Teachers in Late Antique Christianity

Edited by
Peter Gemeinhardt,
Olga Lorgeoux, and
Maria Munkholt Christensen

Studies in Education and Religion in Ancient and Pre-Modern History in the Mediterranean and Its Environs 3

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

The present volume contains the papers presented during a workshop at the University of Göttingen on "Teachers in Late Antique Christianity" which took place on August 10–12, 2016 in the "Ländliche Heimvolkshochschule Mariaspring" in Bovenden (near Göttingen). The workshop was part of the ongoing research of the Collaborative Research Centre *Education and Religion in Cultures of the Mediterranean and Its Environment from Ancient to Medieval Times and to the Classical Islam*. Questions of teaching and learning (Christian) religion are investigated within two of the CRC's sub-projects (C 04: *Communication of Education in Late Antique Christianity: Teachers' Roles in Parish, Family and Ascetic Community*; C 05: *The Christian Catechumenate from Late Antiquity to Early Medieval Times and Its Reception in Modern Pedagogics of Religion*), and the workshop aimed at bringing together scholars of the CRC, from other Universities in Germany and abroad in order to draw a more nuanced picture of agents and processes of teaching and learning in late antique Christianity. At the end of the present volume, the "concluding remarks" sum up some of the findings in this respect. It is hoped that the papers collected here will help to further our understanding of the topic and generate new research perspectives to be pursued in the future.

The editors are very grateful: first of all, to the colleagues who contributed to the workshop by presenting and discussing papers and also by preparing their contributions for publication.

Meeting at Mariaspring would not have been possible without the funding granted to the CRC by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Sincere thanks are also due to Rosetta Manshausen and Ulrike Schwartau for their support in organizing the workshop; to the editorial board of the newly established book series SERAPHIM who readily accepted the manuscript for publication; to Susanne Mang of Mohr Siebeck publishers who did the typesetting; and to the student assistants Aneke Dornbusch, Louisa Meyer, and Dorothee Schenk for their infatigable help with formatting and correcting the manuscripts and preparing the indices.

Göttingen, September 29, 2017

Peter Gemeinhardt
Olga Lorgeoux
Maria Munkholt Christensen

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Bibliographical Abbreviations

ABenR	American Benedictine review
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AKG	Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte
AMSS	Acta martyrum et sanctorum
AnBoll	Analecta Bollandiana
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
Ant.	Antiquitas
APF.B	Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete. Beihefte
AThR	Anglican Theological Review
AugSt	Augustinian Studies
AwK	Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium
BEFAR	Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome
BIDC	Bibliothèque de l'Institut de Droit Canonique de l'Université d'Égypte
BIFN	Bibliothèque de l'Institut Français de Naples
BAW	Bibliothek der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaften
BT	Bibliothèque de théologie. Paris
ByF	Byzantinische Forschungen
ByZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
BzA	Beiträge zur Altertumskunde
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
Cass.	Cassiciacum
CEAug	Collection des Études Augustiniennes
ChH	Church History
CChr.CM	Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis
CChr.SG	Corpus Christianorum. Series graeca
CChr.SL	Corpus Christianorum. Series latina
CistSS	Cistercian Studies Series
CM	Classica et mediaevalia
CMG	Corpus medicorum Graecorum
CP	Classical Philology
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CStS	Collected Studies Series
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DSp	Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique
EAug	Études augustiniennes
EBR	Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception
ECCA	Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity
ECR	Eastern Churches Review

EstBib	Estudios bíblicos
FaCh	Fathers of the Church
FC	Fontes Christiani
FrS	Franciscan Studies
FThSt	Freiburger theologische Studien
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera
HDG	Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte
Hermes.E	Hermes. Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie. Einzelschriften
HSem	Horae semiticae
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
HUTh	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
ICS	Illinois Classical Studies
Interp.	Interpretation
Irén.	Irénikon
IThQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JbAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JbAC.E	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergänzungsbände
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JLA	Journal of Late Antiquity
JLT	Journal of Literature and Theology
JR	Journal of Religion
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JThS (n.s.)	Journal of Theological Studies (new series)
Klio.B	Klio. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte. Beihefte
LACL	Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LWQF	Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie
MDAI.R	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung
MdKI	Materialdienst des Konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim
MH	Museum Helveticum
MHS.C	Monumenta Hispaniae sacra. Serie canónica
MLJb	Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch
ML.P	Museum Lessianum. Section philosophique
MThZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift
NT.S	Novum Testamentum. Supplements
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCT	Oxford Classical Texts
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OrCh	Oriens Christianus
Par.	Paradosis
PatMS	Patristic Monograph Series

PatSor	Patristica Sorbonensia
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus. Series latina
PO	Patrologia orientalis
POC	Proche-Orient chrétien
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RAC Suppl.	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum. Supplement
REAug	Revue des études augustiniennes
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
RMP	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie
RThPh	Revue de théologie et de philosophie
SBF.CMi	Studium biblicum Franciscanum. Collectio minor
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SHG	Subsidia hagiographica
SOKG	Studien zur orientalischen Kirchengeschichte
SPA	Studien der Patristischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft
SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
StAns	Studia Anselmiana
StLi	Studia liturgica
StPatr	Studia patristica
StTh	Studia theologica
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TS	Theological Studies
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
TzF	Texte zur Forschung
UALG	Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte
VigChr	Vigiliae Christianae
VIÖG	Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung
WdF	Wege der Forschung
WGRW	Writings from the Graeco-Roman World
WuD	Wort und Dienst
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAC	Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum
Zet.	Zetemata

Literary and Visual Images of Teachers in Late Antiquity

Arthur P. Urbano

1. Introduction

The term "teacher" conjures up different images. We might think of a teacher of the basic subjects of ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία; or a teacher of oratory, like Libanius, professionals who also declaimed in public; or teachers of philosophy, professional philosophers, like Plotinus or Proclus, who attracted a following of students and established a school, either in a private home or in a public building. Christians also held such positions. Augustine and Basil of Caesarea were teachers of rhetoric before embarking on their ecclesiastical careers. Likewise, Origen of Alexandria taught all manner of subjects, from literature to philosophy, attracting students from a variety of intellectual and religious affiliations. At the same time, one who was a bishop, or an ascetic, or even an emperor could claim or be ascribed the title of teacher. Thus, the title "teacher" could be understood quite broadly and, to an extent, was in flux.

The bounds of who counted as a teacher and who did not were in part determined by social formation, educational training, professional competition, and consecrating recognition by others in the field. They were also fashioned in literary and visual representations, which reflected cultural expectations and pressures, as well as processes of identity formation. Here I offer a modest survey of textual and visual representations of teachers in Late Antiquity, focusing specifically on teachers of philosophy and others who, without the title "philosopher," were understood to fall into that category. I contend that these representations not only expressed in words and materials the character, practices, and appearances of teachers of wisdom as they were seen and understood, but they also attest to the evolution of the conception of the "philosopher" in the volatile intellectual and social contexts of the late Roman world.

Henri-Irénée Marrou published an important collection and analysis of images in 1938. In his *MOYCIKOC ANHP: Étude sur les scènes de la vie intellectuelle figurant sur les monuments funéraires romains*, he collected together extant material evidence, largely from sarcophagi and fragments from Rome, and provided an analysis that led to the thesis that a "cult of learning" had pervaded Roman culture beginning in the third century, resulting in a proliferation of images of

intellectuals and related themes in funerary contexts. Notably, Marrou pursued his interest in late Roman education and culture in his two classic works, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (1938) and *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'Antiquité* (1948). Among art historians, Paul Zanker provides the most recent and thorough treatment of the image of the "intellectual" from classical Greece through Late Antiquity. In *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (1995), Zanker traces the development of the portraiture of philosophers, orators, poets, and teachers in statuary, funerary art, and other media. To a much greater extent than Marrou, he squarely situates the visual material in the literary, cultural, and political contexts of Greece and Rome, tracing not only its formal development, but also the broader meaning and reception of the imagery in a diachronic manner. Björn Christian Ewald's comprehensive study of the philosopher type on third-century sarcophagi, *Der Philosoph als Leitbild: Ikonographische Untersuchungen an römischen Sarkophagreliefs* (1999), highlights the reception and cultural prestige of images associated with learning, oratory, and intellectual practices in this period.[1] In the areas of the cultural and social history of Late Antiquity, Garth Fowden's classic work on the "pagan holy man" is foundational for an understanding of school contexts.[2] Recent work by Ilaria Ramelli, Elizabeth DePalma Digeser, and Edward Watts has provided interesting and fresh perspectives on the philosophical profession in Late Antiquity.[3]

In this contribution, I consider some issues pertaining to the development and evolution of the professional identity of the teacher, and specifically the philosopher, through late antique literary and material evidence. I begin by mapping out an analytical framework that situates these sources within the larger contexts of education and intellectual culture. This is followed by a discussion of two modes of representation: the philosophical biography and portraiture. To focus the discussion I treat three principal themes: 1) Plato's *Theaetetus* and the image of the philosopher, 2) pedagogy and ascetic practices, and 3) appearance and clothing.

2. Analytical Framework

There was no single, static paradigm of a teacher or philosopher in antiquity. There were as many conceptions of the philosopher as there were philosophical positions. They overlapped and competed with one another as they evolved. This was true from the earliest days of Athenian philosophy. The students of Socrates produced contrasting portraits of him. Most notably Xenophon and Plato memorialized their teacher, not simply for the sake of historic preservation, but

[1] For a recent treatment of the philosopher type in Early Christian contexts, see Urbano 2016.
[2] See Fowden 1982.
[3] For example, see Watts 2006, Ramelli 2009, Digeser 2012.

to continue and promote his legacy. As the variety of schools multiplied in the Hellenistic period, each constructed a philosophical system that carefully linked a comprehensive worldview with a prescribed manner of living.[4] The literature they produced reveals a complex field of competing individuals and institutions with distinct, yet intersecting understandings of the sage. Philosophers preserved and developed the systematic thought of their communities and frequently leveled criticisms against their competitors. The Stoic philosopher Epictetus, for example, was highly critical of Cynics, yet simultaneously appropriated Cynic principles to his Stoic worldview.[5] In the third century, a student of Plotinus had to address charges of plagiarism brought against his up-and-coming teacher by a Stoic and a Platonist.[6]

Rivalry and competition between Christian and pagan intellectuals can sometimes be obscured if we understand it simply as *religious* rivalry between two distinct theological worldviews. Instead, I would suggest that a model of intellectual exchange and competition, similar to what we see among the philosophical schools, should be applied to these late antique contexts. Christian intellectuals were not cultural outsiders, but rather were educated and socially formed within the contexts of παιδεία. Justin Martyr, Origen, Basil of Caesarea, and others, studied literary, rhetorical, and philosophical curricula alongside non-Christian peers, were shaped by the pedagogical practices of their teachers, and acquired the skills and habits to be intellectual agents in spheres of rhetorical and philosophical activity. There were also agents within ecclesiastical contexts. These spheres of activity were not always separate, and often overlapped. When examining literary and material evidence, then, it is problematic to regard one group (Christians) as appropriating *extrinsic* ideas and practices from what might be conceived of as a pre-existing, static model of intellectual identity that belongs to another group (pagans). Rather, competition from within, rather than borrowing from without, seems to offer a more accurate model that reflects the complex historical reality of classrooms and education in Late Antiquity. Both Christians and pagans participated in and contributed to a dynamic and continuous process of redefining intellectual identity.[7]

Second, this requires some reconceptualization of how we understand the relationship between pagan and Christian teachers. When we categorize Christian and Greek intellectuals first as members of an educated and cultured class, trained, socialized, and acting within a field of philosophical activity, the dis-

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[4] Even the Cynics who did not, properly speaking, have a dogmatic system, nevertheless promoted a distinctive view of reality. This is most evident in the apophthegmata tradition preserved around figures such as Antisthenes and Diogenes of Sinope. See Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* 6 (LCL 184 Hicks).

[5] See Epictetus, *Diatribai* 3.22.

[6] Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 17.

[7] For a more detailed discussion of this model, see Urbano 2013: 3–12.

tinction between Christian and Neoplatonist becomes a subdivision within this larger category, much in the way the different schools of Hellenistic philosophy were distinguished.[8] Thus at one level there are common identity markers for all members of the larger field – literary and oratorical expertise, modes of comportment and social interaction, appearance (all with some variation) – a durable and molding complex of ideas and practices that translated into cultural authority and prestige. Pierre Bourdieu called this "habitus."[9]

Third, as the various subdivisions of the intellectual field competed within the symbolic economy of cultural production, they aimed for dominant positions which lent the authority and means to define the intellectual orthodoxy. By the fourth century C. E., the main dogmatic schools of the Hellenistic period had essentially ceased to exist as viable independent institutions. Platonism had skillfully incorporated and subsumed elements of Stoic ethics and Aristotelian logic and metaphysics, all in an effort to create a synthetic, unitary system of philosophical thought. Platonists also were interested in including the wisdom and practices of pre-Greek civilizations, such as the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and even the Hebrews, into this schema. Not exactly the same as the "totalizing discourse" that Averil Cameron identified in late antique Christian imperial culture, but nevertheless even this rhetoric and construction of history suggested an overarching synthesis of culture and wisdom that translated into a totalizing and hierarchical picture of intellectual discourse.[10] Philosophical orthodoxy was at stake. In this context, the ascendency of Neoplatonism and Christianity should not be seen as teleological inevitabilities. Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* attests both in its content and in its very *raison d'être* that the legacy of Plotinus was not a given. It had to be built as the philosopher had been looked upon with some suspicion by the Platonist establishment. The struggle between Platonist and Christian intellectuals over intellectual orthodoxy and pedagogical authority can in some ways be likened to a struggle between two ascendant parties, one more invested in the status quo (nevertheless with some innovations) and one advocating for more radical change. At the same time, each of these parties in themselves can be further subdivided into various factions, particularly on the Christian side. This competition was not limited to ideas. The image of the sage was a constituent element of this engagement which had profound cultural and social implications. This in itself was not new, of course, as Zanker demonstrates, but continued in a dynamic manner into Late Antiquity as an integral part of philosophical practice and life from the dawn of professional philosophy.

[8] A further division would also have to be made within the category of "Christian" to distinguish intellectuals from non-intellectuals.

[9] See Bourdieu 1977: ch. 2. Thomas Schmitz (1997: 29) identified παιδεία as the habitus of Greco-Roman society.

[10] Cameron 1991: 2–3.

It is also important to establish some of the historical realities that defined the state of the philosophical field in Late Antiquity so as to apply properly the principles of this model. Here I can only briefly highlight four contextual points. First, by the first century B. C. E. Plato's Academy as a functioning institution was defunct and splintered into rival institutions. Second, the demise of a centralized Platonic tradition paved the way for new Platonist traditions and structures to emerge. This is seen primarily in the proliferation of Platonist teachers and circles outside of Athens in provincial areas such as Asia Minor, Egypt, and Syria. Often called "Middle Platonists," these thinkers vigorously rejected the Skeptic philosophy that had come to characterize the Academy and offered readings of Plato that explored theological as well as ethical questions, often through a Pythagorean lens. Their authority rested on their expertise and charismatic appeal, rather than on institutional succession. Third, as these new Platonisms took shape, the Hellenistic schools that had once dominated the philosophical field were on the wane by the end of the second century – especially Stoicism and Epicureanism. Related to this is the tendency towards synthesis that characterized late Platonism and also some forms of Christian philosophy. In the interests of constructing a unified schema of knowledge and virtue, Platonists often sought to establish an essential harmony between the writings of Plato and Aristotle. In addition, both Christian and Platonist thinkers applied methods of Aristotelian logic and incorporated principles of Stoic ethics in their understandings of the philosophic life.

Within this context, a reflexive outlook on the field itself resulted in the creation of several critical narratives on the state of philosophy. These narratives often outlined a situation of crisis and decline, and called for a return to an original philosophical purity. For example, in the mid-second century, Numenius of Apamea argued that the Hellenistic schools, and especially the Academics, had corrupted Plato. In his *On the Disagreement of the Academics against Plato*, he rejected the interpretations of Plato that had dominated to his own day and called for a renewed Platonism that was Pythagorean in character:

> Having learned about [the discord among the interpreters of Plato], we must return to the original point of issue, and just as it was our task from the beginning to separate him from Aristotle and Zeno, thus, even now, if God helps, we should separate him from the Academy, by himself, to be in the present time a Pythagorean.[11]

Numenius' vision of a purified Platonism also drew upon the wisdom of the "esteemed nations," especially the Egyptians, Hebrews, and Chaldeans, thereby

[11] Numenius, *Fr.* 24 (64.66–65.70 Des Places; my translation): τοῦτο δὲ χρὴ μαθόντας ἡμᾶς ἐπανενεγκεῖν ἐκεῖσε μᾶλλον τὴν γνώμην, καὶ ὥσπερ ἐξ ἀρχῆς προὐθέμεθα χωρίζειν αὐτὸν Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ Ζήνωνος, οὕτω καὶ νῦν τῆς Ἀκαδημίας, ἐὰν ὁ θεὸς ἀντιλάβηται, χωρίζοντες ἐάσομεν αὐτὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ νῦν εἶναι Πυθαγόρειον. Significant portions of Numenius' writings, including this fragment, are preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea, *Praeparatio evangelica*.

rooting it in pre-Platonic, pre-Greek antiquity. Justin Martyr, Numenius' contemporary, made similar arguments about the state of philosophy in his time:

Now, let me tell you why [philosophy] has at length become so diversified. They who first turned to philosophy, and, as a result, were deemed illustrious men were succeeded by men who gave no time to the investigation of truth, but, amazed at the courage and self-control of their teachers as well as with the novelty of their teachings, held that to be the truth which each had learned from his own teacher. And they in turn transmitted to their successors such opinions, and others like them, and so they became known by the name of him who was considered the father of the doctrine.[12]

Here Justin explains how philosophy became differentiated into different schools. Like Numenius he attributes it to discord and disagreement among the philosophers of previous eras. He affirms that philosophy is "one's great possession"; however, different schools exist because "many have failed to discover the nature of philosophy, and the reason why it was sent down."[13] For Justin the solution was to purify philosophy from its Greek corruption, searching out its origins in ancient Hebrew sources, and understanding this in the light of the clarifying revelation of Christ.[14]

Justin did not reject "philosophy" as something extrinsic and incompatible with Christian revelation. Nor did he reject the philosopher's manner of life. He dressed in the philosopher's mantle, engaged in dialectical debate, commented upon philosophical writings, and composed dialogues.[15] He even embraced the professional title of philosopher.[16] Later Christian intellectuals, such as Origen in the third century, and several of the fourth-century Church Fathers (in particular Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus), were formed intellectually and socially within the institutions of ancient education and philosophy. This was a time when the field was experiencing major shifts and changes internally, not just in ideas, but also in pedagogical structures and the distribution of authority.

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[12] Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 2.2 (PTS 47, 71.7–72.14 Marcovich): οὗ δὲ χάριν πολύκρανος ἐγενήθη, θέλω εἰπεῖν. συνέβη τοῖς πρώτοις ἁψαμένοις αὐτῆς καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐνδόξοις γενομένοις ἀκολουθῆσαι τοὺς ἔπειτα μηδὲν ἐξετάσαντας ἀληθείας πέρι, καταπλαγέντας δὲ μόνον τὴν καρτερίαν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ἐγκράτειαν καὶ τὸ ξένον τῶν λόγων ταῦτα ἀληθῆ νομίσαι ἃ παρὰ τοῦ διδασκάλου ἕκαστος ἔμαθεν, εἶτα καὶ αὐτούς, τοῖς ἔπειτα παραδόντας τοιαῦτα ἄττα καὶ ἄλλα τούτοις προσεοικότα, τοῦτο κληθῆναι τοὔνομα, ὅπερ ἐκαλεῖτο ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ λόγου. Tr. Falls.

[13] Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 2.1 (PTS 47, 71.4–5 Marcovich): τί ποτε δέ ἐστι φιλοσοφία καὶ οὗ χάριν κατεπέμφθη εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς πολλοὺς λέληθεν; Tr. Falls.

[14] On the similarities between Justin and Numenius, see Droge 1987: 310–319.

[15] See Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 1.

[16] Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 8.2.

3. The *Theaetetus* and the Identity of the Teacher

As the central figure of Plato's dialogues, Socrates was remembered and memorialized as the archetype of the philosophical life. His actions are as important as his words; and his appearance was also pedagogical and paradigmatic. His worn-out cloak, or τρίβων, became a symbol of self-control and masculinity in both literature and art.[17] It would also come to serve as a kind of "uniform" for those embracing teaching and philosophy. As Paul Zanker has shown, the image of Socrates underwent significant development from "antiestablishment, marginalized figure" to "a good Athenian citizen."[18] A small statuette currently housed in the British Museum, which may likely be a smaller scale copy of an original bronze executed by Lysippus of Sicyon in the fourth century B. C. E., exemplifies the end of a "process of beautification," or normalization, of Socrates.[19]

Reflection on the philosopher's way of life, pursuits, place in society, and reception by the general population begins with the philosophical profession itself. A particularly important passage in Plato's *Theaetetus* (173b–176d) is one of the first self-reflective pieces to emerge from the nascent Platonic Academy. The passage was often quoted by philosophers and intellectuals into Late Antiquity, when even Christian writers turned to the passage to understand the philosophic life. In the passage, Socrates contrasts forensic oratory with philosophical dialectic and describes the life of the κορυφαῖοι, or "chief" philosophers. The κορυφαῖος of the *Theaetetus* is completely removed from the conventions and institutions of the polis, oblivious to the workings of law courts and assemblies. He is "not preoccupied with what principally concerns other people,"[20] and instead loses himself in the contemplation of the nature of things. He "is a laughing-stock not only to Thracian girls but to the multitude in general, for he falls into pits and all sorts of perplexities through inexperience, and his awkwardness is terrible, making him seem a fool."[21] He sounds and appears out-of-place and irrelevant; but in reality he possesses a vision of intelligible realities that transcends the mundane interactions of human life. He takes "flight" from the shadows of this world and consumes himself with the activity of becoming like god, for "to escape is to become like God, so far as this is possible; and to become like God is to become just and pious with intelligence."[22] In the end he drags his critics into dialogue making them realize their own folly. This is his pedagogical method.

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[17] See Plato, *Symposium* 219b–220b.

[18] Zanker 1995: 58–61 (quoted phrases from p. 61).

[19] Zanker 1995: 60. London, British Museum, inv. 1925,1118.1.

[20] Polansky 1992: 137.

[21] Plato, *Theaetetus* 174c (LCL 123, 122.3–6 Fowler): γέλωτα παρέχει οὐ μόνον Θρᾴτταις ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἄλλῳ ὄχλῳ, εἰς φρεατά τε καὶ πᾶσαν ἀπορίαν ἐμπίπτων ὑπὸ ἀπειρίας, καὶ ἡ ἀσχημοσύνη δεινή, δόξαν ἀβελτερίας παρεχομένη.

[22] Plato, *Theaetetus* 176b (LCL 123, 128.2–3 Fowler [translation modified]): φυγὴ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν· ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι.

Modern commentators largely agree that the figure described here cannot quite be identified with Socrates himself.[23] Nickolas Pappas has recently argued that the image reflects an ambiguity in the post-Socratic Academy with Socrates himself at the intersection of this ambiguity: on the one hand, the philosopher as counter-cultural critic and, on the other, the reality of a "professional philosopher" at home in an institution.[24] He further argues that the dialogue reflects an ongoing rivalry between Academics (the institutional philosophers) and Cynics (the counter-cultural philosophers) over the nature of the philosophic life, and thus the image of the philosopher. A rivalry between Plato and Diogenes (the paradigmatic Cynic) is attested in the apophthegmata tradition preserved in Diogenes Laertius: "Plato had defined Man as an animal, biped and featherless, and was applauded. Diogenes plucked a fowl and brought it into the lecture-room with the words, 'Here is Plato's man.'"[25] This rivalry also touched upon outward appearance and fashion. Plato's κορυφαῖος knew how to wear his cloak like a respectable free, male citizen.[26] The Cynic, on the other hand, wore his cloak tattered, dirty, and doubled. Yet, both styles could find precedent in Socrates.

In the decades after Socrates' death, a philosopher type began to develop in Athenian statuary which "began to mark the philosopher as a specific identity"; these visual images complemented literary ones and showed how a philosopher was expected to be seen.[27] Following Zanker, Pappas suggests that into the Roman era, two philosophical types dominated art: "the philosopher as oddity, misfit, [and] … critic of systematic thought" and the "philosopher as teacher, school member,… and participant in a collective institution."[28] These contrasting images are reflected in the *Theaetetus* and evidence inter-scholastic rivalry that began in the Hellenistic era and continued into Late Antiquity.

The Neoplatonist Plotinus, for example, offers a commentary on this section of the *Theaetetus* in *Ennead* 1.2, a treatise on the virtues. He understands the "flight" that Plato describes as fleeing evil things and becoming like God:

> Since it is here that evils are, and "they must necessarily haunt this region," and the soul wants to escape from evils, we must escape from here. What, then, is this escape? "Being made like god," Plato says. And we become godlike "if we become righteous and holy with the help of wisdom," and are altogether in virtue.[29]

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[23] Sedley 2004: 68.

[24] Pappas 2016: 21.

[25] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* 6.2.40 (LCL 185, 42.3–5 Hicks): Πλάτωνος ὁρισαμένου, Ἄνθρωπός ἐστι ζῷον δίπουν ἄπτερον, καὶ εὐδοκιμοῦντος, τίλας ἀλεκτρυόνα εἰσήνεγκεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν σχολὴν καί φησιν, "οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Πλάτωνος ἄνθρωπος." See also Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* 6.2.25–26, 53.

[26] Pappas 2016: 97–98.

[27] Pappas 2016: 98.

[28] Pappas 2016: 99.

[29] Plotinus, Ennead 1.2.1 (LCL 440, 126.1–7 Armstrong): ἐπειδὴ τὰ κακὰ ἐνταῦθα καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης, βούλεται δὲ ἡ ψυχὴ φυγεῖν τὰ κακά, φευκτέον ἐντεῦθεν. τίς

In this reflection on the path to virtue, Plotinus presents "a hierarchical analysis of the four basic Platonic virtues according to the four different levels of theoretical activation each may be seen to occupy," an approach that would continue and develop more intricately in the writings of later Platonists such as Porphyry and Proclus.[30] These late Platonists regarded the proper pursuit of this path to be within the context of school life. The biographies of Plotinus and Proclus by their students present the philosophers as the paradigms of the philosophical systems they expounded. They both achieve the goal of likeness to God through contemplation, teaching, and discipline within a community of professional intellectuals.

Theodoret of Cyrrhus provides an interesting example of a Christian reading of the *Theaetetus*. Rather than rejecting it all together, Theodoret applies a typological reading of the dialogue which sees in the κορυφαῖος a prefiguration of Christian ascetics. After quoting the passage (as well as other passages from the *Republic* and the *Laws*), Theodoret argues not that Plato's vision was fundamentally flawed, but that it would be achieved by Christian ascetics who contemplated the divine mysteries in faith and lived the ascetic life through the power of divine grace:

> In these lines Plato has depicted the mode of existence of our philosophers because he certainly did not find such types among the Greeks. For Socrates, the chief of the philosophers, spent his life in discussions in the gymnasia and the salons … The words of Plato are not strictly applicable to him. And if they are not applicable to him it would be difficult to find anybody else to whom they are applicable. But those who have become enamored of the philosophy of the Gospel have distanced themselves from political troubles. For having installed themselves on mountain tops, or enjoying the life in desert places, they have chosen a life spent in contemplating divine things and their chosen lot in life is in harmonizing themselves with this contemplation, with no care for wives, children, and material possessions, but directing their souls in accordance with the canon of divine laws and, like the best artists, they paint their spiritual image after the best models of virtue.[31]

Theodoret offers an alternative picture, representing Christian ascetics as outsiders to school life and culture. Of course, the picture is much more complicated, as

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οὖν ἡ φυγή; θεῷ, φησιν, ὁμοιωθῆναι. τοῦτο δέ, εἰ δίκαιοι καὶ ὅσιοι μετὰ φρονήσεως γενοίμεθα καὶ ὅλως ἐν ἀρετῇ.

[30] Kalligas 2014: 133–134.

[31] Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 12.26–27 (SC 57, 426.11–427.15 Canivet): ἐν δὲ τούτοις ὁ Πλάτων τὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων φιλοσόφων ἐζωγράφησε πολιτείαν· οὐ γὰρ δή τις παρ᾽ ἐκείνοις τοιοῦτος ἐγένετο. ὁ μὲν γὰρ Σωκράτης, τῶν φιλοσόφων ὁ κορυφαῖος, κἀν τοῖς γυμνασίοις κἀν τοῖς ἐργαστηρίοις διαλεγόμενος διετέλει … ἥκιστα τοίνυν αὐτῷ προσήκει τὰ παρὰ Πλάτωνος εἰρημένα. ἰδὲ τούτῳ τοίνυν αὐτῷ προσήκει τὰ παρὰ Πλάτωνος εἰρημένα. εἰ δὲ τούτῳ οὐ προσῆκε, σχολῇ γ᾽ ἂν ἄλλῳ τῳ ἁρμόσειεν. οἱ δὲ τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς ἐρασθέντες φιλοσοφίας πόρρωθεν τῶν πολιτικῶν θορύβων γεγένηνται· τὰς δὲ τῶν ὀρῶν ἀκρωνυχίας κατειληφότες ἢ τὸν ἐν ἐρήμοις χωρίοις ἀγαπήσαντες βίον, τῇ θεωρίᾳ τῶν θείων καὶ τῷ ταύτῃ ξυνηρμοσμένῳ σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἀπεκλήρωσαν βίῳ, οὐ γυναικῶν καὶ παίδων καὶ κτημάτων ἐπιμελούμενοι, ἀλλὰ τὰς ψυχὰς κατά γε τὸν κανόνα τῶν θείων διευθύνοντες νόμων καὶ οἷόν τινες ἄριστοι ζωγράφοι πρὸς τὰ ἀρχέτυπα τῆς ἀρετῆς τὰς νοερὰς αὐτῶν ζωγραφοῦντες εἰκόνας. Tr. Halton.

recent scholarship has shown.[32] Here Theodoret contends that not even Socrates could successfully attain to the ideal he described because he failed to withdraw from public life. Christian ascetics, on the other hand, fulfilled the description of Plato's κορυφαῖος by forsaking family and political life and withdrawing to the deserts and wilderness. There they occupied themselves with the contemplation of God and successfully progressed in the assimilation to God which Plato identified as the goal of philosophy. While appearing as oddities and misfits to Greek eyes, the ascetics described here actually model back to them a vision of virtue, which derived from their own tradition.

4. Becoming Like God in the Classroom

Theodoret described his monk philosophers in a series of biographical portraits collected in his *Historia Religiosa* in the mid fifth century. By that point, Christian authors had developed the genre of biography to extol the virtues and deeds of martyrs, bishops, and saints. In the Hellenistic period, biography developed within the contexts of inter-scholastic rivalry. Through literary accounts of the lives of philosophers such as Pythagoras and Socrates, biographers crafted paradigms of the ideal sage whose lives mirrored the principles of the various schools. Biographies also drew connecting lines and lines of demarcation to map out intellectual pedigrees and successions. In many ways, the philosopher described on the pages of a βίος became a site for contemplating and debating philosophical truths.[33]

Two important examples of late antique biographical literature that offer simultaneously complimentary and competing visions of the philosopher at work are the roughly contemporaneous *Life of Plotinus and the Arrangement of his Works* by the Neoplatonist (and student of Plotinus) Porphyry and the biographical narrative of Origen of Alexandria in book six of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*. Both works highlight the activities of teaching and study as paradigmatic paths towards assimilation to the divine. By opening the doors to their classrooms and philosophical communities, their biographers offer glimpses into their souls.

The nature of schools and classrooms had changed significantly in the imperial period.[34] The centralized institutions of Plato and Aristotle gave way to local schools across the empire.[35] These were both publicly and privately funded and had no formal continuity with the founders of the Athenian institutions. The

[32] See the collection of essays on various aspects of asceticism and classical paideia in Larsen and Rubenson: forthcoming.

[33] See Momigliano 1993: 53.

[34] Here I summarize the main points of Hadot 2002: 146–168.

[35] In 176 CE Marcus Aurelius established four imperially endowed chairs at Athens in Pla-

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