

## THE GENRE OF EXEGETICAL SENTENCES IN PATRISTIC EXEGESIS

---

BOOK TITLE: *The Oxford Handbook of Early Biblical Interpretation*

ARTICLE TITLE: "Sentences"

ABSTRACT : The classical genre of moral-philosophical wisdom sayings or *gnomai* was adopted in early Christianity by creating exegetical sentences that rephrased or alluded to biblical texts. These were inserted into existing collections which were edited to highlight Christian moral teaching. The chief example of this genre is *The Sentences of Sextus*. In early monasticism, especially in the writings of Evagrius Ponticus, pedagogically-arranged chains of exegetical sentences initially augmented, then gradually replaced the pagan *gnomai* in collections. In texts intended for monastic contemplatives the sayings became increasingly enigmatic, presuming familiarity with Christian monastic vocabulary and models of spiritual development. Coinciding with the waning of original biblical exegesis in the late fifth century, the more obscure exegetical *gnomai* themselves became the object of commentary and exegesis. This approach is exemplified in the writings of Maximus Confessor, whose "centuries" of chapters (*kephalaia*) reinterpret and explain texts that were originally intended to evoke speculative meditation.

KEY WORDS: sentences, *gnomai*, Sextus, Evagrius Ponticus, monasticism, *kephalaia*, Maximus Confessor

---

---

### SENTENCES

Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB, MD, DPhil

#### 1. *Sentences in Classical Antiquity and Early Christianity*

Early Christian collections of exegetical sentences (*gnomai* or *logoi*) represent the adaptation and christianization of an established pagan literary genre. Classical anthologies of concise *gnomai* took different forms and had a wide variety of applications. One genre were the pedagogical *chreia* often found on ostraca and discarded papyri that ranged from simple copybook-phrases used to teach writing and grammar, to more advanced collections for students of rhetoric. Intended for still more advanced students were the *scholia*, literally "marginal annotations", anthologies of succinct commentary on cited texts by revered authors such as Homer, Pythagoras, and Plato. Of particular interest to early Christians was a third genre consisting of ethical *gnomai*, collections of succinct moral aphorisms such as the Stoic *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, the Neo-Pythagorean *Chreia* of Clitarchus and the *Pythagorean Sentences*. These were often arranged in intriguing thematic clusters intended to stimulate intellectual reflection and to serve as guidebooks for ethical behavior and moral improvement. (Cribiore 2005; 167, 201-204. 1996; 316). Christian adaptation of this genre was influenced by biblical wisdom sayings, especially the sapiential literature of the Old Testament. Early Christian fascination with the genre of ethical *gnomai* is 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). These

“ways” contain pithy admonitions, commandments, curses and biblical citations that echo New Testament paranesis, and probably served in ritual pre-baptismal catechesis.

More developed Christian anthologies of *gnomai* include the *Sentences of Sextus* and texts by Evagrius Ponticus and Maximus Confessor. They contain brief proverbs, parables, commandments, and *makarisms* (beatitudes), ranging from succinct statements or allegorical definitions to more developed rhetorical questions, syllogisms, and contrasts or comparisons. Sometimes these anthologies contain clusters of sayings grouped together as interpretations of and meditations on a biblical text, thus constituting a genre of biblical exegesis. Often the only discernible difference between exegetical sentences and biblical scholia is the format of the collections. In scholia the explicated text is generally given, with commentary following or artfully arranged around the cited text. In collections of sentences the underlying biblical text is implicit and left to the reader’s intuition.

## 2. *The Sentences of Sextus*

The earliest example of overt Christian adoption of the classical genre of ethical *gnomai* are the *Sentences of Sextus* (*Sextou Gnomai*), an eclectic anthology of neo-Pythagorean and neo-Platonic maxims, reworked and expanded by an anonymous second-century Christian editor. Origen attributed these 451 sentences to a certain “wise Xistus” (Latinized as “Sextus”); and their authority was significantly enhanced by Rufinus who described Sextus as a Christian martyr and bishop of Rome, a claim Jerome vehemently rejected. Jerome claimed that the author was clearly a pagan, and that Rufinus had attributed the text to the bishop-martyr in order to give it an impressive Christian pedigree: (Jerome, *Epist.* 133.3) Nevertheless, they were widely read and quoted by patristic and medieval authors in both East and West. (Pevarello 2013; 10-35) Rufinus’ praise of both their form and content is typical: “In each brief line one discovers vast clarification, so powerful that a sentence of only a single line could suffice for a lifetime of training.” (Rufinus, *Pref.* 259) Many of these *gnomai* are traditional moral maxims that would have been congenial to both Christians and pagans, such as: §41, “Whatever you honor most will have control over you;” §56, “Reflect on good things so that you may also do good things;” Others as Chadwick notes, “could have had no other origin than a Christian author,” in that as they allude to baptismal promises and/or creedal formulae (Chadwick 1959; 139). Chadwick identified 19 sentences he considered certainly Christian; (Chadwick 1959, 139-140) Wilson has cataloged 44 that “rely on biblical sources” (Wilson 2012; 25-26).

Some of these christianized sentences can be considered exegetical insofar as they explicate or presuppose a specific biblical text. Of these, many are clustered in related chains that interpret sayings of Christ concerning sexual morality and wealth. The relevant biblical sayings are not cited, but are rather alluded to and expanded as philosophical aphorisms. Thus Jesus’ command to cast away the offending member (Mt 5.29-30 and 18.8-9) is restated in altered form:

12. Neither eye nor hand nor any such member sins, but rather the one who makes bad use of hand and eye.
13. Any member of the body that incites you to act against temperance (*sophronein*) - cast it away; for it is preferable to live temperately (*sophronos*) without the member than be destroyed along with the member.

Whereas Jesus original admonition emphasizes the need to avoid sin altogether, Sextus has recast this ethical teaching in traditional philosophical language, applying it to the classical virtue of

temperance (*sophrosune*). In a later chain of sentences on sexual morality Jesus description of committing adultery in the heart (Mt 5.28) is restated and expanded to include other sins of thought:

233. Know that you are an adulterer if you so much as think of committing adultery. And let your attitude be the same about every sin.

On the subject of dispossession, Jesus directive not to withhold one's shirt (Lk 6.29) is linked to the command to render Caesar what is his (Mt 22.21) through sentences that allude to Jesus praise of poverty (Lk 6.20, 16.22) and his admonitions concerning the use of worldly things (Lk 16.9):

17. Let your neighbor take away everything except your freedom.  
18. A wise person lacking property is like God.  
19. Make use of worldly things only when it is necessary.  
20. Be careful to pay back to the world what is of the world, and to God what is of God.

Thus for "Sextus" exegetical sentences serve the purpose of transforming familiar collections of philosophical *gnomai* into Christian pedagogical and catechetical texts.

### 3. *Evagrius Ponticus*

The patristic author who makes most extensive use of collected exegetical sentences is Evagrius Ponticus (345-399). Simultaneously venerated as an Egyptian desert father and reviled as an "Origenist", he received his early ecclesiastical training in Cappadocia with Basil of Caesarea and in Constantinople with Gregory Nazianzen. In Jerusalem he joined the monastery of Melania the Elder and Rufinus, whose friendship and assistance he retained throughout the last decade of his life, which he spent in the Egyptian hermit-colony of Kellia. Given the emphasis in Egyptian monasticism on reciting and memorizing sacred scripture, it is not surprising that the largest part of Evagrius literary output consists of scholia on the books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. These scholia, stripped of the biblical text they explicate, reappear throughout his other writings, sometimes as collections of "chapters" (*kephalaia*) or sentences (*gnomai/logoi*), but also within his longer narrative treatises where they comprise spiritual proverbs and allegorical definitions, often clustered in thematic chains of varying length. These adapt classical models of virtue, vice, and contemplation to the needs of Christian ascetics, effectively translating or "encoding" elements from his model of spiritual progress in biblical terms (Stewart, 258-269). His writings represent a pedagogy in which exegetical sentences initially augment, but eventually come to replace classical collections of *gnomai*.

Like "Sextus" Evagrius was familiar with the classical genre of sentences. He edited two alphabetical collections of moral proverbs, *Maxims 1 & 2*, (Sinkewicz 2003; 229-231) in which he intersperses his own reflections with citations from the sentences of Sextus, Clitarchus and Pythagoras. His maxims often presume the reader's familiarity with biblical texts:

**Maxims 1.3.** Be towards everyone, as you want everyone to be [towards you] (cf. Mt 7.12)

**Maxims 2.17.** One who makes just speeches is a drinking-cup of cold water (cf. Mt 10.42)..

Two additional collections consist entirely of exegetical sentences. Often combined together in manuscript editions as *Thirty-Three Chapters*, these contain a series of allegorical definitions. The first sixteen are entitled "Definitions of the reasoning soul's passions", and appear to be Evagrius' response to a suggestion of Origen that it would be valuable for someone "with the leisure to do so" to make a list of the illnesses with which malefactors are threatened in the Bible, in order to show that these refer allegorically either to the soul's vices or to the suffering it is forced to endure (Origen, *de Prin.* 2.10.6) Thus Evagrius interprets diseases mentioned in Lev. 13-22 and Deut. 21-32 as symbols of maladies that afflict the soul, such as:

4. Blindness (Lev 21:18; 26:16) is ignorance in the intellect that fails to devote itself to the virtues of the *praktiké* and the contemplation of creatures.
5. Paralysis (Lev 21:18) is immobility of the reasoning soul towards the virtues of the *praktikē*.

Other maladies for which Evagrius offers spiritual definitions include: jaundice (Lev. 26:16); convulsive back-spasm (Deut. 32:24); gangrene (Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:32); urethral discharge (Lev. 15:4-33); leprosy (Lev. 13.8-37; 14.3-57); dementia (Deut. 28:28); crushed testicles (Lev. 22.24; Deut. 23.1-2); nasal deformity (Lev. 21:18); mutilation of the ears (Lev. 21.18); dumbness (Is. 35:6); and lameness (Lev. 21.18).

The remaining exegetical sentences in this collection are extracted from his *Scholia on Proverbs* and define creatures and substances mentioned in Prov. 30.24-28, such as ants, hedgehogs, locusts, lizards, roosters, goats, leeches, and the elements of earth, fire, and water. The following are typical:

§17. The *ant* (Pr 30.25) is an ascetical (*praktikos*) human being who gathers his nourishment in this present age.

§33. *Young eagles* (Pr 30.17) are holy powers entrusted with striking down the impure.

In other collections such as the *Sentences for Monks* and *Sentences for Virgins* Evagrius intersperses exegetical sentences with spiritual maxims crafted to resemble biblical proverbs. Here the arrangement of *gnomai* is not determined by the progression of themes in underlying biblical texts, but rather by Evagrius' model of spiritual progress. The reader is expected to ponder and puzzle out subtle interrelationships between individual sentences and thematic chains and to associate them with stages of spiritual growth (Driscoll 1994; 48-72). Three texts, *Praktikos*, *Gnostikos*, and *Kephalaia Gnostica* were written as a trilogy intended to introduce and provide an experience of his ascetic/contemplative pedagogy. In these as in other texts he encourages the reader to use his *gnomai* as a starting point for engaging in specific forms of speculative meditation (*Prak. Prol.*; *Gnost.* 26, 28; *Keph.Gn.* 1.67, 4.89, 6.77). The first book of the trilogy, *Praktikos*, describes ethical and spiritual failings, and prescribes remedies for obsessions and compulsions categorized according to the eight principal tempting thoughts (*logismoi*) of gluttony, lust, anger, acedia, sadness, vainglory and pride. The second, *Gnostikos*, teaches allegorical exegesis of the scriptures and contemplation of creation as an aid to spiritual guides and teachers. The third, *Kephalaia Gnostica*, is a deliberately-enigmatic exercise book for monastic contemplatives. It contains 540 *gnomai*, mysteriously arranged "according to the six days of creation" (Evagrius, *Keph.Gn.* 6.90) in intertwining chains of sayings. Of these, 28 are exegetical sentences taken from his *Scholia on Psalms*, chiefly allegorical definitions of biblical terms, such as "lyre" and "harp" (Ps. 91.4):

6.46. The *lyre* is the *praktiké* soul moved by the commandments of Christ.

6.48. The *harp* is the pure mind moved by spiritual knowledge

Sometimes his association of contemplative maxims with biblical themes is fairly straightforward, as in his interpretation of "sabbath rest" as the soul's willingness to refrain from speculation on mysteries beyond the realm of nature:

4.44. *The Sabbath* is reasoning soul's rest, whereby it is naturally made not to cross the limits of nature.

In other *gnomai*, such as the following exegetical sentence concerning Jesus' transfiguration (Mt 17; Mk 9; Lk 9) Evagrius is deliberately enigmatic and invites his reader to meditate on obscure metaphysical themes:

4.23. Moses and Elijah are not the Kingdom of God, if the latter is contemplation and the former the saints. How is it, then, that our savior, having himself a spiritual body, after

promising to show the disciples the kingdom of God, shows them Moses and Elijah on the mountain?

Throughout the *Kephalaia Gnostica* he interweaves chains of exegetical sentences that are enigmatic, sometimes to the point of incomprehensibility, such as the following *gnomai* on the spiritual meaning of circumcision. These clearly presume the reader's familiarity with symbolic and numerological conventions that are difficult to unravel, and may refer to texts and traditions of interpretation that have not survived:

- 4.12. Intelligible circumcision is voluntary separation from the passions for the sake of acquiring the knowledge of God.
- 5.83. We have found that all the circumcisions are seven: four of them are of the sixth day, one of them of the seventh day, and the others of the eighth day.
- 6.6. Just as the knife circumcizes the sensible Jew, so the *praktke* circumcizes the intelligible Jew, he whom Christ symbolically called the "sword he has cast into the world". (Mt. 10:34)
- 6.7. If the eighth day is the symbol of the resurrection, and Christ is the resurrection, those therefore who are circumcized on the eighth day are circumcized in Christ.
- 6.66. The knife of stone (cf. Jos 5:2) is the teaching of Christ our Savior, which circumcized with knowledge the mind that is covered by the passions.

Thus although Evagrius was unquestionably familiar with the moral-ethical genre of exegetical sentences typified by "Sextus", his own approach makes much more extensive use of typology and allegory.

#### 4. The *Apophthegmata Patrum*

Recent scholarship has highlighted many similarities between the the "Sayings of the Desert Fathers" and the older philosophical collections of moral aphorisms on which the *Sentences of Sextus* and Evagrius sentences are modeled (Larsen 2008). It might thus be expected that the genre of exegetical sentences would be well-represented in these collections, which condense into brief maxims the wisdom of revered fourth and fifth century Egyptian and Palestinian monks. However this is not the case. Explicit references to or citations from the scriptures are comparatively rare in these collections, and sayings that cite the Bible bear little resemblance to the exegetical sentences of Sextus or Evagrius. There is no interest whatever in typological or speculative interpretation of the Bible in these texts: when scripture is cited it is generally as a proof-text, used solely in the literal sense, justifying the action or teaching of an *abba*. Of the relatively infrequent instances where scriptural references occur in the *apophthegmata* the following are typical:

A brother asked him: "What shall I do?" And he said "When Abraham entered the land of promise, he built for himself a grave, and bought the land as a burying-place for his posterity. And the brother said to him: "What burying-place is meant?" And the old man said: "A place of weeping and sorrowing." (*Ap.Pat.-Lat.Syst.* 3.13.)

Abba Antony said: "Now I do not fear God, rather I love him: for love drives out fear." (1 Jn 4:18). (*Ap.Pat.-Lat.Syst.* 17.1)

He [Antony] also said, "Nine monks fell after many labors and were overwhelmed by spiritual pride, because they relied on their own works and, being deceived, did not pay proper attention to the commandment that says, 'Ask your father and he will tell you'" (Dt. 32.7). (*Ap.Pat.-Gr.Alph.* Antony 37)

Blowers has observed that the *apophthegmata* belong to the ancient literary genre of *aporiai*, or *questio-responsio*, which highlights the spiritual authority of the sage and which already had a rich heritage in Christian literature. The exclusively pragmatic emphasis of the *apophthegmata* and the refusal of the *abbas* they portray to speculate on biblical texts may reflect an increasing sense of the importance of the monastic teacher's own *logia*, even above scripture itself (Blowers 1991; 27, 37-39)

Recent scholarship has suggested another possible explanation for the absence of Evagrius type of exegetical sentences in the *apophthegmata*. Although they purport to describe monastic doctrine of fourth-century Egypt, these collections were not compiled until the mid-to-late fifth century; and it is clear that were significantly redacted, probably in the wake of doctrinal controversies. The question arises whether these collections more clearly reflect the pedagogy of the desert fathers or that of their subsequent devotees, since the editors appear to have been anxious to present revered monastic authorities as having conformed to their own, later orthodoxies (Larsen 2008; 21-23; Rubenson 2013).

Whether one regards the *Apophthegmata* as reflecting the theology of Evagrius' contemporaries or that of their later editors, it is clear that after Evagrius the art of creating new exegetical *gnomai* and arranging them according to classical models fell rapidly into decline. From the mid-fifth century there is also a discernible shift from the production of original biblical exegesis to preservation of what was regarded as authoritative interpretation from the past. Exegetical works increasingly took the form of anthologies and *catenae*, "chains" of extracts from sermons, commentaries, and exegetical scholia attributed to trusted authors.

## 5. Maximus Confessor

The last patristic author to make significant use of purposefully-arranged exegetical sentences is Maximus Confessor (c.580-662). One of the greatest Byzantine theologians of the seventh century, his spiritual writings and treatises against monophysite and monothelete Christology constitute a significant part of the theological patrimony of the eastern churches. Unlike the tradition reflected in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, Maximus was eager to cite and interpret the scriptures at multiple levels, literal, moral, and allegorical. His goal has been summarized as the desire "to maximize the salvific value of every passage of scripture for the monastic life" (Blowers 1991; 56). He frequently employed the "question-response" genre of teaching and he adopted from Evagrius Ponticus the literary genre of "centuries", collections of one hundred chapters (*kephalaia*) on a particular theme. In his writings the fading genre of exegetical *gnomai* is still discernible, however his *kephalaia* are generally longer and more detailed than the *gnomai* of Sextus or Evagrius. Scholarship concerning Maximus has tended to emphasize his opposition to the "Origenist" theology that so troubled the monks of Palestine during the so-called "second Origenist crisis" of the sixth century and resulted in imperial and conciliar anathemas against both Origen and Evagrius. However, it may be more accurate to say that one of Maximus' goals was to explain, to correct where necessary, and to supply a semi-definitive interpretation of some of Evagrius' more obscure sentences (Thunberg 1985; 18-21). In the *Centuries on Love* Maximus quotes and explains (although without attribution) texts by Evagrius, including *gnomai* from *On Prayer* and *Praktikos*. In his *Centuries on Knowledge* Maximus regularly reproduces and expands texts from Evagrius' *Praktikos* and *Kephalaia Gnostica*, including several passages cited above.

In §36-47 of the *Chapters on Knowledge* Maximus reinterprets Evagrius' *gnomai* concerning the mystical significance of the sabbath and circumcision. To Evagrius' brief definition Maximus adds

the notion of multiple Sabbaths, as well as the biblical “Sabbath of the land” (Lev. 25) which he calls the “Sabbath of Sabbaths.” This enables him to incorporate Evagrius’ brief sentence into a progressive definition of different Sabbaths:

37. Sabbath is the detachment of the rational soul which has by practice completely thrown off the marks of sin.
38. Sabbaths are the freedom of the rational soul which by natural contemplation in the Spirit has put down this natural activity oriented toward sensibility.
39. Sabbaths of Sabbaths are the spiritual peace of the rational soul which, having withdrawn the mind even from all the more divine principles which are in beings, dwells entirely in God alone in a loving ecstasy, and has rendered itself by mystical theology totally immobile in God.

Thus Maximus creates a context for Evagrius’ exegetical sentence concerning the limited capacity of the reasoning soul and the necessity for desisting from certain kinds of contemplation. He places Evagrius’ sentence within a model of spiritual ascent, itself derived from Evagrius but significantly modified. In the *Praktikos* and in many other works Evagrius analyzed and described the ascetical struggle against temptation that leads first to natural contemplation, then to contemplation of the divine nature. However Maximus final step, “loving ecstasy...immobile in God” is his own creation: for Evagrius the term *ekstasis* generally denotes confusion or madness. In a similar way Maximus renders Evagrius’ obscure *gnomai* on circumcision more comprehensible by locating them within a schema of progressive spiritual ascent:

40. Circumcision is the soul's putting off of its disposition of being affected by becoming.
41. The circumcision of circumcisions is the total loss and stripping even of natural movements of the soul with respect to becoming.

In a similar way Evagrius’ enigmatic question concerning the symbolic significance of Moses and Eljah at the Lord’s transfiguration is reshaped by Maximus from an encouragement to meditation into an elaborate discussion of spiritual progress, contemplation, and eschatology.

16. The one who is instructed for a time about the reason of the monad fully recognizes as well the reasons of Providence and judgment associated with it. Thus he judges it a good thing, as did St. Peter, that three tents be made by him for those who appear, that is, the three ways of salvation: virtue, knowledge, and theology. The first one requires the practice of courage and chastity, of which the blessed Elijah is a figure. The second is the righteousness of natural contemplation which the great Moses showed in his life. The third is the pure perfection of wisdom which the Lord revealed. Tents are spoken of because there are other appointed places better and more distinguished than these which those who are worthy will receive in the future. (Maximus, *Cent.Kn.* 1.16)

Here Maximus has effectively responded to Evagrius invitation to puzzle out the symbolic meaning of the Transfiguration cited above (*Keph.Gn.* 4.23) by identifying Elijah with the virtues (*i.e.* asceticism), Moses with natural contemplation, and Christ with wisdom. This extended explication of the Transfiguration highlights the fact that although exegetical *gnomai* may be found in Maximus’ *kephalaia*, his goal is less to create new sentences than to explain obscure ones. In general his chains of *gnomai* are not intended to evoke speculative meditation, as in Sextus or Evagrius. Rather, Maximus embeds exegetical sentences within longer *kephalaia*, or positions them together with his explanatory *kephalaia* in order to clarify what is otherwise obscure.

---

---

## REFERENCE LIST

### ANCIENT SOURCES

- APOPTHHEGMATA PATRUM, Greek alphabetical collection. Greek text: PG 65.71-440. English trans.: *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*, tr. B. WARD (Cistercian Publ.; rev. ed. 2005).
- Latin systematic collection (*Verba Seniorum*). Latin text: PL 73.855-1062. English trans.: *The Sayings of the Fathers*, in *Western Asceticism, Selected Translations with Introductions and Notes*, tr. O. CHADWICK, (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1958).
- EVAGRIUS PONTICUS *Ad monachos*. Greek text: ed. H. GRESSMANN, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 39.4 (Leipzig, 1913), 152-165. English trans.: J. DRISCOLL, *The 'Ad Monachos' of Evagrius Ponticus, Its Structure and a Select Commentary, Studia Anselmiana* 104 (Rome, Sant' Anselmo, 1991).
- *Chapters on Prayer*. Greek text: ed. S. TUGWELL, *Evagrius Ponticus: De oratione* (Oxford Univ., Faculty of Theology, 1981), based on six MSS and: PG 79.1165-1200. English trans.: SINKEWICZ, R.E., *Evagrius of Pontus, the Greek Ascetic Corpus*, ser. *Oxford Early Christian Studies*, (Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 183-209.
- *Gnostikos*. Greek text: ed. and trans. A. and C. GUILLAUMONT, *Gnostikos, Le Gnostique ou celui qui est devenu digne de la science*, SC 356 (Paris, Cerf, 1989).
- *Kephalaia Gnostica*, Syriac text with French trans.: A. GUILLAUMONT, *Les six Centuries des 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Évagre le Pontique*, PO 28.1, n° 134 (Paris, 1958).
- *Maxims*. Greek text: PG 79.1249C-1269D. English trans.: SINKEWICZ, 228-232.
- *Praktikos*, Greek text: *Praktikos*, ed. and trans. A. and C. Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique Traité Pratique ou Le Moine*, SC 170 (Introduction), 171 (text), (Paris: Cerf, 1971). English trans.: SINKEWICZ, 95-114.
- *Thirty-Three Ordered Chapters*, Greek text: PG 40.1264D-1268B. English trans: SINKEWICZ, 224-227.
- JEROME, *Letter 133 (ad Ctesiphontem adversus Pelagium)*, ed. by I. Hilberg, CSEL 56, pt 1 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 241-260 (246-7). English trans.: *The Principal Works of St. Jerome*, tr. W. Fremantle, G. Lewis, NPNF, ser. 2, v. 6 (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, rpr. 1986), 272-280 (274).
- MAXIMUS CONFESSOR, *Chapters on Prayer & Chapters on Knowledge*. Eng. trans.: *Maximus Confessor, Selected Writings*, ser. *Classics of Western Spirituality*, tr. G.C. BERTHOLD (Paulist, New York, 1985).
- ORIGEN, *De Principiis*. Latin text: ed. & tr. H. CROUZEL and M. SIMONETTI, SC 252 (Paris: Cerf, 1978). English trans.: *Origen on First Principles*, tr. G.W. Butterworth (London: SPCK, 1936).
- RUFINUS, *Preface (to Apronianus) to His Translation of the Sayings of Xistus, Tyrannius Rufinus Opera*, CCSL 20, (Brepols, 1961), 259. English trans: *Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, and Rufinus: Historical Writings* tr. W. Fremantle, NPNF, ser. 2, v. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rpr. 1986), 564.
- SEXTUS. *The Sentences of Sextus, A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics*, ed. O. CHADWICK, (Cambridge Univ.Pr., 1959). Engl. trans (with facing Greek text): W.W ILSON, , *The Sentences of Sextus*, ser. *Wisdom literature from the ancient world*, 1. (Atlanta, Soc. Bibl. Lit., 2012).

## SCHOLARSHIP

- BLOWERS, P., *The Drama of the Divine Economy, Creator and Creation in Early Christian Theology and Piety*, ser. *Oxford Early Christian Studies*, (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2012).  
— *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus Confessor*, ser. *Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity*, 7, (Univ. Notre Dame Pr., 1991).
- CRIBIORE, R., *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, *American Studies in Papyrology* 36 (Atlanta, *Scholars Press*, 1996).  
— *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton University Press, 2005)
- DOMACH, Z., *Tempered in the Christian Fire, Greek and Roman Wisdom Literature in Early Christian Teaching and Moral Traditions*, (MA Thesis, Emory University, 2013).
- DRISCOLL, J., ‘Spiritual Progress in the Works of Evagrius Ponticus’, *Spiritual Progress, Studies in the Spirituality of Late Antiquity and Early Monasticism*, ed. J. DRISCOLL, and M. SHERIDAN, *Studia Anselmiana* 115 (Rome: Sant’ Anselmo, 1994), 47-84.
- LARSEN, L., “The Apophthegmata Patrum: Rustic Ruminations or Rhetorical Recitation.” *Meddelanden från Collegium Patristicum Lundense* 22 (2008): 21-31.
- MORGAN, T., *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988).  
— *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire*, (Cambridge Univ. Pr. 2007).
- PEVARELLO, D. *The Sentences of Sextus and the Origins of Christian Asceticism*, ser. *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum* 78, (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2013).
- RUBENSON, S., “The Formation and Re-formations of the Sayings of the Desert Fathers”, *Studia Patristica* 55.3 (Peeters, 2013) 5-22.
- SIMONETTI, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church, an Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1994).
- STEWART, C. “Evagrius Ponticus on Monastic Pedagogy”. *Abba, Festschrift for Kallistos Ware*, (St. Vlad. Sem. Press, 2003) 241-271.
- THUNBERG, L., *Man and the Cosmos: The Vision of St. Maximus the Confessor* (St. Vladimir Sem. Press, 1985)
- YOUNG, F., *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, (Cambridge Univ. Pr. 1997).

## FURTHER READING

- BLOWERS, P., *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus Confessor*, ser. *Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity*, 7, (Univ. Notre Dame Pr., 1991).
- DYSINGER, L., *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus*, (Oxford, 2005).
- LARSEN, L., “The Apophthegmata Patrum: Rustic Ruminations or Rhetorical Recitation.” *Meddelanden från Collegium Patristicum Lundense* 22 (2008): 21-31.
- STEWART, C. “Evagrius Ponticus on Monastic Pedagogy”. *Abba, Festschrift for Kallistos Ware*, (St. Vlad. Sem., 2003) 241-271.