this reviewer that any use has been made of specific ritual theories. The same holds true for Jutta Dresken-Weiland's treatment of the ideas of the afterlife in Christian grave inscriptions. An essay by Karel Innemée examines the development of ecclesiastical dress from the clothes of a Roman magistrate. The chasuble and phelonion both deriving from the *casula* makes much sense, but some further consideration needs to be given to the Syrian Orthodox/Church of the East/Maronite *phayno*, which resembles the clothes of an Old Testament priest in some of the mosaics of Ravenna rather than the *casula* which is also depicted. An essay on the emergence of the Gallican Rogations bravely uses the new approach to ritual championed by Risto Uro using a 'cognitive science' approach, though the essay would have benefited greatly from awareness of Nathan Ristuccia's 2018 study of rogations. Nienke Vos offers a rather pedestrian discussion of spiritual direction in monasticism, and Jacques van der Vliet explores writings magic in Christian Egypt, arguing that it was a means of profoundly anchoring Christianity in Egyptian society. A most fascinating paper by Mariëtte Verhoeven on Hagia Sophia traces its transformation from Justinian I through to its current reappropriation as a mosque. A final 'latch key' paper by Nienke Vos attempts to thread all the essays together – and the fact that such was thought necessary is a sign that many of these are studies of ritual that do not utilise any specific methodology, and some are not really about rituals. In sum, there are some interesting and useful essays in this collection, but it is difficult to identify many where the 'new perspectives' are particularly new.

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Food, virtue, and the shaping of early Christianity. By Dana Robinson. Pp. xii + 252 incl. 2 ills. Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020. £75. 978 1 108 47947 9

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In the last thirty years and across a variety of historical fields, the investigation of food and foodways has deepened our understanding of social dynamics by focusing attention on the most basic and essential of human activities: eating. Dana Robinson's important and learned study argues that the most important meal in early Christianity was not the eucharist, but the ordinary domestic meal. In the quotidian act of eating, the complex process of the Christianisation of the Greco-Roman world took place with all its ambiguities and tensions.

Robinson's monograph originated as a doctoral thesis at the Catholic University of America, but its thorough and careful reworking as a monograph is a model for how a thesis might be transformed into an important book. It consists of three case studies that move across the diverse linguistic, geographic and social space that early Christianity occupied. The first of these studies examines the sermons of John Chrysostom to his wealthy Antioch congregation. In Chrysostom's imagination the dining room is the most dangerous room in the house: a domestic theatre full of ribaldry and the vice of elite display. But with Christian moderation, conceived as a medical regimen, the table becomes a place of discipleship and where virtue can be fully displayed. The second study transports us to the White Monastery Foundation in Middle Egypt and its celebrated abbot, Shenoute of

Atripe. Shenoute blends biblical imagery and classical tropes with a knowledge of agriculture and food production to exhort an audience of monks and laity to Christian good work. In an astonishing inversion of the eucharist, Shenoute encourages his audience to transform themselves into the food that Jesus would want to consume. Negatively, Shenoute is critical of the funerary eucharist and martyr festivals which stand outside the institutional structure of the monasteries. Robinson demonstrates the difficulties that Shenoute has with bringing his criticisms to bear on his lay hearers and the complicated interrelationships that exist between production and consumption, private and public, monastic and lay, ritual and social. The third study scrutinises the poems of Paulinus of Nola for the Campanian cult of St Felix. The complex transformation of sacrifice sees it being de-ritualised and re-ritualised as Paulinus assimilates Roman votive religion into the martyr devotion of Christianity. The image of the mouth becomes a crucial vehicle for uniting the consumption of the feast and the voicing forth of praise.

Two methodological perspectives inform Robinson's study and provide it with considerable interpretive insight. The first of these is cognitive metaphor theory. Robinson is a deeply perceptive reader of ancient metaphors. She demonstrates not only how they reflect the socio-economics of the Greco-Roman world, but also shows to good effect how metaphors are not just vivid images that ancient Christian preachers used to animate their sermons for their hearers, but had a fundamental effect on how reality was structured and understood. Particularly useful is the way that she unfolds the different metaphors that each of her subjects is using and reveals the social, religious and philosophical tensions that exist. In the case of Chrysostom, Robinson shows how the Antiochene preacher sometimes uses a bipartite *schema* that contrasts frugality and excess, and prefers frugality, and other times uses a tripartite system that sees good health as a balancing of the humours, and values moderation. If Chrysostom's rhetoric emphasises binary oppositions, the flow of the discourse establishes the core metaphor of moderation as dominant. 'The healthy temperament resides in the middle of opposing forces held in balance by the bodily regimen. Binary opposites may be applied as treatment for a systemic imbalance, with no contradiction to the general equation of a healthy and virtuous system with the moderate state' (p. 38).

The second methodological perspective that Robinson uses is theories of space and the perception that space is a social product that is constructed, inhabited and contested. Like food, space is endemic in early Christian discourse, and whilst rarely an object of direct examination, it reveals numerous basic assumptions about ethical and social life and exposes intellectual tensions. Thus, Shenoute imagines the monastery as the site of Christian perfection and an exceptional domestic space that decentres the lay Christian household. In contrast, the rural shrines are an ambiguous space in the Christian landscape that are incorporated into lay networks, but sit outside the monastic organisations. These spaces are not just where meals are consumed; the meals also create the space and its meaning. Shenoute's conception of the monastery as a perfect domestic space provides an example of how Robinson's case studies also address one another, and reveal the diversity of the early Christian attempts to assimilate the Greco-Roman meal and the Mediterranean space. Despite their similarities as moral preachers, Chrysostom and Shenoute move in opposite directions, since for

Chrysostom the household becomes a 'little church' rather than the monastery becoming the perfect Christian household.

As a biblicist, I would have liked to have seen a little more on how the complexities of biblical imagery were incorporated into these writers' works. Chrysostom might have been influenced by models of moderation in biblical texts like Daniel and Esther as well as Greco-Roman medical textbooks. As was the case with Robinson's examination of Shenoute's, attention to biblical imagery would no doubt uncover further complexities and subtleties in early Christian discourse. But this is only a minor quibble from someone with very particular interests. In every respect, I found this an engaging and subtle study with insights on every page.

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The Bible in Christian North Africa, I: *Commencement to the 'Confessiones' of Augustine (ca. 180 to 400 CE).* Edited by Jonathan P. Yates and Anthony Dupont. (Handbooks on the Bible and its Reception, 4.1.) Pp. xiv + 396 incl. 6 colour and black-and-white ills and 2 maps. Berlin–Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020. €199.95. 978 1 61451 756 6

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This first volume in the section on North Africa of the series *Handbooks on the Bible and its Reception* consists of fourteen essays on scriptural materials and their use in North African Christian literature. Tertullian and Augustine are the subject of multiple essays. Attention is also devoted to Cyprian and his anonymous contemporaries in the third century, to Optatus of Milevis and Tyconius, and to the apologists Arnobius and Lactantius. Parmenian of Carthage, one hopes, will be discussed, at least indirectly, in the next subsequent volume.

Foundational to the entire collection is an extended account by H. A. G. Houghton of the sources and translations of the biblical texts developed or used in Africa. Most of the essays on individual writers begin by situating them and their contributions to the process of translating and interpreting the Scriptures. Houghton argues that a full Latin text is reflected in the writings of Cyprian and the treatises that were attributed to him. Variations appeared through the gradual development of a distinctly Christian Latin language (*claritas* became *gloria*, *agape* was replaced by *caritas* or *dilectio*). A Latin version originating in Spain or Northern Italy appears in the usage of Tyconius and Augustine. Chapter titles were introduced in the third century and greatly developed by the Donatists to highlight passages that supported aspects of their cause.

David Riggs adds to Houghton's work by demonstrating the peculiarly Christian adaptation of Roman language of patronage relationships (*gratia*) and the sharing in divine power (*uirtus*) and glory (*claritas*) by both women and men. Geoffrey Dunn also amplifies Houghton's analysis of Tertullian's use of Scripture, concluding that he used both Greek and Latin versions of the text, including his own translations. He also preferred figurative or literal exegesis according to the needs of the arguments against Christian heretics. Carly Daniel-Hughes makes similar observations about Tertullian's moral and ascetical writings.