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DAYNA S. KALLERES. *City of Demons: Violence, Ritual, and Christian Power in Late Antiquity*. (The Joan Palevsky Imprint in Classical Literature.) Oakland: University of California Press, 2015. Pp. xii, 374. \$95.00.

Dayna S. Kalleres's *City of Demons* sets out to make demons real, tracking their "tangibility" (4) in the buildings (synagogues and temples), landscapes, and bodies of the ancient cities of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Milan. In the non-Christian landscape, she writes, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Ambrose of Milan recruited Christians to engage in battles with demon-infested buildings and bodies. Church leaders did not function only as the rational elites imagined by Edward Gibbon but were also working to "construct the baptized Christian soldiers engaged in 'spiritual warfare'" (3). Church leaders' writings drew vivid pictures of the demonic might that pressed close upon the daily life of good Christians, the literary depictions of the tense battles between good and evil forces themselves constituting a push toward violence. In contrast to many modern scholars who reduce demons to social forces or psychological factors, Kalleres emphasizes the "animistic" power present in these struggles (14). Demons must be studied in the city, and not just in the desert, as Peter Brown studied them (as Kalleres points out).

The book is organized into three sections, the first on John Chrysostom in Antioch (c. 349–407). Chrysostom's personal anti-demonic struggles as a priest remain vivid in his writings as he moved into his ecclesiastical roles. Kalleres shows that Chrysostom did not limit demonization to Jews but extended it to Christian opponents whom he claimed had given themselves over bodily to evil powers. Kalleres follows Isabella Sandwell in

seeing Antioch's ritual practices as central to religious identity construction (28), in this case through Chrysostom's specific instructions to his followers about how to counteract the dangerous presence of deities, above all in the ancient temples of the cities (36).

These deities' presence threatened anyone navigating the city without apotropaic protection (48). Chrysostom's teaching, obeyed or not, drew clear lines for his followers.

Scholars such as Peter Brown in "Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity" [reprinted in his *Religion and society in the Age of St. Augustine*, London: Faber & Faber, 1972], Kalleres argues, analyze exorcisms where both parties joined in the ritual voluntarily. Chrysostom asked more of his Christians, urging them to go out and do exorcistic battle with unwilling individuals who did not see themselves as possessed. Chrysostom's very words rendered non-Christians and even some Christians and their buildings as menacing entities, ones that Christians did well to draw away from—and thus to draw closer to each other—in everyday life. Kalleres notes in passing that Chrysostom does not provide any actual exorcism formulae (82). Perhaps he thought that hearing one of his sermons was equivalent to an exorcism, since it turned the listener into a Christian soldier against evil.

Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313–386), the focus of the second section of the book, shared the visions of apocalyptic Jews who saw past Hadrian's city to the Holy City of Jerusalem (127). These Jewish writers offered a model for Cyril's sense of a demon-infused catastrophic landscape. At the same time, Cyril looked not forward, to an apocalyptic future, but back, to Jesus's life as a model for demon fighting. Kalleres adopts Catherine Wessinger's concept of "catastrophic millennialism" to highlight the potential violence in Cyril's writings [cited from "How the Millennium comes violently",

Dialogue 36.4, 1997, and amplified in several later works]. Violence, Kalleres maintains, was more likely than tolerance given the thrust of Cyril's discourse (191). While this is a valuable observation, the question of what exactly was the final straw that ignited violence in an ancient city remains.

As for Ambrose of Milan (c. 340–397), he faced off against other Christians more than against Jews. Kalleres correctly insists that scholars should no longer find any “disparity” between Ambrose as an accomplished Christian leader and as an exorcist (200). It was in fact through his denunciation of demonic possession and his control of martyrs' bones that he forged a new Christian identity and denied that Christian identity to his enemies.

Kalleres carefully summarizes and builds upon much of the recent innovative scholarship on late antiquity, relating her interpretations to the work of scholars such as Patricia Cox, Isabella Sandwell, and David Frankfurter. Kalleres's analysis of demons is fascinating but open to debate on several points. Her adoption of the term “diabolization” from Birgit Meyer's study of witchcraft in contemporary Ghanaian Christianity (4–5) is an odd choice, since Kalleres is writing about demons, not the devil. Equally debatable is her reading of Jonathan Z. Smith's description of the category of the demonic as locative, as implying a physical distance between demons and humans (5, 95). Kalleres's real contribution is to add materiality to understanding demons in antiquity, and to place them, as she points out previous studies rarely do, in “connection with the actual world of living ritual” (93). She is a thoughtful guide to the Christian writers she interprets.

Kalleres mentions in the preface that she watched *The Exorcist* as a terrified child. Yet Chrysostom's sermons demonstrate that Christians continued to reject many of the

fears he tried to foster in them and, much to his dismay, refused to see the non-Christian festivals, buildings, and bodies as things that should frighten them away. Still, readers of this book will know that, in the end, the demons lurking in the corners of these fourth-century cities truly mattered.

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