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# ENCODED WISDOM: GNOMIC CONTEMPLATION in THE GNOSTIC TRILOGY of EVAGRIUS PONTICUS

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## ABSTRACT:

Christian fascination with structured collections of wisdom-sayings, *gnomai* or *kephalaia*, is already discernible in the *Letter of Barnabas* and the *Didache*, and is clearly attested in the *Sentences of Sextus*. The fourth-century writings of Evagrius Ponticus offer numerous similar examples of such deliberate, structured collections, culminating in his enigmatic *Kephalaia Gnostica*. This paper will explore Evagrius' use of different literary *genres* to both model and teach his understanding of spiritual ascent.

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## 1. EVAGRIUS' PEDAGOGY

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What was Evagrius' purpose in combining his *Praktikos*, *Gnostikos*, and *Kephalaia Gnostica* into what we have called *The Gnostic Trilogy*? He clearly states his pedagogical intentions at the conclusion of the *Letter to Anatolius*, which constitutes the introduction to both the *Praktikos* and the trilogy as a whole, he writes:

Concerning the life of the ascetic and the Gnostic (*knower*) I now propose to describe in detail not [only] what we have seen or heard, but also what I have been taught by [the elders] to say to others. I have compactly divided ascetical matters into a hundred chapters, and matters of knowledge into fifty, plus six hundred.

And some things I have concealed and shadowed over, so that we do not *throw holy things to the dogs nor cast pearls before swine* (Mat. 7:6). But this will be clear to those who have embarked on the same quest [*ichnos* = *searching for traces*].

Περὶ δὲ τοῦ βίου τοῦ τε πρακτικοῦ καὶ τοῦ γνωστικοῦ νυνὶ διηγούμεθα, οὐχ ὅσα ἐωράκαμεν ἢ ἠκούσαμεν, ἀλλ' ὅσα τοῦ καὶ ἄλλοις εἰπεῖν παρ' αὐτῶν μεμαθήκαμεν, ἑκατὸν μὲν κεφαλαίους τὰ πρακτικά, πενήκοντα δὲ πρὸς τοῖς ἑξακοσίοις τὰ γνωστικά συντετμημένως διελόντες·

καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐπικρύψαντες, τὰ δὲ συσκιάσαντες, ἵνα μὴ δῶμεν τὰ ἅγια τοῖς κυσὶ μηδὲ βάλωμεν τοὺς μαργαρίτας ἔμπροσθεν τῶν χοίρων. ἔσται δὲ ταῦτα ἐμφανῆ τοῖς εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ ἵχνος αὐτοῖς

His trilogy is intended for those “on the same quest”, as himself. The Greek word ἵχνος, here translated as “quest” can also mean footprint, or trace: it does not occur in the New Testament, but in the Septuagint version of Job 11:7 it describes a path strewn with clues or footprints: “can you discover the traces of the Lord (ἢ ἵχνος κυρίου εὕρησεις). Evagrius thus writes for those willing to follow a spiritual path containing traces, clues of God's deeper purposes and intentions, what he calls the “*logoi*” or inner meanings of created things.

The *Gnostic Trilogy* both describes and mirrors this quest or path, consisting of progressive ascent from *praktiké*, ascetical practice, to *gnostiké* or *theoretiké*, the practice of knowledge and contemplation. His readers are to undertake the ascetical practices that free from slavery to the eight principal *logismoi* or tempting-thoughts – forerunners of the medieval seven deadly sins – and attain some degree of *apatheia*,

freedom from what we might associate today with emotional or behavioral addictions and compulsions. This inner freedom and tranquility facilitates the ability to contemplate, that is, in Evagrius' words, to behold (*theorein*) or perceive (*noein*) the *logoi*, the inner meanings and divine purposes perceptible in all of creation.

For the contemplative or *gnostikos*, as Evagrius calls him, the entire hierarchy of phenomena and beings in the created order can serve as objects of contemplation, depending on the *gnostikos*' level of spiritual maturity. This is true of both the microcosm, the inner spiritual and psychological struggle for virtue as well as the macrocosm, the movement of all creation back into union with the God from Whom it had fallen in the primordial *kinesis* or "movement".

Evagrius' *gnostikos* is both a contemplative and a cautious teacher, constantly exercising the virtue of prudence and the art of discernment in determining what his hearers may profitably be taught. He maintains the broadest possible horizon in his contemplative efforts: he strives to perceive himself and the whole of the cosmos from the perspective of a divine origin and destiny. All multiplicity is to be comprehended as pointing either back in time to the unity and simplicity from which it fell, or ahead into that restored union and simplicity towards which it is moving. This movement from complexity to simplicity, like the journey from asceticism to contemplation is mirrored and facilitated by Evagrius' choice of different literary genres in the *Gnostic Trilogy*.

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## 2. LITERARY GENRES

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Evagrius' goal is to enable his readers to undertake and, if competent, also to teach what might be called the art of "gnomic contemplation." His writings may be envisioned as comprising a spectrum consisting at one extreme of letters and narrative treatises that are discursive in structure, prose texts divided into clearly-defined sections and subsections where ideas are discussed sequentially. At the other end of the spectrum are what he generically describes as *kephalaia*, or "summaries," "sentences" often misleadingly translated as "chapters." These take a variety of forms, including *paroimiai* proverbs, *gnomai*, moral or philosophical maxims, and *horoi* "sentence-definitions". These collections of *kephalaia* sometimes resemble poetry and are highly variable: in some texts they are arranged in an obvious and orderly way, while in others the underlying significance of their sequence appears deliberately obscure. Between these two genres on our spectrum are Evagrius extensive biblical scholia which vary in form from brief narrative expositions of particularly rich texts to the much more common definitions and succinct summaries which, stripped of the biblical verses they explicate, often reappear as *kephalaia* in the longer gnomic collections, such as the *Kephalaia Gnostica*.<sup>1</sup> It must be admitted, however, that the distinction between narrative texts, *kephalaia*, sentence-definitions, and maxims is not always clear-cut, since the narrative texts often contain brief series of maxims, while the collections Evagrius designates as *kephalaia*, such as the *Praktikos* may also contain frequent narrative paragraphs.

Despite this ambiguity in nomenclature of literary genres, the literary structure of the *Gnostic Trilogy* reveals Evagrius pedagogical method in that the trilogy has the form of a textbook or workbook in “gnomic contemplation” through which the reader is invited to progress from relatively straightforward narrative texts to increasingly compact and often-obscure *kephalaia*. Thus the introduction to the *Praktikos*, the first volume of the trilogy, is written in the form of a letter, and the first two-thirds of that work provide a continuous prose discussion of virtues and vices, with only an occasional sprinkling of brief maxims (*gnomai*) and sentence-definitions (*horoi*).<sup>2</sup> However, immediately after chapter 60 in which Evagrius discusses the possibility of attaining ‘perfect *apatheia*’, he shifts the literary style of the remaining chapters, so that the latter third of the *Praktikos* consists almost entirely of maxims and sentence-definitions, concluding with apophthegmata – saying attributed to famous spiritual teachers, including Anthony the Great and Macarius the Egyptian.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Gnostikos*, the second volume of his trilogy, the majority of its 50 chapters take the form of brief maxims and definitions;<sup>4</sup> and the 540 chapters of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* are Evagrius’ longest and most obscure collection of maxims and definitions, many of them adapted from his voluminous biblical scholia. The reader of this trilogy is thus initiated into ascetical practice via an introductory paranetic treatise, and then into successive levels of spiritual knowledge which are described in progressively more compact and enigmatic *kephalaia*. In the *Kephalaia Gnostica* these are often arranged in parallel couplets or thematic ‘chains’ of variable length. Within these chains concepts are contrasted and explored from different perspectives. There is often a didactic purpose behind both the ordering of concepts within chains and the sequence of chains within treatises, but this underlying purpose may not be immediately apparent; it sometimes becomes so only after multiple re-readings and careful study of the text.<sup>5</sup>

Antoine Guillaumont has described the development of ideas in the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, as ‘polyphonic’<sup>6</sup> rather than progressive. The concept of “polyphony” evokes the image of multiple simultaneous melodies combining together to create a harmony. We will now isolate and compare two strands or “melodies” in the complex symphony that is the *Gnostic Trilogy* in order to appreciate something of its overall harmony.

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### 3. VESTMENTS *and* VIRTUES

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Evagrius’ pedagogy of progressive gnomic contemplation can be appreciated by contrasting two lists of virtues he allegorically derives from religious vestments. The first is based on the monastic habit and constitutes almost the whole of the *Letter to Anatolius*, the Prologue to the *Praktikos*. The second is scattered throughout the second half of Century Four of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* and consists of contemplative or, or as Evagrius calls them, noetic [*νοητός*], “perceptible to the *nous*” interpretations of the high priests’ vestments described in Exodus, chapters 14-28.

The allegories of the monastic habit that introduce the *Praktikos* are presented in a straightforward narrative treatise. Six articles of the habit are described and interpreted.

First, the hood (κουκούλλιον) signifies Christ's grace and protection (σκέπαις) of the mind (ήγεμονικόν) through simplicity (νηπιότης, literally child-likeness) and humility.

Second, "nakedness of the hands" symbolizes the absence of hypocrisy and vainglory.

Third, the scapular (ανάλαβος) represents faith in Christ.

Fourth, the monastic cincture "repels impurity" (ἀκαθαρσία)."

Fifth, the sheepskin cloak (μηλωτή) is a complex symbol that signifies both the death of Christ and the soul's mystical "circumcision" and participation in the good (μετουσία τοῦ καλοῦ).

Sixth, the staff represents the primordial tree of life and reliance on Christ.

Finally, the significance of these six vestments is summarized and consolidated into nine virtues that Evagrius states are ritually proclaimed at the monk's investiture with the habit. These nine virtues are: (1) faith ; (2) fear of God; (3) continence ἐγκράτεια; (4) patient endurance (ύπομονή); (5) hope, (6) *apatheia*; (7) love; (8) knowledge of nature; and (9) *theologia*, that is contemplation or knowledge of the Divine Nature.

In the *Kephalaia Gnostica* nine virtues are similarly associated with consecrated garments; but in this case they are not the monastic habit of the desert ascetic, but rather the sacred vestments of the Jewish High Priest, described in Exodus chapters 18-28, The "High Priest" is a figure Evagrius associates in both Centuries Four and Five of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* with teachers (angels and human *gnostikoi*) who imitate Christ the High Priest (Heb 4.14) by interceding for and actively guiding others away from sin and towards spiritual knowledge (KG 5.46, 6.76, 6.86). The allegories of the priestly vestments are presented in consecutive *horoi*, sentence-definitions, each separated from the next, by usually two or three, but in a single instance six, seemingly-unrelated *gnomai*, maxims. Like the series that introduces the *Praktikos*, this list of "noetic" high-priestly vestments begins with those that adorn the head and then progresses downwards.

First (KG 4.48; Exod 28.4) is the noetic turban (Exod. 28.4), which represents "inflexible faith, not susceptible to fear".

[2] Next (KG 4.52) is the noetic *petalon*, or golden headband (Ex 28:36) that stands for "true knowledge of the Blessed Trinity."

Third (KG 4,56) is the "noetic Ephod" (Ex 18:4) that signifies the state (*katastasis*) of the one practicing virtue, probably a reference to *apatheia*.

Fourth (KG 4,63) is the noetic Propitiatory (Ex 25:17), or mercy seat or perhaps "breastplate," that signifies "spiritual knowledge that conducts the soul of those who practice asceticism."

[5] Next (KG 4,66) is the noetic Pectoral, (Ex 28:34, ff.), perhaps that part of the priestly breastplate containing the *urim* and *thumim*, which represents “the unspeakable knowledge of the mysteries of God.”

Sixth (KG 4,69) is the cloak, (Ex 28:4) “the spiritual teaching that gathers wanderers.”

Seventh, (KG 4.72) the noetic Loincloth (Ex 28:42), which like the monks’ cincture signifies mortification of the *epithumetikon*, the “concupiscible part” of the soul, here undertaken not as in the *Praktikos* in order, to “repel all impurity,” (*Prak* Prol. 6) but rather “on account the knowledge of God.”

[8] The penultimate garment (KG 4.75) is the noetic robe (Ex 28:4) representing the form of justice that enables one to blamelessly “offer a response in actions and teaching.”

Finally (KG 4,79) the ninth article is the High Priest’s cincture (Ex 28:4) signifying the virtue of gentleness (πραΰτης) that both sustains the *hegimonikon*, the soul’s higher function, and calms the *thumikon*, the part of the soul susceptible to irascibility.

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#### 4. COMPARISONS

##### [*Comparison of the Two Lists of Virtues*]

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These two sets of virtues derived from lists of sacred vestments differ from each other both in the literary genre in which they are presented, and in the significance of the virtues themselves.

The nine virtues that introduce the *Praktikos* depict the soul’s progress in ascetical virtue from fear of God to *apatheia*, balance in the *pathetikon*, the part of the soul subject to passion. This is achieved through the practice of continence or temperance and patient endurance. *Apatheia* in turn gives rise to charity and the capacity for contemplation of both creation (*theoria physiké*) and the divine nature (*theologia*). This list is described in greater detail near the end of the ***Praktikos* in chapter 89**, which Evagrius has adapted from the *Eudemian Ethics*, a text classically included in the Aristotelian corpus, if not perhaps by Aristotle himself.

We would expect the list of virtues in the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, derived from the High Priest’s vestments, to be more closely associated with the *gnostiké*, the practice of teaching Christian wisdom and of contemplation. In this, the list of definitions in *Kephalaia Gnostica* 4.52-79 does not disappoint. In both of our lists the first virtue is “faith” associated with “fear.” However, in the *Praktikos* “faith” is strengthened or made firm” (*bebaioi*) by fear understood positively as “fear of God;” while the “noetic turban” of KG 4.48 represents “inflexible faith not susceptible to fear.” While the monastic *praktikos* requires the fear of God in order to progress in virtue, towards *apatheia* and the love (*agape*) that is the

“door” to spiritual knowledge, the contemplative *gnostikos* has evidently left fear behind, perhaps having attained that perfect love (*agape teleia*) which according to 1 John 4:18 “casts out fear.” Rather than fear, the faith of *gnostikos* is sustained by *theoria*, contemplative attentiveness to that which is symbolized by the “noetic” *petalon*, the ritual plate or headband of KG 4.52 that signifies “true knowledge of the blessed Trinity,” the very highest form of *theoria* or *gnosis*.

The virtues symbolized by the High Priest’s vestments depict one who, rather than focused inward on moral improvement, practices virtue from a *katastasis*, a “state” (KG 4.56, the noetic ephod) nourished by “spiritual knowledge” (KG 4.63) oriented towards “directing,” that is helping and teaching the *praktikoi*. Focused on the “unspeakable knowledge of the mysteries of God” (KG 4.66 the noetic tunic or pectoral), the *gnostikos* offers “spiritual teaching that gathers wanderers.”

The last three virtues, symbolized by the loincloth (KG 4.72), the robe (KG 4.75), and the cincture (KG 4.79), have parallels in the virtues described in the *Praktikos*. But here in the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, they are adapted to the work of the *gnostikos*, the contemplative teacher. As has been noted, in the *Praktikos*, mortification of the *epithumetikon*, symbolized by the belt has as its goal the virtue of temperance or continence (*enkrateia*). In the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, however, the virtue of continence is sought, not for its own sake, but “on account of the knowledge of God;” in other words, in order to facilitate *theoria*. “Justice” in the *Praktikos*, is concerned with “symphony and harmony among the [different] parts of the individual’s soul;” (*Prak.* 89); whereas the “justice” of *Kephalaia Gnostica* 4.75 is oriented towards the “blameless teaching” of the *gnostikos*. Finally, the cincture represents the virtue of gentleness (*prautes*) that frees the *nous* from the anger that Evagrius repeatedly warns against in *Gnostikos* 4,5,10, and 31, where he emphasizes that misdirected *thumos*, anger, can impede the *gnostikos* both as contemplative and teacher.

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## 5. EVAGRIUS’ COLLECTIONS of DEFINITIONS

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In order to compare these two lists we have extracted the nine “High-Priestly virtues” from the surrounding gnomic matrix of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* and thereby created a series of *horoi*, definitions. Or to use Guillaumont’s metaphor, we have isolated one melody in the complex polyphony of the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, and compared it with a similar melody that serves as the introduction to the *Praktikos*, and thus to the whole Gnostic *Trilogy*. In *Gnostikos* 17 Evagrius makes it clear that we are to pay particular attention to this particular type of “melody” or strand, namely that of definitions, *horoi*:

“It is necessary also to know the definitions of things, especially those of the virtues and vices: for these are the source [and the beginning] of knowledge and ignorance, of the kingdom of heaven and of torment.”<sup>7</sup>

In other words, allegorical or, as Evagrius calls them here, “noetic” definitions of virtues are essential for the *gnostikos*; and, indeed, collections of definitions, *horoi*, and maxims, *gnomai*, comprise a significant portion of Evagrius’ surviving literary corpus.

By creating collections of definitions and maxims Evagrius was continuing a well-established tradition. The classical genre of moral-philosophical wisdom sayings<sup>8</sup> had been adopted in early Christianity by creating exegetical sentences that rephrased or alluded to biblical texts. These were inserted into existing collections that were edited to highlight Christian moral teaching. The chief example of this genre is *The Sentences of Sextus*; however, earlier Christian fascination with the genre of ethical *gnomai* is already perceptible in the “Ways of Light and Darkness” of the late first-century *Letter of Barnabas* (19.1-21.1) and the *Didache* (1.1-6.1).. Evagrius thus continued a well-established practice of pedagogically-arranging chains of exegetical sentences that had initially augmented, and then gradually replaced the pagan *gnomai* in collections.

Considered together, these nine noetic definitions of virtues associated with the High Priest’s vestments are identical in form with two collections of *horoi*, sentence-definitions, that later editors have combined in Evagrius’ *Thirty-Three Chapters Arranged in an Orderly Sequence*, subtitled, *Definitions of the Reasoning Soul’s Passions* (Οροι παθων ψυχης λογικης).<sup>9</sup> The editors have used the terms *kephalaia* (chapters) and *horoi* / ὅροι, definitions, interchangeably.

The first sixteen of these are, indeed, *horoi*, spiritual definitions of illnesses drawn primarily from Chapters 13-26 of Leviticus and Deuteronomy 23-28. Here Evagrius has responded to a suggestion found in the second book of Origen’s *De Principiis*<sup>10</sup> where Origen mentions how valuable it would be for someone ‘with the leisure to do so’ to make a list of the illnesses with which malefactors are threatened in the Bible,<sup>11</sup> in order to show that these diseases and deformities refer allegorically either to the soul’s vices or to the suffering it is forced to endure.<sup>12</sup> In these *Definitions of the Soul’s Passions* Evagrius has responded to Origen’s hint by listing sixteen biblical afflictions which he allegorically defines as spiritual vices.<sup>13</sup>

The second set of definitions in the *Thirty-Three Chapters*, numbers 17-23, are allegorical definitions of animals and natural phenomena mentioned in chapter 30 of the Book of Proverbs. Like the nine allegories of the High Priest’s vestments in *Kephalaia Gnostica* 4.48-4.79, these definitions differ from Evagrius’ biblical scholia only in that they do not directly cite the relevant biblical verse, but rather presume the reader’s familiarity with the text from which the definitions are taken.

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## 6. CONCLUSION

### *The Significance of Definitions in Interpreting the Kephalaia Gnostica*

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If the the nine definitions of High vestments were **found together**, not as it were sprinkled throughout of Century Four of the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, this collection might be legitimately entitled, “Noetic

Definitions from the Book of Deuteronomy” and be included among Evagrius’ collections of sentences. To take this a step further, it is interesting to note that if these nine noetic definitions were, as it were, set as it were to one side and considered separately, the maxims that surround them, especially 4.60 to 4.76 [4.68] would offer a much more coherent series of *kephalaia* providing reflections on the importance of the body and the dangers of discounting corporeal existence or holding it in contempt.

This raises the question, with which we shall conclude, whether the strands or “melodies” represented by different literary genres embedded within the *Kephalaia Gnostica* were principally intended to be read consecutively, with the assumption, appropriate in a narrative text, Even, even a cursory reading of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* reveals that this is not the case. Perhaps, instead, part of Evagrius’ training exercises in gnostic contemplation, consists in the ability to recognize the difference between genres, and to simultaneously hold them apart and compare them, as we have done, considering them both separately and in their interaction with one another.

This is no easy task. If we highlight, for example, only the definitions that employ the adjective “noetic” (*noetos*) in Century 4, additional patterns and associations emerge; and if one also takes note of *kephalaia* that are clearly definitions, *horoi*, but lack that adjective, it becomes clear that the collection of “vestment virtues” we have considered is embedded within a broader “symphony” or matrix that allegorically interprets symbols associated with the Jewish Temple worship, priesthood and ritual sacrifice. And if this approach is taken in Century 5, similar strands emerge, associated with the notions of spiritual warfare and of the Holy City.

This approach, namely: of first identifying individual “strands” or thematic” melodies” in the *Kephalaia Gnostica*; then of considering them and their surrounding maxims both apart from and in relation to each other, may prove useful in identifying more clearly interwoven thematic currents in each of the six Centuries. This “polyphonic” approach is by no means new: Guillaumont alluded to more than sixty years ago.<sup>14</sup> And, finally a warning: as a Benedictine novice master once put it: “We must avoid the temptation to do *lectio divina* on alphabet soup.” Not to imply that the *Kephalaia Gnostica* is a disorganized jumble; but rather, that in all of this one must be cautious of a kind of pareidolia, the temptation to perceive a specific, meaningful image in a random or ambiguous pattern.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Géhin has described these different kinds of scholia. Allegorical definitions of individual words are very frequent, often giving Evagrius’ scholia the appearance of glossaries containing lists of biblical terms together with their spiritual ‘translation’. Another form consists of a paraphrase of the text, restating it in a slightly modified form that renders Evagrius’ interpretation obvious. In other scholia he employs logical syllogisms, a parallel biblical text, or a citation from his own or another authors’ works or from a seemingly-unrelated biblical text. A fourth type of scholia consists of proverbs of Evagrius’ own composition, modeled on the biblical wisdom literature. Two final methods include: ‘question- response’ scholia in which Evagrius solves or hints at the solution of an enigma he has propounded; and antirrhetic scholia that recommend biblical verses to be used in “contradicting” tempting-thoughts of demonic origin. P. Géhin, *Scholies aux Proverbes*, Titre et Genre Littéraire’, pp. 13-22, ‘L’Exégèse Évagrienne’, pp. 26-32; SC 340.

<sup>2</sup> Of the first sixty-one chapters of the *Praktikos*, only chapters 1-4 and 17-20 (13%) are unambiguously of the brief, gnostic type.



<sup>3</sup> Excluded from consideration here are the apophthegmata with which both the *Praktikos* and the *Gnostikos* conclude. Of the last third of the *Praktikos* 90% (chapters 61-71, 74-88, and 90) are of the gnomic type.

<sup>4</sup> All but eleven of the fifty chapters of the *Gnostikos* are brief sentences. The exceptions are: the four concluding apophthegmata (chapters 44-48) and chapters 14, 18, 20, 25, 28, and 34.

<sup>5</sup> Jeremy Driscoll descas described in detail the significance of the order and interrelationship between chains in Evagrius' *Ad monachos* (*The 'Ad Monachos'*, fn 12, p. 3; cf also pp. 13-18, 305-306, 319-322

<sup>6</sup> Guillaumont *Les 'Kephalalaia Gnostica'*, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> cf. *Ecccl* 3.1; *Wisd.* 11.20; cf. Sch 23 *On Ps* 88.49; [Sch. 4. On Ps 138.11](#). Greek retroversion: < Frb 549 > ριθ: αναγκαιον τους των πραγματων ορους γινωσκειν και περισσοτερον τους των αρετων και των κακιων· αυται γαρ πηγαι και αρχη της τε γνωσεως και της αγνωσιας και της βασιλειας του ουρανου και της κατακρισεως.

[Guil:] οί ὄροι

<sup>8</sup> These include the Stoic *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, the Neo-Pythagorean *Chreia* of Clitarchus and the *Pythagorean Sentences*. These collections were often arranged in intriguing thematic clusters intended to stimulate intellectual reflection and to serve as guidebooks for ethical behavior and moral improvement. Criboire 2005; 167, 201-204. 1996; 316

<sup>9</sup> CPG 2442 PG; 40.1264D-1268B: *Capitula xxxiii*= Suarèz (1673).]

<sup>10</sup> Origen, *De Principiis* 2.10.6, SC 252, p. 388, li 200-205; 2.11.5, p. 404, li. 160-164.

<sup>11</sup> Origen first notes that God, the physician of our souls, sometimes uses painful and even agonizing remedies, like those of an earthly physician, in order to wash away the vices engendered by our sins. *De Principiis* 2.10.6, SC 252, p. 386, li. 195-197: 'medicum nostrum deum uolentem diluere uitia animarum nostrarum, quae ex peccatorum et scelerum diuersitate collegerant, uti huiuscemodi poenalibus curis.'

<sup>12</sup> Origen, *De Principiis* 2.10.6, SC 252, p. 388, li. 205-210: 'Si qui ergo ex otio de omni scriptura congregat omnes languorum commemorationes, quae in comminatione peccatoribus uelut corporearum aegritudinum appellationibus memorantur, inueniet quod animarum uel uitia uel supplicia per haec figuraliter indicentur.' Origen specifically mentions afflictions threatened in the book of Deuteronomy, and in a later chapter he alludes to similar passages in Leviticus: (2.10.6) [...] and thus in Deuteronomy the divine word threatens that sinners are to be punished with 'fevers, and chills and pallor', and afflicted with 'untrustworthy eyes, insanity, paralysis, blindness and weakness of the kidneys' (cf. Deut 28: 22,28,29) [...] (2.11.5) [One should understand] the [allegorical] meaning of the cleansing from leprosy, of the different kinds of leprosy (Lev. 13-14), and of the purification of those who suffer a seminal emission (Lev. 15:13). (2.10.6) [...] Denique in Deuteronomio sermo diuinus peccatoribus comminatur quod febribus et frigore et aurugine puniantur, et oculorum uacillationibus et mentis alienatione et paraplexia et caecitate ac debilitate renium cruciandi sint [...] (2.11.5) quae sit quoque ratio leprae purgationis et leprae diuersae, quae etiam purificatio sit eorum, qui seminis profluuium patiuntur, aduertet.

<sup>13</sup> Fourteen of these are taken from Deuteronomy and Leviticus, one is from Isaiah, and the last comes from Luke. The illnesses are: jaundice (ικτερος - Lev. 26:16); convulsive back-spasm (ὀπισθότονος, Deut. 32.24); gangrene (σφακελλισμός, Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:32); blindness (τυφλότης, Lev. 21.18; 26.16); paralysis (παράλυσις, Lev. 21:18); urethral discharge (γονόρροια, Lev. 15:4-33); menstruation<sup>13</sup> (ἀποκάθισις, Lev. 15.33; 20.18); leprosy (λέπρα, Lev. 13.8-37; 14.3-57); dementia (ἔκστασις, Deut. 28:28); crushed testicles (θλάσις, Lev. 22.24; Deut. 23.1-2); nasal deformity (κολόβωσις, Lev. 21:18); mutilation of the ears (ὠτότμησις, Lev. 21.18); blotches (ἐφηλῖς [of the eyes], Lev. 21:20); dumbness (μογιλαλία, Is. 35:6); lameness (χολότης, Lev. 21.18); and dropsy (edema or congestive heart failure, ὕδρωψ, Luke 14:2).

<sup>14</sup> *Les 'Kephalalaia Gnostica', d'Evagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origenisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens*, Patristica Sorbonensia 5 (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1962).