony upon being ordained. Although he admits his emotional reactions may have been "base or noble, I do not know," he nonetheless promises "I will speak out to you all my secrets," thus early on establishing his open relationship with the audience (SOG 2, 206; cf. 3, 228). Homily 33, spoken against the Arians, describes his attire and lifestyle—"the raggedness of my dress and the want of elegance in the disposition of my face" (SOG 33, 331). Homily 36, too, details Gregory's private "mystified" attitude about being accused of coveting the see of Constantinople (SO 36, 220-229). These and many other

casual personal references subtly and collectively allow Gregory's audience to feel like they know him and foster a sense of closeness between Gregory and his audience.

In the context of the lessons of his homilies, it is likewise interesting to see how the *personal* nature of Gregory's rhetoric contrasts that of Basil. For example, in homily 26, delivered after Maximus temporarily seized control of Gregory's see, Gregory incorporates a personal anecdote as means of teaching about the instability and temptations of life. The anecdote recounts his habitual walks along the shore and the lessons he learns from watching the sea:

Right about sunset, I used to go for a walk by myself along the seashore. This is what I have always done when I want to relax. . . . [At times] when [the sea's] calm surface turns a deep red and it laps against the shore in sweet and gentle play, it is most delightful. But at that particular time (I take delight in adding the words of scripture) the sea *rose* in agitation *because a strong wind was blowing* [John 6:18]. And, as usually happens in such storms, some of the waves began to swell far out at sea and, after gradually reaching a crest, ripped to the shore and died, while others crashed over the nearby rocks and were sent flying backwards and dissipated in foam and fine mist. On that spot rocks and wrack and cockles and the tiniest of oysters were dislodged and spewed forth. . . . But the rocks remained unshaken and unmoved just as if nothing disturbed them. . . . What I saw was a revelation to me. Truly, I said, is not our life, and human affairs in general, an ocean that contains much bitterness and instability? And are not the

winds the temptations that befall us and all the unexpected turns of events that occur? (SO 26, 181-182).

On one hand, this excerpt echoes the many natural analogies that Basil employs to instruct his audience. On the other hand, the language of the anecdote, the style of Gregory's presentation, make its personal nature a primary focus. His use of first person, the introductory superfluous details, his parenthetical commentary, his informal and animated tone all contribute interpersonal emphases, as if Gregory were telling a story or sharing insight with some peers rather than instructing distant students. They establish a sense of intimacy that, perhaps, encourages his audience to let down their guard and feel close with their pastor and community (cf. Jasinski "(Re)Constituting" 481). Even the way Gregory segues to the lesson he learned from the scene is notably personal and quirky: "Clearly, there was something of significance and value for me here. And, since I am the sort who tries to find a personal message in everything, especially when some incident happens to set my mind churching as was the case that day, I did not take in the sight casually" (SO 26, 181).

This long personal anecdote demonstrates the typical style of Gregory's homilies. Even in passages that do not contain long personal reflections, Gregory continues to use first person, to include personal commentary, and to make personal references. Collectively, these rhetorical elements help foster a close, personal relationship with the audience. By opening himself up to the audience they at least perceive his openness. The audience and Gregory also begin to build a wealth of shared knowledge beyond scripture and theological definitions. By sharing the details of his life, Gregory allows the

audience to know him in multiple ways—to know him as a son, as a friend, as a struggling Christian like them. This knowledge fosters mutual understanding and closeness. Even if Gregory does not know personal information about every audience member, they all know him personally. Establishing this personal relationship with the audience then allows Gregory’s rhetoric to work in other ways.

Complementing Gregory’s personal anecdotes are explicit discussions of dissonance within his personal relationships, which tormented him and divided his feelings. These references reinforce the intimate connection Gregory fosters with his audience, while portraying his goodwill. For example, his early homilies highlight his internal dissonance surrounding his desire to fulfill God’s calling yet to resist the priesthood—dissonance relating to his relationships with God and with his father, who ordained him (e.g., SOG 1; 2; 3). In his first homily, labeled “On Easter and His Reluctance,” Gregory vacillates between recalling suffering and reconciliation: “Yesterday I was crucified with Him; today I am glorified with Him” (SOG 1, 203). Here Gregory alludes to Christ’s sacrificial actions and his own sacrifice upon accepting the religious life forced upon him by his father. Likewise, his early homilies as a bishop reflect dissonance surrounding his desire to preserve his relationship with Basil by serving as bishop of Sasima and to provide support for his aging father by remaining in his see—two seemingly incompatible objectives (SO 11; 13; SOG 12).¹⁰ By making

¹⁰ Although voicing resistance to ordination was a common trend among bishops who often waited for popular demand to push them into the episcopal seat, Gregory’s lamentations throughout his homilies and writings seem more genuine and less deferential. For example, not only did he lament his episcopal ordination, the event severed his relationship with Basil (Jackson xxvi; Vinson xvi; Van Dam *Families* 165). Moreover, Gregory’s writings and orations indicate that his decision to not accept his own

public his personal efforts to reconcile dissonance among friends, family, and even one's own heart, Gregory allows his congregation to become privy to his own private experiences and internal struggles.

Such disclosure reinforces the intimate connection between Gregory and his audience while establishing a sense of goodwill. Opening himself to others shows his vulnerability. This edifies his ethos from the audience's perspective. He appears human with real struggles, just as they are human with their own disagreements, struggles, and tensions, which they must find ways to resolve. In turn, the audience perceives Gregory as a more trustworthy rhetor. It is because of this effect that Aristotle suggests goodwill is essential in persuasive arenas (I.8; II.1); without portraying his goodwill towards the audience and seeming trustworthy, a rhetor is less likely to effect a desired change. Accordingly, because Gregory portrays himself as personal, relatable, and most importantly as having goodwill toward his (close) audience, they can trust that his advice and examples are not only righteous and wise but realistic and applicable. His homilies seem to be composed for the audience's benefit, even as the cost of his own emotional stress. Speaking of his own relational dissonance shapes his perceived ethos as a Christian peer and a warm leader, fostering a close interpersonal relationship with his audience.

In turn, frequent references to the *maintenance* of his own personal relationships helps strengthen Gregory's conductor-like persona. Not only does Gregory balance

episcopate in Sasima had more to do with concern for his aging father and less to do with popular opinion (Browne and Swallow 193; Van Dam *Families* 51).

interpersonal concerns and his status as a member and a leader, but he also sets an example for others and creates a cohesive community. For example, in homily 11 he expands upon his relationship with Gregory of Nyssa, comparing it to that of Moses and Aaron (SO 11, 31). In Gregory's panegyric of Basil, which he delivered well after Basil's funeral, Gregory is quick to correct that "it is not contempt which has caused me to fall short of what might have been expected of me" (SOG 43, 396). Though his relationship with Basil waned over the years, Gregory makes a notable effort to reason away his lifelong friend's faults and reaffirm their friendship, exemplifying for his audience the importance of maintained relationships, despite hardships, even to the death. He also dramatizes their separations: "It was like cutting one body into two, to the destruction of either part, or the severance of two bullocks who have shared the same manger and the same yoke, amid pitiable bellowings after one another in protest against the separation" (SOG 43, 396). These and other explanations help the audience understand how valuable and treasured relationships are—worth the necessary maintenance and the pain they sometimes cause. Gregory's personal references to the maintenance of his own relationships with family and friends underscore the value of relationships in general and orient his audience to attend to their own relationships. In addition, Gregory's constant emphasis on and demonstration of working through relational, social, theological, and personal discord repeatedly highlight the importance of reconciliation, of harmony.

Gregory's references to his relationship with his audience have similar rhetorical effects as well; by articulating the existence and status of this relationship, Gregory

encourages its maintenance. In homily 6, on the event of a theological reconciliation within his father's see, Gregory notes of dissenting monks and the greater community: "These are the people, my substance, my noble delight, who both when present made me radiant and when absent cast me down" (SO 6, 5). Here, although speaking of fellow Christians who had opposed his father, Gregory emphasizes them as substantive parts of his community with whom he values a relationship. In homily 26, after returning from the countryside and recovering from Maximus's attempt to usurp his position, Gregory warmly greets his audience: "I have missed you, my children, and was missed by you to an equal degree," and later, "I scarcely realized the extent of my affection for you; but when I parted from you, I came to know longing, that sweet tyrant" (SO 26, 175; 176). By sharing and emphasizing this emotional response, Gregory implies that his relationship with his audience is important, is valuable. This exemplifies for them that preacher-laity relationships are meaningful.

Even when speaking to fellow clergy members, Gregory similarly emphasizes that relational issues can and should be worked through. In his fifth theological oration at the Council of Constantinople Gregory draws attention to the existence of shared understandings behind all disagreements: "And just as we find in the case of roads and rivers, that they split off from one another and join again . . . people who differ in all other respects have here some points of agreement, so that you never can tell for certain either where they are of one mind, or where they are in conflict" (SOG 32, 318). These and other audience references have significant rhetorical implications for Gregory's rhetorical context. By explicitly including his audience in his homilies, even

acknowledging the differences among them, Gregory indicates that his messages are for all ears. Moreover, Gregory's rhetoric exemplifies *how* an individual can speak so as to effect a desired change (e.g., collaboration) among a varied and dissonant audience.

Borrowing from Smith and Hyde, who build upon Heidegger and Aristotle, we know that the character of individuals and of communities can be shaped through emotional appeals (460). Because emotions often guide human interpretations of and attachments to life situations, they ultimately become crucial elements in the formation of a relationship and a sense of community (448). As already mentioned, the personal substance that imbues Gregory's rhetoric helps craft a close, personal relationship between the speaker and his audience. Moreover, though, by regularly speaking about relationships and their maintenance Gregory emphasizes and exemplifies their importance. As such, his rhetoric helps construct a cohesive and interdependent community. As Gregory works to improve his own character and relational harmony, he leads his congregation to do the same. If even some individuals (consciously or unconsciously) heed Gregory's examples and reciprocate his openness, the community can incrementally become characterized by openness and relational attention. The continual presentation of these relationship norms in turn helps constitute the nature and norms of Gregory's community. Borrowing from Jasinski we may understand Gregory to be presenting a persona, built through his language, that "functions as the moral [constitutive] center of a particular persuasive community" (469). As a preacher and a leader of a congregation, Gregory's language and rhetorical practices function as a persuasive center for his community; his characteristics and values set an example that

can ultimately shape the espoused norms, values, and behaviors of his surrounding community.

The personal substance of Gregory's rhetoric and especially the focus he places on relationships notably distinguish his homilies from those of the other Cappadocian Fathers. His content contrasts, for example, Basil's reliance upon abstract nature-based content. Gregory's personal rhetoric also contrasts the constrained closeness that Gregory of Nyssa's homilies create between himself and his audience. The distinct content and style of Gregory of Nazianzus' homilies gradually construct an image of Gregory as a conductor, as an individual who not only promotes social harmony but exemplifies how this can be achieved, providing personal examples and language that help foster a close, harmonious community.

Inclusive Language

In addition to the content, the style of Gregory's homilies further constructs his persona as a conductor. Gregory's use of inclusive language is one of the most prominent stylistic elements of his rhetoric, and can be found throughout all of his homilies. His frequent employment of first person plural, especially in his commentaries on surrounding exigencies like disagreements, controversies, community events, and social failings, helps him build a close sense of relationship. More generally, inclusive language connects Gregory with his audience and gradually helps instigate community change.

Turn to any homily and an abundance of first person language and shared ideas can be found. Especially in his strictly exegetical homilies, Gregory uses inclusive

phrases to transition: “And thus we see that God is not a body,” “How shall we pass over the following point, which is no less amazing than the rest?” “Now since we have ascertained that God is incorporeal, let us proceed. . .” “And what will our proclamation say?” (SOG 28, 291; 29, 306; SO 25, 159). Basil, too, uses first person plural periodically, mostly to refer to the learning process within the homily (e.g., “let us consider” and “we have learned”). Gregory of Nazianzus, however, uses first person plural regularly throughout all parts of all his homilies. For example, in homily 17, he shares the observation that “Human affairs, my brothers, run in a circle, and God teaches us by means of opposites” (SO 17, 88). In homily 25, speaking of their shared learning environment he states, “For we are become *as* those gathering *straw in harvest* (if the prophet’s words are here apropos) and *grape-gleanings in the vintage, when there is no cluster*. Do you see how small our gathering is? For this very reason help make our threshing floor richer and our wine-vat more full” (SO 25, 173-174; Micah 7:1). Even in his last extant homily, Gregory’s inclusive language downplays his authoritative position and his theological renown and places him alongside his lay audience in both status and spiritual need: “but we, standing midway between those whose minds are utterly dense on the one side, and on the other those who are very contemplative and exalted, that we may neither remain quite idle and immovable, nor yet be more busy than we ought, and fall short of and be estranged from our purpose” (SOG 45, 427). These and many similarly inclusive passages shape Gregory’s overarching persona. To better understand their specific rhetorical effects, let us turn to a single homily.

Homily 14, “On Love for the Poor,” sufficiently represents the language that generally imbues Gregory’s homilies. In addition, this homily is intriguing to examine because it parallels the homily by Basil that is analyzed in Chapter Four (i.e., SJ “In Time”), and it parallels two homilies by Gregory of Nyssa, which Susan Holman has elsewhere studied in depth (cf. Holman “Healing”). The homilies by Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil were delivered between 368 and 372 when famine and drought devastated Cappadocia and especially Basil’s Caesarea; both preachers directly address the surrounding social devastation. Gregory in particular spoke in the context of a hospital complex being built in Caesarea with a message about showing love for the poor. Rather than separating himself and indicting his audience members for their selfishness (as does Basil), as Gregory preaches he acknowledges his own affluent background and potential selfishness. Using inclusive language, Gregory connects himself to the audience.

Gregory begins the homily by addressing “My brothers and fellow paupers—for we are all poor and needy where divine grace is concerned, even though, measured by our paltry standards one man may seem to have more than another—give ear to my sermon on loving the poor” (SO 14, 39). The phrases “brothers,” “we are all,” and “our paltry standards” craft Gregory’s authority position behind the ambo as a collegial position among his peers. Gregory’s inclusive language casts him as part of the social problem *and* part of the solution. When he speaks of the sin of selfishness and the blessings of altruism, Gregory is not doing so from a condemning position but a position of concern, including for himself. This rhetorical approach is particularly distinct from

Basil's homily, in which he adopts a condemning prophetic voice that differentiates him from his audience.

Throughout his homily, Gregory maintains this peer relationship with his audience. In the body of the homily, for example, he includes himself in an indictment of the community: "While *they* would be quite satisfied with plain water, *we* keep demanding bowls of wine until we are drunk" (SO 14, 51). Later he asks, "Why are we ourselves sick in our very souls, with a sickness far worse than any that affect the body? Why do we revel amid the misfortunes of our brothers? God preserve me either from being prosperous when these are in want, or healthy if I do not try to assuage their wounds" (SO 14, 51-52). Here Gregory sympathizes with the poor while simultaneously empathizing with the spiritual-material struggle of the rich; he connects with both audiences while acknowledging his own failings.

Similarly, elsewhere in the same homily Gregory uses inclusive and direct language to push his audience to amend their attitudes and behaviors towards community members. He asks, "What of ourselves, who have been given so great a model of sympathy and compassion? What will our attitude towards these people be? What shall we do? Shall we neglect them? Walk on by? Dismiss them as corpses, execrable, the vilest of beasts and creatures that crawl? Most certainly not, my brothers!" (SO 14, 49). Here Gregory beseeches his fellow Christians to, with him, create a more harmonious community where the laughter of the rich does not contrast the cries of the poor. By including himself as part of the problem and part of the potential solution, Gregory puts himself on the same level as his congregants—a move that augments his

rhetorical potential. By not only articulating the solution, but by rhetorically making Gregory part of the solution, Gregory's rhetoric helps instigate community change. He doesn't just urge the audience to create accord where there are social gaps and social tension, he initiates this process. Gregory's inclusive style helps the audience create harmony within their own community; this rhetoric is only strengthened when paired with the content of Gregory's preaching.

Deliberative Engagement

Gregory's inclusive language complements his tendency to devote content within his homilies to engaging with those in disagreement. Whether speaking of others' disagreements or of those in which he is a party, Gregory constantly underscores discord, in multitudes of contexts, as something that must be worked through and resolved or harmonized. Gregory's tendency to engage his audience, even when countering their viewpoints and asserting his own, speaks to the value he placed on cooperation. As evidenced by the content of his rhetoric, Gregory uses his homilies to realize a more harmonious church and Christian community. By examining Gregory's homilies, we can see that his engagement with dissenting parties has a number of rhetorical effects. It underscores cooperation as necessary, highlights the destructive nature of unresolved discord, outlines how disagreements can be worked out and, finally, emphasizes the possibility of reconciliation. These lessons not only inform Gregory's messages, their emphasis shapes Gregory's personas as a conductor, as an instrument of harmony.

Gregory's theological orations, given in the context of the Council of Constantinople to other Christian leaders (including those in theological disagreement with one another), provide many examples of his harmonizing rhetoric. The second homily in the series, for example, begins by reviewing the previous homily and beseeching cooperation among all parties caught in the Trinitarian debate:

We saw that [the theologian] ought to be, as far as may be, pure, in order that light may be apprehended by light; and that he ought to consort with serious men, in order that his word be not fruitless through falling on unfruitful soil; and that the suitable season is when we have a calm within from the whirl of outward things.

So as not like madmen to lose our breath. (SOG 28, 288)

Recognizing the passion, close-mindedness, and dogmatism that inhibited theological deliberation and unity, Gregory charges his audience to think first of their objective (to achieve theological clarity) and repress any debilitating impulses that prevent productivity and unity. Doing so, Gregory emphasizes that harmonious relationships are both necessary and useful. These messages he weaves throughout other homilies as well.

Gregory's other homilies similarly address differences among other cacophonous and dissenting groups. In homily 6, his first oration on peace delivered in when peace was reestablished between monks and his father's see after a minor theology-based split, Gregory points out the ironic, destructive, and sinful nature of discord:

These are the things that distressed, these that troubled my soul; these that cause me to walk bowed down and in mourning; these the reason why I rejected speech along with everything else that gave me pleasure . . . because we tore apart

Christ, we who love God and Christ so well, and deceived one another in the name of truth, and in the name of love fostered hatred and for the sake of the cornerstone were crushed, and of the rock rent asunder; because in the name of peace we warred more than honor allowed, and in the name of him who was raised on the cross we were brought low, and in the name of him who was buried and resurrected we embraced death. (SO 6, 5)

While condemning such destructive behavior, Gregory is careful to acknowledge the shortcomings of both sides. Here Gregory does not emphasize the subject of the theological disagreements (which have passed) but instead the destructive implications that can endure or reappear in other social and religious facets (in hindsight this could include, for instance, the Protestant debates of the sixteenth and later centuries).

Gregory frequently urges dissenting parties to work through their differences. In his homily on the Holy Spirit he reminds his audience of scripture's teachings against forced change: "That no violence might be done to us, but that we might be moved by persuasion. For nothing that is involuntary is durable. . . . But that which is voluntary is more durable and safe" (SOG 31, 325). From this Gregory infers the necessity of theological deliberation (like that which his homilies contribute to at the Council of Constantinople), rather than trying to violently force the adoption of various theological beliefs. Elsewhere in the theological series (again using inclusive language) he engages his present opponents and urges cooperation:

But let us at least be no longer ignorant of ourselves, or pay too little attention to the due order in these matters. And if it be impossible to put an end to the

existing hostility, let us at least agree upon this, that we will utter Mysteries under our breath, and holy things in a holy manner, and we will not cast to ears profane that which may not be uttered. . . . Let us even in our disputing then be kept within bounds. (SOG 27, 286)

Although he acknowledges that hostility, at present, may be impossible to assuage, Gregory urges that they work together.

Smaller phrases, too, throughout Gregory's homilies encourage cooperation among dissenting parties. Returning to homily 6, we may again observe that Gregory calls on both parties to rely on wisdom to "curb incontinent anger," "quiet corrosive envy," "quell grief that shackles the heart," "restrain effusive pleasure," and "moderate hatred, but not love" (SO 6, 7). Although the homily marks the faction's dissolution, Gregory explains that it is important to "rake over past unpleasantness and dwell on painful events" in order to "avoid the causes that led us to them" (SO 6, 5-6). The content of this and other homilies explicitly addresses contextual exigencies, speaks to all involved parties, and encourages cooperation (e.g., SO 11, 33; 15, 79; 17, 94; 22, 119; 22, 125; SOG 29, 307; 31, 323; 42, 390). By not just saying these things, but actually doing them in his homilies—recounting events, re-outlining arguments—Gregory engages multiple parties and shows exactly how differences can be worked out.

Although much of Gregory's style and content is inclusive and even conciliatory, I would be remiss if I did not also note that Gregory's language is, at select times, quite biting. In the conclusion of a homily on the Trinitarian debate, for example, Gregory labels opposing views as "the views of the malcontents, the views of those who are

quick to jump on every word” (SO 20, 114). Shortly thereafter, he says “I am repeating myself because your crassly materialistic cast of mind frightens me.” In his first theological oration, Gregory likewise uses harsh language. Quoting Jeremiah he states: “Behold, I am against thee, O thou proud one’ not only in thy system of teaching, but also in thy hearing, and in thy tone of mind” (SOG 27, 284). Although these and a handful of other particularly sharp passages stand out in his homilies, more often harsh language regarding discord is phrased to include himself. In homily 14, for example, after explaining a lack of consideration for the poor Gregory offers the following inclusive reproach: “These unfortunates, on the other hand, we avoid at all costs—the inhumanity of it!—hardly abiding the thought that in fact we breathe the same air as they” (SO 14, 46). Rather than simply reproaching those in the wrong, the greedy, selfish, and apathetic Caesareans, Gregory engages with them, in this case including himself in the reproach.

Even when on occasion speaking harshly, Gregory quickly engages his opponents in his deliberation. For example, in the homily containing the aforementioned Jeremiah quote, Gregory later asks them to, “restrain their tongues,” “lend us their ears,” and “bear with us so far as not to give a savage reception to our discourse upon this subject,” (SOG 27, 285). Throughout the homily he continues to engage in conversation with his opponents, who he calls “my friends and brethren (though you do not behave like brothers)” (SOG 27, 286). These rhetorical choices, which engage rather than silence discordant audiences, foster a particular relationship between Gregory and his audience. By including language and content that engages rather than silences, Gregory

underscores the importance of unity, harmony, and cooperation, such as was needed to work through the social and theological strife in the context of the Trinitarian debates. His rhetorical example exemplifies his values.

Although, in general, Gregory ultimately asserts his own viewpoint, he couches his perspective in content that engages dissenters rather than dismissing them; he works through their actions and arguments until arriving at his own conclusion. Granted, acknowledging counterarguments is a well-established argumentative strategy. However, Gregory's rhetoric suggests he had conciliatory motivations beyond a basic argumentative one. Engagement with multiple parties *throughout* his homilies fosters an inclusive environment. Moreover, this rhetorical approach draws attention to the possibility, utility, and importance of harmony. By engaging others himself and then working through social, theological, and relational tumult, Gregory's rhetoric implies such cooperation, such harmony *is* possible.

Combined Effects

Gregory's rhetorical approach to addressing exigencies, audiences, and constraints is notably distinct from that of the other Cappadocian Fathers. To move his audience he rhetorically builds a personal relationship with them that makes him at once a peer and a leader. His homilies assert his own ideas, his own interpretations, but they also involve the audience as equal members in the process of reaching harmony. Gregory's personal substance helps build his relationship with the audience and constitute a close church community. Likewise, Gregory's inclusive language also connects him with the audience and also helps gradually instigate community change.

Finally, Gregory's engagement of dissenting parties helps emphasize community cooperation and realize social and theological harmony.

By including personal content, using inclusive language, and engaging dissonant voices, Gregory frames himself as an instrument of harmony, a conductor. This persona is quite different than the impersonal, professorial persona of Basil and the mediating persona of Gregory of Nyssa. Still, Gregory of Nazianzus' conductor-like persona puts him in an authority position. Although he is a fellow Christian, a peer, he is also a leader. To lead, Gregory chooses to engage with and build relationships with his fellow Christians; he chooses to listen to them and to make sense of their ideas. Even while asserting his own interpretations, Gregory listens to and works with the voices around him. Thus, through his leadership style Gregory himself models how an individual can work to harmonize cacophony, to harmonize social and theological discord. As this analysis of Gregory's homilies has illustrated, the content of Gregory's homilies often directly encourages cooperation. Paired with his style, Gregory's rhetorical example demonstrates how an individual, peer or leader, can actually work to foster community harmony.

This description of Gregory as a conductor notably downplays his role as an exegete. Indeed, even though Gregory's preaching role is based primarily in his interpretations of scripture—and in many passages he quotes, explains, and applies scripture—his homilies emphasize an alternative role. This greatly contrasts the personas of Gregory and Basil, which both emphasize the preachers' roles delivering the messages of scripture. Still to be understood is how these differences, how these

different personas, collectively affect the communities the Cappadocians' build as peer rhetors.

Gregory of Nyssa, the Interpreter

Unlike the leadership of Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil, the leadership of Gregory of Nyssa has been much less studied; thus comparatively little is known about his style and history of leadership (Sterk 229; Graef 3). Scholars have only begun to study his works and from there sketch his apparent worldview and purpose. Gregory's extant work suggests that he continually strived to help individuals discover how they could grow as Christians (Van Dam *Families* 110). Leading individuals to fuller knowledge of Christian truth through his homilies was one such endeavor (cf. SS "Preface," 3). His homilies continually illustrate how individuals can mature and transform their lives through understandings of allegorical interpretations of scripture (Norris xxiv).

In addition to studying his rhetoric, as we will shortly do, by taking note of Gregory's discussion of other bishops we may better understand his leadership and ideals (Sterk 236). Sterk points out that when discussing other bishops Gregory strongly emphasizes the ideal bishop as one who possesses monastic virtues, education, discernment, and courage (237). While the former two qualities demonstrate the importance Gregory placed on reflection and understanding, the latter two illustrate the value he placed on bishop's interactions with others. Especially in early Christianity, discerning anything (e.g., theologically sound beliefs and actions) often involved discussing and possibly contending with other leaders. From Gregory's perspective,

bishops needed to act with strong, clear, and informed authority on behalf of Christianity. These qualities were especially important given that bishops did more than preach but also communicated with imperial magistrates to negotiate various agreements (Van Dam *Becoming* 79, 119-122). Combined, such values could not only strengthen the life and leadership of a bishop, but they could help strengthen and transform the life of the laity.

For Gregory, life transformations were real and palpable experiences. Unlike the other Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory had married and worked as a rhetorician before deciding to become a priest, which contrasts the forced ordination of the other Cappadocian Fathers (Norris xv; A. Wilson 263; Graef 3). As a bishop, despite his earlier secular lifestyle, Sterk notes that Gregory of Nyssa, like Gregory of Nazianzus, “managed to harmonize monastic ideals and practices with active service to the church” (228). Such a transformation was likely a partial product of Basil’s influential example and Gregory of Nazianzus’ direct chastisement of Gregory for seemingly preferring the title of “a rhetorician rather than a Christian” (Van Dam *Families* 69). Within an approximate span of twenty-five years, Gregory received a rhetorical education, worked as a rhetorician, married, became a bishop, and then became a monastic leader among the Cappadocian Christian society. These transitions no doubt influenced his role and rhetoric as a bishop. Perhaps more than the others, Gregory of Nyssa, in his homilies, seems acutely aware of the rhetorical nature of his position as a preacher.

Unlike Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil, Gregory of Nyssa often speaks directly about his approach to preaching, which itself is a distinct trait of his rhetoric. The aim of

his homilies, Gregory explains, is to provide “some direction to more fleshly folk for the sake of the spiritual and immaterial welfare of their souls” (SS “Preface,” 3). His homilies on the Beatitudes and the Song of Songs (delivered respectively to lay audiences during his early and then late episcopate) all directly refer to his role as a preacher delivering a message to his audience (Hall “Gregory” 15; Norris xxi). Clear references to his role as an interpreter can also be found in his homilies on Ecclesiastes, delivered during his episcopate to an ecclesial congregation assumedly shortly before the Council of Constantinople (Hall “Introduction” 1). Even, his homilies on the Lord’s Prayer (which, in content, are more moral and less exegetical) refer to his interpretive role, calling the interpretive act “bold” (LP 1, 21). Preaching, for Gregory, was an opportunity to provide spiritual direction for Christians—direction that he continually clarifies comes from a separate, divine source. This approach noticeably shapes his rhetorical persona as not just a preacher but an interpreter.

Although technically all preachers are interpreters, the rhetorical characteristics of Gregory’s homilies notably emphasize, above other roles, his role as an interpreter. To better understand the characteristics of an interpreter’s role, it is helpful to draw upon and compare the characteristics of other mediating roles. For example, Old Testament descriptions of prophets as messengers emphasize their reliability and faithfulness in deed. As James Darsey explains, the Hebrew prophet “acts responsibly only when he subordinates his will to the divine will and bears witness to God’s word” (17). For the prophet, acting responsibly means allowing oneself to literally become the mouthpiece of God. In this case, reliability and faithfulness play a role in the act of submission.

Then, based on the prophets' faithful actions, even at the risk of being killed or taken for a madman, the delivered message may be considered genuine (Zulick "Agon" 137).

In a similar sense, Gregory's homilies underscore his reliability and faithfulness in deed. Specifically, various rhetorical characteristics frame him as an interpreter equipped with the ability to relay divine knowledge to a Christian audience. Gregory portrays himself as a faithful *servant* of God—a description that coincides with traditional generic understandings of messenger speeches as function-based (Barrett 540). This emphasis helps craft for Gregory an ethos that is humble and dignified and (ideally) earns the empathy and esteem of the laity. That Gregory's homilies always have clear and explicit points, lest they become futile "senseless speech," further helps ensure the successful delivery of his interpreted message (E 1, 41). And, as will shortly be explained, Gregory's allegorical interpretations ensure that God's full message (i.e., not just the envelope of scripture) is received.

As a scriptural interpreter, Gregory also serves as a decisive rhetor. While the message of a prophet is assumedly *direct* from God, who uses the prophet as a mouthpiece, the message of an interpreter is acknowledged as a *secondary* product (Zulick "Prophecy" 200; France 259). Although an interpreter's message is ideally faithful to the original source, potential modification of the message is universally acknowledged. Through their transformation into another set of words, interpretations necessarily undergo inherent change, making them, like messengers' speeches, "fundamentally rhetorical creations" (Barrett 541). This understanding is significant when we consider Gregory's constant choices to portray to make evident his interpretive

choices. Rather than masking his interpretive rhetorical choices, Gregory underscores them, as we will shortly see, which shapes his perceived ethos and the audience's response.

Although various components of Gregory's rhetoric may overlap with other personas, Gregory's rhetoric clearly distinguishes him as an interpreter. For example, with the exception of an emphasis on being an intermediary, Gregory's rhetoric does not employ many of the rhetorical characteristics of a prophet, which are more closely examined in Chapter Four. In his homilies, Gregory is also careful to attribute the role of teacher to God, from whom he and his audience obtain their knowledge.

Beyond these preliminary rhetorical aspects, Gregory's interpreter persona is most evidently established through direct references to the act of preaching and to his own homilies. These references publicize Gregory's mediating role, separating him from both the audience and the original source of knowledge. Second, his allegorical interpretations and related analogies are presented in such ways that their mediated nature is emphasized. They imply that to understand scripture's message the audience *needs* Gregory the interpreter. Together, these rhetorical traits help Gregory focus his audience's attention on God and the authors of scripture as primary sources of knowledge rather than focusing on Gregory as a primary source. This helps downplay the rhetorical and even controversial nature of his interpretations, his homilies. The qualities also help constitute a preacher-parishioner relationship and a church community that are again distinct from those constructed by the rhetoric of his fellow Cappadocians.

Homiletic References

To begin an analysis of Gregory's rhetoric let us first examine his internal references to preaching, homilies, and interpretation. These references, which may be found throughout all of his homilies, craft Gregory's persona as an interpreter in a number of ways. First, they emphasize his intermediary role and thereby distinguish him from his sources of knowledge. Second, Gregory's homiletic references acknowledge the rhetorical nature of his interpretations, thus reinforcing his separation from the source but also establishing his humble, trustworthy nature. Finally, his references emphasize the challenging labor of interpretation, which establishes the audience's necessary reliance upon Gregory as a specialized mediator.

First, Gregory's rhetoric about preaching conveys that his homilies are neither a source nor an end, but something that serves to connect the two. For example, Gregory begins his twelfth homily on the Song of Songs by asking the audience to imagine a people who prepare "for a journey across the sea in the hope of finding riches. . . . and ask a god to be their guide" (SS 12, 361). This journey and treasure analogy he repeats elsewhere (e.g., SS 5, 159; B 3, 39), emphasizing that his homilies are merely mediating messages that help Christians interpret the map (i.e., scripture) provided by their divine "Guide" to lead them to heavenly treasure.

Elsewhere Gregory modulates his role as a source of knowledge by repeatedly inferring that his messages derive from a separate source. When referencing scripture Gregory uses third person phrases to explicitly acknowledge various original sources: "if the Ecclesiast had not claimed" (E 7, 112), "the great David thinks" (SS 3, 87), "the

voice of life itself proclaims” (B 8, 89), and “we have learned from the prophet” (SS 11, 345), “What does the Guide in wisdom say”? (E 5, 97), and “Paul . . . fulfills the church’s need of *teeth* by grinding the open truth of the teachings up small . . . [clarifying] the mysteries for us” (SS 7, 239). Elsewhere Gregory states, “As the chorus looks to its conductor, the rowers to the helmsman, and an army in line to its general, so we who belong to the ecclesial congregation look to the Ecclesiast” (E 2, 48). These and other more subtle references, like the common phrase “He says” (e.g., E 8, 136; 143), help Gregory distinguish himself from the original producers of knowledge. In doing so, Gregory presents his homilies as “secondary products,” like interpretations, not primary messages (France 259). While the other Cappadocians more often avoid such language and insinuations by speaking of the meaning of scripture generally without reference to any sources but the divine, Gregory’s rhetoric explicitly points out his sources.

Such rhetoric emphasizes his role as a mediating interpreter, not a primary source of knowledge. But, it should also be noted that the constant explicit citations of scripture and of sources also underscore Gregory’s competence. Even if the audience assumed that their preacher knew scripture thoroughly, Gregory makes an effort to explicitly remind them of this. While other preachers weave scripture into their homilies more seamlessly, without citations or breaks in the flow of their explanations, Gregory makes quotations and citations prominent components of his homilies. Thus, the references notably separate him from his sources but also publicize his scriptural competence. Constant references to the breadth of his knowledge help Gregory separate himself, as a learned interpreter, from his lay audience.

Other homiletic references further shape his persona as an interpreter and emphasize his homilies' rhetorical nature. Specifically, the language Gregory uses to couch his interpretations highlights his rhetorical or at least mediating role. Often following quotations of scripture and preceding an interpretation of divine teachings, Gregory employs phrases such as "In my view" or "It seems to me" or "I reckon" or "I think this is the meaning of the text, in which he says . . ." or "My own view, however, inexpert though the statement may be" (e.g., B 1, 30; 2, 34; 3, 41; 6, 70; 7, 80; E 1, 46; 4, 83; SS 7, 233; 9, 299). These examples typify how Gregory mediates the transfer of knowledge. He repeatedly clarifies that his homilies are *not* direct, unadulterated messages. By explicitly referring to his interpretations, he again separates himself from the sources and constrains his authority.

Another rhetorical effect, however, results from Gregory's hedging language. The open acknowledgment of his human, intellectual role in the transfer of understanding—"it seems to me," "I think this is," "if you be persuaded by me"—Gregory presents himself as humble, augmenting his perceived trustworthiness (B 1, 30; WL "Baptism," 523). This effect is a direct result of his use of softer language, including hedges and qualifiers, which previous scholars have defined as powerless language (Johnson 167). Although the name implies a lack of power, existing communication studies have demonstrated that such language "creates a positive impression" on audiences, and (Haleta 17; Bradac and Street 195). In addition to creating a positive impression, Richard Perloff adds that powerless language like hedges help generate perceived goodwill (283). Accordingly, we may see how hedging language helps

amplify Gregory's perceived humility and goodwill. Given the already controversial nature of allegorical interpretations, which Gregory employs, his use of hedges makes sense.¹¹ By *humbly* acknowledging the human, rhetorical nature of his interpretations, Gregory limits the projected absolute nature of his homily but also opens his audience to its reception.

Finally, Gregory further opens his audience to the reception of his homilies and interpretations by establishing with them a relationship of dependence. Additional homiletic references portray Gregory's interpretive role as challenging and labor intensive. The challenges of the preacher's role are emphasized through Gregory's repeated discussions about "great labour in speaking," "explaining the inexpressible," "work[ing] with pleasure at my sermon," and the involved "effort and sweat" (E 1, 43; 2, 55; WL "Baptism," 518; see also B 2, 24; E 7, 126; 6, 99). In his seventh homily on the Song of Songs, Gregory also uses an analogy to draw attention to the labor-intensive *and* intermediary nature of preaching.

To deliver a comprehensible message to the laity, Gregory explains, preachers are responsible for ruminating God's messages before delivery. He states, "those who desire 'the noble task' of the episcopate . . . are assigned to perform the service of *teeth* in the church." Such "teeth" he expounds, are "those who chop up the indigestible fodder of the divine oracles for us and chew it as their cud" (SS 7, 239). His description of chewing and feeding information creates a palpable sense of mediation that

¹¹ For example, Basil regularly critiqued allegorical interpretation (e.g., EH 9, 136), and it was considerably limited by those teaching and studying in Antioch. See Pelikan 73.

underscores the preacher's specialized role. Other preachers, too, use this same rumination analogy to explain their roles, but Gregory's explanation extends for seven paragraphs. As a result of this prolonged explanation, a pause is felt, which emulates the mediating pause that exists between a preacher's reception and delivery of knowledge to his audience.

Explicit references to the challenging and specialized nature of preaching imply that the preacher's interpretive role is incredibly difficult. Thus the laity, who may not be properly equipped to expound the divine message of scripture, must necessarily rely on their preachers' interpretations of scripture (E 1, 32; LP 1, 21; 3, 45-47; WL "Baptism," 521). This notion of exclusion is likewise alluded to by other preachers, who indicate that preaching and studying theology are best left to select individuals prepared for the tasks (e.g., Gregory of Nazianzus SOG 27, 286; 20, 115; SO 32, 199; see also Fortin 230). Framed accordingly, the work of the preacher—interpreting the text, conveying information, *and* persuading his audience to accept it—is both specialized and laborious. Acknowledgement of such not only helps garner the audience's respect for Gregory's labor-intensive work to prepare and produce a homily, it establishes their dependence on Gregory as a *specialized* laborer, an interpreter.

Together, Gregory's various forms of homiletic references, his citations of sources, his hedging language, and his emphasis on challenge, all help emphasize his role as not just a preacher but as an interpreter. These various rhetorical elements all emphasize Gregory's mediating and rhetorical roles while, at the same time, establishing the audience's dependence on him as a humble, trustworthy, and specialized interpreter.

Allegorical Interpretation

In addition to these references, Gregory's method of allegorical interpretation itself helps to further establish his persona as a *necessary* interpreter. Because of the complexity of scripture, Gregory implies that it is the preacher's duty to make sense of these "coded" messages and "riddles" in which truth is hidden and then relay the revealed knowledge to the audience (B 2, 34; 3, 45). Again, this hermeneutical responsibility is explicitly acknowledged by the other Cappadocians, yet because Gregory's homilies are so thoroughly allegorical, his rhetoric emphasizes this responsibility all the more. Paired with his other rhetoric, Gregory's allegorical interpretations frame him as a *necessary* interpreter, without whom scripture would remain obscure and inaccessible to a lay audience.

Often before even offering an interpretation in his homilies, Gregory emphasizes, as previously mentioned, the obscurity of scripture. In addition to mentioning the inherent challenge of this reality, Gregory also emphasizes its intended design. In his homilies on the Beatitudes, Gregory describes scripture as "a continuing invitation to thirst and to drink . . . an invitation to partake of yet more" (B 2, 34). Likewise, in his homilies on the Song of Songs, Gregory asks, "What meaning, then, did we detect in these words? The wellspring of good things always draws the thirsty to itself—just as in the Gospel the well spring says . . ." (SS 8, 261). Comparing scripture to a "wellspring" implies an endless, ever flowing nature of its messages—a nature which allegorical interpretation alone can properly tap. As an *unending* "riddle" scripture never unveils the full complexity of God's truth (B 2, 34; 3, 45). Gregory explicates that this endless

nature is largely due to the limit of human knowledge, “the frailty of our intellectual nature.” The human mind, Gregory repeatedly notes, is no match for “the divine nature . . . [which] transcends all conceptual comprehension, being inaccessible and unapproachable to speculative thoughts” (E 1, 43). These and other similar passages emphasize that scripture’s challenge is a result of both its divine nature and human’s mortal nature. For Christians, scripture is an *unending* wealth of knowledge because we can never *fully* comprehend things on a divine level.¹² Emphasizing the designed obscurity of scripture helps justify Gregory’s allegorical interpretations.

Gregory’s justifications are implicitly conveyed through his references to scripture’s obscurity and explicitly conveyed through reasoning and examples. Although scripture may be obscure, Gregory contends that its words are never futile; thus it is necessary to often apply various methods of interpretation to derive useful meanings (e.g., E 1, 35; 1, 45; 5, 89; 7, 113; SS 5, 153; 6, 203). In several instances he explicitly uses this line of reasoning. He quotes John 5:39, saying “since it is also one of the Master’s commands, that we must *search the scriptures*, there is an absolute necessity, even if our mind falls short of the truth . . . that we should still ensure by all the zeal for the Word of which we are capable that we do not appear to disregard the Lord’s command” (E 1, 33). In addition to this reasoning, Gregory compares athletes’ contests, which are designed to be challenging exercises, to the process of learning from scripture: “For just as those who have trained in wrestling in the gymnasium . . . so it seems to me

¹² Several years later, Augustine more thoroughly elaborates upon the robust nature of scripture in *On Christian Doctrine* to justify and outline his system of hermeneutics.

that the teaching of Proverbs is an exercise, which trains our souls and makes them supple for the struggle with Ecclesiastes” (E 1, 33).¹³ Gregory explains that the design of scripture, in this case of subsequent books, is all part of the Christian’s challenge.

Likewise, in the preface to his published homilies on the Song of Songs, he provides paragraphs of examples demonstrating and justifying allegorical interpretation as divinely designed. He points to Paul’s use of allegorical interpretation and the regular, purposeful occurrence of allegories throughout scripture, citing more than thirty verses. For example, he quotes Isaiah 11:1 saying, “that a branch shall spring up and a new shoot from the root”; he quotes Psalm 67:30 recounting, “the ‘herd of bulls’ that is let loose upon ‘the heifers of the people’”; and from Psalm 67:16 he recalls “the great David’s ‘curdled mountain’” (SS “Preface,” 11). Through these and other references Gregory not only illustrates the designed, obscure, allegorical meanings of scripture, but he reminds the audience that allegories and allegorical interpretations are not new (or pagan); they are part of Christianity’s Hebrew rhetorical heritage (which Augustine, too, later notes in *On Christian Doctrine* 3.87). Gregory even acknowledges that these citations serve as his “apologia . . . in response to the people who lay it down as a law that one is not to seek from the inspired words any meaning that goes beyond the obvious sense of the text” (SS “Preface,” 11). For the sake of truth, for the sake of Christian understanding, and for the sake of obeying “the Master’s command” Gregory

¹³ Several years later, Augustine reasoned that, “The fusion of obscurity with such eloquence in the salutary words of God was necessary in order that our minds could develop not just by making discoveries but also by undergoing exertion” (4.27-28).

justifies his allegorical method (E 1, 33; WL “Baptism,” 521). Gregory’s emphasis here and elsewhere on allegorical interpretation is a likely product of his influence by Origen’s writings, which he studied (Moore and Wilson 14-23). Regardless of Gregory’s influences, however, through his great efforts to interpret and to justify his interpretations, Gregory frames himself as above all an interpreter.

Like his justifications, Gregory’s allegorical interpretations themselves function to emphasize his persona as an interpreter. Unlike Basil’s homilies, which interpret scripture line by line and even word by word, Gregory promises that his interpretations will “not be too minute in following the syntax of a text but rather [will] attend to the way in which the thought hangs together” (SS 2, 59). Let us turn, for example, to a passage from his third homily on the Song of Songs. In discussion of the phrase “My spikenard gives off his scent,” Gregory says the following:

[It] seems to me to say, in her philosophic discourse, both these things and the following. If a person, having gathered every sweet-smelling flower or scent from the various blooms of virtue and having rendered his whole life a perfume by the fragrance of his daily doings, should become perfect in all respects, he does not have it in him to look intently upon the divine Word itself any more than upon the disc of a sun. Nevertheless, he sees the sun within himself as in a mirror. For the rays of that true and divine Virtue shine upon the purified life through the inward peace that flows from them, and they make the Invisible visible for us and the Incomprehensible comprehensible, because they portray the Sun in the mirror that we are. (SS 3, 101)

Comparing scripture to “blooms of virtue” and teachings to “sweet-smelling flower” or “scent,” Gregory illustrates how the passage from the Song of Songs articulates that scripture, once understood and shared through lived expression becomes (ideally) unnecessary to look upon for its teachings are otherwise “given off” and sensed (i.e., smelled).¹⁴

The aforementioned passage is just one of many detailed passages in which Gregory interprets the implied, allegorical meanings of scripture. These interpretations are very much the focus of Gregory’s homilies; they make up the body paragraphs and, one by one, they combine to illuminate the meaning of a set of scriptural verses. Upon the conclusion of a set of interpretations Gregory generally draws some overarching meaning. For example, in the conclusion of his fifth homily on Ecclesiastes Gregory states, “So may all that we have learned by setting the good and the bad alongside one another for comparison in our present reading be helpful to us in feeling from what is condemned, and a support for the things which are directed to what is superior” (E 5, 98). Likewise, Gregory concludes his fourth homily on the Lord’s Prayer with, “Let us therefore learn from the counsel under consideration what one must ask for today, and what for later” (LP 4, 70). Although, obviously, all homilies provide some sort of conclusion and (ideally) a main message, Gregory’s explicit emphasis on interpretations throughout *and* at the end of his homilies again emphasizes his role as not just a preacher but an interpreter.

¹⁴ Interestingly, not only does Augustine later expand upon this hermeneutic method, he also makes a similar argument about scripture in *On Christian Doctrine* 1.93.

The content within Gregory's allegorical interpretations, too, helps advance his persona as an interpreter. Unlike Basil who often presents analogies based on nature, and unlike Gregory of Nazianzus who imbues his homilies with analogies taken from personal experiences, Gregory of Nyssa often employs analogies based on general human and social experiences, although not necessarily personal ones. The experiences he draws attention to are often normal, mundane experiences that present minimal didactic value until Gregory, as an interpreter, derives from them a more insightful meaning, which he relays to the audience.

Throughout his homilies, Gregory explains the messages of scripture by transforming ordinary experiences into scripture-based lessons. These lessons supplement the comparably complex messages of scripture. For example, Gregory describes the threat of hypocrisy as a silent sin through an analogy of witnessing a Dog's quiet fury before its terrifying rage (B 7, 81). To articulate the pain of losing a bishop, Gregory compares Christianity to a widow (WL "Meletius," 515). To emphasize the fleeting nature of pleasures, Gregory provides the analogy of writing letters in water (E 4, 84). To illustrate the danger of following crowds without reason, Gregory describes the danger of indiscriminately following cattle tracks (SS 2, 74). These and many other analogies, based on ordinary human experiences, supply Gregory's homilies with additional opportunities to frame himself as a necessary interpreter (e.g., medical analogies B 1, 25; 2, 37; 4, 47; 7, 77-80; mirror analogy B 6, 70; 7, 83; SS 4, 115; 5, 163; castle building E 1, 41; rock-climbing E 7, 125; ladder analogies throughout the Beatitude homilies). Through such analogies Gregory is able to further explain and apply

scripture for his audience, expanding their knowledge of Christian truth. In doing so, Gregory all the more frames himself as an interpreter—an interpreter who, ideally, helps transform not just language but lives.

Combined Effects

Gregory's adoption of an interpreter persona, which is crafted through his homiletic references and allegorical interpretations, casts his audience as both distinct from and dependent upon him. His mediating role as an interpreter distinguishes him based on knowledge and skill that his audience, assumedly, does not possess to an equal degree. Although Gregory modulates this relational distinction using hedging language that emphasizes the limits of even his mind, thus conveying a somewhat humble (at least human) ethos, other rhetorical aspects nonetheless establish the audience's dependence upon him.

In particular, Gregory indicates that the challenging obscurity of scripture is designed to necessitate reflection and interpretation. The challenge of scripture and the challenge of allegorical interpretation, Gregory repeatedly labels as *his* duties, his challenges to accept. Although his position as a skilled interpreter places Gregory in a position of authority, the language Gregory uses to construct this context still exhibits his human and fallible nature. He is distinct but not divine, an interpreter but not a sage.

This constrained position of authority, constructed by his transparent limitations *and* projected knowledge, allows Gregory to maintain a somewhat close relationship with his audience. He helps them through their transformative Christian journey, deciphering their map for them, but he himself is on the journey too; he merely has the

distinguished role of being their interpreter through life, their “guide for a fair voyage” (SS 12, 361).

Gregory’s rhetoric, his persona, and the relationship he crafts with his congregation together foster a notably distinct community from those of Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. His audience is not cast as pupils or as dissonant citizens, but as individuals in need of aid on their transformative journey toward heaven. Assuming that rhetoric has the power to constitute the very nature of communities (cf. Jasinski; Charland; Smith and Hyde), the distinctions among the Cappadocians’ homilies are rhetorically significant. Let us turn, then, to examine the implications of the Cappadocians’ distinct personas and the perceptions, relationships, and communities their rhetoric constructs.

Rhetorical Implications

As illustrated in the preceding analyses, all three Cappadocians approached and framed the preaching position quite differently despite their shared Cappadocian context. Their differences are all the more interesting considering that they occasionally preached *among* each other. Although the leaders oversaw and preached within their own particular sees; on occasion they also preached to visitors (including each other), to other congregations they visited, and to gatherings of other Christian leaders. Many of the homilies in the preceding analyses derive from such occasions. And still, regardless of context, the preachers maintained their distinct personas. Notice of the Cappadocians’ simultaneous rhetorical differences *and* shared positions and contexts begets a number of important rhetorical questions. How do peer rhetors’ distinct personas affect audience

perceptions of preachers and the preaching role? What are the potential constitutive effects of rhetorical variance among peer rhetors? And finally, how do distinct peer personas affect rhetors' argumentative potential? These questions will be addressed through discussions of the rhetorical challenges, rhetorical potential, and modern applications of peer personas.

Rhetorical Challenges

The Cappadocian Fathers spent much time together, maintained correspondence, and shared similar theological views (Holman "Healing" 285); thus, even though their personas were different, the messages of their homilies were not necessarily contrasting. All three vehemently defended the same Trinitarian view, all three expressed concern about certain Cappadocian behaviors (e.g., greed), and all three spoke out in theological unity against various heresies. This, however, is not the case among many of the other fourth-century preachers. The abundance of competing theological perspectives left a door open for incompatible rhetorics and incompatible local communities. For example, Gregory of Nazianzus' homilies in Constantinople at the chapel of Anastasia directly contrast the messages, or at least theology, of other Arian preachers in surrounding churches (SOG 34, 334). And, given the differences among the Cappadocian Fathers' personas, we may assume that additional differences existed among other preachers' messages, personas, and communities.

As demonstrated by Gregory's stay in Constantinople, in the Cappadocians' contexts, both preachers and lay persons occasionally travelled. Although we cannot be certain of the travel patterns of their audiences, we know that the Cappadocian Fathers

travelled regularly (some of which is documented in their homilies) and that they preached to more than their regular local audiences. Thus, we may assume that audiences were exposed at least occasionally to the preaching of visitors—preaching which varied rhetorically. In addition, we know that local audiences periodically became subject to different preachers when church leaders were appointed to different roles, when priests filled in for traveling bishops, when individuals decided to attend a different church, when irregular attendants attended different churches on various holidays, etc. As a result, audiences were likely exposed to a variety of preaching personas and, consequently, to a variety of projected relationships with preachers. If, for example, a congregation repeatedly assumes the position of ignorant pupils but then are exposed to a preacher that addresses them instead as peers, how does this affect their perception of and relationship to the past and the present preachers? To preachers in general?

From the preceding analyses combined with existing literature, a number of rhetorical challenges may be posited regarding the laity's *exposure* to such variance. Although we cannot know the exact degree of preaching variance the Cappadocians' audiences were exposed to, we can posit how exposure to variance in general affected the ongoing processes of persuasion. The subsequent challenges are not particularly surprising; however they are nonetheless important to consider given the prevalence of peer personas. From the preceding analyses I argue that exposure to varied peer personas may hinder consistent understandings of the preaching role, foster position

identifications based on individual rather than shared characteristics, and hamper persuasive efforts.

First, building from Jamieson and Osborn we may posit that different personas, like metaphoric clusters, can project starkly different speaker-audience relationships (cf. Jamieson 52). Like metaphoric roles, personas have the capacity to alter the audience's overall perception of each preacher. This, Michael Osborn suggests, is the power of rhetoric: "the first, most basic function of rhetorical language—including metaphor—is to control perceptions: how we see and encounter the world in which we live" ("Trajectory" 83; "Archetypal" 117). Correspondingly, we may assume that the preachers' distinct self-portrayals impacted their audiences' perceptions of them as preachers and impacted their understanding of the religious context of which they were a part.

Because preacher-congregant relationships vary by preacher, audiences' exposure to different preachers may hinder their development of a consistent understanding of their role and their relationship to church leaders. The Cappadocian Father's occasional references to their audience's familiarity with multiple preachers' messages supports the assumption that Cappadocian laity were exposed to various preachers and personas (e.g., FF "Drunkards," 83). In one speech context, a preacher's persona may cast the audience as peers, in another ignorant pupils, yet in another dependent recipients. *Exposure* to such inconsistency can complicate the audience's understanding of the general preaching role (e.g., as a messenger, interpreter, prophet, guide, conductor, peer, or teacher) and their own role as congregants. Just as mixed

metaphors complicate and constitute public conceptions and opinions of various issues (Jensen 28; Osborn and Ehninger 226), so too might mixed personas complicate the Cappadocians' and other shared audiences' understandings of preachers and themselves.

Because it may be difficult to make collective sense of the differences *among* preachers' personas and relationships, audiences may simplify this process by closely identifying preachers as individuals through their projected personas rather than identifying preachers *primarily as preachers*. This thwarts, at least implicitly, a united understanding of preachers and their roles within Christianity and potentially allows audiences to cultivate particular attitudes toward preachers as individuals rather than toward preachers as preachers.

Second, attention to preachers' distinctions as individual humans may also challenge the argumentative efforts of each preacher. Exposed to variance, congregants may come to doubt preachers' projected selves and messages as subjective. As long as a rhetor is perceived as authentic, the audience's doubt is suspended enough to make possible a positive evaluation of the message and, ideally, persuasion (Jasinski "(Re)Constituting" 472). But when the personas of peer rhetors contrast, audiences aware of the contrast may identify each persona as a *mere* persona and not an extension of a more authentic ethos that informs, justifies, and validates the message of each preacher. In short, exposure to variance may lead an audience to call into question the rhetors' portrayed ethos, subtly underscoring the rhetorical, the crafted, the human nature of their homilies. Although readers are exposed to similar variance through the gospels' portrayals of Jesus, this variance surrounds a single person and is reconciled in

a number of ways. As Craig Smith notes, by the end of Matthew's gospel for example, any tensions created by competing personas and dichotomies are relieved through Christ's resurrection and his fulfillment of Hebrew criteria ("Persona" 64, 65). The Cappadocians, however, do not go through a similar process that allows audiences to make sense of their differences. Thus, exposure to preachers with different personas may not only frustrate a shared lay understanding of the role, it may lead some to even doubt or reject preachers' projected ethos altogether.

As a result, preachers' persuasive efforts are somewhat hampered—a third rhetorical challenge of distinct peer personas. Basil's projected professorial authority is undercut, for example, by the limit Gregory of Nyssa places on his own authority (e.g., through hedging language). Similarly, the peer relationship Gregory of Nazianzus attempts to construct is potentially thwarted by both Basil and Gregory of Nyssa's projected distinction from their audience. And these are just examples of some of the complications that may arise; the situation is further complicated when other preachers and personas are considered. Although Cappadocian audiences may not have all been exposed to the same combinations of preachers, undoubtedly they were exposed to some degree of variance. Exposure to such variance, then and now, may call into question the projected rhetoric, persona, and authority of any one preacher.

In light of the challenges of distinct personas, it may also be helpful to consider the potential challenges of ambiguous personas. In the case that a single rhetor within a collective group does not regularly demonstrate a particular persona, audience perceptions of the rhetors' shared role may also be frustrated. For example, if a preacher

borrowed and delivers the (diverse) homilies of other preachers without adapting them to his own voice.¹⁵ Or, if a preacher regularly delivers homilies that project relatively limited characterizations. Although, theoretically speaking, it may be impossible for a rhetor to ever be completely devoid of a persona (some faint characterizations may always be inferred), certainly rhetors can de/emphasize personas in a number of ways. Scenarios in which a single preacher's persona is ambiguous or varied can frustrate audience understandings of the preaching position by not offering a clear outline of how to view the role. Much like the case of conflicting personas, in the case of varied or ambiguous personas audience members may not gain the desired perspective of the preacher's role, his ethos, and his arguments.

Audiences may form their own ideas based on other contextual clues, but these ideas may not be grounded in what the preachers deem to be representative of their role. Imagine, for example, the instructor of an online course interacts with students but provides relatively little language that offers clues regarding how his or her role should be interpreted. Then a student meets and interacts with the instructor at a restaurant and uses this experience to interpret the instructor's *instructing* role. Such an interpretation may be far removed from the instructor's individual or the school's global (and preferred) interpretation of the instructor role. Without clarifying for audiences how their roles should be interpreted, rhetors may risk confusing or misleading audience

¹⁵ For example, as Lisa Kaaren Bailey has explained, the homilies of Ambrose, Augustine, Eusebius of Gallicanus, and many others were circulated and re-used for centuries (21). On the circulation of homilies, George Kennedy also notes that until 529 some priests commonly delivered homilies composed by their bishops (*Classical* 143, 204, 159; *Greek* 182).

understandings, whether speaking individually or in a peer rhetor context. Rhetors who portray varied or ambiguous personas additionally lose the opportunity to build nuanced relationships with their audience members, like those constituted by the Cappadocians' personas. This, in turn, hampers their ability to also constitute dynamic local communities, which I will next explain.

Rhetorical Potential

Despite the risks and challenges of ambiguous and distinct personas, the employment of personas among peer rhetors presents significant rhetorical potential. As Jamieson, Jasinski, and Charland have already made clear, adopting a persona advances the opportunity to shape an audience's understanding of the role of and their relationship with a rhetor. Applying this theory to the rhetoric of the Cappadocian Fathers we also learn how personas adopted by peer rhetors may, despite the challenges, help shape perceptions and constitute communities on a macro level, such as the creation of a regional or global Christian community beyond a single church context. With a little cooperation and forethought, peer rhetors may advance distinct *compatible* personas that (1) *constitute local communities that enrich one another* and (2) *augment each rhetor's rhetorical potential*.

Advancing distinct personas that are simultaneously compatible is very much possible and can be rhetorically fruitful. Building from Leff's explanation that "metaphor does not consist solely in word choice, or in the substitution of one word for another," but is gradually and collectively constructed, we may posit that complementary personas can be collectively crafted in various ways (Leff "Topical" 218). As the study

of the Cappadocians' rhetoric makes clear, minute rhetorical details can not only craft distinct personas, they can craft complementary ones. With careful attention to their peer position, peer rhetors can collaborate to minimize problematic contradictions.

For example, although the nature and tone of the Cappadocians' rhetoric and relationships with their audiences greatly differ—Gregory of Nyssa's persona casts him as an interpreter, Gregory of Nazianzus a conductor, and Basil a teacher—the personas are moderately compatible in that they maintain relationships of dependence. The necessity of the preacher's role is preserved by each persona among each community. This in turn preserves a degree of balance within the greater Christian context between preachers and congregants. From compatible preaching personas, congregants may gain a more complex understanding of their communities and may even be moved to realize distinct communities that enrich one another.

In the case that distinct personas are complementary, audiences exposed to distinct personas may come to better understand the complex shared role of the peer rhetors and the complex nature of their greater organization—for example, the complex role of the preacher and the complex nature of Christianity, which understands itself to have one body, though many parts (1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Romans 4:3-8). Preachers employing distinct but complementary personas may be identified as distinct “parts” of a greater body of preachers and Christians. Understanding of the diverse nature of this body can help explain, advance, and fulfill the teachings of scripture. In a non-religious context, complementary peer personas may likewise help rhetors demonstrate and even realize the many ways an organization's mission statement may be fulfilled by its

employees. As long as peer rhetors' personas are compatible, as long as they work in the same direction without causing significant confusion or conflict, they may help advance a more nuanced understanding and realization of a greater reality.

Different characterizations assigned to audiences by rhetors' distinct peer personas may also diversify audience members' understandings of themselves and their communities. This theory is built upon the idea that individuals do not alone construct their own self-identities. As Edwin Black explains, understanding oneself necessitates understanding one's relationship with others: "The quest for identity is the modern pilgrimage. And we look to one another for hints as to whom we should become" ("Second" 113). In a community setting, Jasinski explains, individuals identities, characters, norms, and even behaviors are shaped by the discourse of the community (Jasinski "(Re)Constituting" 468, 479). In the Cappadocian Fathers' contexts, their discourse as leaders, their homilies, helped constitute the identities, characterizations, norms, and behaviors of their respective audiences. Building from Jamieson, we may more specifically posit that the Cappadocians' personas, like metaphoric clusters, held constitutive rhetorical potential for shaping audiences and communities. While such suppositions may not be true of every audience member, as Edwin Black explains, "they do apply to the persuasible, and that makes them germane to rhetoric" ("Second" 113). Thus, the preachers' constant homilies, their repetitive rhetoric, may have gradually constituted distinct local communities. Fourth-century preachers' homilies and theology, we know, effected at times strong responses from the Christian public sector; it is not a stretch, then, to posit that their preaching also constituted the natures of their local

communities (Van Dam *Becoming* 9; Maxwell 11). For many Christian Cappadocians, their understandings of their religion, their roles, and their relationships with others were potentially defined by preachers' homilies.

By assigning different characterizations to their audiences, each preacher effectively creates a different subset of Christianity. Smith and Hyde's interpretation of Heidegger holds that individuals' "everyday way of being-with-others defines a realm of emotional orientations and attachments 'attuning' us to and helping to disclose the situations of which we are a part" (448). Accordingly we may assume that Basil's formal and comparatively cold persona and context, which sharply contrasts Gregory of Nazianzus' warm, affectionate persona and environment, attunes his audience toward a different understanding of their relational role with him as a preacher and toward a different understanding (and even realization) of the nature of their shared community. The same may be said of Gregory of Nyssa's interpreter persona and transactional context, which contrasts Gregory's of Nazianzus' peer-centered approach. The emotional contexts constructed by the preachers' different personas shape the relationships they built with their audiences and the local church communities they built together.

Such variance adds nuance and helps make the nature of Christians and Christianity more robust, more profound. This is certainly true of the many characterizations the gospels assign to Christ (cf. Smith "Persona"). Such variance can contribute to the growth of specialized communities (e.g., distinct orders of priests and nuns), which are uniquely characterized by the traits, values, and norms emphasized

within a community. The development of distinct local communities can, in turn, enrich the greater community with a wealth of diversity. One community might be characterized by their care for the poor, another by their piety, and still another by their effort to maintain accord. Of course, these are merely ideal outcomes of constituted communities. In reality, the individuals that comprise such communities can stray from their assigned characterizations, defy community norms, and reject the message of a preacher. Nonetheless, the opportunity to employ peer personas that rhetorically constitute communities is a significant opportunity for local and global enrichment.

A second implication of compatible peer personas is the augmentation of each rhetor's argumentative potential. As peer rhetors, Basil, Gregory, and Gregory preached to Cappadocian audiences on similar topics in relatively compatible manners. Likewise, they sometimes even preached on the same Christian subjects, and in several cases the content of their extant homilies is notably similar (e.g., Basil's homily "On Baptism" in FF and Gregory of Nazianzus' homily 40 in SOG). Nonetheless, the fact that their rhetorical styles, their personas, were distinct from one another likely indicates that each preacher affected his audience in a different way. Given their distinct but complementary rhetorical natures, where the rhetoric of one preacher failed to move a certain audience, the rhetoric of another peer rhetor could prove successful.

As long as peer personas are complementary, if employed to achieve similar endeavors they may actually help compound the rhetorical potential of a group of speakers. The stubborn pupils of Basil's audience may finally hear the voice of God through Gregory of Nyssa's interpreter persona. Although Basil may, at times, reach the

rhetorical limit of the teacher persona—“For if the drunkard is out of his mind and in a stupor, whoever rebukes him goes through this rigmarole in vain since he does not hear a thing!”—a speaker like Gregory of Nyssa who purports to deliver the message of God may successfully convince a drunkard that he, indeed, hears the voice of God (FF “Drunkards,” 85). By complementing each other’s rhetoric, peer rhetors can effectively compound their argumentative potential and move an audience. In the case of the Cappadocian Fathers, we might describe their combined rhetoric as *triangulated rhetoric*. By together using three different but complementary approaches, the Cappadocians could better strive to reach argumentative success, to effect Christian change in their Cappadocian audience. The necessary or ideal balance of peer speaker’s complementary personas and characteristics is not yet known; however, this study has begun to illustrate how personas might work together. The evident complementary nature of the Cappadocians minimizes the aforementioned potential challenges that otherwise contrasting peer personas could produce, while their still distinct natures augment the preachers’ collective rhetorical potential as peer rhetors.

Adopting and maintaining compatible peer personas is one means by which peer rhetors can work within their local and global rhetorical situations. For peer rhetors, personas can be useful, purposeful, and constitutive. Although they necessitate some work to ensure that compatible rhetor and audience characterizations are projected by their personas, on the whole personas may be useful means for peer rhetors to establish relationships (even close relationships, as does the rhetoric of Gregory of Nazianzus) with a potentially large audience. Once established, personas and relationships can help

speakers and audience members form (ideally productive) models of local and global community communication and interaction. Being able to establish even a small degree of consistency among these items and among a potentially large group of rhetors and audience members is a significant rhetorical accomplishment that can help foster more cohesive local and global communities. In addition, complementary peer personas can help constitute specialized communities that don't just coexist but even enrich one another. Finally, complementary peer personas can help increase the rhetorical potential of a group of rhetors who otherwise might alone and alike struggle to move an audience. With these potential benefits of complementary peer personas come a number of future applications but also necessary questions and directions for future research.

Future Directions

In a modern context, the implications of the Cappadocian Fathers' rhetoric retain significance. A number of situations continue to exist in which multiple peer speakers address shared audiences. These contexts may include organizational settings among corporate spokespersons and the public, educational settings among educators and students, and contemporary religious settings among (co)pastors and congregants. In all cases, speakers of supposedly equal positions address communities and help constitute their beliefs, values, and norms. Variance among peer speakers, especially given their potential adoption of distinct personas, may hold the same implications as does the rhetoric of the Cappadocian Fathers. Turning our attention to a modern preaching context, for example, we may begin to again see the challenges and potential of peer personas.

Today, preachers more than ever speak among other preachers in a shared context. Some preachers are tasked with preaching alongside other ministers at a single church. Preachers continue to travel, as did the Cappadocian Fathers, and they increasingly record and post their homilies online, which can then garner local or national followings (e.g., Higdon; Ricard). Still other preachers, including the pope and various bishops, have their special and even daily homilies circulated much the same as political speeches, online in full and also partially disseminated among the masses through various means.

In all these contemporary cases modern preachers must make a number of rhetorical choices. To begin, they must choose whether their rhetoric ultimately caters to their local or global audiences—to establishing intimacy (and enhancing their ethos with their local congregations) or enhancing the greater transmission of the message. Even if they do not consciously focus on this element, their rhetoric may likely cater to one or the other. Basil's distant and general rhetoric downplayed his relationship with his local audience but facilitates his message's resonance and transmission with a secondary audience. In contrast, Gregory of Nazianzus' context-specific and personal rhetoric cultivated his relationship with his local audience while complicating his message's resonance with a secondary audience. Still, Gregory of Nyssa's intermediary rhetoric emphasizes and establishes his relationship of dependence with his local *and* secondary audience. All three preachers' personas ultimately shaped how their audiences (then and now) understand them as preachers and are affected by their rhetoric.

In addition, preachers today must consider how their rhetoric complements or conflicts with the rhetoric of those around them. Certainly consideration of how local preachers' rhetoric coincides with the pope's example is common. However, as this study indicates, it is important that local preachers also consider how their rhetoric coincides with the rhetoric of their peer rhetors. While making these considerations, preachers ought to consider their constitutive and rhetorical goals in light of their peer rhetor status.

Peer rhetors who wish to identify, evaluate, and improve their implementation of peer personas could begin group and self-analyses with the following questions: What are the present characteristics of your rhetoric? What personas do these traits craft? What are your rhetorical goals for the audience? How are they de/emphasized and un/realized by your present personas? What sort of relationship and community would you like to build with your local audience? How do you want your audience to perceive your role and their role in the greater (e.g., organizational) context? How might these perceptions benefit from and be challenged by your present peer personas? How can the present personas be rhetorically shaped, reshaped, or emphasized to better meet these goals? Such questions, asked of and in light of peer personas, can help rhetors move their audiences and constitute their ideal rhetorical contexts and communities.

In the Cappadocians' context and today, what preachers focus on and how they craft their messages ultimately shape their relationship with and their ability to move various audiences. From a constitutive perspective, their homilies can constitute their relationships with and effect on the local congregations and even a greater secondary

audience. As this study has indicated, preachers' personas, as particular elements within their rhetoric, hold a number of important implications. While they may contribute to the growth of a rich diversity of Christian communities characterized by distinct values, preachers' distinct personas may also hinder the rhetorical potential of their messages when audiences become aware of existing variance.

The challenges and rhetorical potential surrounding peer personas suggest that the adoption of preaching personas *should* be approached, but with caution. Their constitutive and argumentative benefit is clear. In addition, it is unlikely that variance among preaching personas could ever be absolutely avoided given the likely close connection between a preacher's persona and his authentic self. Still, in order to downplay the potentially negative implications of varied personas, peer rhetors must ensure that the personas they adopt are compatible and, ideally, complementary. Peer speakers must ensure that their personas do not so greatly contrast that they constitute incompatible communities, inhibit audiences' understandings of their relationship to the speakers, nor add unnecessary emphasis on the rhetorical nature of their messages.

These challenges add to a long list of constraints no doubt already felt by preachers. Even in the fourth-century, Gregory of Nazianzus, speaking on behalf of all preachers, acknowledged the difficulty of preaching: "My brothers, you cannot know how difficult it is for us to stand here as a pompous figure of authority and lay these rules upon you, the people. . . . You cannot know how great a gift from God is silence and not having to speak on every occasion" (SO 32, 201). Because of the rhetorical dimensions of preaching—both the crafting and the persuading—preachers are faced

with challenges and constraints that complicate their speaking and their reception. In addition, language use itself is a challenge given the religious content of homilies. For, as Gregory explains, “all speech is by nature loose and inadequate and, because it is open to challenge, vulnerable, and speech about God all the more so . . . [emotion] runs higher and the venture is more difficult” (SO 32, 201). Navigating these many challenges necessitates preachers’ adoption of rhetorical practices that grant rather than detract argumentative potential.

The adoption of preaching personas, as this study has illustrated, may prove persuasive for singular audiences but challenging for multiple *unless* care is taken to ensure personas are compatible. In that case, preachers may find comfort and rhetorical strength in the rhetorical support that their peer rhetors provide. The strengths and weaknesses of their preaching personas may be complemented by the rhetorical strengths and weaknesses of a peer’s persona. Although Basil, like many preachers and teachers today, may have at times felt so disheartened that he confessed, “the futility of previous efforts check my impulse and blunt my willingness” to preach and teach again, rhetors with complementary peer personas may find comfort in knowing that their rhetoric together compounds the rhetorical strength of a single preacher and persona (FF “Drunkards,” 83). Although such an effect may be gradual, especially if speakers are not frequently sharing audiences, eventually difficult audience members may be moved by the complementary persona of a peer rhetor. In taking on the challenge of crafting and employing complementary peer personas, peer rhetors may be rewarded through their

audience's better understanding of their context's complexity and rewarded by their collective realization of enriched and enriching local communities.

By examining the creation and rhetorical effects of distinct personas among peer rhetors, this study has contributed to present rhetorical scholarship by building upon and connecting theories of rhetorical personas and constitutive rhetoric. The analysis and discussion of the Cappadocian Fathers' rhetoric has illustrated the challenges, constitutive benefits, and argumentative potential pertaining to peer rhetors' personas. Although care must be taken to ensure peer personas are complementary, once employed peer personas can rhetorically constitute communities that are at once nuanced and complementary, enriching their members and greater context. In addition, the utilization of peer personas can help a set of peer rhetors triangulate, so to speak, their rhetoric to increase the efficacy of their persuasion. Supplementary research is warranted to further understand how peer rhetors might ensure their personas are complementary. In addition, further research is necessary to better understand the rhetorical effects of preachers' personas on modern audiences. Some scholars, including Horan and Raposo, have already begun this work by quantitatively examining audience responses to preacher-as-teacher personas. More rhetorical work in this and related fields will help explain the effects of rhetorical strategies espoused at the pulpit.

Lastly, as this study has begun to do, further rhetorical and historical research can and should connect the longstanding but oft ignored relationship between rhetoric and preaching, including early and modern preaching. Studies exploring the history of rhetorical events and exploring historical events from a rhetorical perspective can

provide much knowledge about forms and functions of rhetoric and its synchronic and diachronic roles (cf. Zarefsky “Four” 29-30). Analyzing how early preachers’ individually and collectively helped shape Christian communities through their homilies is one such endeavor. Not only has this study provided much practical insight for preachers and other practitioners, it has importantly documented one part of an ongoing rhetorical history—a history of rhetorical preaching and community constitution. In addition, by studying the Cappadocian’s constitutive rhetoric we have gleaned much new *rhetorical* knowledge about this otherwise well documented moment in history.

Adding to the historical and practical contributions of this study, the following chapter will investigate how the Cappadocians’ homilies evolved from Greek and Judaic origins and fit within the long tradition of religious rhetoric. Although today’s preachers may not be trained rhetoricians by name, they continue to employ rhetoric much like their early Christian predecessors, including the Cappadocian Fathers. Thus, it is important that we understand the practical, historical, and theoretical implications associated with the *rhetorical* preaching tradition. *Personas*, which this study has examined, are just one of the many rhetorical strategies utilized by preachers. More rhetorical scholarship on homilies, including that of the subsequent chapter, will help augment our understanding of the early characteristics and rhetorical foundations of preaching, which continue to inform modern preaching practices.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN PROPHETS BECOME PREACHERS:

SAINT BASIL AND THE EVOLUTION OF A CHRISTIAN JEREMIAD

In an American context, when asked to think of early preaching, an informed individual might mention the Puritan jeremiad. So rhetorically distinguished is this form of speech that political descendants of early American religious and political leaders continue to use jeremiads today. In the last century, Ronald Reagan, Richard Nixon, and even Barack Obama borrowed from this early American preaching tradition to move audiences toward desired change (cf. Ritter “American”; Harrell; Jones and Rowland). Yet, what few individuals and scholars have paused to investigate is the antecedent history of the Puritan jeremiad. As this dissertation has made clear, the preaching tradition in general has a long and enduring history. Using generic rhetorical criticism, this chapter provides theoretical insight necessary for understanding how at least one specific form of preaching evolved from Greek and Judaic origins to become a form recognized and utilized by later Christian preachers.

To investigate the theoretical threads that unite Hebrew, Greek, and Christian rhetoric, any number of homilies could be examined; the rhetorical foundations of the Cappadocian Fathers are apparent in all their homilies. However, Basil’s homily “In Time of Famine and Drought,” which this essay examines, exemplifies early Christian adoption and adaptation of a specific form of preaching, namely the jeremiad. This particular homily is one of Basil’s homilies on social justice, which very evidently

amalgamate rhetorical traditions in general but also the Hebrew *prophetic* tradition, Judeo-Christian principles of *reformation*, and the Christian principle of *charity*. The combination of these elements within Basil's jeremiad, in particular, makes for a theoretically rich rhetorical study.

While the jeremiad has received much scholarly attention, more remains to be understood of its history. How, for example, did the prophetic tradition, especially the jeremiad, evolve in light of Christ's arrival? In light of the debut of Christian preachers? Answers may be found by studying the rhetorical shifts among early Christian rhetoric, including Basil's homily. The findings of these inquiries contribute to our theoretical understanding of the history of rhetoric and the trajectory of various rhetorical traditions. We gain understanding of how the Christian preaching tradition evolved. In addition, the findings help document Basil's rhetorical choices, as a rhetor and rhetorician, within his specific historical context.

Basil's adaptation of Greek and Hebrew rhetoric is a reflection of his rhetorical origins but also a reflection of the rhetorical exigencies within his historical context. The Cappadocian drought and famine of 368-369 was, according to Gregory of Nazianzus, "the most severe one ever recorded" (SOG 43, 407). Throughout this disaster, Basil's four homilies on social justice increasingly convey a sense of gravity, severity, and urgency.¹⁶ As the disaster worsened, Basil's words intensified. By the time "In Time of

¹⁶ These homilies include: *To the Rich* (Homily 7); *I Will Tear Down My Barns* (Homily 6); *In Time of Famine and Drought* (Homily 8); and *Against Those Who Lend at Interest* (Homily Two on Psalm 14). See Schroeder 39. On delivery dates see: Holman "Rich City" 208; Silvas 167.

Famine and Drought” was delivered at the peak of the famine, Basil strongly exhorted the Caesareans to obey the Christian commandment of love so that the drought and suffering would end. Adapting the form of a jeremiad, Basil asserted that the disaster was caused by God to punish the Caesareans for breaking the Christian covenant of love: “This is why the fields are arid: because love has dried up” (*Social Justice* 76).

The tremendous calamities that Basil accounts evidence the need for his message and his rhetoric. His homily “In Time” paints a morbid picture of the Caesareans’ suffering:

Hunger is the most severe of human maladies, the very worst kind of death. The other hazards to human life do not involve extended torment: whether in the case of death by the sword, which brings about a swift end, or roaring flames, which swiftly extinguish life, or wild beasts, that tear one limb from limb with teeth, the interval of suffering is relatively brief. But starvation prolongs the pain and draws out the agony, so that sickness is ensconced and lurks within the body, while death is ever present yet ever delayed. The body becomes dehydrated, its temperature drops, its bulk dwindles, its strength wastes away. Skin clings to bone like a spider’s web. The flesh loses its natural coloration: its ruddiness fades as the flow of blood decreases, while the alabaster of the skin turns discolored and dark. The body takes on a mottled hue, with yellow and black patches mingling in a manner terrible to see. (84)

Such haunting images pervaded Caesarea in 369. In his homily “In Time of Famine and Drought” Basil makes clear that such suffering need not exist. “How many torments,” he

asks, “does the one who neglects such a body deserve? For whoever has the ability to remedy the suffering of others, but chooses rather to withhold aid out of selfish motives, may properly be judged the equivalent of a murderer” (85). The ruthlessness of the famine, Basil argues, is merely a measure of the ruthlessness of the Caesareans’ hearts.

To move his audience to honor the Christian covenant of Love Basil emulates the Hebrew jeremiad. Basil transfers the tradition’s rhetorical force to the still-developing Christian rhetoric. Yet particular generic differences arise given that Basil is a presbyter not a prophet. Through analysis of Basil’s homily “In Time of Famine and Drought,” I demonstrate how generic constraints of the jeremiad evolved during early Christianity. I argue that Basil’s ethos and form, as the rhetoric of a presbyter, constitute a subtle but new middle ground. Divinely inspired yet strategically selected, Basil’s rhetoric responds to the needs and nature of early Christianity.

Before tracing this rhetorical phenomenon, I review literature pertaining to the Greek and Judaic origins of Christian rhetoric, the Hebrew prophetic tradition, the jeremiad, and reformist rhetoric. I then conduct a generic analysis of Basil’s homily “In Time of Famine and Drought,” also known as Basil’s eighth moral homily. The homily’s adaptation of the jeremiad makes it rhetorically significant. Significance also rests in the fact that “In Time of Famine and Drought” was not even translated into English until 2001, despite Basil’s historical and rhetorical renown.

Following the generic analysis of Basil’s jeremiad—his ethos and his form—I discuss implications of this study, contemporary jeremiads, and directions for future research. As will become evident, this study contributes to scholarship on a number of

levels. First, it addresses a gap in generic research on the jeremiad, which generally explores the Hebrew form and contemporary adaptations but not early Christian adaptations. Second, this essay provides a sketch of the rhetorical role of early Christian presbyters, particularly pertaining to homiletics. Third, the study joins existing scholarship to trace how early Christians adopted and adapted various rhetorical traditions to meet evolving needs. Not the least of its contributions, however, is this essay's subtle suggestion that early Christian rhetoric warrants revisiting; it is ripe with historical, theological, and rhetorical situations that inform contemporary contexts.

Converging Rhetorical Traditions

The Ancient Roots of Christian Rhetoric

That early Christianity would be rhetorically robust should not be surprising given the Greek and Judaic roots that constitute its past. Many early Christian leaders were trained rhetoricians; other Christians, as converts from Judaism, had been steeped in their own rich rhetorical traditions (Kennedy *Classical* 167). Although many leaders, including Basil, were continually leery of “pagan rhetoric,” by the end of the fourth century Eastern Christians had found relative peace with the Greek tradition (Murphy “Saint” 207-209; Kennedy *Classical* 167). Basil’s discourse speaks to his rhetorical education, historical context, and adaptation of existing rhetorical traditions to meet rising exigencies. His homilies incorporate an awareness of the utility of rhetoric while keeping with the early popular trend of a “simple ‘homily’ style of preaching” that was conversational and exegetical (Murphy *Rhetoric* 55). Basil’s adoption of the jeremiad

and complementary characteristics of Hebrew prophetic discourse showcase how his homilies could be profoundly rhetorical even while maintaining relatively simple style.

Basil's savvy navigation of rhetorical traditions is informed, in part, by the transmission of classical rhetoric. Throughout the ages, Kennedy notes, classical rhetoric has offered new inspirations and adaptations to meet "the needs of each era" (*Classical* 1). Christian rhetors employed Greek rhetoric, for example, "to address audiences educated in rhetorical schools" and familiar with Greek traditions—a lingering (Greek rhetorical) influence of the Palestinian context of Christianity's early historical and geographical development (*Classical* 139).¹⁷ As Christian rhetoric emerged and adopted Greek tendencies, it developed distinctions from its Hebrew origins (*Greek* 180).

The nature of Christian rhetorical appeals evidences the influence and convergence of the Greek and Hebrew rhetorical traditions in the making of Christian rhetoric. James Kinneavy and James Darsey both trace this convergence (cf. Kinneavy 107; Darsey 16-34). For example, while Greek ethical appeals relate to the speaker's character, goodwill, and coherence, Judaic ethical appeals are built upon the divine and scripture-based authority of a speaker. Similarly, Greek logical appeals include examples and enthymemes, while Judeo-Christian ones include those but also parables, miracles, and reported signs. Additionally, Greek pathetic appeals are founded upon emotion, while Christian appeals use emotion but also Judaic means including threats, promises,

¹⁷ As discussed in Chapter Two, the Palestine area—its architecture, politics, language, citizenry, and especially its education system—was heavily influenced by Greek culture (Kinneavy 56-80; Kennedy *Classical* 139). Within this context Jews played active roles despite religious and cultural differences (72). The influence of Greek education within this context, Kinneavy argues, is an important contributing factor to the rhetorical development of Christian rhetoric.

signs, and miracles. The amalgamation of Greek and Hebrew rhetoric in the evolving Christian rhetorical tradition thus informs the rhetoric of Basil.

Christian homilies, as Kennedy notes, were influenced by Greek diatribes, Neoplatonic philosophy, and also Jewish Sabbath services, which involved public address rituals that were influenced by Greek culture during the Hellenistic period (*Classical* 143-144). Understanding *how* Basil adapts these traditions in his homily, however, remains an open question. Knowledge of Christian rhetors' amalgamation of Greek and Hebrew discourse informs our study of Basil's rhetorical reinvention of the jeremiad, a generic form within Hebrew prophetic discourse.

The Hebrew Prophetic Tradition

The Hebrew prophecy—a well-documented discursive tradition—is one of three forms of address within the Old Testament (the others being epideictic and covenantal speech). It is also one of many genres of biblical rhetoric, which include narrative, poetry, and wisdom literature (Kennedy *Classical* 137-142). Multiple types of Hebrew prophecies exist, including the “prophecy of disaster,” the “prophecy of salvation,” and several secondary forms, such as the trial scene described in Isaiah 41 (Kennedy *Classical* 142). For Christian rhetoric, Hebrew prophecy held importance; the type-archetype relationship that existed between prophecies and their messianic fulfillment linked the content and tone of the rhetorical traditions, providing “a basis of authority” for the apostles' and later Christians' preaching (142).

Hebrew prophetic discourse is generally characterized by several stylistic elements. Margaret Zulick explains, for example, that the blending of argument and

poetics is “both prophetic and . . . coldly rational” (“Normative” 482). Relying on Michael Leff’s work on metaphors and Charles Kauffman’s essay on “Poetic as Argument,” Zulick demonstrates that Hebrew prophetic force is routinely built upon “emotional logic” or “the sublime,” which marries “the proper and felicitous, but also [the] miraculous” (488). Through such rhetoric, the Hebrew prophetic tradition emphasizes the power of not just speech but eloquent speech, which Basil, as a rhetorician-turned-presbyter, knew well (see also Zulick “Active” 369).

The employment of the prophetic model, as with any genre, is the result of various constraints and exigencies to which a rhetor responds (see Jones and Rowland 160; Campbell and Jamieson “Form” 21). In the context of Hebrew scripture, prophetic utterance as a speech form is understood to be the product of a prophet’s divine mission and moment rather than a “strategic choice”; decisive action is instead emphatically placed on the hearer (Jones and Rowland 160; Zulick “Active” 376). With their agency downplayed, prophets are portrayed solely as mouthpieces, the “genre and medium” of prophecy (Zulick “Agon” 127). Assigned by God, this role is never sought by the prophets, who often lament their burden and doing so becomes a trademark of their authenticity (cf. Zulick “Agon”; “Prophecy” 195; Darsey 28). Yet although their burden is great, prophets’ objective is simple: to deliver a message from God.

The Hebrew Jeremiad

Within the Hebrew prophetic tradition emerges the jeremiad—a specific form of Hebrew prophetic discourse that originates from the Old Testament prophecies of Jeremiah. Jeremiads are speeches of warning addressed to wayward people who have

“lost sight of latent but persistent values” (Terrill 28).¹⁸ The genre “accomplishes its goals rhetorically by a process leading [hearers] to view themselves as a chosen people confronted with a timely if not urgent warning that unless a certain course of atoning action is followed, dire consequences will ensue” (Carpenter 104). Beyond this basic understanding, substantive, stylistic, and situational distinctions exist, which mark the jeremiad as a unique rhetorical genre.

Substantively speaking, the jeremiad’s arrangement is a generic trait. Jeremiads always identify a people’s sin, warn them, and conclude by calling them to return to God’s covenant to prevent disaster (cf. Jones and Rowland 160; DeSantis 72; Ritter “American” 157). Additionally distinctive is the contemporary jeremiad’s tendency to address secular issues through religious discourse (DeSantis 72). Examples include Barack Obama’s “economic jeremiads,” Ronald Reagan’s “covenant-affirming jeremiads,” and Frederick Douglass’, Booker T. Washington’s, and W.E.B. Du Bois’ “black jeremiads” (Harrell 299; Jones and Rowland 157; Howard-Pitney “Jeremiads” 48). Modern adaptations of the jeremiad have led political scientists to define the form as “a longstanding form of political rhetoric that explicitly invokes the past and laments the nation’s falling-away from its virtuous foundations,” accurately relaying the form’s modern usage but ignoring its Hebrew origins and rhetorical characteristics (A. Murphy 125).

¹⁸ For further generic discussion of the jeremiad see: DeSantis 71-73; Terrill 27-28; Carpenter 103-108; Miller 27-39; Minter 45-55; Howard-Pitney *African* 5-7, and Bercovitch 5-7.

In the Hebrew context, jeremiads are marked by many of the same stylistic traits as other Hebrew prophetic discourse. Metaphoric language amplifies the speaker's ability to show and compel (Darsey 19). Emotional heights construct an intense sense of direness, urgency, and threat (23-25). Motivational tactics, language, tone, imagery, and even direct threats are used to evoke fear but also hope (cf. Bercovitch 7; Howard-Pitney *African* 6). Linguistic signposts, including See, Hear, and Listen, demand attention and foster for the speaker an authoritative voice—one that trumpets the message of God (Zulick "Agon" 131). Enthymematic constructions engage the audience and lend an absolute sense to the message. Simultaneously, these constructions emphasize "the presence of a public tradition," which strengthens the sensed authority and authenticity of the message (Darsey 20). As with Hebrew prophetic discourse in general, these stylistic characteristics are responses to jeremiads' situational contexts.

The situational attributes of the jeremiad help distinguish the form from prophetic rhetoric at large. Alan DeSantis notes that, unlike general prophetic discourse, jeremiads always primarily address the very community of which the speaker is a member (72). This characteristic is particularly noteworthy given that secondary audiences in ancient times and especially now increasingly present due to the increasingly available nature of discourse. How speakers adapt jeremiads to this situational reality is a noteworthy question, which this study on Basil's homily will begin to address. Much like modern political speeches, homilies of the fourth century were situated in highly public contexts as performative, "popular public events" (Van Dam *Becoming* 102, 103). Thus, although jeremiads primarily address the speaker's own

community, jeremiads produced by rhetors who strategically emulate the form may also consciously consider secondary audiences—a possible generic distinction of Christian and secular jeremiads from their Hebrew models and a point to be more thoroughly discussed later.

Reformist Rhetoric

The situational characteristics of the jeremiad and the straightforward, corrective nature of prophetic discourse in general parallel Christian reformist rhetoric of later eras. This latter discourse emerges in the New Testament as a social response to cultures encountered by first-century Christians (Robbins *Exploring* 72). Bryan Wilson first outlined the “reformist sect” as one of seven types of ideological movements that aim to maintain and propagate particular ideologies (362, 364, 369). Adding to Wilson’s sociological understanding, Vernon Robbins explains that reformist rhetoric views “the world as corrupt because its social structures are corrupt. If the structures can be changed so that the behaviors they sanction are changed, then salvation will be present in the world” (*Exploring* 73). Both Robbins and Wilson note that reformists do not hopelessly damn the world. “*Reformist* argumentation insists that social, political and economic institutions can serve good, rather than oppressive, ends” (Robbins *Tapestry* 149; B. Wilson 370). Reformist rhetoric encourages hearers to identify present evil and also the potential good that may come from a reformed state of their present reality.

This form of rhetoric, used by Paul and other evangelists, has continued to be employed in modern and secular contexts. Robbins documents its use in the New Testament. Wilson notes its use among Quakers and Christadelphians. Angela Ray and

Garth Pauley identify nineteenth and twentieth-century adaptations used to reform corrupt societal structures regarding human rights (Ray 183; Pauley 323). In both modern and historical contexts, the corrective nature of reformist rhetoric provides an avenue for speakers to advocate reformation without going so far as to declare a prophetic vision or identify a broken covenant.

In Basil's context, reformist rhetoric at a minimum was requisite; the Caesarean Christians had failed to uphold a social system that distributed wealth and goods and had failed to uphold their new covenant with God. Given both failures, Basil's adoption of Christian reformist rhetoric *and* the prophetic tradition makes sense. As James Darsey explains, in the Hebrew prophetic tradition, "the word brought by the prophets was a reassertion of Yahweh's covenant with His people and a reminder of Yahweh's presence in the world, a reminder of God's will, not a revelation or the presentation of a startling new claim" (17). Blending the reformist and prophetic traditions, Basil sought to address the social injustices committed by the rich and the spiritual destitution (and broken covenant) exhibited by all, thereby fixing the social and spiritual systems under his care. Adapting rhetorical traditions, Basil employed a new version of the jeremiad with generic distinctions tailored to fit his early Christian context.

The Ethos of a (Prophetic) Presbyter

Basil's social justice homilies reflect his sense of *kairos*, his sense of timeliness (Silvas 165-175). As a presbyter, leader, and rhetor, Basil responded to the needs of his people. In early Christianity, presbyters occupied roles somewhat similar to those of Jewish synagogues' presbyters. Glenn Hinson notes that Christian "presbyter-

bishops exercised general oversight, administered finances, presided over public worship, taught, and supervised the charitable ministries” (85; cf. 1 Timothy 3:2-7). This role, common in the first and second centuries, evolved into a hierarchy of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, which was well established by the fourth century.

Much like a prophet, as a presbyter Basil was responsible for making sense of the chaos within and around his parish and leading his congregation to righteousness. And, like a prophet, he pointed to physical problems (e.g., “the most severe [famine] ever recorded”) as indications of spiritual ailment (e.g., a lack of charity; cf. Nazianzen 407). Although Basil and other preachers may not have explicitly compared themselves to prophets or other scriptural figures, like teachers and rabbis, the rhetorical traditions associated with these positions of leadership were recognized by Jewish and Christian audiences. Thus, in early Christianity especially, the role of the Hebrew prophet could continue to have an influence. The second-century bishop Irenaeus maintained, for example, that “prophecy and other gifts of the Spirit are embedded in the life of the Church” (van Oort 4). Although divine inspiration held different implications for prophets and presbyters, it was nonetheless a shared quality.

Basil’s role as an early Christian presbyter also parallels the role of a Hebrew prophet in that neither role is sought; they are roles with which one is burdened. Basil did not choose to become a Christian leader; he felt divinely compelled to leave his career as a rhetorician and enter religious life. The life of Basil’s fellow Cappadocian Father, Gregory of Nazianzus, attests to the fact that presbyters did not simply choose their roles. Gregory was outspoken about his preference for the monastic life but was

“ordained against his will” (Hinson 263; cf. SOG 2; 3; SO 9; 10; 11). Like the prophets, Basil and fellow presbyters were believed to be divinely called and appointed to lead and serve. Although being divinely called to serve and divinely inspired to speak are distinct, they are also related. As such, the burdens of speaking somewhat mirror each other.

Traditionally, prophets were reluctant to speak given the associated danger. Zulick explains that Jeremiah, “ensnared by divine persuasion, proclaims a message that fails to persuade his hearers and makes him an object of derision,” potentially risking his life at the hand of people who cry “madman” (“Agon” 137). Ecstatic “mad” behavior is a scriptural demarcation of divine inspiration; however, in societal contexts such behavior bore social and physical consequences (Zulick “Prophecy” 198-199). As James Jasinski reminds, “The Bible is full of examples of prophets who ended up martyrs because they insisted on the veracity of their vision” (*Sourcebook* 460). Proving divine inspiration is what James Crenshaw terms, “the Achilles-heel of ancient prophecy” (38). Yet despite the challenge and his reluctance, each Hebrew prophet “finds himself unable not to speak”—a divine “entrapment” (Zulick “Agon” 137).

Unlike the Hebrew prophets, Basil is neither reluctant, ecstatic, nor in mortal danger; he is speaking to a congregation of (albeit spiritually wanting) believers. As such, proof of his prophetic ethos takes a slightly different shape. His ethos does not solely rely on *proof of* divine inspiration; as an ordained presbyter it is already clear that he is a spiritual leader. And, because Basil is an *active* divine mouthpiece—a speaker capable of making independent strategic decisions—his message has a clear mortal undertone. To balance his part divine, part mortal ethos Basil weaves particular qualities

into his rhetoric. He parallels Hebrew prophetic contexts and explicitly prays for prophetic zeal. Basil also employs Greek ethical appeals by emphasizing his character and goodwill, not simply his divinely sanctioned authority. Together, these characteristics help him adapt his ethos and jeremiad to meet the new Christian context.

To begin, the main biblical passage of the homily and subsequent references establish Basil's prophetic persona. By comparing himself to the prophet Amos, Basil harnesses divine agency and prophetic legacy. Basil opens his homily by quoting Amos: "*The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?*" (73). Like Amos who prophesied against his own will, Basil's quotation clarifies his divine call to speak. As James Darsey explains, "the strongest argument for [the prophet's] authenticity is not an argument at all, but the simple affirmation that God had sent him" (19). By becoming a parallel of Amos, who is often called "the prophet of social justice," Basil enhances his divine ethos (King 245).

Basil's divine agency and ethos imply that his audience is not just hearing Basil's judgment but God's. And, as Basil the presbyter parallels the prophets so his congregation parallels ancient wayward people. Initially Basil only infers this connection through description:

The people [of Amos' era] were rebellious; they were like a stiff-necked colt that caught the bit in its teeth and so cannot be properly guided, but rather turns aside from the right path, prancing wildly, rearing and snorting as it struggles against the one who holds the reins, so that in the end it falls off a cliff into a ravine, suffering deserved ruin for its disobedience. (73)

Basil does not yet condemn his audience as such recalcitrant rebels, but he offers the analogy. Before making a direct statement of divine punishment, Basil further establishes his authority, gradually building his divine credibility before moving forward with his judgment and demands.

As we will see, throughout the homily, additional references to past prophets, covenants, and people bolster Basil's prophetic tone and character. He compares the hungry to the Israelites wondering in the desert (74). He recalls Jonah and the Ninevites who eventually fasted and "humbled themselves by condemning themselves" (77). He mentions Habakkuk and Daniel who was preserved from lions and fed through the air "so that this righteous man might not be hard pressed by hunger" (82). He points to Elijah whose "hope in God was his provision for life" (82). Such references buttress Basil's prophetic characterization while indicating that famine is a state from which deserving people, and potentially the Caesareans, can be rescued by God. Issuing a covenantal plea, Basil himself parallels the prophets. Unlike many Hebrew prophets, however, Basil need not act mad to establish his divine authority. Other rhetorical strategies derived from his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew rhetoric aid his persuasion.

Basil's part divine, part mortal ethos is further established by his early prayer for "prophetic zeal" (73). Such a move makes Basil like the prophets in regards to inspiration but distinct in terms of reception. Praying for inspiration shows that Basil *chooses* the oft resisted burden of prophecy for the sake of his audience (73). By making explicit his request for prophetic zeal, Basil crafts an ethos of altruism. Verbalizing his prophetic prayer, "I pray that I too might receive some measure of his [Amos'] prophetic

zeal,” Basil marries two distinct rhetorical traditions (73). Basil draws upon the Hebrew tradition by basing his ethical appeal on divine authority and upon the Greek tradition by crafting his character. The outward character, goodwill, and competence that Basil establishes throughout the homily in a variety of ways (e.g., prophetic parallels, expressed concern, social and religious savvy) are inherent components of his ethical appeal—an Aristotelian influence not found in traditional jeremiads.

An early ethical appeal follows Basil’s opening prayer for “prophetic zeal” and his allusion to Amos’ stubborn audience. Basil states, “May this not be the result of our case, my children, whose father I have become through the gospel, and whom I have swathed with the blessing of my own hands” (73). In this instance, labeling himself as a “father” of wayward “children” emphasizes his concerned nature (73). Here Basil echoes Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians: “For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15). Through his words and allusions, Basil’s sincerity and concern are at once evident.

These same lines buttress Basil’s divine ethos, again echoing the Hebrew prophets. The allusion to Paul’s ministry, combined with Basil’s position as an active presbyter, again lending divine support to his message while arguing for his sincerity. Paul’s messages and Paul’s divine inspiration were not doubted. And, Basil insinuates, neither should his hearers doubt his own divine inspiration. At minimum, Basil implies that he is a secondary conduit of divine inspiration, given his Christian lineage as, like Paul, a father “through the gospel.” At most, by emulating the prophets Basil implies he

receives inspiration directly from God. These comparisons augment his implied divinity and buttress the ethos crafted throughout his rhetoric.

Another ethical appeal appears at the conclusion of the homily where he alludes to the care of “a mother or some kind of nursemaid” who tells children stories to frighten them to behave (88). Like these individuals, Basil expresses concern for the audience’s wellbeing, but unlike these individuals’ Basil claims to not invent his message, which is “not myth, but reality foretold by the voice of truth” (88). His rhetoric is concerned and strategic, like that of a caretaker, but divinely inspired and True, like that of a prophet. By establishing his ethos on his own goodwill and character, Basil generically moves his jeremiad beyond the divine ethical appeals of traditional Hebrew prophetic discourse.

In addition to comparisons, Basil’s balanced language builds his ethos by emphasizing his character, competence, and goodwill. Although at times his language is harsh—“Come to your senses, people!”—on other occasions it is encouraging and comforting (81). Following a tirade, for instance, Basil transitions to a tone of instruction and encouragement: “Are you poor? Do not be discouraged. Too much sorrow becomes a source of sin: sadness inundates the mind, helplessness produces bewilderment. . . . Place your hope in God” (81). Basil’s balanced language and emphasis on hope are also evident in his analogies. For example, the following analogy from an aggressive passage gently shows that God will provide:

Open the Old or the New Testament and you will discover in them many people who were fed in diverse ways. Elijah was on Mount Carmel, a high and uninhabited mountain, a solitary in solitude. For this righteous man, the soul was

everything; his hope in God was his provision for life. The famine did not take his life, but rather the most greedy and gluttonous of the birds, the ravens, that customarily steal food from others, brought bread and served food to this righteous man. (82)

Basil's biblically rooted chastisement and encouragement lend credibility to his message, while his balanced language attests to his sincere concern. Basil's use of Hebrew *and* Greek rhetoric leads his audience to recognize and accept his crafted ethos and to acknowledge the truth of his message: that the drought and famine are products of their broken covenant.

Prophetic Form in a Christian Homily

Just as Basil's ethos is modeled after the Hebrew prophets and amended in light of his role as a presbyter, so too is his form. For Basil's audience the concern is not that they will be punished but that they are *already* being punished. To effectively press his message, Basil adopts the prophetic form that is most relevant to his rhetorical situation—the jeremiad. With small changes, Basil is able to adapt the form to his Christian context. Rather than offering futuristic prophecies, Basil prophesies about the existing connection between two *present* realities: spiritual and social disaster. In the process, Basil emulates particular generic qualities of prophetic discourse—commanding and metaphoric language, visualization, elaboration, and outsider appeal—while also making small changes that characterize a new Christian jeremiad.

Commanding and Metaphoric Language

The particular language Basil employs does more than build his ethos; it engages his audience. Commanding language secures their attention while metaphoric language holds it. Commanding language is common in the context of Hebrew prophetic rhetoric in which God is a fierce force for justice. As Darsey points out, the prophets themselves were commanded by God to demand “the people use their senses, long fallen into destitution: ‘Hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but see not, who have ears, but hear not’” (19; quoting Jeremiah 5:21). Prophetic signposts (e.g., See, Hear, Listen) are effective rhetorical tools for audiences familiar and unfamiliar with the Hebrew prophetic tradition, and Basil employs them frequently. For example, he begins a passage with “Let us listen again” and then commands, “See, now, how the multitude of our sins has altered the course of the year” (75). Later, near the climax of the homily, he exclaims, “Listen, O people! Hear me, O Christians!” (86). Basil’s rhetorically ripe signposts urge his audience *to see* that their present reality is a product of their own acts, *to hear* the cries of the starving poor, and *to listen* to God’s call for repentance.

Commanding language, like that of Basil and the prophets, does more than attract attention and assert authority; it is a necessary tool in the reformation process. In the contexts of Hebrew scripture and the Caesarean famine, strong commanding language, an extension of prophetic and reformist rhetoric, was necessary to compel spiritual and social reformation. As Schroeder notes, Basil’s desire was not merely to assuage the suffering of the poor, but to reform “the structures that create and reinforce the cycle of poverty” (29-30). Thus, Basil’s rhetoric targets the rich, the “predatory lenders,” and

other selfish and exploitative individuals among the Caesarean community (Schroeder 30). In order to be heard by a “stiff-necked” audience, Basil’s language and tone is authoritative, commanding, and bold (73).

The persuasive effect of Basil’s commands is bolstered by his implementation of metaphoric language. “Heavy use of metaphors of vision in Old Testament prophecy,” explains Darsey, “suggests a rhetoric of showing” (19). Showing, or demonstration as Aristotle taught, is an important step in the revelation of truth. By using language that connects physical and spiritual realities—by using what Zulick terms “emotional logic”—Basil augments the homily’s legitimacy and sense of urgency (“Normative” 488). For example, while chastising his audience Basil asks, “Who prays with *streams of tears*, so as to receive rainstorms and showers in due season? Who *washes away* sins in imitation of the blessed David, who *rained tears* upon his bed?” (78, emphasis added). These and other references to water, including “rinsing away” and “wipe away,” remind the audience of the drought they have caused through sin and can alleviate.

While these linguistic characteristics are shared by Basil and the Hebrew prophets, Basil’s homily differs from most prophetic discourse. Most Hebrew prophetic discourse judges present actions in light of past covenants to warn of the *future*. Basil’s homily judges the present (spiritual drought) in light of past covenants to prove the *present* (environmental drought and famine). Although future salvation/damnation is subtly implied in Basil’s Christian jeremiad, it is not a major theme within his discourse. Basil’s implementation of commanding and metaphoric language is not only eloquent,

not only prophetic, but necessary to command the attention of his audience so he can open their eyes to the urgent *present* reality.

Visualizations

In prophetic scripture, commanding signposts like “listen,” “see,” and “declares the LORD” are often followed by strong tirades and rich visualizations of divine punishments (Zulick “Agon” 131). Not surprisingly, Basil too incorporates these staples. But while the visuals Basil presents are literally right outside the church walls, as aforementioned, in Hebrew prophetic tradition the prophets’ visions of destruction are often (though not always) of the future—immediately accessible to the hearers only through the prophets’ words.

Basil need not describe what the impoverished nor greedy Caesareans look like, but he provides references to engage his audience and emphasize his connection between the physical and the spiritual. Early in the homily he offers a visualization that echoes a parable:

I saw the fields and wept bitterly for their unfruitfulness. I poured out my lament since the rain does not pour down upon us. Some of the seeds dried up without germinating, buried by the plow beneath clumps of dried earth. The rest, after just beginning to take root and sprout, were withered by the hot wind in a manner pitiful to see. . . . Farmers sit in their fields and clasp their hands against their knees—this, of course, is the posture of those who mourn. (74)

This imagery, echoing a parable, taps into what Michael Leff describes as the audience’s “imaginative rationality”—their ability to visualize the drought *and* see it “in terms of

something else,” namely a spiritual drought (“Topical” 227; cf. Matthew 13:1-9). Like a metaphor, Basil’s robust visualization engages the “communal knowledge” of his audience and facilitates their “active cooperation” (219). In this excerpt, rather than explicitly telling his audience that their lack of faithfulness has produced the physical and spiritual drought, Basil’s allows them to come to the conclusion themselves. In doing so, his imagery brings knowledge of eschewed Christian principles to the forefront of his hearers’ minds. Basil’s imagery pushes his audience, farmer and lender alike, to see the full social, spiritual, and physical reality of their shared context.

Even though Basil’s audience is exposed to the Caesarean social and spiritual devastation, their eyes are not open to it. Basil’s strong and vivid language, like that of a prophet, engages hearers and allows them to *see* his prophetic message. For example, to show his audience the juvenile nature of their individualism, he adopts a harsh and demanding tone while conveying condemning imagery: “Come to your senses, people! Do not behave like foolish children, who smash their teacher’s writing tablets when they are rebuked, or rip apart their father’s garments when he sends them away from the table to teach them a lesson, or scratch their own mother’s face with their fingernails” (81). These images reflect to Basil’s audience the exorbitant energy they exert to continually defy his appeals.

Elsewhere in the homily Basil uses contrasting imagery to reflect the Caesareans’ meager effort to improve their social and spiritual situation: “The voices of those who pray disperse vainly in the air, since we do not listen to those who entreat our help. . . . Few there are who have gathered to pray with me, and those who have come are drowsy,

yawning, peering around incessantly” (76). For his audience, visualizations of their behavior would likely be uncomfortable. The discomfort, guilt, or shame produced is part of Basil’s rhetoric. Using visualizations, Basil opens his audience’s eyes and minds to a *present* reality they fail to see.

Elaboration

Much like his reliance on visualization, Basil uses elaboration, another common characteristic of prophetic discourse, to strengthen his message. Basil adds weight to his claims and conclusions by pausing to elaborate and explain certain points in light of historical, spiritual, and contemporary contexts. Zulick notes that Jeremiah does the same. For example, in Jeremiah 20:7b-9 the prophet elaborates on the nature of his position, thus bolstering his ethos (“Agon” 137). Throughout scripture, elaboration produces a variety of effects. The first chapter of Joel expands upon destruction caused by locusts, showing the strength of divine punishment. This effect is also seen in Amos 2:9-16, which emphasizes God’s wrath. Later, in Amos 9:11-12, elaboration is used to portray the restored community and God’s mercy.

Like the prophets, Basil elaborates to emphasize the direness of the present disaster by compounding its spiritual and social natures. When describing the cause of the drought, for instance, Basil first expands upon the Caesarians’ spiritual faults: “Few there are who have gathered to pray with me, and those who have come are drowsy, yawning, peering around incessantly, counting the minutes until the cantor finishes the verses, until they are released from church and the duty of prayer as from a dungeon” (76). This spiritual failure he then connects to the Caesareans’ social failings: “It is on

your account that this catastrophe was decreed, because you have but do not give, because you neglect the hungry, because you pay no heed to the plight of the miserable, because you show no mercy to those who prostrate themselves before you” (79). Here, using anaphora and antithesis, he elongates his speech with exposition that continues for several paragraphs. Without elaboration Basil’s message would quickly be over and his audience would hastily depart. With elaboration, like the prophets, Basil is able to amplify his ideas and conclusions, thus increasing the potential of his rhetorical effect.

What distinguishes Basil’s elaboration, however, is the substance of his elaborations. Although in many ways Basil’s elaboration echoes those of the prophets, it also incorporates new undertones that reflect the new context, the new covenant at the heart of his Christian jeremiad. Amidst accusations, for example, Basil extends the following eloquent observations and advice regarding repentance, which merit full quotation:

[We] commit sins fervently, but repent in a slack and half-hearted manner. Who prays with streams of tears, so as to receive rainstorms and showers in due season? Who washes away sins in imitation of the blessed David, who rained tears upon his bed? Who washes the feet of strangers, rinsing away the dust of travel, so that in time of need that person might entreat God, seeking an end to the drought? Who supports the child without parents, so that God might in turn support the wheat, which is like an orphan battered down by the unseasonable winds? Who ministers to the widow afflicted by the hardships of life, so that the provisions we need might now be measured back to us? Tear up the unjust

contract, so that sin might also be loosed. Wipe away the debt that bears high rates of interest, so that the earth may bear its usual fruits. For when gold and bronze and things that do not naturally reproduce give birth in a manner contrary to nature, then the earth which bears according to nature becomes barren and is sentenced to fruitlessness as a punishment to those who dwell there. (78)

In this single excerpt, representative of the surrounding text, an abundance of rhetorical elements are at play, including elaboration, anaphora, metaphor, simile, form matching content, allusion, rhetorical question, analogy, and visual imagery. These rhetorical devices allow Basil, through rhetorical elaboration, to connect his charges to the Caesareans' Christian covenant with God, which they adopted upon accepting Christ.

By elaborating upon their Christian duties, Basil reminds them of their Christian covenant. He alludes to charity as means of serving Christ who said, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). He also reminds those familiar with Hebrew scripture of the Judaic call to care for the vulnerable and act with justice (e.g., Isaiah 1:17). By asking which of them has washed the feet of strangers, Basil reminds the Caesareans of their call to imitate Christ, who "poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet" (John 13:5). Without quoting Christian scripture, Basil eloquently urges his audience to see their failures and understand their significance. They had broken their Christian covenant with God and were now experiencing His wrath—a summation that carries the force of biblical types and antitypes, of Judaic prophecies fulfilled in the Christian era (cf. Reid "Apocalypticism"). Rather than concisely charging the

Caesareans for abandoning the Christian principles of charity, Basil uses elaboration to advance a much fuller and more emotional depiction of their *Christian* failings.

Appeal to a Secondary Audience

In addition to adapting the linguistic, visual, and elaborative qualities of the Hebrew jeremiad, Basil also adapts a Greek and Hebrew audience-centered approach. Hebrew prophecies usually sought to procure repentance and reformation from a targeted Judaic audience; however, Basil's jeremiad makes external messages, including evangelic messages to outsiders, an implicit yet central tenet. Extending discourse to include outsiders is not itself a new trait of prophetic discourse; Jonah, for example, was sent to Nineveh to prophesy and secure repentance. This example is noteworthy because the Ninevites repented despite their foreign language and culture. In this regard, the story of Jonah serves as a precursor for Christian evangelization; the book navigates the question of "whether the Lord's mercy extends even to Ninevites"—even to heathens (McGowan 636). Basil's rhetoric is similar to that of Jonah in that it seeks, at least implicitly, to *initiate* people's adoption of an existing covenant.

Yet, whereas the prophets' messages are given directly to their target audience, Basil and other Christian rhetors *also* extend their messages indirectly to secondary audiences. As Kennedy points out, "Whenever given an occasion to speak . . . [Christians] try to convert the situation into an opportunity to proclaim the message of Jesus and convert others. That is what really matters to them" (New 140). As a presbyter, Basil's immediate audience is his congregation; however, as a Christian his primary goal is to spread the message of Christ. Basil's rhetoric is fitted to increase its potential of

being repeated and shared with secondary audiences and is fitted to reform and evangelize among that audience.

Definite knowledge of Basil's immediate audience is unavailable; however, in general, the popular nature of fourth-century homilies, especially at events like festivals or funerals, allowed them to be perfect evangelical opportunities to advance an *inclusive*, evangelical message. As Van Dam notes, "People either attended or boycotted services and sermons; sometimes they took to the streets and rioted; but always, whether bustling about in the markets or relaxing at the baths, they talked and gossiped about the prominent contenders and their various doctrines" (*Becoming* 9). In such a context, Basil's messages, interpretations, and theologies would have been transmitted to secondary audiences, Christians and outsiders, making this a rhetorical opportunity for reformation *and* evangelism. "Preachers knew they were entertainers" and thus tailored their homilies to startle, cajole, and otherwise engage their equally animated audiences (103; Schwartz 22). As a result, early homilies have a distinct dialogic nature that infiltrates their substance, style, and delivery. Within this context, Basil's concerned and sharp language, among other traits, instills a lasting emotional effect that aids the transmission of his message. The prominence of such rhetoric, combined with the greater context, suggests that consideration of a secondary audience is another subtle generic adaptation of the jeremiad that helps meet the rhetorical needs of early Christianity.

As a presbyter, Basil addressed his homily primarily to Christians, a community of believers of which he was a part. As previously mentioned, prophecies addressed to

foreign audiences occasionally appear in the Old Testament. In regards to the jeremiad, however, scholarly discussions over this point are contradictory. Kurt Ritter, for example, explains that “ancient prophets stood outside of the society and political order they criticized” (“American” 158). In contrast, Alan DeSantis states that jeremiads are always “delivered by a speaker who . . . is a member of the target community” (72). These differing portrayals may be reconciled by James Darsey’s explanation of Old Testament prophetic logos. Darsey explains that a prophet:

cannot alter the message without violating his sacred trust. Indeed, the fact of the sacred trust itself places the speaker outside the frame of reference of his audience; the speaker’s role is that of the extremist. Thus prophetic rhetoric violates one of the traditional functions of rhetoric by emphasizing separation over identification. (21-22)

Darsey’s explanation allows both Ritter’s and DeSantis’ understandings to coexist; in Hebrew jeremiads the speaker is often an insider and outsider in specific ways. Jeremiah, for example, is an outsider as a divine messenger but an insider as he addresses the nation of Judah (e.g., chapters 1-6) and its leaders (e.g., Jehoiakim in chapter 36). Later adaptations, including Basil’s, can play with these insider-outsider distinctions to meet their contextual needs.

Although an outsider compared to his lay audience, Basil was an insider in his general church and Caesarean communities. The rhetoric of his homily reflects this, including his occasional use of first person plural: “We praise beneficence, while we deprive the needy of it,” and “as Adam transmitted sin by eating wrongfully, so we wipe

away the treacherous food when we remedy the need and hunger of our brothers and sisters” (76, 86). At the very least, the passages suggest an attempt to rhetorically create a sense of community. Historians, too, suggest that Basil, like other post-Constantine bishops, took a fairly active role in his community and that he was involved in religious, social, and political arenas (cf. Rapp 243; Van Dam *Becoming* 53-71). Within this context, some individuals likely felt or chose to be excluded. It is this secondary population that Basil may implicitly include in his homily. Resolving the social crisis necessitated the inclusion of more than a sliver of society.

Basil’s homily appeals to a secondary audience by including words and rhetoric that would engage and be familiar to a wide Cappadocian audience. For example, editor Paul Schroeder notes that throughout the homilies, “one of the most commonly repeated words is the Greek adjective κοινός, meaning ‘shared’ or ‘common’” (31). This word and other related words that Basil repeatedly uses, including κοινόν, κοινῆ, κοινῶνι, κοινῶ, all cognates of the Greek κοινωνία for communion, emphasize the Christian principles of charity and oneness. However, Basil’s use of these words extends beyond the Christian community; the words implicitly include the whole Caesarean community.

We see this, for example, at a heightened point of the speech near the conclusion of the homily. Basil draws from nature’s universally understood anecdotes and sharply points out:

Even the animals use in common the plants that grow naturally from the earth.

Flocks of sheep graze together upon the same hillsides, herds of horses feed upon the same plain, and all living creatures permit each other to satisfy their need for

food. But we hoard what is common, and keep for ourselves what belongs to many others. (86)¹⁹

Basil's language takes on a universal sense. The juxtaposition of animals and "we," a common dichotomy, suggests that "we" refers to *all humans* and, subsequently, that their contextual problems and food supplies are shared. Inclusive language is repeated through the end of the homily where Basil reminds that "each person" and "everyone" will receive final judgment (88). Constant inclusion makes sense in light of Basil's message; ending the (spiritual and physical) famine required the involvement of *all* Caesareans. Basil's homily is not exclusive but inclusive, to draw in outsiders, to improve the Caesarean society, and perhaps even to evangelize.

In addition to his diction, Basil's incorporation of popular rhetorical elements (e.g., metaphors, elaboration, visualization, personification, analogies, anaphora, and hyperbaton) would have appealed to a broad audience.²⁰ Educated individuals would have identified these techniques; others would simply have been engaged by them. Basil's examples also occasionally draw from pagan sources. When chastising greedy Caesareans for hoarding goods, for instance, he points to the ancient Greeks: "We should be put to shame by what has been recorded concerning the pagan Greeks. For some of

¹⁹ The Greek translation of this quotation is as follows: "Ἐκεῖνα γὰρ τοῖς ἐκ τῆς γῆς φουομένοις παρὰ τῆς φύσεως ὡς κοινῆ κέχρηται. Καὶ προβάτων ἀγέλαι ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καταβόσκονται ὄρος· ἵπποι δὲ παμπληθεῖς μίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν κατανέμονται πεδιάδα· καὶ πάντα τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον οὕτως ἀλλήλοις ἀντιπαραχωρεῖ τῆς ἀναγκαίας τῶν χρειῶν ἀπολαύσεως· ἡμεῖς δὲ, ἐγκολπιζόμεθα τὰ κοινὰ, τὰ τῶν πολλῶν μόνον ἔχομεν. Αἰδεσθῶμεν Ἑλλήνων φιλόφρονων διηγήματα." (Basil "Homilia" 7).

²⁰ Many of the rhetorical strategies discussed in previous sections are classical concepts employed by early Christian apologists to demonstrate that Christianity did not necessarily threaten but could coexist with many cultural, political, and academic pillars, like Greek and Roman rhetoric (e.g., Tertullian and Justin Martyr).

them, a law of philanthropy dictated a single table and common meals, so that many different people might almost be regarded as one household” (86). Pointing to Greek philanthropy, Basil loosely includes a pagan audience. Moreover, he makes his homily and the Christian principle of charity appear more universal. Audience appeals are certainly not new rhetorical tactics; however, given their strategic nature and context, Basil’s outsider appeals add to the rhetorical invention of his Christian jeremiad.

To end mass starvation would take the cooperation of all Caesareans, including the complacent rich and the greedy lenders—not just the believers, not just the poor. Thus it makes sense that Basil maximizes the intended audience of his jeremiad. His prophetic form attracts those familiar with the Hebrew prophetic tradition while also serving as a clear warning and evangelic call for nonbelievers. His jeremiad, buttressed with specific rhetorical components, resonates with heathens and Christians alike and aids the transmission of his message. Simultaneously, his continual emphasis on collective society—the common, the shared, the *κοινός*—informs his appeal for universal social and spiritual amelioration: restoration of the Christian covenant, reformation of social structures, and conversion of the spiritually destitute.

Conclusion

Although Saint Basil of Caesarea spoke seventeen centuries ago, to ancient people, of an ancient famine, his homily endures. Not only is his message of charity and altruism still relevant, but his rhetoric is still intriguing for rhetoricians, theologians, and historians today. The ethos and form that Basil presents showcase a rhetorical reinvention of the traditional Hebrew jeremiad. As a presbyter, Basil constitutes a new

middle ground between a strategic rhetor and an inspired prophet to meet the evolving needs and nature of early Christianity.

The Christian jeremiad showcased in Basil's homily illustrates a number of subtle generic shifts that account for new situational uses of the jeremiad and document the historical trajectory of the rhetorical form. As a Christian presbyter not a Hebrew prophet, Basil emphasizes his character, competence, and goodwill over reluctance and madness. And while his authority is still divine, it is freely chosen and prayed for. As a presbyter, Basil balances being a divinely inspired and mortal speaker; his rhetoric evidences play surrounding his insider-outsider distinction. The form of Basil's jeremiad likewise displays a number of changes. His commanding and metaphoric language and visualizations closely emulate prophetic discourse, but they emphasize the present over the future. The elaborations found in Basil's jeremiad likewise differ in that they articulate the community's failure to uphold their *Christian* covenant. Lastly, Basil's implicit appeal to an outside audience differs slightly in that, while the prophets directly address their target audience, Basil *also* implicitly extends his message to a secondary outside audience, granting an evangelical flair to his jeremiad.

These subtle aspects of Basil's homily distinguish the Christian jeremiad from its Hebrew origins. These changes also foreshadow the more recent generic adoption and adaptation of jeremiads to meet the needs of new Christian and even secular contexts. The strategic adoption of the jeremiad has become almost commonplace in American rhetorical history; the genre exhibits, what Kurt Ritter terms, a "rhetorical legacy" of its own ("Significant" 3).

In an American context, the form has been used throughout history in many situations. According to Perry Miller, strategic adoption of the jeremiad first appeared in American Puritan discourse when political and religious affairs were intertwined (30). Although Puritan jeremiads are some of the more renowned examples of common-era jeremiads, as Kurt Ritter notes:

The Puritan political sermon has come to be called a jeremiad not because the Puritan minister assumed the precise role of a Jeremiah, but because the sermons so frequently took their texts from the Book of Jeremiah. The American Puritans who presented jeremiads, in fact, stood in a fundamentally different relationship to society than did the prophets of the old. (“American” 158)

The loose nature of the American Puritan jeremiad showcases a generic phenomenon evident through the jeremiad’s post-Judaic history: generic invention. The subtle changes displayed in Basil’s Christian jeremiad are just several examples of the ways in which the traditional form’s substance and style has been adapted to meet the needs of new situational contexts. Jasinski notes that in an American context the jeremiad has become increasingly secularized (*Sourcebook* 336). As subsequent American discourse continues to emulate the form, it continues to adapt the genre.

In his study of African-American jeremiads, for example, David Howard-Pitney argues that there are two types of jeremiads: one produced from the rhetor’s stance of total national and cultural acceptance, and another produced from the perspective that there is a distinct destiny for African-Americans apart from the surrounding American destiny (*African* 13-14). It is this later type of jeremiad that Robert Terrill suggests

Malcom X adopted to “encourage a politically passive isolation” (25). John Jones and Robert Rowland note similar modifications in their outline of the “post-presidential ideological appeals” of Ronald Reagan. These appeals, they argue, are jeremiadic in nature but do not follow the typical form of American jeremiads, which generally “warn that America [is] straying from conservative dogma” (157).

Other generic studies of Christian and secular adaptations of the jeremiad continue to document subtle generic shifts in response to new situations.²¹ Jasinski notes that the secularization of the jeremiad “should not be surprising given that the [American] jeremiad never was a *purely* religious mode of address” (*Sourcebook* 336). As rhetors become further removed from the role of the prophet, as contexts become only quasi-religious, and as audiences become increasingly diffuse, generic changes increasingly occur within contemporary jeremiads. The sometimes subtle, sometimes bold substantive, stylistic, and situational change of these new adaptations is, itself, a generic attribute of the jeremiad—a living “rhetorical legacy.”

Basil’s Christian jeremiad, as an early (perhaps the earliest) extant adaptation of the jeremiad, serves as a bridge to understand the form’s evolution, its rhetorical trajectory. Basil’s early context places his rhetoric in relative proximity with the Greek and Hebrew rhetorical traditions; these traditions’ influences on Basil’s jeremiad make for an interesting case study through which to understand generic evolution. Basil’s

²¹ Contemporary jeremiads span a wide range in regards to context and subject. For example: Bobbitt and Mixon; Ritter “American”; Murphy “Barack”; Carlson and Ebel; Harrell; and Jendrysik.

evolution of the jeremiad, as an example, demonstrates the influence of historical and social change on one of the oldest and longest enduring forms of speech.

Finally, more studies are needed to expand our understanding of evolving models of homiletics. As a main form of Christian communication, homiletics—even grassroots homiletics—offers insight into the development of the early Church as an inchoate body. The study of early homiletics can further illuminate the role of rhetoric (and various rhetorical traditions) in this formative historical, theological, and social period. Studying the rhetorical aspects of Christianity’s historical developments provides knowledge of how change came to be and through what language it was effected. This finely detailed examination of Basil’s jeremiad is just one example of many possible historical and rhetorical studies that may be done to build existing knowledge of the trajectory of rhetorical traditions and of the *rhetorical* dimensions of history.

Beyond these contributions, however, perhaps the most important contribution made by rhetorical studies of homiletics, including this chapter and this dissertation, is the provision of an opportunity for diverse scholars to come together over a single issue and create, through their diverse perspectives, a magnificent mosaic. Because homiletics encapsulates a number of specialty research areas, the subject bridges disparate fields and potentially offers valuable implications for theologians, historians, classicists, and rhetoricians. Future interdisciplinary research on early homiletics is thus warranted, as I suggest in the subsequent concluding chapter. As the present chapter has demonstrated, combined perspectives on homiletics proffer a more comprehensive understanding of a field that subtly informs much contemporary scholarship.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Several years after the Cappadocians lived and died, Augustine wrote a handbook that not only defended rhetoric, but established the rhetorical nature of preaching—a point which I have worked to reestablish. Despite his defense of rhetoric, in another book, speaking to God, Augustine penned the following confession, “The day came when I was actually liberated from the profession of rhetor, from which in thought I was already freed. But now it became a reality. You delivered my tongue from a task from which you had already delivered my heart” (Augustine *Confessions* 159). So it seems, even for Augustine, a preacher and fierce defender of rhetoric, the relationship between homiletics and rhetoric was a challenging one.

For Augustine, and perhaps for other preachers, the challenge was rethinking the aim of their vocations. Although, as a preacher Augustine continued working like a rhetor and rhetorician, his confession reveals that his vocation had indeed changed. For scholars and practitioners today, the challenge perhaps is to better understand the nature and implications of the relationship between rhetoric and homiletics. On a theoretical level, several scholars have already begun this work (cf. Enos and Thompson). From the perspective of preachers and preaching, however, more remains to be understood.

To trace the relationship between rhetoric and homiletics, this dissertation advanced a simple argument, that preaching is rhetorical in nature, both theoretically and practically. This broad argument allowed for each chapter to provide different forms of

support. Examining the homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers proved a useful means of examining just some of the many rhetorical dimensions of early Christian preaching. Using rhetorical history and rhetorical criticism as research methods, exploring preachers and homilies as subjects, and addressing theoretical and practical lines of inquiry, in this dissertation I illustrated and supported the rhetorical nature of preaching.

The Chapter Two I brought together the work of scholars in multiple fields to present the rhetorical and historical context of the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies. Here I traced the growth, influences, and constraints on Christianity during its first few centuries. I outlined the geographical, cultural, political, and theological composition of fourth-century Cappadocia, and I presented the familial, educational, and leadership backgrounds of the Cappadocian Fathers. In short, this chapter provided the context necessary for understanding the rhetorical insights, arguments, and theories advanced in the subsequent chapters.

In Chapter Three, I conducted rhetorical critiques of the Cappadocian Fathers' homilies and illustrated how different preachers can similarly be rhetorical, although in different ways. Although steeped in rhetorical theory and grounded on rhetorical criticism, the findings of this chapter demonstrate palpable *practical* implications of understanding preaching rhetorically. From outlines of the rhetorical personas present in the homiletic collections of each preacher—Basil as a teacher, Gregory of Nazianzus as a conductor, and Gregory of Nyssa as an interpreter—I posited that personas adopted by peer rhetors have constitutive effects. From this I advanced the idea that *complementary* peer personas offer potential challenges and benefits when employed on even a loosely

shared audience. Collectively, the critiques within this study serve to document the rhetorical dimensions of historical events, preachers, and leaders within fourth-century Christianity and Roman Cappadocia. In addition, the conclusions of this study emphasize the shared rhetorical nature of individual preachers' homilies and the practical significance of acknowledging and embracing the rhetorical nature of preaching.

In Chapter Four, I conducted a generic rhetorical analysis of Basil's homily "In Time of Famine and Drought" to trace how Christian preaching evolved from Greek and Hebrew rhetorical origins—a history which continues to characterize Christian preaching today. The findings of this chapter speak to the importance of understanding the (enduring) theoretical rhetorical foundations of preaching. By closely examining the reinvention of the Hebrew jeremiad, I illustrated how Basil, as a preacher, constituted a new middle ground between a strategic rhetor and an inspired prophet to meet the evolving needs and nature of early Christianity. The chapter at once emphasizes the *broad* rhetorical history of which preaching is a part and the *fine* rhetorical details that imbue preachers' homilies and contexts.

Through each of these chapters, this dissertation has plainly laid out the rhetorical dimensions of preaching. By focusing on the role of the preacher, the personas portrayed, and the origins of preaching, I have supported the argument that preaching is profoundly rhetorical in nature, both in theory and in practice. The generic and constitutive lines of inquiry included in this study have contributed *theoretical* understandings of the rhetorical nature of preaching—understandings which help

advance the scholarship of historians, theologians, classicists, and rhetoricians. At the same time, the conclusions within this dissertation help seminarians, preachers, homiletics professors, and other practitioners see the *practical* value of acknowledging and embracing preaching as a thoroughly rhetorical vocation.

While this dissertation supports the argument that preaching is theoretically and practically rhetorical and offers a renewed perspective of preaching, several limitations must be acknowledged. To begin, this dissertation's primary focus on the Cappadocian Fathers allowed for a close, detailed understanding of preaching but also limited the extent to which the findings may be generalized. The study of Basil's jeremiad, for example, provides insight into his adoption and adaptation of rhetorical traditions, but it does not necessarily yield detailed information about how other preachers of his era balanced their divinely inspired and strategically rhetorical positions. Thus, from this and the other studies of the Cappadocians' preaching we may draw conclusions about their rhetoric and contexts but only postulate about the rhetoric of their contemporaries and successors.

In addition, the fact that this dissertation worked largely from translated texts has limited the project's findings. While the possibility of accessing multiple scholarly translations and cross-referencing findings made this project possible, it must be acknowledged that my own inability to work with the texts in their original language meant that many potential rhetorical findings have been left unconsidered. As several of the Cappadocians' translators note, their handle of language was so nuanced, so detailed, so rich that many linguistic intricacies of the homilies are impossible to convey in

translation (cf. Moriarty 13, 27; Hall “Gregory” 8-14). That said, working with translations has provided one significant benefit: the opportunity to publicize the remarkably accessible and applicable nature of much of the Cappadocians’ preaching. This, of course, makes sense when we consider the fact that most of their homilies, as rhetorical inventions, were tailored for and addressed to lay audiences not unlike the public today.

One further limitation is a limitation of my own choosing. In studying the Cappadocian Father’s homilies I chose to focus my critiques on the personas they project through their preaching. In selecting this focus, I also chose to not address many other important rhetorical aspects present in the preaching of all three leaders. To augment existing understandings of the rhetorical dimensions of preaching, other scholars can attend to the subsequent rhetorical themes, which I noted throughout my research and which deserve further attention.

A number of directions for future research can be derived from the limitations of this dissertation. For example, several themes that imbue the Cappadocians’ and other early preachers’ homilies may hold rhetorical significance. These themes include the expressed limit of language, the relationship between language and knowledge, and the relationship between truth and obscurity. In addition to documenting early preachers’ perspectives, studies on these topics can potentially provide rich theoretical insight about the marriage of homiletics and rhetoric. This dissertation has explored the rhetorical nature of homiletics through preachers, homilies, personas, and generic evolution; however a study that comparatively explores the theory behind rhetoric and homiletics in

relation to language, knowledge, or obscurity can provide further information about the rhetorical nature of homiletics.

Another direction for future research is to study how contemporary preachers and teachers of homiletics rely upon rhetoric. Given that most modern preachers do not have explicit rhetorical educations as did the Cappadocian Fathers, it is likely that their homilies and training reflect rhetorical principles in less explicit ways. They are, perhaps, receiving their rhetorical education only through the rhetorical examples of homilies left by early (rhetorically trained) preachers. More studies of contemporary preaching and training can help identify if and how rhetoric still subtly underpins modern homiletics courses and modern preaching practices, thus further extending the argument of this dissertation to a modern era. Moreover, such studies can identify areas of preaching and training in which an explicit study of rhetoric could improve the practice of preachers today.

Finally, a third direction for future research involves working with scholars in other fields to better understand audience perspectives of preaching. Combining rhetorical research on personas, for example, with research on audience perspectives of preachers' behaviors can yield rich information that potentially validates rhetorical theories while offering practical insight for churches and practitioners. Moreover, pairing rhetorical research with qualitative research about audiences (as Horan and Raposo have begun to do) can yield information helpful to scholars and practitioners beyond a religious setting. Personas and peer personas, among other rhetorical constructs

present in preaching, exist beyond church settings; rhetorically *and* qualitatively studying them and their effects can prove insightful for a variety of sectors.

Studying the homilies of the Cappadocian Fathers has advanced new understandings of the rhetorical dimensions of homiletics and has carried on what I hope remains a long and fruitful discussion of the rhetoric of Christian preaching. Generally speaking, the study has joined the conversations of many other scholars who study rhetoric, religious rhetoric, early Christianity, and homiletics. This dissertation on the Cappadocians' preaching, perspectives, and personas has documented significant rhetorical dimensions of history and has laid historical and theoretical groundwork for understanding contemporary homiletics from a rhetorical perspective. Although, like Augustine, few preachers today may see themselves as rhetors or rhetoricians, like Basil, his brother Gregory, and their friend Gregory, all preachers today hold profoundly rhetorical vocations.

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APPENDIX A

HOMILIES INCLUDED IN DISSERTATION

The homily versions relied upon in this dissertation are listed below. Not included are other versions consulted or homilies published but considered possibly inauthentic.

Author / Volume	Num.	Homily Name
BASIL	46	
CDP		Homily on the Beginning of Proverbs
		First Homily on Psalm 14
		Homily on Humility
		Homily on Envy
		Homily on Detachment from Worldly Things, and on the Fire that Occurred Outside the Church
		Homily delivered in Lakizois
		Homily on Psalm 115
		Homily on Faith
		Homily on the Beginning of the Gospel of John
		Homily on Not Three Gods, Against Those Who Calumniate Us, Claiming That We Say That There Are Three Gods
		Homily against the Sabellians, Anomoians, and Pneumatomachians
EH	1	On the Hexaemeron – Creation of the Heavens and the Earth
	2	On the Hexaemeron – Invisible and Unfinished State of the Earth
	3	On the Hexaemeron – The Firmament
	4	On the Hexaemeron – The Gathering of the Waters
	5	On the Hexaemeron – The Germination of the Earth
	6	On the Hexaemeron – Creation of the Lights of the Heavens
	7	On the Hexaemeron – Creation of Crawling Creatures
	8	On the Hexaemeron – Creation of Winged Creatures and Those Living in the Waters
	9	On the Hexaemeron – Creation of Land Animals
	10	On Psalm 1

	11	On Psalm 7
	12	On Psalm 14
	13	On Psalm 28
	14	On Psalm 29
	15	On Psalm 32
	16	On Psalm 33
	17	On Psalm 44
	18	On Psalm 45
	19	On Psalm 48
	20	On Psalm 59
	21	On Psalm 61
	22	On Psalm 114
FF		On the Holy Birth of Christ
		On Baptism
		First Homily on Fasting
		Homily Against Drunkards
		On Giving Thanks
		On the Martyr Julitta (and On Giving Thanks Concluded)
		On the Holy Martyr Mamas
HC		Homily Explaining that God is Not the Cause of Evil
		Homily Against Anger
		Homily on the Words "Be Attentive to Yourself"
SJ		To the Rich
		I Will Tear Down My Barns
		In Time of Famine and Drought
GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS	43	
SO	6	First Oration on Peace
	9	Apologia to his father Gregory, in the presence of Basil, when he was consecrated bishop of Sasima
	10	On himself and to his father and Basil the Great after the return from exile
	11	By the same to Gregory of Nyssa, the brother of Basil the Great, who arrived after the consecration
	13	Homily delivered on the occasion of the consecration of Eulalius as bishop of Doara
	14	On Love for the Poor
	15	In Praise of the Maccabees
	17	To the frightened citizens of Nazianzus and the irate prefect

	19	On his sermons and to the tax adjuster Julian
	20	On theology and the office of the bishops
	22	Second Oration on Peace. Delivered in Constantinople on the occasion of the strife that arose among the people regarding a quarrel among certain bishops
	23	Third Oration on Peace. On the accord that we of common faith have reached following our quarrel
	24	In praise of Cyprian, the holy martyr and saint, when Gregory had returned from the country the day after the celebration
	25	In praise of Hero the Philosopher
	26	On himself upon returning from the country after the Maximus affair
	32	On discipline in theological discourse and that discoursing about God is not for everyone or for every occasion
	35	On the Holy Martyrs and against the Arians
	36	On himself and to those who claim that it was he who wanted the see of Constantinople
	44	On New Sunday
SOG	1	On Easter and his reluctance
	2	In defence of his flight to Pontus, and his return, after his ordination to the priesthood, with an exposition of the character of the priestly office
	3	To those who had invited him, and not come to receive him
	7	Panegyric on his brother, S. Caesarius
	8	On his sister Gorgonia
	12	To his father, when he had entrusted to him the care of the church of Nazianzus
	16	On his father's silence, because of the plague of hail
	18	On the death of his father
	21	On the great Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria
	27	The first theological oration—a preliminary discourse against the Eunomians
	28	The second theological oration
	29	The third theological oration—on the Son
	30	The fourth theological oration, which is the second concerning the Son
	31	The fifth theological oration—on the Holy Spirit
	33	Against the Arians, and concerning himself

	34	On the arrival of the Egyptians
	37	On the words of the gospel, “When Jesus had finished these sayings,” etc.—S. Matt xiv. I
	38	On the Theophany, or birthday of Christ
	39	Oration on the Holy Lights
	40	The oration on Holy Baptism
	41	On Pentecost
	42	“The Last Farewell”
	43	The Panegyric on S. Basil
	45	The second oration on Easter
GREGORY OF NYSSA	38	
B	1	Matthew 5:3
	2	Matthew 5:4 (5:5)
	3	Matthew 5:5 (5:4)
	4	Matthew 5:6
	5	Matthew 5:7
	6	Matthew 5:8
	7	Matthew 5:9
	8	Matthew 5:9
E	1	Ecclesiastes 1:1-11
	2	Ecclesiastes 1:12 – 2:3
	3	Ecclesiastes 2: 4-6
	4	Ecclesiastes 2:7-11
	5	Ecclesiastes 2:12-26
	6	Ecclesiastes 3:1-4
	7	Ecclesiastes 3:5-7
	8	Ecclesiastes 3:8-13
LP	1	Sermon One
	2	Our Father, who art in Heaven
	3	Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come
	4	Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread
	5	Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil
SS		Homily Preface
	1	Song 1:1-4
	2	Song 1:5-8
	3	Song 1:9-14
	4	Song 1:15 – 2:7
	5	Song 2:8-17

	6	Song 3:1-8
	7	Song 3:9 – 4:7a
	8	Song 4:8-9
	9	Song 4:10-15
	10	Song 4:16 – 5:2a
	11	Song 5:2b-4
	12	Song 5:5-7
	13	Song 5:8-12
	14	Song 5:13-16
	15	Song 6:1-9
WL		Funeral Oration on Meletius
		On the Baptism of Christ

APPENDIX B

LISTS OF TRANSLATIONS

The volumes listed on the nomenclature page include the translations of homilies cited throughout this project. When possible, during the research process I also engaged with alternative translations. Lists of extant homilies by the Cappadocian Fathers and their English translations may be found in the following works on the specified pages:

Basil

Basil. *On Christian Doctrine and Practice*. Trans. Mark DelCogliano. Popular Patristics Series, No. 47. Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012. 11-14, 26-38, 305-308. Print.

Basil. *Letters and Select Works*. Trans. Blomfield Jackson. In *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Ser. 2, Vol. 8. Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978. xxxii-lxxvii. Print.

Radde-Gallwitz, Andrew. *Basil of Caesarea: A Guide to His Life and Doctrine*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012. 151-159. Print.

Gregory of Nazianzus

Gregory of Nazianzus. *Select Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*. Trans. Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow. In *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Ser. 2, Vol. 7.

Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007.
200-202. Print.

Gregory of Nyssa

Moore, William, and Henry Austin Wilson. *Select Writings and Letters of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa*. In *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Ser. 2, Vol. 5. Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979. ii, 549-552. Print.

Greek Versions of Texts

The Cappadocian Fathers' work is available in Greek online from *Patrologia Graeca* as translated by Jacques-Paul Migne between 1857 and 1866. Although these versions are widely recognized and used by theologians and historians, a number of misprints exist at least within Basil's moral homilies (See: DelCogliano 33).

Basil (PG 29-32)

Gregory of Nazianzus (PG 35-38)

Gregory of Nyssa (PG 44-46)