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## THE PLATONIST PHILOSOPHER AND HIS CIRCLE IN LATE ANTIQUITY\*

According to Augustine of Hippo, "the most distinguished philosophers of recent times, who were followers of Plato, wished to be called, not *Peripatetici* or *Academici*, but *Platonici*"<sup>1</sup>. In this sentence is neatly encapsulated the difference between classical and late antique philosophy.

In classical Greece, philosophical life was dominated by the great Schools founded in the fourth and early third centuries. In a specific place, and under a regular succession of teachers (διαδοχή), these Schools (αἵρέσεις) sought to preserve, if not the letter then at least the spirit of their founder's teachings, while at the same time undertaking new work in an atmosphere of free intellectual enquiry. Usually their members shared some form of common life, and took part together in certain religious acts, even if expressive of nothing much more than devotion to the memory of the founder. Such, at least in their beginnings, were Plato's Academy, the Lyceum as it developed under Theophrastus, and the School of Epicurus. There were, of course, many other lesser circles (usually referred to as σχολαὶ or διατριβαὶ) that never acquired the formality and permanence of an αἵρεσις, but dissolved on the death of their teacher. The pages of Diogenes Laertius are full of the comings and goings of philosophers between one circle and another, and from the time when Aristotle left the Academy while Plato was still alive, and provoked from his teacher the bitter complaint that "Aristotle kicked me, like colts kick out at their mother as soon as they are born"<sup>2</sup>, it is possible to see that the natural tendency of the Schools was towards intellectual diversification, and hence institutional fragmentation. Stoicism, the fourth and last to be founded of the great Athenian Schools, never enjoyed the centralized organisation of its predecessors; as late as the second century A.D. Numenius could compare the Stoics, "torn by factions, which

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\* I wish to thank the Very Rev. Dr Henry Chadwick, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and Dr Polymnia Athanassiadi, of the University of Athens, for help without which this article could not have been written.

1. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 8.12.

2. Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* 5.2.





began with their founders and have not ceased even now", with the School of Epicurus, "like some true republic, perfectly free from sedition, with one mind in common and one purpose, so that they were, and are, and seemingly will be devoted disciples"<sup>3</sup>.

Like the Stoa, so too the other Schools, as they began to spread their activities beyond Athens onto the wider stage provided by the Hellenistic kingdoms, and afterwards by the Roman empire, naturally lost their original sense of corporate identity, and of attachment to the city in which they had been born. The breaking down of the old institutional structures was accompanied by an eclectic approach to philosophy itself. The School of Epicurus, which we know to have maintained a separate institutional identity in Athens at least into the reign of Hadrian<sup>4</sup>, was also, hardly coincidentally, the one dogma that was unanimously condemned as impious by all other philosophers. The Stoics too, curiously enough, preserved their διαδοχή in Athens until the latter half of the second century<sup>5</sup>, but of the Academy and Peripatos we hear nothing after Sulla's sack of Athens in 86 B.C.<sup>6</sup>. By the third century the Epicureans had disappeared completely, and such Stoics as lingered on are mostly just names to us.

What modern scholarship calls Neoplatonism, and contemporaries thought of as "the purified philosophy of Plato"<sup>7</sup>, was born into a world where the old philosophical institutions were reduced to nothing more than prestigious names, and thinking men had already for many generations tended to subscribe to a spiritual view of the world that owed far more to Pythagoras and Plato than to Aristotle. The divine Plato (ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων) in particular

3. Numenius, fr. 24.33-8 (des Places). On Stoic sects in second century A.D. Athens, cf. Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 5.186a.

4. *IG* 2-3<sup>2</sup>. 1099.

5. Cf. *ibid.* 3801, 11551.

6. Cf. the excellent discussion by J. P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School: a study of a Greek educational institution* (Berkeley 1972), 177-89, 192 - 207. The fact that several Athenians of the second and third centuries are attested as διάδοχοι, *tout court*, does not of itself validate J. H. Oliver's suggestion, *The diadochê at Athens under the humanistic emperors*, *TAPA* 98 (1977) 160 - 78, that there was a combined Platonic and Aristotelian διαδοχή at Athens during this period. The word διάδοχος seems gradually to have lost its specific reference to the head of an Athenian philosophical School, and by the second century it could refer to any teacher of philosophy, no matter where he lived: cf. Plutarch, *De exilio* 605b; A. Rehm, *Didyma II: Die Inschriften* (Berlin 1958), no. 150; Galen, *De ordine librorum suorum ad Eugenianum* 1; J. - P. Rey - Coquais, *Inscriptions grecques d'Apamée*, "Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes" (1973) 67,84; Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* VII. 32.6.

7. Hierocles apud Photius, *Bibliotheca* 214.173a (ἡ Πλάτωνος διακεκαθαυμένη φιλοσοφία).



exercised what almost amounted to an intellectual monopoly in late antiquity. However his doctrines might be reinterpreted, the authority of his name was absolute, and the great philosophers of the age acknowledged this by preferring the name of "Platonist" to that of "Academic"<sup>8</sup>. The personal holiness that to contemporaries like Eunapius was the most striking thing about them was the outward sign both of their acceptance of Plato's authority, and of the efficacy of the mystical teachings attributed to him<sup>9</sup>. They were holy men as much as philosophers, and their followers were inspired as much by personal devotion as by desire for intellectual instruction.

It is legitimate to enquire whether this attitude was reflected in the way in which philosophical life was articulated on the practical level in the third and fourth centuries. The Platonist philosophers of the period shared a common culture, and the very existence of this culture, especially of its religious content, was under threat as Christianity first encroached upon it, then began openly to attack it. To a common background was naturally joined a common purpose, an urge to defend, or even attack, more apparent in some (like Porphyry, Julian, and Eunapius) than in others (Plotinus and Iamblichus, for example), but inherent in the very fact of being a pagan. Yet the institutions of the past were dead, and some form of organisation had to be put in their place. Julian saw this problem, and worked for a general solution. The Neoplatonist philosophers did not have such resources, and anyway were not usually men of the world, yet the circles they gathered around themselves can be shown to have had a family resemblance, and to have responded well enough to the historical and social circumstances in which they functioned.

Towards the end of his life the philosopher Longinus wrote: "When I was a boy there were not a few masters of philosophical argument, all of whom I was enabled to see because from childhood I travelled to many places with my parents, and became acquainted with those who had lived on into my time in my intercourse with a great number of peoples and cities"<sup>10</sup>. Late antique philosophers were indeed used to international audiences<sup>11</sup>;

8. For a similar attitude to Aristotle, cf. Themistius, *Or.* 2. 26d.

9. Cf. Hierocles, loc. cit. (ὅσοι τῆς ἱερᾶς...γενεᾶς ἔτυχον φύντες); Proclus, *Theologia Platonica* I, p. 6, (Saffrey-Westerink) (Platonic philosophy restored ὑπό... τινῶν ἱερέων ἀληθινῶν); ? Olympiodorus, *In Phaedonem* p. 123. 4-6 (Norvin) (Iamblichus, Syrianus, and Proclus were ἱερατικοί).

10. Longinus apud Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 20.20-25 (Henry-Schwyzler; trans. A.H. Armstrong, *Plotinus* I (London 1966). Longinus was born c. 213.

11. Porphyry, op. cit. 7; Themistius, *Or.* 23.294b; Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* V.1.5 (Giangrande).



this was a world in which a Plotinus could throw up all and join an expedition bound for Persia, while a Prohaeresius might, despite his poverty, set out from his home in Armenia and embark on a career which would take him to Antioch, Athens, Rome, and even Gaul<sup>12</sup>. Of course, if the disciples who surrounded the great teachers of the Roman world tended to be truly international in origin, they were inevitably also unstable and discontinuous as groups. The best way to understand the way in which these Neoplatonist philosophical circles worked, is to examine in detail the four about which we know most. These four circles fall naturally into two pairs, those of Ammonius Saccas and his most famous pupil, Plotinus, in the third century, and those of Iamblichus and his successor Aedesius in the first half of the fourth century.

Relatively little information has survived about Ammonius, but even that little has been the subject of a lengthy controversy which has as yet lost none of its fatal attractiveness. Any conclusion must be based partly on guess-work, and that offered here does not coincide exactly with the result of any of the more recent investigations<sup>13</sup>.

We possess four main testimonies to the life of Ammonius from writers who enjoyed some direct or indirect personal knowledge of him. Because our interest is in the evolution of the Platonist tradition, it is best to begin with the evidence supplied by Porphyry, though it is not the earliest. Porphyry was heir at only one remove to Ammonius's teaching through both Plotinus and Longinus<sup>14</sup>, and his biography of the man whom later generations at least were to see as Ammonius's closest disciple is the earliest testimony that has survived in its own right. From it we learn that Plotinus, disillusioned with the conventionally approved philosophers (οἱ εὐδοκίμουντες) of Alexandria, was introduced by a friend to Ammonius, and immediate-

12. Porphyry, *op. cit.* 3.17-9; Eunapius. *op. cit.* X.1.8; 3.3; 7.1; 7.3. Cf. *ibid.* XXIII.4.12 on the travels of Hellespontius. On the enthusiasm of philosophers and others of the Roman period for Herodotus, cf. J. Geffcken, *Zwei Griechische Apologeten* (Leipzig 1907), 188, n. 3, and K.-A. Riemann, *Das Herodoteische Geschichtswerk in der Antike* (diss. Munich 1967), 70-124. Pausanias too, of course, had his audience.

13. Bibliography: H. Crouzel, *Bibliographie critique d' Origène* (The Hague 1971), sv *Ammonios Saccas*, 615 - 6; R. Farina, *Bibliografia Origeniana 1960-1970* (1971), I. 196 - 200, to which add F. H. Kettler, *War Origenes Schüler des Ammonios Sakkas?*, in J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser (edd.), *Epektasis: Mélanges offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (Paris 1972), 327 - 34. The only thoroughly sound treatment of Ammonius and his connections (but excluding his philosophy) is that of L. Krüger, *Ueber das Verhältnis des Origenes zu Ammonius Saccas: ein Versuch*, «Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie» 7 (1843) 46 - 62.

14. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 3.10-13, 20.36-8; Eunapius, *V. soph.* IV.1.2.



ly captivated by him. This was in 232/3, when Plotinus was twenty-eight, and he stayed with Ammonius continuously for eleven years, until he was thirty-nine (242/3 A.D.)<sup>15</sup>, acquiring a sound grasp of philosophy and a desire to go on and explore the learning of Persia and India. Porphyry also tells us that Plotinus and his fellow-pupils Herennius and the pagan Origen agreed (συνθηκῶν γεγονυῖων) to keep secret the doctrines that Ammonius had revealed to them in his lectures, but that subsequently all three broke their pact<sup>16</sup>.

We have a second Porphyrian testimony, a fragment of the *Contra Christianos* preserved in Eusebius's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI.19. 4-8. The object of this fragment is to defame the Christian Origen and the allegorical interpretation of Scripture, but we are told *en passant* that Porphyry, κομιδῆ νέος ὢν, had met Origen and subsequently (it is implied) become familiar with his writings. Origen had been an ἀκροατής of Ammonius, whom Porphyry describes as having an at that time pre-eminent devotion (ἐπίδοσιν) to philosophy. Porphyry goes on to complain that the Christian learned a great deal from his master but did not adopt the philosophical life, elaborating the point by contrasting Ammonius, "a Christian, and given a Christian upbringing by his parents", who nonetheless went over πρὸς τὴν κατὰ νόμους πολιτείαν as soon as he began to think and to study philosophy; and Origen, "Ἕλληνα ἐν Ἑλλησιν παιδευθεὶς λόγοις, who "drifted into" (or "was shipwrecked on": ἐξώκειλεν) the βάρβαρον... τόλμημα (Christianity), and thenceforth lived παρανόμως.

To these we may add an earlier testimony by Longinus in the preface to his *Περὶ τέλους*, preserved by Porphyry in his *Vita Plotini* 20, and dating from about 265<sup>17</sup>. Distinguishing philosophers who write for the benefit of posterity from those who see their duty as the imparting of wisdom to their own pupils, Longinus remarks that Ammonius and the pagan Origen<sup>18</sup>, with both of whom he studied for a long time, and who were egregious on account

15. Plotinus's failure to return to Alexandria after the failure of the Persian expedition is usually taken to mean that Ammonius died about that time.

16. Porphyry, op. cit. 3.

17. Cf. W. Theiler, *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus* (Berlin 1966), 38.

18. The fact that Ammonius is here mentioned in the same breath as Origen would seem to prove that he is identical with the teacher of Plotinus, Herennius, and Origen. On the reasons why this Origen cannot possibly be identical with the Christian Origen, see H. Dörrie, *Ammonios, der Lehrer Plotins*, «Hermes» 83 (1955) 471-2; K.-O. Weber, *Origenes der Neuplatoniker: Versuch einer Interpretation* (Munich 1962), 17-33. Origen was by no means an uncommon name in Egypt: cf. F. Preisigke, *Namenbuch* (Heidelberg 1922), 496-7 sv.



of their wisdom, belonged to the latter group. He then adds: "And if some of these did write something, as for example Origen, *On the daimons* . . . , these are not enough to justify us in counting them among those who have written extensively on philosophy; they are occasional works of men whose interest was in teaching, not writing, and who did not make authorship their main concern"<sup>19</sup>.

Fourthly, we may note that the Christian writer Origen refers in a letter, again preserved by Eusebius<sup>20</sup>, to the διδάσκαλος τῶν φιλοσόφων μαθημάτων under whom he studied, in the company of another Christian called Heraclas, who adopted the φιλόσοφον σχῆμα on account of his master. Since the letter refers to Heraclas as νῦν ἐν τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ καθεζόμενος it seems to have been written before Heraclas became bishop of Alexandria in 232<sup>21</sup>, and is therefore our only testimony that is contemporary with Ammonius.

The failure of scholars to agree on what we can legitimately say about Ammonius is the best excuse for rehearsing these well-known passages once again. Longinus and Origen, both pupils of Ammonius himself, and Porphyry, the intimate of Ammonius's spiritual and intellectual heir, furnish us with evidence about the Alexandrian teacher's life which, if sparse, is both consistent and credible. The only necessary assumption that has been made in setting the evidence out in this way has been that the Ammonius who appears in the *Contra Christianos* fragment, and therefore by implication the διδάσκαλος τῶν φιλοσόφων μαθημάτων to whom Origen refers, is identical with the Ammonius whom we encounter in Porphyry's *Vita Plotini*. The way in which Porphyry describes Ammonius in the former passage (ὁ πλείστην ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς χρόνοις ἐπίδοσιν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἐσχηκώς), and the fact that both Ammonii taught in Alexandria, seems to make this assumption overwhelmingly probable.

On the basis of this evidence we can hardly claim to say very much about Ammonius's character, but we are at least now in a position to avoid the more dangerous misapprehensions apparent in recent discussions. Looking again at the four testimonies just discussed, the following points arise:

Firstly, Ammonius was not in 232/3 one of the εὐδοκιμοῦντες as far as the Alexandrian philosophical establishment was concerned, and yet he must by that time have been teaching for many years. Origen took over the

19. Armstrong's slightly free translation of Porphyry, op. cit. 20.40-41,44-7. That Longinus does in fact have the contrast between teaching and writing in mind is evident from lines 25-9.

20. Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.12-4.

21. Ibid. VI.26; cf. H. Koch, *Zum Lebensgange des Origenes und des Heraklas*, "Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft" 25 (1926) 280.



catechetical school at the age of eighteen (c. 203), and, as his fame spread abroad, philosophers and heretics came and disputed with him<sup>22</sup>. Feeling his inadequacies he betook himself to Ammonius, where he met Heraclas, who had already been a disciple of Ammonius for five years<sup>23</sup>. The implication is that Ammonius was already teaching at some point in the first decade of the third century. This is not, *pace* Dörrie<sup>24</sup>, a reason why the same man cannot have taught Plotinus and Origen—a teaching career of forty years is nothing extraordinary, and indeed Origen's lasted about fifty. Nonetheless, we must somehow account for Ammonius's lack of public reputation in Plotinus's day, and the obvious explanation is that Ammonius did not run a conventional philosophical school open to all comers. But that at one period in his life he was in the habit of lecturing publicly is suggested by the fact that Origen went to him as an ἀκροατής, the term used to describe the pupil who was formally registered with a public teacher<sup>25</sup>. We may guess that, as Ammonius's own philosophy evolved and became less conventional, he gradually withdrew from the public eye, and concentrated on a few chosen pupils<sup>26</sup>.

Secondly, it is clear that Ammonius was a master of Greek philosophy. Porphyry attributes Plotinus's knowledge of philosophy to the time he spent

22. Eusebius, *HE* VI.3.3, 19.12: cf. 8.6.

23. Ibid. VI. 19.12-3. Koch. art. cit. 278-82, argues with reference to Eusebius, *HE* VI.3.1-2 that Heraclas cannot have been among Origen's earliest pagan pupils if Origen first "found" him (εὗρον: ibid. 19.13) at Ammonius's lectures, to which he began to go precisely because of the arrival of pagans in his own school. Presumably therefore Eusebius mentions Heraclas and Plutarch on account of their subsequent reputation rather than their strict priority.

24. Dörrie, art. cit. 468.

25. Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.6; cf. Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorica* 25 (ἀκροατής τε καὶ μαθητής); Libanius, *Or.* 1.16 (ἡκροώμην... ἐν τάξει μαθητοῦ). The reference in Priscian, *Solutiones ad Chosroem* 42.15-6 to a "collectio Ammonii scholarum", written down by a certain Theodotus, would support this point of view, could it be proved that they refer to Ammonius (as Theiler, op. cit. 37-9) rather than to the fifth century Alexandrian philosopher Ammonius Hermeiu (as Dörrie, art. cit. 467-8 and *RE* Supp. 8.853, and E.R. Dodds, *Numenius and Ammonius*, «Entretiens Hardt» V (Geneva 1960), 25). In addition to the arguments put forward by Theiler, the fact that no Neoplatonist philosopher called Theodotus and contemporary with Ammonius Hermeiu is attested independently of Priscian suggests that the previous alternative is the more probable.

26. Cf. below p. 371 for the contrast ἀκροαταὶ - ζηλωταί. Ammonius's known pupils are: Heraclas (Origen apud Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.13); the Christian Origen (Porphyry apud ibid. VI.19.6); Herennius, the pagan Origen, and Plotinus (Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 3.24-5); (?)Theodosius (ibid. 7.18); Olympius (ibid. 10.1-2); Longinus (Longinus apud ibid. 20.37-8); Antoninus (Proclus, *In Timaeum* 187b); ?Theodotus (cf. previous note).



with Ammonius, and emphasizes how Ammonius's influence continued to be a source of inspiration to his famous pupil's teaching<sup>27</sup>. We may, following Porphyry, assume that Origen too owed his sound grasp of Greek philosophy to Ammonius<sup>28</sup>. The extent to which Ammonius inspired in his pupils a religious enthusiasm may be disputed, but the profundity of his philosophical thought may not — if indeed anyone should be so unwise as to try to separate the two in late antiquity.

Thirdly, the agreement to keep Ammonius's teachings a secret was an initiative on the part of Herennius, Origen, and Plotinus, not of Ammonius. It was the private expression of a shared but deeply personal enthusiasm and, perhaps, of a particular interpretation of what the master had taught — one does not have to assume, because these three decided not to divulge what they had learned from Ammonius, that they were his only pupils<sup>29</sup>. There can therefore be no question of founding upon this pact an interpretation of Ammonius as a Pythagorean wonder-worker, as Dörrie has attempted to do<sup>30</sup>. The other evidence adduced in support of this theory is equally suspect. The magician Olympius may have been a pupil of Ammonius, but only for a short time, and magic was anyway common in Egypt; we can deduce nothing about Ammonius from the character of one of his lesser pupils. Again the pagan Origen may have written a treatise *On the daimons*, but this is no more surprising in a Platonic than in a Pythagorean context — and it should not be forgotten that Longinus unequivocally describes both Ammonius and Origen as Platonists<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand, Platonism and Pythagoreanism are not easily distinguishable at this period<sup>32</sup>, and an Ammonius innocent of Pythagoras would be as absurd an hypothesis as an Ammonius cast in the mould of Apollonius of Tyana. Porphyry, illustrating the catholic philosophical training with which the Christian Origen had been endowed by Ammonius, besides Plato mentions "Numenius and Cronius, Apollophanes and Longinus and Moderatus, Nicomachus and the distinguished men among the Pythagoreans"<sup>33</sup>. Likewise Plotinus was inspired by Ammonius to an interest in Persian and Indian philosophy — a strong hint of Pythagorean ways of thought. In short, we need not doubt a certain Neo-

27. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 3.33-4, 14.15-6.

28. Porphyry apud Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.8.

29. As does Dörrie, art. cit. 446-7.

30. Ibid. 439, 441-6, disputed by Dodds, art. cit. 27-9, and Weber, op. cit. 27.

31. Longinus apud Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 20.36.

32. Dodds, art. cit. 28 goes too far in asserting that Nemesius's reference to τὰ παρὰ Ἀμμωνίου τοῦ διδασκάλου Πλωτίνου καὶ Νουμηνίου τοῦ Πυθαγορικοῦ, *De natura hominis* (=PG 40.537), surely implies that Ammonius was not a Pythagorean.



pythagorean tinge to Ammonius's teaching—but nor need we take it further than that<sup>34</sup>.

Fourthly, there is nothing inherently implausible in Porphyry's account of the relationship between the Christian Origen and Ammonius<sup>35</sup>. Porphyry lived in Tyre, and as a boy may well have met Origen, who after 232 taught in nearby Caesarea. It is quite possible that Ammonius was born a Christian, and then drifted away from the faith as he grew up, perhaps encouraged a little, as Langerbeck suggested, by the Severan persecution of 202-3, in which Origen's father was martyred<sup>36</sup>. The character of the Christian community in Alexandria at this period was highly ambiguous—there was no norm of orthodoxy, no sure criterion for defining who was a heretic, and no sign even of a desire for one until the episcopate of Demetrius (189-231)<sup>37</sup>. Nor, as a general rule, were even Christians and pagans particularly intolerant of one another—Alexander of Lycopolis (fl. c. 290), the Platonist philosopher who, in writing against the Manichaeans, showed such a command of Christian teachings that he was until recently assumed to have been a Christian himself, was in this respect a typically Alexandrian figure, and men like him were still dominating Alexandrian intellectual life in the fifth and sixth centuries. As we have seen, pagans and heretics came to Origen's catechetical school, and Christians sat at the feet of Ammonius the Platonist. With his Christian background Ammonius would, especially in the early years of his career, have found nothing strange in Heraclas and Origen coming to his lectures. Later, however, he may have identified himself more closely with the pagan cause, perhaps as a result of Demetrius's attempts to draw the bonds of the Christian community more tightly together. In this context it is easily understandable that Origen may have chosen not to refer to his teacher by name when defending his philosophical studies in the letter quoted by Eusebius.

One might add that it would have been no odder for Origen to have been born a pagan, as Porphyry clearly says he was<sup>38</sup>, than for Ammonius to have

33. Porphyry apud Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.8.

34. Cf. V. Cilento, «Entretiens Hardt» V, 57: un "uomo meraviglioso", ma solo teoricamente tale; and a slightly repentant Dörrie, *ibid.* 43.

35. Pace Dörrie, *art. cit.* 468-71.

36. H. Langerbeck, *Die Verbindung aristotelischer und christlicher Elemente in der Philosophie des Ammonius Saccas*, in *id.*, *Aufsätze zur Gnosis* (Göttingen 1967) 151; Eusebius, *HE* VI. 2.2-3.

37. W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and heresy in earliest Christianity* (Engl. transl. London 1972), 44-60.

38. The antithesis intended by Porphyry apud Eusebius, *HE* VI.19.7, between Ἑλλήν



been born a Christian. However, his parents do seem to have given him a Christian education from an early age<sup>39</sup>, though they themselves may well have been converts from paganism. On this point, then, one may legitimately suspect Porphyry, either of having been misled by Origen's remarkable philosophical erudition into assuming that he came from a pagan background<sup>40</sup>, or else of having stretched the truth to serve his polemical purpose. Either way, the antithesis between Ammonius and Origen is a little too rhetorically neat to be fully credible<sup>41</sup> —but this is an issue of no great importance here.

Finally, we may note that Longinus does not, as is often assumed in the literature on the subject, state that Ammonius did not write anything, but that he wrote nothing of great significance<sup>42</sup>.

In the light of what we have learned from our four most reliable testimonies, it is now possible to turn briefly to the later sources, and ask whether they have anything to add. Eusebius is less reliable than Porphyry, because he seems to have known none of Ammonius's pupils personally, although he does claim to have spoken to friends of Origen<sup>43</sup>. Eusebius disputes what Porphyry says about Origen's pagan background, and, as we have seen, probably quite rightly; but about Ammonius, who according to Eusebius remained a Christian to the end of his life, there is no good reason for disbelieving Porphyry. Eusebius seems unsure of his ground here —the only evidence he can quote is a number of Christian theological works he attributes to Ammonius, but he can remember the name of only one of them<sup>44</sup>, and they were most probably written by a completely different Ammonius.

Apart from a brief and disputed reference in Ammianus Marcellinus<sup>45</sup>, Ammonius disappears from view for the rest of the fourth century, only to reappear in various fifth-century sources<sup>46</sup>. Theodoret, apart from being

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and Χριστιανός is unmistakable, and was taken for granted by Eusebius, *ibid.* 9 (and by the *Suda*, A 1640). Ἑλλήν was by this time anyway a *terminus technicus* for 'pagan': cf. I. Opelt, *Griechische und Lateinische Bezeichnungen der Nichtchristen: ein terminologischer Versuch*, «Vigiliae Christianae» 19 (1965) 5-10.

39. Eusebius, *HE* VI. 2.7.

40. Thus Dodds, *art. cit.* 31, n. 1.

41. Thus Dörrie, *art. cit.* 470-1.

42. This has occasionally been recognized, as by H. v. Arnim, *Quelle der Ueberlieferung über Ammonius Sakkas*, *Rh Mus* 42 (1887) 284; H.-R. Schwyzer, *RE* 21.479; and Langerbeck, *art. cit.* 165. Dodds, *art. cit.* 24-5, persists in the old error.

43. Eusebius, *HE* VI.2.1.

44. *Ibid.* VI.19.10.

45. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* XXII.16.16; cf. Dörrie, *art. cit.* 467.

46. The two references to Ammonius in Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* (PG 40.537 ff., 593ff.) are concerned purely with his philosophical doctrine, and will not be further discussed here.



the first explicitly to make the connection between Ammonius the teacher of the Christian Origen and Ammonius the teacher of Plotinus, adds two new facts in his brief notice: firstly that Ammonius was called Σακκᾶς, because he used to carry sacks of wheat; and secondly that he deserted his sacks for philosophy in the time of Commodus (180-92)<sup>47</sup>. This date, though surprisingly early, does not necessarily contradict the other testimonies; presumably Theodoret is referring to the date when Ammonius first began to study philosophy, but even if his teaching career stretched from c. 190 to 242, it was still no longer than Origen's. As for Σακκᾶς, the name, admittedly unusual<sup>48</sup>, need not be rejected, though the interpretation may be Theodoret's invention. One is tempted to follow Langerbeck in assuming a reference to the simple ascetic garb affected by philosophers, and favoured, according to Origen, in Ammonius's circle too<sup>49</sup>.

Our other fifth century source, roughly contemporary with Theodoret, is the Alexandrian philosopher Hierocles's *Περὶ προνοίας καὶ εἰμασμένης*, excerpted by Photius<sup>50</sup>. According to Hierocles, Ammonius was the founder of the purified Platonic philosophy, and the first of a line of Platonic philosophers that extended down to his own day<sup>51</sup>. He was θεοδίδακτος<sup>52</sup>, and [ὁ] πρῶτος ἐνθουσιάσας πρὸς τὸ τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀληθινόν, καὶ τὰς τῶν πολλῶν δόξας ὑπεριδὼν τὰς ὄνειδος φιλοσοφία προστριβομένης<sup>53</sup>. Most important of all, he put an end to the fashion for opposing Plato to Aristotle, and reconciled them εἰς ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν νοῦν<sup>54</sup>.

From our point of view the most interesting thing about these texts is their confirmation of the impression given by the earlier testimonies of Ammonius as a man of real philosophical erudition and insight, tinged by an enthusiasm that had something of the religious about it. More than that one

47. Theodoret, *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 6. 60.

48. Cf. however the Μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ πανευφήμου ἀποστόλου Ἀπολλῶ, τοῦ καὶ Σακκέα, who dwelt in Alexandria under Commodus (=«*Analecta Bollandiana*» 14 (1895) 286 ff).

49. Langerbeck, art. cit. 150, who errs, however, in suggesting that the practice was specifically Cynic; cf. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1940<sup>9</sup>), sv τριβών; to which add Libanius, *Or.* 13.21 on Julian's student τριβών, and Eunapius, *V. soph.* VI.5.8, 10.3, on Eustathius's τριβώνιον. For Origen's letter, cf. above, p. 364.

50. Photius, *Bibl.* 214, 251.

51. Hierocles apud ibid. 214.173a.

52. Ibid. 214.172a; 251.461a.

53. Ibid. 251.461a.

54. Ibid. 214.172a, 173a; 251.461a.





cannot say — to deduce from the expression ἐνθουσιάσας a tendency to mystical ecstasy, as does Dörrie in his pursuit of Ammonius the 'Wundermann'<sup>55</sup>, is to assume a degree of religiosity, or exhibitionism, thoroughly alien to the self-effacing, dedicated thinker we encounter, albeit fleetingly, in the texts. That Ammonius should have despised the opinions of the masses is quite in character with the man whose teaching inspired his closest disciples to a pact of secrecy. Again, in his reconciliation of Plato and Aristotle we see foreshadowed both the philosophical eclecticism, and the fascination with Aristotle, of Plotinus and his successors.

Ammonius emerges from this necessarily protracted discussion as no conventional School - philosopher, but an original genius who, like Socrates, saw his vocation as the education of others in wisdom and, we may assume, virtue. He must have had an instinctive understanding and sympathy for other men's characters, evidenced in the diversity of his pupils — the magician Olympius, the philologists Longinus and Heraclas, and the spiritual giant Plotinus<sup>56</sup>. Nonetheless, Ammonius did not publicise himself, and there is no evidence that his circle was ever very large, though it may in the earlier years have been more public than it was later. His philosophy was eclectic in tendency, with Plato, Aristotle, and probably Pythagoras, particularly prominent. There is no evidence for activities other than the straightforward study of philosophy.

Ammonius's truest disciple was Plotinus, and indeed to later generations the Alexandrian master was known for little else. According to Porphyry, Plotinus lived in the house of the Roman lady Gemina<sup>57</sup>. Presumably Gemina was wealthy, and her house large, for Plotinus's friends, ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες . . . τῶν εὐγενεστάτων, often when dying entrusted him with the guardianship of their children, who would then go and live with him. We also learn from Porphyry that Plotinus would entertain his friends on the traditional birthdays of Plato and Socrates<sup>58</sup>; and he presumably gave his lectures at Gemina's house too. It is improbable that Plotinus kept a house of his own, since his disciple Rogatianus gave up his when he conver-

55. Dörrie, art. cit. 462.

56. With Plotinus's dismissal of Longinus as being a mere φιλόλογος (Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 14.19-20; cf. Eunapius, *V. soph.* IV.1.3), cp. Origen apud Eusebius, *HE* VI. 19.14 on Heraclas (οὐ παύεται φιλολογῶν). Dörrie, art. cit. 441, 468 finds it improbable, for this reason, that Ammonius may have taught either Heraclas or Longinus (neither was as profound a philosopher as Plotinus!).

57. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 9.2.

58. Ibid. 2.40-43.



ted to the philosophical life<sup>59</sup>. When he went to the country, he would stay with his friend Zethus near Minturnae<sup>60</sup>.

We need not suppose that Plotinus's disciples lived with him too; some of them were senators or doctors, and most seem to have been established in their own right in one walk of life or another<sup>61</sup>. They give the impression of a close-knit group of men who shared a passion for philosophy and the ascetic life, and a deep admiration and awe of Plotinus himself<sup>62</sup> — and yet there was more to the circle than just that. Plotinus's wards, for example, were all the time being trained in philosophy, though their properties and incomes were kept intact in case they should decide not to take up the philosophic life (ἕως ἄν μὴ φιλοσοφῶσιν)<sup>63</sup>. Even if there is no positive evidence that Plotinus gave formal lectures<sup>64</sup>, or that he had a large public following, his circle was by no means a closed one. Amelius got round Plotinus's refusal to be painted by bringing the artist Carterius εἰς τὰς συνουσίας, in order to familiarize himself with the master's features and then paint him from memory<sup>65</sup>. Recounting the story, Porphyry makes a point of explaining that these συνουσίαι, or διατριβαὶ as he sometimes calls them, were open to anyone who wished to attend<sup>66</sup>. Later in the *Life* we find the pagan Origen taking advantage of this privilege and arriving unannounced, much to the embarrassment of his old friend and fellow-student<sup>67</sup>, while Plotinus himself acknowledges in his *Πρὸς τοὺς Γνωστικούς* that there are Gnostics in his circle, whom he describes as φίλοι but distinguishes from his γνώριμοι. It is to the latter that the treatise is addressed, "for we could make no further progress towards convincing them" (the Gnostics)<sup>68</sup>. Porphyry too distinguishes between the ἀκροαταί, who were many, and the ζηλωταί, who he implies were fewer<sup>69</sup>. Chapter seven of the *Life* is clearly intended as a list of this inner circle, the ἑταῖροι<sup>70</sup>, who would naturally

59. Ibid. 7.37-8.

60. Ibid. 7.17-23; cf. 2.18-20.

61. Ibid. 7; Porphyry refers to his own house at 11.13.

62. Ibid. 10.38.

63. Ibid. 9.14.

64. Ibid. 18.6-7: ὁμιλοῦντα... ἔοικέναι ἐν ταῖς συνουσίαις.

65. Ibid. 1.4-19.

66. Ibid. 1.13-4 (ἐξῆν... τῷ βουλομένῳ φοιτᾶν εἰς τὰς συνουσίας); cf. 3.36,46;5.6; 13.1;14.10,21;16.10;18.6-7,19.

67. Ibid. 14.20-25 (and cf. 13.12: Θαυμασίου τινὸς τοῦνομα ἐπεισελθόντος).

68. Plotinus II.9.10.3-9 (Henry-Schwyzler).

69. Porphyry, op. cit. 7.1; cf. *Stoicorum index Herculanensis* 41.4-5 (Traversa), and Iamblichus, *V. Pyth.* 29-30 (cf. below p. 380) for the same distinction.

70. Porphyry, op. cit. 2.42, Porphyry, naturally, was ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἑταῖρος (7.50).





be present at the general meetings, but also enjoyed a more sustained contact with the master, through *ὁμιλῖαι*, or private conversations, in which Plotinus would relax somewhat, tell his friends something of his own life, and give them some more personal philosophical instruction, helping them over their particular difficulties<sup>71</sup>. Porphyry's remark that copies of Plotinus's writings were only issued after careful scrutiny of the recipients<sup>72</sup> is additional evidence for the existence of this small inner circle of trusted friends and disciples, which cannot have numbered more than a dozen at any time<sup>73</sup>. However, Plotinus does not seem to have imparted secret teachings even to these intimates — his public teaching was difficult enough, and was clearly intended as a sincere statement of his beliefs<sup>74</sup>.

From these practical details it is natural to draw the conclusion that Plotinus could never have founded a School (*αἵρεσις*) in the classical sense; he could never have drawn up a will of the sort which Diogenes Laertius attributes to Epicurus<sup>75</sup>, appointing trustees charged with maintaining his school (*διατριβή*) on its traditional premises after his death. Neither Plotinus himself, nor any of his followers, ever held official teaching posts as far as we know. What was more, only one of Plotinus's disciples, Eustochius, was still with him at his death<sup>76</sup>. Porphyry was in Sicily, and Amelius in Syria<sup>77</sup>; others had predeceased their master<sup>78</sup>, and the rest deserted him because of the nauseating character of his illness<sup>79</sup>. We know that Porphyry returned to Rome after Plotinus's death, and that he gave public lectures and probably died there, but Bidez's idea that he became head of

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Pace R.T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London 1972), 41, the reference at 7.29-31 to attendance at Plotinus's lectures by τῆς συγκλήτου οὐκ ὀλίγοι cannot refer exclusively to the outer circle, since Porphyry goes on to quote as an example Rogatianus, who was very close to Plotinus. The context suggests that the same was true of Porphyry's other examples, Marcellus Orrontius and Sabinillus.

71. Porphyry, op. cit. 3.1;5.4-5;18 (an account of a series(?) of *ὁμιλῖαι*, in which a doubting Porphyry is gradually convinced of Plotinus's teaching that the object of thought exists outside the intellect, and ultimately recants publicly, ἐν τῇ διατριβῇ). Ibid. 13.10-17 shows that the problems of individuals might also be dealt with at considerable length in the *συνουσίαι*, presumably if Plotinus thought them to be of general interest.

72. Ibid. 4.14-6.

73. Ibid. 7 refers to eleven; we may perhaps add Antonius of Rhodes (4.2).

74. Ibid. 14.1-4; Eunapius, *V. soph.* IV.1.10. Eunapius says Porphyry eschewed *ἀσάφεια* (IV.1.9), but he had his lapses - cf. e. g. *V. Plot.* 15.1-4.

75. Diogenes Laertius 10.16-22.

76. Porphyry, op. cit. 2.34;7.8-10.

77. Ibid. 11. 18-9; 2.32-3.

78. E. g. Zoticus and Paulinus, ibid. 7.15-7.

79. Ibid., 2.16-7.



Plotinus's school is pure speculation<sup>80</sup> — Plotinus's desertion by his friends and his retirement to Campania suggest that his circle, which as we have seen had no home of its own, and no existence apart from its members, had already disintegrated, and this impression is strengthened by Augustine's assertion, possibly not purely polemical, that of Plotinus's followers some became Christians and others magicians, but none remained philosophers<sup>81</sup>. Plotinus's reputation and influence survived through his disciples and his writings, but not because of any School<sup>82</sup>.

Unlike Plotinus, Iamblichus lacked a biographer of Porphyry's meticulousness. He was one of those elusive characters whose true importance we divine only in the impression they leave on the minds of others. We know very little of the outward circumstances of his life, and yet the power of the spirit that dwelt within him shines through the pages even of those who, like Julian and Eunapius, never knew the man himself. To Julian he was *ὁ θεῖος ἀληθῶς καὶ μετὰ Πυθαγόραν καὶ Πλάτωνα τρίτος*<sup>83</sup>; in Eunapius's *Life* he appears enigmatic even to his disciples, a worker of miracles who yet deprecates such things as an impiety, a brilliant philosopher of penetrating insight, but capable of graceless obscurity in his writing. The extremes of enthusiasm he was capable of inspiring are illustrated by the letters of Julian, an otherwise unknown disciple, whose erotic imagery and quarryings from Sappho remind us that Christianity was not the first faith to be debased and vulgarised in Syria<sup>84</sup>. Of Iamblichus's circle of disciples we know nothing save what Eunapius tells us, and most of that is anecdotal. It seems that he owned several houses in the place where he taught, and it may be that some of his disciples lived with him, or at least that they had a formal meeting-place<sup>85</sup>. It is true that Eunapius strongly emphasizes how numerous were

80. Ibid, 2.12; Eunapius, *V. soph.* IV.1.10, 2.6; J. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre, le philosophe Néo-Platonicien* (Gand 1913), 103. That Porphyry had a number of pupils is nonetheless well-attested: ibid. 104; R. Beutler, *RE* 22.312; A. Smith, *Porphyry's place in the Neoplatonic tradition* (The Hague 1974), XVIII, n.19.

81. Augustine, ep. 118.33.

82. Eunapius's reference, *V. soph.* III.1.3., to τοῦτου Πλωτίνου θερμοὶ βῶμοι νῦν, if it is not purely metaphorical, probably refers to individual rather than corporate devotions.

83. Julian, ep. 12.

84. J. Bidez and F. Cumont (edd.), *Imp. Caesaris Flavii Claudii Iuliani epistulae, leges, poemata, fragmenta, varia* (Paris 1922), nos. 181, 183-7.

85. Eunapius, op. cit. V.1.12. On the question of where Iamblichus lived on his return to Syria, cf. B. D. Larsen, *Jamblique de Chalcis, exégète et philosophe* (Aarhus 1972), 40; J. M. Dillon, *Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta* (Leiden 1973), 11ff.



Iamblichus's students — πλῆθος μὲν ἦσαν οἱ ὁμιλοῦντες, πανταχόθεν δὲ ἐφοίτων οἱ παιδείας ἐπιθυμοῦντες<sup>86</sup>— but he then goes on to say that “for the most part he [Iamblichus] conversed with his ἑταῖροι and was easy-going and old-fashioned in his way of life”<sup>87</sup>. This is suggestive rather of a small and informal community practising a modest asceticism; we gather also that they were occasionally the recipients of his τελεωτέρα σοφία, which was presumably denied to his less intimate followers<sup>88</sup>. To identify the ἑταῖροι with the πλῆθος of students would make nonsense both of the sentence just quoted and of the anecdotes Eunapius goes on to tell about Iamblichus's informal strolls and conversations with his followers, indiscriminately referred to as ἑταῖροι or ὁμιληταί<sup>89</sup>. Probably therefore we should not take the word πλῆθος too seriously, for it would be characteristic of Eunapius to exaggerate Iamblichus's following, although we may assume a rather wider circle than the few intimate disciples mentioned by Eunapius<sup>90</sup>. Nonetheless, just as Plotinus's pupils were scattered at his death, so too were Iamblichus's, or at least the more important among them<sup>91</sup>. The exact circumstances in which this occurred are not very clear, and a brief glance at them will serve to introduce the last of the philosophical circles with which we are here concerned, that of Aedesius.

According to Eunapius, “Aedesius the Cappadocian took over Iamblichus's teaching and his circle of disciples” (ἐκδέχεται δὲ τὴν Ἰαμβλίχου διατριβὴν καὶ ὁμιλίαν ἐς τοὺς ἑταίρους Αἰδέσιος ὁ ἐκ Καππαδοκίας)<sup>92</sup>. The words διατριβή and ὁμιλία may both carry the meaning “lecture” or “discourse”, or, more generally, “instruction” or “study”, and here seem to refer generally to Iamblichus's teaching activities. Διατριβή can also mean a philosophical school, both (1) in the abstract and (2) with reference to a more specific time or place<sup>93</sup>, but its use by Eunapius in conjunction with ὁμιλία, and its specific reference to ἑταῖροι, make it clear that this meaning is not the primary one intended here. Even so teaching, however informal, must hap-

86. Eunapius, op. cit. V.1.4; the word πλῆθος is repeated at V.1.5.

87. Ibid. V.1.6.

88. Ibid. V.1.7-11; cf. VI.1.5-6.

89. Ibid. V.1.6; 2.7.

90. Ibid. V.1.5.

91. Ibid. V.3.10.

92. Ibid. VI.1.1.

93. Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English lexicon*, sv διατριβή, 2(d). For a fourth-century example of usage (1), cf. Eunapius, op. cit. VIII.1.8; of (2), Iamblichus, *V. Pyth.* 26 (Pythagoras's first διατριβή the origin of the later Samian ἡμικύκλιον or place of assembly, its name graphically recalling Pythagoras's pupils sitting in a semi-circle round their master).



pen somewhere, and if Iamblichus owned several houses, which he may have used for teaching and which would have had to be disposed of somehow at his death, there is no reason why the more concrete meaning of διατριβή should not have been at the back of Eunapius's mind when he wrote the sentence in question.

The ἑταῖροι are more of a problem. Eunapius states that on Iamblichus's death ἄλλοι μὲν γὰρ ἀλλαχοῦ τῶν εἰρημένων ὁμιλητῶν διεκρίθησαν εἰς ἅπασαν τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν ἐπικράτειαν· Αἰδέσιος δὲ κατέλαβε τὸ Μύσιον Πέργαμον<sup>94</sup>. Two points should be made about this passage. Firstly, it does not say that all Iamblichus's pupils were scattered, but only some of those Eunapius has already referred to — in other words the leading lights mentioned at V.1.5. Secondly, Eunapius later tells us that after the death of Iamblichus, but before he began teaching in Pergamon, Aedesius spent some time, in obedience to an oracle, leading a simple, rustic life on a small estate in Cappadocia, the province in which he had been born<sup>95</sup>. Eunapius also gives us some valuable indications of chronology. He first introduces Aedesius in his own right at V.3.10-VI.1.6, but then digresses (VI.2-3) to describe Sopater's success at Constantine's court, his downfall, and the death of his persecutor Ablabius. Sopater's death can not be dated precisely, but must have occurred between 330, when according to John Lydus he was present at the consecration ceremonies for the new city of Constantinople, and 337-8 when Ablabius himself met his end<sup>96</sup>. Having recounted these events, Eunapius resumes his account of Aedesius with the following words: Τούτων δὴ οὕτω κεχωρηκότων καὶ τῆς Προνοίας οὐκ ἀφιεΐσης τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, ὁ τῶν περιλειφθέντων ἐνδοξότατος Αἰδέσιος κατελίπετο<sup>97</sup>. Τούτων . . . κεχωρηκότων establishes that Sopater and Ablabius have now left the stage; ὁ τῶν περιλειφθέντων ἐνδοξότατος Αἰδέσιος recalls the way in which Sopater was earlier introduced as ὁ πάντων δεινότερος, διὰ τε φύσεως ὕψος καὶ ψυχῆς μέγεθος<sup>98</sup>, and emphasizes Aedesius's position as the effective heir of Iamblichus after the death of Sopater. Then Eunapius proceeds immediately to the story of Aedesius's oracle with the phrase: καταφυγὼν δὲ ἐπὶ τινα μαντείαν δι' εὐχῆς. The implication seems to be that Aedesius's period of rustic retreat, ending with his removal to Pergamon, must be planned after 337-8. If then, as is now the custom, we accept Bidez's argu-

94. Eunapius, op. cit. V.3.10.

95. Ibid. VI.4.1ff.; cf. V.1.5.

96. John Lydus, *De mensibus* 4.2; *PLRE* sv *Fl. Ablabius* 4.

97. Eunapius, op. cit. VI.4.1.

98. Ibid. VI.2.1.



ment that Iamblichus died c.325<sup>99</sup>, we are left with a period of roughly twelve years during which Aedesius's movements are unaccounted for.

The natural assumption must be that Aedesius returned some time after his teacher's death to his home in Cappadocia, and stayed there until he received the oracle that was to change the course of his life. Although well-born, he was not rich<sup>100</sup>, and so must have worked for his living. The fact that by the time he received his oracle he was a famous man, whose pupils ultimately did not allow him to fulfil the god's command, presumably means that he already had a school<sup>101</sup> before he went to Pergamon. At this point we should recall to mind the Ἰαμβλίου ἐταίρους. It is improbable that many of them would have accompanied Aedesius when he left Syria and returned home to Cappadocia — at this stage it was Sopater who was regarded as the master's true heir<sup>102</sup>. However, Sopater soon left to seek his fortune at court, and it is not unreasonable to assume that for a time Aedesius filled the vacuum thus created, before taking his own departure. The hypothesis at least has the merit of not contradicting any of the known facts, while accounting for the sentence of Eunapius with which we began, and for the fate of Iamblichus's lesser pupils after his death. Aedesius's enormous reputation in later life, to which Eunapius several times draws attention in the most emphatic terms<sup>103</sup>, is more understandable if he had already acted as successor to the revered Iamblichus before he returned to Cappadocia.

If it be supposed that Aedesius taught philosophy in Cappadocia between his departure from Syria and his receiving the oracle, it is necessary to find some reason why, at the end of his period of retreat, he established his school not in Cappadocia but in Pergamon. The answer is to be found in Eunapius's account of the life of Sosipatra, a noted philosopher who happened also to be the wife of Aedesius's kinsman Eustathius<sup>104</sup>. When Eustathius died, Sosipatra went to live at Pergamon, and was looked after by Aedesius, who

99. J. Bidez, *Le philosophe Jamblique et son école*, REG 32 (1919), 32.

100. Eunapius, op. cit, VI.1.1.

101. Presumably in Caesarea, as was suggested by F. Schemmel, *Die Hochschule von Konstantinopel im IV. Jahrh. p. Ch. n.*, "Neue Jahrbücher für Pädagogik" 11 (1908) 150, whose chronology however is completely impossible. On the reputation that Cappadocia enjoyed for learning, see Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.43; Basil, *epp.* 74.3,76.

102. Cf. Sozomen's description of Sopater as προεστὼς τῆς Πλωτίνου διαδοχῆς (*Historia ecclesiastica* I.5.1) and ὁ ἐπισημώτατος τότε παρ' Ἑλλήσιν ἐπὶ παιδεύσει γεγενημένος (ibid. I.5.5).

103. Eunapius, op. cit. VI.4.5,7; VI.9.1; VII.1.9.

104. Ibid. VI.4.6, 6.5.



also took upon himself the education of her sons<sup>105</sup>. Eunapius then continues:

Καὶ ἀντεκάρητό γε αὐτῷ (Αἰδεσίῳ) φιλοσοφοῦσα κατὰ τὴν ἑαυ-  
τῆς οἰκίαν ἡ Σωσιπάτρα, καί, μετὰ τὴν Αἰδεσίου συνουσίαν, παρ'  
ἐκείνην φοιτῶντες, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις τὴν μὲν ἐν λόγοις ἀκρίβειαν  
Αἰδεσίου <οὐ> περιηγάπα καὶ συνεθαύμαζεν, τὸν δὲ τῆς γυναικὸς  
ἐνθουσιασμόν προσεκύνει καὶ ἐσεβάζετο <sup>106</sup>.

In other words, Aedesius and Sosipatra were in friendly competition as public teachers in Pergamon, and students circulated from one to the other just as was the custom in Athens or Alexandria. This, taken in conjunction with the enthusiasm with which Aedesius was greeted on his arrival<sup>107</sup>, strongly suggests that Aedesius, and probably Sosipatra too, had been elected to one of the chairs of philosophy which we may assume Pergamon, like other cities, supported from its own funds<sup>108</sup>.

Once established in Pergamon, Aedesius naturally began to build up a circle of close disciples, and Eunapius's description of Julian's arrival at Pergamon<sup>109</sup>, shows that at that time (late 351) Aedesius's circle was functioning much as those of Plotinus and Iamblichus had done — the ailing philosopher could depute his teaching to his disciples when it became too much for him, while the disciples themselves attended and criticised each other's lectures, indulged in disputations with each other, and took walks in Pergamon together with Aedesius<sup>110</sup>. According to Eunapius, some members of the circle, including Aedesius himself, Chrysanthius, and, we may assume, Maximus, kept the innermost mysteries of their teaching secret<sup>111</sup>. Maximus, Chrysanthius, Priscus, and Eusebius were of course only the most

105. Ibid VI.9.1: πρὸς τὰ αὐτῆς ἐπανελθοῦσα κτήματα must refer to a house in the town—the ἑαυτῆς οἰκία of VI.9.2, which is contrasted with the ἀγρὸς at VI.9.11.

106. Ibid. VI.9.2.

107. Ibid. VI.4.7.—but this is something of a topos in Eunapius; cf. VI.6.1.

108. Unfortunately the evidence for the survival of such chairs into the fourth century is thin. A. Cameron, *The end of the ancient universities*, "Cahiers d'histoire mondiale" 10 (1967) 658, argues that our ignorance about official chairs of philosophy in Rome, Constantinople, Athens, and Alexandria makes it improbable that smaller cities were able to support professors of philosophy. Public support for teachers of grammar and rhetoric was of course commoner: H. - I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1965<sup>6</sup>), 439. On the academic associations of the verb ἀντικαθῆσθαι, see D. Wyttenbach, *Annotatio in Eunapium*, in J.F. Boissonade's edition of Eunapius (Amsterdam 1822) II.124.

109. Eunapius, op. cit. VII. 1.9ff. For the date, cf. E. v. Borries, *RE* 10.30.

110. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.1.14, 2.2-13; VIII.1.5.

111. Ibid. VI.1.5-6; cf. V.1.7-11.



distinguished of Aedesius's pupils — there were many others of lesser note, "Ἕλληνές τε . . . καὶ οἱ πρόσχωροι, drawn from Pergamon and the nearby cities<sup>112</sup>. Aedesius was a famous man — Julian was drawn to Pergamon κατὰ κλέος τῆς Αἰδεσίου σοφίας<sup>113</sup> — and this would perhaps not have been the case had he presided only over a small and private circle of like-minded disciples.

However, even before Aedesius's death, which occurred between 352 and 355<sup>114</sup>, the circle had begun to split up, as Plotinus's had done. According to Eunapius, Priscus was already living in Greece and Maximus in Ephesus when Julian arrived at Pergamon<sup>115</sup>. Eusebius and Chrysanthius were still with Aedesius, but at Julian's request Chrysanthius joined Maximus at Ephesus shortly afterwards, and seems to have stayed there for some time<sup>116</sup>. We know that the first (joint) summons to Julian's court found Maximus and Chrysanthius in Asia and together, and we may assume that this means in Ephesus, since we are told of crowds of sycophants besieging Maximus's house when it became known that he was off to court<sup>117</sup>; but Julian's second summons to Chrysanthius was addressed to him at Sardis in Lydia<sup>118</sup>. Maximus and Priscus obeyed, but Chrysanthius remained behind and was appointed highpriest of Lydia<sup>119</sup>. Clearly Aedesius's circle had long since lost any separate identity, though individual members maintained contact at least until Julian's death. Soon after this event, Priscus returned to Greece<sup>120</sup>. Chrysanthius, because he had behaved with moderation towards the Christians while Julian was on the throne, was, like Priscus, left in peace<sup>121</sup>, and seems to have remained in Sardis, where Eunapius

112. Ibid. VII.1.10; VI.4.7.

113. Eunapius VII.1.9; cf. VI.4.5,7: ἡ δόξα τῶν ἄστρον ἔψαυεν; VI.9.1; Libanius, *Or.* 13.12. If, following J. Keil, *Vertreter der zweiten Sophistik in Ephesos*, "Jh. Ost. Arch. Inst., Wien" 40 (1953) 24-5, the Aedesius honoured by a statue at Ephesus was indeed the philosopher of that name, here is material evidence of his repute — but J. and L. Robert, *Bull. Epig.* (1955) 194 (=REG 68 (1955) 259) doubt the identification.

114. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.1.10,3.6.

115. Ibid. VII.1.14; cf. VII.4.4—Priscus still in Greece when Julian summoned him to Gaul—and Julian, *ep.*, 11-3. Libanius's reference (*Or.* 12.55) to a philosopher travelling to Julian from Athens probably refers to Priscus.

116. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.1.14; 2.13.

117. Ibid. VII.3.9-16, esp. 15; cf. Ammianus Marcellinus XXII.7.3.

118. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.4.4.

119. Ibid. VII.4.1,7,9. Judging from Julian, *ep.* 13, and Libanius, loc. cit. (if the philosopher here referred to is correctly identified with Priscus), Priscus travelled to Julian in Gaul.

120. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.4.12.

121. Ibid. XXIII.2.7-8.





was among his pupils<sup>122</sup>. It is impossible to establish any chronology from Eunapius's vague account, but what emerges is that Sardis remained an intellectual centre throughout the reign of Theodosius, and apparently into the next century, since Chrysanthius's diadochoi, Epigonus of Lacedaemon and Beronicianus of Sardis, are referred to by Eunapius as still alive<sup>123</sup>. As for Maximus, he was made to suffer for his arrogance in Julian's service; he was heavily fined, and sent εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν in order to collect the money<sup>124</sup>. This presumably means that he went back to Ephesus. After a period of extreme personal suffering he was able to resume his philosophical lectures and regain his property for a while, until he went to Constantinople, was implicated in a conspiracy, and put to death<sup>125</sup>. There is then a probability that some sort of formal philosophical teaching persisted in Ephesus as well as Sardis after the death of Julian.

To resume, we have so far, within the limits of our fragmentary evidence, established three features shared by the circles of Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Aedesius, and to some extent foreshadowed in that of Ammonius. Firstly, and of fundamental importance, their *raison d'être* was not the preservation of an inherited dogma within the formal structure of a School, but the desire to associate with and learn from a specific individual teacher, whose disciples tended not to maintain a group identity after his death. (The dejection which overcame Jesus's disciples after the crucifixion would doubtless have had the same effect had it not been for the resurrection appearances). Secondly, except in the case of Ammonius's circle, the disciples themselves tended to be divided between an inner group of close associates and a larger body of pupils, the instruction of whom was as likely to be the responsibility of the inner group of disciples as of the master himself. Thirdly, parts at least of the circles of Plotinus and perhaps of Iamblichus and Aedesius too seem to have enjoyed a common life, their sense of community fostered by a shared but not rigorous asceticism. Save in the exceptional case of Plotinus's wards, we need not go so far as to assume a shared dwelling-place, but clearly a good deal of time was passed in common activities. For Ammonius and his disciples there is no evidence on this point.

122. Ibid. X.8.3; XXIII.1.1; 4.4; 6.3,8.

123. Ibid. XXIV.1-2; cf. XXIII. 4.3: οἱ...ἐπὶ παιδείᾳ δόξαν ἔχοντες. The date of the visit of Justus, the Vicarius Asiae, to Sardis (XXIII.4.1-10), is unknown, but such a display of pagan feeling is improbably later than c. 390 (cf. *Codex Theodosianus* XVI.10.10-12). Because he refers to Alaric's invasion of Greece (VII.3.4-5; VIII.2.2), Eunapius must have written the *V. soph.* after 396.

124. Ibid. VII.4.2,14; Themistius, *Or.* 7.100a.

125. Eunapius, op. cit. VII.6.1-7.



It can hardly be coincidental that both Porphyry and Iamblichus wrote lives of Pythagoras which show close parallels with the organisation and atmosphere of the groups that have just been described. Pythagoras, seen through the eyes of these two Neoplatonist philosophers, was a semi-divine or even divine figure<sup>126</sup>. His followers were numerous —several thousand flocked to him as soon as he arrived at Crotona<sup>127</sup> — and they were divided between the κοινόβιοι (or μαθηματικοὶ or ζηλωταί), who as their name suggests led a communal life while being instructed by Pythagoras, and the ἀκουσματικοὶ (or ἀκροαταί), who merely followed the essentials of his teachings<sup>128</sup>. With some at least of his disciples Pythagoras seems to have been on intimate terms, walking and disputing with them in groves and holy places<sup>129</sup>. He taught them an ascetic way of life which seems, along with his command of secrecy and his insistence that his close followers should hold all their goods in common, to have encouraged a sense of community<sup>130</sup>. Nonetheless, the separate identity of the Pythagoreans did not long survive the master's death<sup>131</sup>; nor in their subsequent revival under the empire did they ever have a recognized succession of heads, like other Schools<sup>132</sup>. Indeed there is a sense in which their leader always remained Pythagoras, for the philosophers of Neopythagoreanism rarely claimed their ideas for themselves, but attributed them instead to the Founder<sup>133</sup>. Neopythagoreanism is a strain of thought and behaviour that appears here and there, but is never easy to tie down and label. It is, as A.D. Nock put it, a commonplace<sup>134</sup>, a spiritual view of life which is not necessarily distinguishable from Middle or Neo-Platonism, or from the widening frontier zone of philosophical mysticism that in the light of hindsight seems the most conspicuous feature of the late antique mentality.

Porphyry called his life a Πυθαγόρου βίος, but the title given to Iamblichus's work was *Βίος Πυθαγόρειος* or *Βίος Πυθαγορικός*, and this is symptomatic of the particular emphasis which Iamblichus gives to Pythagorea-

126. Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae* 2,20; Iamblichus, *V. Pyth.* 30.140.

127. Porphyry, op. cit. 20; Iamblichus, op. cit. 29.

128. Porphyry, op. cit. 37; Iamblichus, op. cit. 29-30.

129. Porphyry, op. cit. 32; Iamblichus, op. cit. 96.

130. Asceticism; Porphyry, op. cit. 43-5; Iamblichus, op. cit. 106 ff. Secrecy: Porphyry, op. cit. 20; Iamblichus, op. cit. 103. Κοινὰ τὰ φίλων: Porphyry, op. cit. 20,33; Iamblichus, op. cit. 30, 32.

131. Porphyry, op. cit. 54ff.; Iamblichus, op. cit. 248 ff.

132. A. D. Nock (ed. Z. Stewart), *Essays on religion and the ancient world* (Oxford 1972), 622.

133. Hippolytus, *Philosophumena* I.2.1; Numenius, fr. 24.20-22; Iamblichus, op. cit. 158, 198.

134. Nock, *Essays* 623.



nism as a way of life rather than simply a philosophical system. Indeed there is remarkably little doctrine in either text; Pythagoras confines his discourses for the most part to the question of how the sage should conduct himself during his life on earth. The exact proportions of Pythagorean tradition and Neoplatonic invention in these texts are hard to establish, and anyway of no immediate concern here; what is important to note is that the portrait of Pythagoras with which we are here presented was for practical purposes the everyday ideal of the fourth century philosopher and holy man. It was a flexible ideal, and appealing even to ordinary people — one thinks of the stories Porphyry and Iamblichus tell of Pythagoras's command over the animals<sup>135</sup>. It allowed for, but did not require, intellectual originality in those who sought to follow it. In short, it was the ideal counterblast to the Christian gospel<sup>136</sup>, and we should not be surprised to find Porphyry painting Plotinus, and Eunapius depicting Iamblichus and Aedesius, in colours borrowed from the Neopythagorean palette.

If then we are to understand the atmosphere of fourth century paganism, and the mentality of the philosophers and holy men it produced, we must keep constantly in mind, as a point of reference, the image of Pythagoras conjured up by Porphyry and Iamblichus, and best reflected, perhaps, in Iamblichus's own life. To the emperor Julian, Iamblichus was the Pythagoras or Plato (and to Johannes Geffcken the Hegel) of the fourth century<sup>137</sup>, and even in Eunapius's day it was possible to feel oneself a direct heir of his life and example, mediated through his disciples. But around the turn of the century a change is noticeable. Even in the pages of Eunapius the virtuosi of the spiritual life seem to fall on hard times after the death of Julian. With Plutarch of Athens the Platonic diadochoi were effectively re-established at Athens, while at the same time the Alexandrian schools returned once more to the forefront of intellectual activity. From that time forth the pagan philosopher who was neither Athenian nor Alexandrian was a rarity. This self-institutionalisation may mark a loss of impetus; certainly it was a necessary response to growing legal pressure on paganism in general, pressure which could easily eliminate small groups of disciples centred on a single teacher — just as political pressures had succeeded in breaking up Pythagoras's circle — but which was less effective where there was strength in numbers, especially in a traditionally pagan centre such as Athens. At the last, then, retreat into

135. Porphyry, *op. cit.* 23-5; Iamblichus, *op. cit.* 60-2.

136. Cf. Eusebius, *Adversus Hieroclem*, *passim*.

137. J. Geffcken, *Der Ausgang des griechisch-römischen Heidentums* (Heidelberg 1920), 134-5; cf. above p. 373.



the old mould was unavoidable, and it is not surprising to find the Schools of Athens and Alexandria evolving styles of their own during the fifth century, even if their doctrine remained in essence the same. This is why Justinian's edict concerning the Athenian schools strikes us in retrospect as an important symbolic event. Some philosophers, like Simplicius, continued to write, and perhaps even teach, after 529, but unlike Ammonius and his heirs in the third and fourth centuries, they were isolated figures in a world that offered them no hope. Just as the classical Schools had been absorbed into a broader eclecticism, so now philosophy itself, exhausted as an independent force, was destined to survive only in so far as it could help elucidate the Christian revelation.

## Ο ΠΛΑΤΩΝΙΚΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΚΥΚΛΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΤΗΝ ΥΣΤΕΡΗ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΤΑ

### Περίληψη.

Μιά πρώτη βασική διαπίστωση, στην οποία προβαίνει ο συγγραφεύς του άρθρου, είναι ότι οι φιλοσοφικές σχολές που πρωτοεμφανίσθηκαν στην Αθήνα των ὀψιμων κλασσικῶν χρόνων είχαν ἔντονο τὸν χαρακτήρα τοῦ ιδρύματος, ἐνῶ οἱ τρόφιμοί τους ἐνιωθάν στενὰ δεμένοι μὲ τὸν χῶρο ποὺ τοὺς φιλοξενούσε. Ὅταν, κατὰ τοὺς ἐλληνιστικοὺς καί, ἀκόμα περισσότερο, τοὺς ρωμαϊκοὺς χρόνους, τὰ φιλοσοφικά ρεύματα ποὺ εἶχαν ἀναπτυχθῇ στην Αθήνα ἄρχισαν νὰ κινοῦνται πρὸς τὰ μεγάλα ἀστικά κέντρα τῆς οἰκουμένης, ὑπέστησαν διάφορες ἐξελίξεις. Μιά ἀπ' αὐτὲς ἦταν ἕνας εὐρὺς συγκρητισμός, ποὺ ὄχι μόνο ὑπῆρξε ἡ εὐλογη αἰτία νὰ ἀδυνατίσουν τὰ νήματα ποὺ συνέδεαν τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντες μὲ τὰ παραδοσιακὰ ἀθηναϊκὰ κέντρα, ὅπου ἡ κοσμοθεωρία τους εἶχε πρωτοδιατυπωθῇ σὲ σύστημα, ἀλλὰ ἀκόμα ἦταν ὑπεύθυνος γιὰ τὴν διαδοχικὴ ἔκλειψη τῶν περισσοτέρων συστημάτων ἀπὸ τὸν ἰδεολογικὸ ὀρίζοντα. Πρὸς τὰ τέλη τοῦ Β' μεταχριστιανικοῦ αἰῶνα, μοναδικὸ ἀστὲρι πρώτου μεγέθους στὸ πνευματικὸ στερέωμα φάνταζε ὁ Πλάτων μὲ δορυφόρους τοῦ τὸν Πυθαγόρα καὶ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη. Γιὰ νὰ τονίσουν τὴν ἀπόλυτη παραδοχὴ των τοῦ κύρους τοῦ Πλάτωνος οἱ φιλόσοφοι τῆς ἐποχῆς αὐτοαποκαλοῦνταν *Πλατωνικοὶ* —καὶ ὄχι *Ακαδημαῖκοι*. Οἱ σπουδαιότεροι ἀνάμεσα στοὺς ὁπαδοὺς τῆς *Πλάτωνος διακεκαθαρμένης φιλοσοφίας* κατὰ τὸν Γ' καὶ Δ' αἰῶνα, ἦταν ἄνθρωποι ποὺ διακρίνονταν γιὰ τὴν θρησκευτικὴ τους ἀντίληψη τοῦ ρόλου τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ τὴν ἀγιότητα τοῦ καθημερινοῦ τους βίου.

Μὲ τὸ ἐρώτημα ἂν καὶ κατὰ πόσο αὐτὰ τὰ δύο χαρακτηριστικὰ γίνονται ἐκδηλα στὸν τρόπο ποὺ διαρθρώνεται γενικώτερα ἡ φιλοσοφικὴ σκέψη



καὶ ζωὴ στήν ὄψιμη ἀρχαιότητα, ἀρχίζει ἡ ἀνάπτυξη τοῦ κυρίου θέματος τοῦ ἄρθρου, πού συνίσταται στήν λεπτομερῆ ἐξέταση τῆς δομῆς τεσσάρων ἀπὸ τοὺς Πλατωνικοὺς κύκλους πού ἤκμασαν κατὰ τὸν Γ' καὶ Δ' αἰῶνα (τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου, Πλωτίνου, Ἰαμβλίου καὶ Αἰδεσίου).

Ἀπὸ τὴν ἐρευνα τῶν σχετικῶν μὲ τὴν προσωπικότητα τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου Σακκά καὶ τοῦ κύκλου του πηγῶν προκύπτει ὅτι ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς ὑπῆρξε κάθε ἄλλο παρὰ ἀρχηγὸς Σχολῆς μὲ τὴν συμβατική ἐννοια τῆς λέξης. Σὰν τὸν Σωκράτη, ὁ Ἀμμώνιος ἦταν μιὰ βαθιὰ θρησκευμένη προσωπικότητα, πού εἶδε ὡς κύριο σκοπὸ τῆς ζωῆς του τὴν χειραγώγηση τῶν ἄλλων στὸ δρόμο τῆς σοφίας καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς. Γύρω του μαζεύθηκε ἓνας μικρὸς κύκλος μαθητῶν μὲ διάφορους χαρακτῆρες καὶ ποικίλες κλίσεις καὶ ἐνδιαφέροντα πού, κάτω ἀπὸ τὴν ἐμπνευσμένη του καθοδήγηση, ἀσχολοῦνταν μὲ τὰ μεγάλα προβλήματα τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ὑπαρξῆς, παίρνοντας ὡς φάρους στήν ἀναζήτησή τους αὐτὴ τὸν Πλάτωνα, τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη καί, προφανῶς, τὸν Πυθαγόρα.

Στὴν συνέχεια ἐξετάζονται οἱ πηγές, πού ρίχνουν φῶς στὸν κύκλο τοῦ Πλωτίνου. Τὸ γενικὸ συμπέρασμα εἶναι ὅτι ὁ γνησιώτερος ἀπὸ τοὺς μαθητὲς τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου οὐδέποτε ἱδρυσε Σχολὴ μὲ τὴν κλασσικὴ ἐννοια τῆς *Αἰρέσεως*, ἢ ἐδίδαξε ἐπίσημα ἀπὸ καθέδρας. Στὶς διαλέξεις καὶ δημόσιες συζητήσεις, πού διοργανῶνόνταν στὸ σπίτι τοῦ Πλωτίνου στήν Ρώμη, ὁποιοσδήποτε ἠθελε μποροῦσε νὰ παραστῇ καὶ νὰ πάρῃ ἐνεργὸ μέρος, ἂν καὶ ὑπῆρχε κάποια διαφορὰ ἀνάμεσα στοὺς «ἀκροατὲς» καὶ τοὺς «ζηλωτὲς». Μὲ τὸν θάνατο τοῦ Πλωτίνου, ὁ κύκλος του διασπάσθηκε, ἀκριβῶς ὅπως εἶχε συμβῇ καὶ μὲ τὸν κύκλο τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου.

Στὴν Συρία τῶν ἀρχῶν τοῦ Δ' αἰῶνα ἤκμασε ὁ Ἰάμβλιχος. Ἡ χαρισματική του προσωπικότητα εἴλκυσε «πλῆθος» μαθητῶν καὶ μιὰ πλειάδα «ἐταίρων», πού, ὕστερα ἀπὸ τὸν θάνατο τοῦ διδασκάλου, μεταλαμπάδευσαν τὶς ἀρχὲς τῆς φιλοσοφίας του σ' ἄλλες μεριὲς τῆς οἰκουμένης.

Ἕνας ἀπ' αὐτοὺς ἦταν ὁ Καππαδόκης Αἰδέσιος στήν Πέργαμο. Γύρω του ἤκμασε ὁ τελευταῖος ἴσως Νεοπλατωνικὸς κύκλος τῆς ὄψιμης ἀρχαιότητος πού εἶχε ἔντονα τὰ χαρακτηριστικὰ πού ἴσχυσαν γιὰ τοὺς προηγούμενους.

Μὲ τὸν θάνατο τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Ἰουλιανοῦ, πού εἶχε μαθητεύσει κοντὰ στὸν Αἰδέσιο, γιὰ πρώτη φορὰ ξέσπασε ἔντονη ἡ ἀντίδραση τῆς Ἐκκλησίας κατὰ τῶν φιλοσόφων, πού ὡς τρόπο ἄμυνας στὶς πιέσεις τῆς πολιτείας εἶδαν τὴν συσπείρωσή τους σὲ δύο μεγάλα παραδοσιακὰ κέντρα, τὴν Ἀθήνα καὶ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρεια. Στὶς ἀρχὲς τοῦ Ε' αἰῶνα, οἱ Πλατωνικὲς Ἀκαδημίες τῶν δύο αὐτῶν πόλεων —πού εἶχαν ἀνακτήσει κάτι ἀπὸ τὴ μορφή τῆς κλασσικῆς *Αἰρέσεως*— σημείωσαν μιὰν ἀξιόλογη ἀναλαμπή, πού φώτισε καὶ τὸ πρῶτο ἡμῖς τοῦ Στ' αἰῶνα.

