

CREATING THE ACADEMY: HISTORICAL DISCOURSE AND THE SHAPE OF COMMUNITY IN THE OLD ACADEMY*

Abstract: The Old Academy developed in an unplanned fashion and, as its structure evolved, changes in leadership and institutional culture were mirrored by shifting Academic historical traditions. As the Old Academy became an institution that presented a systematized philosophy, its leadership placed increased emphasis upon traditions about Plato and other Academic leaders that illustrated the power and practical application of this Academic teaching. This suggests a conscious attempt by the scholars of the Old Academy to craft a distinctive institutional identity centred as much upon the character and exemplary lifestyle of its leadership as upon its specific doctrinal teaching.

THE final moments of Socrates and the Neoplatonist Proclus, the earliest and latest philosophical deaths described at length by ancient sources, form slightly untidy but not inappropriate book-ends for the ancient Platonic tradition.¹ As one would expect, these occupy very different points in the history of Platonism and they played out in unique intellectual, cultural and religious circumstances. Nevertheless, one distinction between them is particularly revealing. Although both Socrates and Proclus died in the presence of their intimate circles of followers, their deaths meant dramatically different things to their associates and, more particularly, to the intellectual circle within which they lived. With Socrates' death, his circle of associates soon dispersed.² He had appointed no successor, the group had no defined meeting place or communal property, and there were evidently few coherent core doctrines that members of the school were supposed to defend.³ Indeed, Plato's description of Socrates' final moments in the *Phaedo* suggests that Socrates gave his followers no more instruction than a simple request that they continue to take good care of themselves.⁴ The circle, like its founder, simply receded into the past as the government-issued hemlock took its effect.

By the lifetime of Proclus, however, the Platonic tradition, begun in a sense by the death of Socrates, had come to exert a significant gravitational force on the teachings and conduct of philosophers. Bowed by this history, Proclus spent a great deal of time and energy superintending his intellectual patrimony.⁵ Yet, as Socrates' death shows, the forces of doctrinal fidelity and historical continuity were not natural products of the Athenian philosophical environment.⁶ They instead resulted from a particular sort of institutionalization of learning that privileged continu-

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¹ For the death of Socrates note, most memorably, Plato, *Phd.* 118a.5-14. For that of Proclus, see Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 36.

² Diogenes Laertius does twice mention a tradition, attributed to Hermodorus of Syracuse, that Plato and τῶν λοιπῶν φιλοσόφων fled to Megara following the death of Socrates (Diog. Laert. 2.106, 3.6; cf. J. Dillon, *The Heirs of Plato. A Study of the Old Academy* (Oxford 2003) 199). The significance of this tradition will be discussed below.

³ One can note, for example, the wide variety of 'Socratic' described by Diogenes Laertius. They range from Plato and Xenophon (2.48-59) to the rhetorician Aeschines (2.60-4), the Cyrenaic Aristippus (2.65-105) and miscellaneous figures like Phaedo (2.105-6), Crito (2.121) and Simon the Cobbler (2.122-4).

⁴ Socrates responds to Crito's rather open-ended request for further guidance with the statement: 'You will please me and mine and yourselves by taking good care of your own selves in whatever you do' (*Phd.* 115b).

⁵ For the final five years of his life Proclus was consumed by the task of finding a healthy and able successor because he was 'fearful that the truly Golden Chain of Plato might abandon our city of Athens' (*Vit. Is.* fr. 98E Athanassiadi). For a discussion of this selection process, see E. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley 2006) 112-18.

⁶ Direct institutional succession seems not to have been a concern in sophistic schools of the fifth and early fourth centuries BC. Though the schools had pupils who, in some cases, identified closely with the methods of a particular master, they do not seem to have marked out clear intellectual successors (note, for example, J. de Romilly, *Les grands sophistes dans l'Athènes de Périclès* (Paris 1988) 60). One exception to this may be the Sicilian sophists Corax and Tisias, though note T. Cole, *The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Baltimore 1991) 22-7, as well as 'Who was Corax?', *ICS* 16 (1991) 65-84; E. Robinson, 'Democracy in Syracuse 466-412

ity of space, basic doctrine, and, above all, a linear succession of Platonic scholarchs. This institutionalization took its earliest, most recognizable form in the Old Academy and grew out of an uneven process of development in which Plato's successors worked to make sense of his immense personal and intellectual legacy.

The teachings and personalities involved in the Old Academy have been the subject of much significant work in the past few years and now, with the publication of John Dillon's *Heirs of Plato*, a comprehensive picture of the early Academy's philosophical development has emerged.

While it builds upon much of this important work, this current study is primarily interested in the process through which the first generations of Platonists struggled to shape a healthy and vibrant Academic culture that also protected its Platonic (and later post-Platonic) historical roots. Surprisingly, this study will argue, this process of development seems not to have focused particularly upon establishing a clear doctrinal identity. Instead, the scholarchs of the Old Academy drew upon the biographical traditions associated with Plato and his successors to craft a distinctive institutional profile centred upon the character and exemplary lifestyle of its leadership.

This paper will describe an unplanned and imperfect evolution in which the shape of the institution and its conception of its own history were subjected to repeated refashioning and reinterpretation. Unlike the Peripatetic school, the Old Academy lacked a native biographical tradition and, after a spurt of Platonic biographies penned by Plato's own followers, many of its internal traditions about past leaders either perished entirely or were preserved only by much later authors.⁷ This chronological distance means that anecdotes were retold multiple times in many sources, a process that potentially altered or obscured precise historical details. Consequently, this study concentrates less on establishing the historicity of specific details provided by individual sources and more on the general thematic trends and broad character-identities conveyed by clusters of related historical traditions. By paying particular attention to these thematic and narrative clusters, we can come to appreciate how the Academy, Academic historical discourse, and the school's sense of the character of its leadership all evolved in tandem.

THE NATURE OF THE ACADEMY

Before turning to the Academy, however, it is necessary to understand how Plato's school developed out of the circle of Socrates. Generally speaking, it seems that Socrates' circle dissolved after his death and his individual followers each pursued their own philosophical directions. In two slightly different accounts, each of which draws upon Hermodorus' *Life of Plato*, Diogenes Laertius says that 'Plato and the remaining philosophers fled to Euclides after the death of Socrates because they feared the savageness of the tyrants.'⁸ This is impossible to confirm but, even if Hermodorus' suggestion that members of the Socratic circle fled collectively to Megara is

BC', *HSCP* 100 (2000) 203-4; and, on their possible teaching connection to Gorgias, S. Consigny, *Gorgias. Sophist and Artist* (Columbia, SC 2001) 7. Pythagoreans obviously were concerned with the broad continuity of their system of thought, but there is no evidence that the school of Pythagoras maintained a linear succession. Iamblichus, drawing upon Aristoxenus' fourth-century BC text, describes the scattering of Pythagoreans following an attack by Cylon of Croton near the end of Pythagoras' life (*VP* 249-51 = Aristox. *fr.* 18; *cf.* Porph. *Vit. Pyth.* 55; on these traditions note now C. Riedweg, *Pythagoras. His Life, Teaching, and Influence* (Ithaca 2005) 18-20, 104-6). Aristoxenus does suggest that Pythagorean teaching circles persisted in Italy and mainland Greece (Lysis is said to have established a circle in Thebes with which Epaminondas was associated), but

this is a different sort of phenomenon from the strict spatial and institutional continuity created by the early Academics. Indeed, Aristoxenus presents the surprise attack of Cylon in such a way that one could see in this narrative an attempt to explain away Pythagoras' failure to create an intelligible succession process.

⁷ On Peripatetic biographical traditions, see the nuanced study of A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (2nd edn, Cambridge, MA 1993) 65-85 as well as the classic survey of F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer literarischen Form* (Leipzig 1901). Early Academic biographical works are discussed in more detail below.

⁸ Diog. Laert. 2.106; *cf.* Diog. Laert. 3.6 which classifies the remaining philosophers as ἄλλοι τινὲς Σωκρατικοί.

accepted, it seems that each Socratic follower went his own way relatively soon afterwards. Plato himself apparently embarked on a tour of philosophical discovery, fancifully described by Diogenes Laertius in terms reminiscent of the education of Pythagoras.⁹ Eventually, he made the first of his three well-known trips to Sicily. Following this trip (and, we are told, his capture and sale as a slave in Aegina),¹⁰ Plato returned to Athens and set up shop in the district around the Academy, a park area dedicated to a local Athenian hero Akademos that was near one of the city's most pleasant suburbs and contained, among other amenities, a gymnasium with a large courtyard.¹¹

It remains somewhat unclear how Plato made use of this space, but one can begin to get some idea of the mechanics of his teaching. Plutarch emphasizes that Plato both lived and taught in a private house,¹² but the few actual descriptions of Plato's teaching that we have suggest that he also taught publicly within the park.¹³ In the Academy, there seem to have been two gradations of students: casual hearers who sought to acquire a basic understanding of philosophy,¹⁴ and an inner core of students who devoted their lives to its pursuit.

It seems that Plato taught this first group of students within the confines of the public space of the Academy and led more intimate discussions in his house. We have two short but tantalizing pictures into the way that this teaching was conducted. The first appears in a fragment from a lost comedy by Epicrates.¹⁵ The scene begins with two characters discussing the activities of Plato, Speusippus and Menedemus during the Panathenaic festival. One of the interlocutors saw them with a group of students in the gymnasium of the Academy¹⁶ engaged in a discussion about the various categories into which natural objects can be separated. After watching them try to classify a pumpkin, Epicrates writes, a doctor from Sicily dismissed the whole proceeding with an obscene gesture and stormed away. The man who had first asked about the gathering then suggested that the group of philosophers must have become enraged by this. The surprising answer was that they 'were not at all troubled by these things. And Plato, who was present and very calm, without irritation, asked them to begin again.'¹⁷

This fragment provides two important details. First, it shows that the school was readily identified with Plato but Speusippus and Menedemus evidently played a significant public role as well. This particular philosophical discussion, however, does not seem to have involved only these three men. Instead we are told that a group had gathered and all of them were encouraged to consider where a pumpkin belongs in a natural classification scheme. Plato speaks once in this narration; Speusippus and Menedemus do not appear at all.¹⁸ It seems, in fact, that the youths

⁹ Diog. Laert. 3.6; cf. Iambl. *VP* 3-27.

¹⁰ For this marvellously improbable story, see Diog. Laert. 3.19-21.

¹¹ Diog. Laert. 3.7. For discussion of the area, see M. Baltes, 'Plato's School, the Academy', *Hermathena* 155 (1993) 6; J. Glucker, *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (Göttingen 1978) 227; Dillon (n.2) 2. Note the descriptions of Plut. *Cim.* 13.7 and Pliny, *HN* 12.5.9 as well as the earlier comments of Thuc. 2.34.

¹² *De exil.* 603 B10-C5. Note as well Glucker (n.11) 228-9.

¹³ Note, for example, Epicrates *fr.* 11 (Kock) and Aelian, *VH* 3.19. These passages will be discussed further below. For discussion of the locations of teaching, see Dillon (n.2) 3-4 and Baltes (n.11) 7. It seems that Plato also gave public lectures to a general audience on occasion (e.g. his lecture *On the Good* described in Aristox. *Harm.* 30-1; cf. A.S. Riginos, *Platonica. The Anecdotes Concerning the Life and Writings of Plato* (Leiden 1976) anecdote 79).

¹⁴ In late antiquity these were the *akroatai*, who were contrasted with the more intimate circles of *gnorimoi* or *hetairoi* (cf. Watts (n.5) 31-5). For a discussion of the gradations within Plato's Academy, see Baltes (n.11) 10-11. His larger point about the two distinct types of Platonic students is certainly sound but, given our evidence, it seems difficult to establish the specific terms used to refer to each group in the Platonic Academy.

¹⁵ On this fragment, note the discussions of Baltes (n.11) 14-15 and Dillon (n.2) 7-8.

¹⁶ ἀγέλην μειρακίων ἐν γυμνασίοις Ἀκαδημείας (Epicrates *fr.* 11.9-11).

¹⁷ οὐδ' ἐμέλησεν τοῖς μειρακίοις/ ὁ Πλάτων δὲ παρῶν καὶ μάλα πρῶως/ οὐδὲν ὀρινθείς, ἐπέταξ' αὐτοῖς πάλιν (Epicrates *fr.* 11.34-7).

¹⁸ It is tempting to think that Speusippus and Menedemus offer up two of the comical classifications of a pumpkin, but they are not named and Epicrates gives three such definitions. These appear to be the thoughts of some still rather confused junior students.

doing the discussing were not members of Plato's inner circle but were general hearers who frequented its public discussions. There was also an audience, perhaps drawn to the grove on the occasion of the Panathenaic festival, that included the scoffing Sicilian doctor and our narrator. This suggests that the general teaching of the Academy took place within the public space of the garden. It also involved three categories of participants: Plato and his inner circle, the general hearers of Academic teaching, and interested members of the general public.¹⁹

The Epicrates fragment also sheds important light upon Plato's role in the public teaching of the Academy. Plato appears to have worked as a superintendent who offered up a general topic for discussion, suggested approaches and patiently provided encouragement. Though he certainly had opinions on the topics he introduced, Plato seemed perfectly at ease providing only enough direction to help his students work their way through discussions.²⁰ Plato seems to have neither expected nor enforced any doctrinal orthodoxy among his followers. He was the respected head of the school but others involved with it evidently could follow their intellectual inclinations in whatever way they wished.

The second passage, an anecdote preserved by Aelian, suggests one of the effects of Plato's loose intellectual management style.²¹ Aelian describes a scene in which an elderly Plato is set upon by Aristotle and his associates and subjected to rather aggressive and 'unjust' questions.²² Plato's closest colleagues Speusippus and Xenocrates were away from the Academy and unable to come to his defence, so Plato stopped teaching in public. When Xenocrates returned to Athens, he found Aristotle leading his followers and acting as the public face of the institution. Upon inquiring whether this meant that Plato was ill, he was told that Plato had retreated to his home out of irritation with Aristotle.²³ Xenocrates then went to Plato's house and happily found the master engaged in a pleasant discussion with a large group of his disciples.²⁴ Though Plato continued teaching in private, Xenocrates went on the offensive and drove Aristotle out of the public space in order to restore Plato to his customary position.

The reliability of this anecdote is suspect but the general atmosphere that it presents is not implausible.²⁵ Indeed, Aelian's narration provides some important pieces of evidence about the way that Plato ran his school. Under Plato, the Academy was apparently arranged so that each of its leading lights maintained a distinct inner circle that met privately.²⁶ Plato clearly had a select group of students who met in his house and participated in closed sessions. Aristotle too had a group of 'companions'²⁷ who grouped around him. Aelian then describes two 'inner circles' that existed within the broader structure of the Academy and had their own unique members and characteristics. So, for example, Aelian contrasts Aristotle's student Mnason of Phocis (evidently the son of one of the men responsible for initiating the Sacred War)²⁸ with the noble youths who surrounded Plato.²⁹ If the basic impression given by Aelian is to be trusted, one sees

¹⁹ Cf. Dillon (n.2) 3.

²⁰ Cf. Baltes (n.11) 8, 18. Especially interesting is the suggestion that Plato used the dialogues to introduce his ideas about a topic proposed for discussion.

²¹ Ael. *VH* 3.19.

²² ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, καὶ φιλοτίμως πάνυ τὰς ἐρωτήσεις ποιούμενος καὶ τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἐλεγκτικῶς, ἀδικῶν ἅμα καὶ ἀγνωμονῶν ἦν δηλός (Ael. *VH* 3.19.22-5).

²³ Ael. *VH* (3.19.34) says ἐνοχλῶν δὲ αὐτὸν Ἀριστοτέλης.

²⁴ Ael. *VH* 3.19.37-40.

²⁵ The anecdote is dismissed as unreliable by L. Tarán, *Speusippus of Athens. A Critical Study with a Collection of the Related Texts and Commentary* (Leiden 1981) 221, and defended by Dillon (n.2) 3-4. It presents an Academic world broadly consistent with the general,

hands-off management style that Plato seemed to prefer, but the disagreements between Plato and Aristotle seem overemphasized. It is now accepted that Aristotle remained a member of the Academy at the time of both Plato's death and that of Speusippus eight years later (note the discussion of P. Merlan, 'The successor of Speusippus', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 77 (1946) 103-1).

²⁶ Dillon (n.2) 205-6 provides a brief discussion of intellectual factionalism within the Platonic Academy.

²⁷ Aelian uses the term ὀμιλητής.

²⁸ Mnason seems to be the son of the Mnaseas, one of the Phocians responsible for the start of the Sacred War (Arist. *Pol.* 1304a10-13).

²⁹ ἦσαν δὲ μάλα συχνοὶ καὶ ἄξιοι λόγου καὶ οἱ μάλιστα δοκοῦντες τῶν νέων ἐπιφανεῖς (Ael. *VH* 3.19.39-40)

not only the existence of multiple subgroups within the Academy but also a differentiation in their character caused by the particular personalities of their leadership.

This general picture is confirmed by some other, less arresting pieces of evidence. A look at the known members of the Academy suggests a diversity of interests and pedagogic approaches within its space that certainly could have accommodated the sort of arrangement that Aelian describes. Philippus of Opus, the man who served as Plato's secretary during his last years (and who copy-edited the *Laws*), had a keen interest in mathematics and astronomy.³⁰ Heraclides of Pontus represents another sort of student whose interests ranged from Pythagorean-influenced mathematics to physics.³¹ Like Aristotle, he too expressed his strong disagreement with some of Plato's ideas on important concepts like the Forms while still remaining firmly attached to the Academy itself.³² In fact, Heraclides was made the interim caretaker of the Academy during Plato's third Sicilian trip, and very nearly became the head of the school following the death of Plato's successor Speusippus.³³ One is probably entitled to suspect something similar of Menedemus.³⁴

This potentially chaotic collection of philosophers coalesced around the powerful figure of Plato. Though Plato evidently had little interest in firmly pressing his own doctrines upon the other members of the Academy, the activities within the school bore his unmistakable hallmark. Indeed, the Academy was primarily recognized as Plato's school during his lifetime. Students from around the Greek world were specifically attracted by his reputation, which they seem to have learned about through word of mouth.³⁵ In addition to Aristotle (who, according to different traditions, was sent when either his father or his guardian Proxenus learned of Plato),³⁶ one finds Xenocrates from Chalcedon, Hermodorus from Syracuse and Heraclides from Heraclea all attracted to the Academy because of Plato's prominence. The great and widely dispersed fame of the school is suggested by Aelian's description of an encounter between Plato and a group of strangers at Olympia. Plato ate and spent time with these men in a completely unpretentious style, identifying himself only by name. During a subsequent visit to Athens, his friends requested to meet the famous Plato, 'the namesake' of their host, and asked to be taken to his Academy so that they could benefit from spending time with him.³⁷ If this anecdote is to be trusted, the opportunity to profit from conversations with Plato primarily attracted students from abroad to the Academy. The other philosophers active there and the rest of the institution's vibrancy were probably seen as welcome bonuses.

It seems that we need to imagine the Academy under Plato as a space within which followers led a philosophical life and discussed philosophical principles. Plato, as the most able and

³⁰ On Philippus, see L. Tarán, *Academica, Plato, Philip of Opus and the Pseudo-Platonic Epinomis* (Philadelphia 1975) as well as Dillon (n.2) 178-95. Diogenes Laertius (3.37) describes his work with Plato's texts, especially the *Laws*.

³¹ On Heraclides, note the study of H.B. Gottschalk, *Heraclides of Pontus* (Oxford 1980) and the discussion of Dillon (n.2) 204-14.

³² Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1114F-1115A = Heraclides fr. 68 in F. Wehrli (ed.), *Die Schule des Aristoteles* 7 (2nd edn, Basel 1969); cf. Dillon (n.2) 208.

³³ On his caretaker role during Plato's Sicilian trip, see *Suda* H 486 = Heraclides fr. 2 (Wehrli). For his near selection after the death of Speusippus, see Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 7 = Heraclides fr. 9 (Wehrli). On the text of Philodemus' *History of the Academy*, see the important study of K. Gaiser, *Philodemus Academica. Die Bericht über Platon und die Alte Akademie in zwei herculanensischen Papyri* (Stuttgart 1988), and the more complete text

of T. Dorandi, *Filodemo, Storia dei Filosofi. Platone e l'Accademia* (Naples 1991). This article draws upon the edition of Dorandi for all of its references to this text.

³⁴ Perhaps also suggested by Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 7.

³⁵ Dillon (n.2) 89 speaks aptly of a 'philosophical grapevine'.

³⁶ Proxenus is mentioned as the responsible party in *Vita Arabica* 4.3 (Düring); cf. Dion. Hal. *Amm.* 5. Nicomachus is named by *Vita Arabica* 2.3-9 (Düring). Also notable is the tradition that Aristotle came to study under Plato after receiving an oracle (e.g. *Vita Marciana*, 34-47). For a discussion and analysis of these various traditions, see O. Gigon, *Vita Aristotelis Marciana* (Berlin 1962) 41.

³⁷ Aelian, *VH* 4.9.10-13. Its general conformity to Aelian's broader picture of an abstentious and humble Plato makes the specific historicity of this incident somewhat suspect.

respected philosopher, superintended the space, provided occasional general intellectual direction, and drew upon his considerable personal reputation to attract students. Nevertheless, the grounds of the Academy housed an array of philosophical interests and intellectual circles, all of them grouped loosely (but securely) under a broad Academic umbrella. Despite its doctrinal diversity, the Academy seems to have had a clear institutional identity tied to both the place of study and its revered superintendent.³⁸

THE ACADEMY OF SPEUSIPPUS

The unique role played by Plato in the Academy meant that his eventual death presented a serious functional challenge. Though the dissolution of the Socratic circle upon its master's execution had apparently been the norm in Classical Athenian education, the Academy was a different sort of institution. While it does not seem to have advocated a solidly defined set of doctrines in Plato's lifetime,³⁹ the school did have a recognized meeting place and some private property that was used primarily by members of the Academy. It enjoyed a powerful reputation in the Greek world that, while largely due to Plato's influence, also drew upon the philosophical resources and reputations of other Academics. There were, in short, considerable advantages that could have permitted philosophical teaching to continue in the Academy. At the same time, there was no evident plan for how the circle should function once Plato's stabilizing presence was removed.

The natural danger in such a circumstance was that the circle would dissolve, with each leader of an inner circle spinning off into his own intellectual orbit. This seems not to have happened. When Plato died in 347, all of the students associated with the Academy marched in his funeral procession, visited his fresh tomb in the grove of the Academy and then continued their work at the school.⁴⁰ The leadership of the Academy passed to Speusippus, Plato's nephew, by something approaching general consensus within the school.⁴¹ This evidently meant that Speusippus assumed Plato's position of first among equals. Though Plato's burial in the Academy meant that the school was now even more closely identified with that particular precinct, it does not seem that Plato's house passed directly into Speusippus' control. In his will, Plato describes two properties, the first evidently his ancestral estate in Iphistidae and the second a property that he bought in the general area of the Academy grove.⁴² Neither of these properties was passed to Speusippus and, while the head of the school, it seems that he continued to live in his own house.⁴³ Because Speusippus was able to add a statue of the Graces to its garden and Xenocrates was able to live on its grounds, the school undoubtedly continued to have use of Plato's property around the Academy.⁴⁴ It is not clear, however, in what capacity (if any) it exercised ownership.⁴⁵

³⁸ On the importance of the place of study, one should note Ammonius Hermiou's curious observation about the source of the name 'Academics' (*In Porphyrii isagogen* 46.9-17).

³⁹ Dillon (n.2) 16.

⁴⁰ Diog. Laert. 3.41. Between the lists given by Diogenes Laertius and Philodemus, this seems to have amounted to at least twenty-one students (Dillon (n.2) 13-14). This may have been the size of the group, though the Epicrates fragment mentioned above and the trial of Plato's students Menedemus and Asclepiades (Ath. 4.168 AB) suggests a much larger number may be possible.

⁴¹ On Speusippus' succession, see Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 6; Diog. Laert. 4.1; *Vita Aristotelis Marciana* 3.69-73. Though one may find Speusippus' uncontested succession implausible given Aristotle's presence in the Academy, Tarán (n.25) 8-9 makes the reasonable point that, in 347, a 60-year-old Speusippus was in all likeli-

hood a far more accomplished philosopher than the 37-year-old Aristotle. For discussion of Speusippus and his career, see the valuable surveys of Tarán (n.25) 3-11 and Dillon (n.2) 30-8.

⁴² Diog. Laert. 3.41-3. There exists an abundant discussion of this will and the question of which property constitutes the buildings associated with the Academy. Among the most important contributions are J.P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School. A Study of a Greek Educational Institution* (Berkeley 1972) 106-34; Glucker (n.11) 229-34; and Dillon (n.2) 6-9.

⁴³ Speusippus' house may have been a part of the gift given to him by Dio when he left for Sicily (Plut. *Dion* 17.3-4, 964E; cf. Glucker (n.11) 229).

⁴⁴ For Speusippus and the Graces, see Diog. Laert. 4.1. On Xenocrates, see Diog. Laert. 4.7.

⁴⁵ It has been argued that, under Athenian law, neither Speusippus nor anyone else at the school could inherit

As scholarch, Speusippus remained devoted to Plato's general administrative methods and seems to have encouraged the free spirit of inquiry and intellectual independence that characterized Plato's Academy. In his own inquiries, Speusippus ranged quite widely and staked out original positions on first principles, epistemology and ethics that differed in significant ways from those of his uncle.⁴⁶ If Aristotle's comments are a good guide, these ideas were extremely influential within the Academy despite their divergence from Plato.⁴⁷ The Speusippian Academy's permissive investigative culture extended beyond the scholarch's own work. Under Speusippus, Philippus of Opus, another of Plato's inner circle of followers, continued the mathematical studies that most interested him, and Heraclides of Pontus pursued investigations into atoms that were at odds with ideas expressed in Plato's dialogues.⁴⁸ Heraclides even seems to have flitted between the inner circles of Speusippus and Aristotle during this time.⁴⁹

In the years after Plato's death, some members of the Academy became extremely interested in detailing the life of their deceased master and, in particular, illustrating ways in which his conduct indicated support for ideas that they cherished. In short, the members of the Academy began a process of struggling to define the character of their intellectual community by drawing upon their founder's immensely complicated intellectual and personal legacy. Given the amount of evidence that has been lost, it is difficult to see anything more than the broadest outlines by which the early Academics shaped Plato's legacy. Nevertheless, enough fragmentary material does survive to show both the importance members of the Academy attached to Plato's legacy and the different ideas that they had about how Plato's life ought to be understood.

Though something of a light touch in this process, Speusippus evidently began it with an oration delivered following Plato's death.⁵⁰ In this, he describes 'something that was said in Athens' about Plato's conception through an encounter that his virginal mother had with Apollo.⁵¹ This remarkable story could not have been accepted as the literal truth so soon after Plato's death, especially by Speusippus,⁵² but the story of Plato's divine birth was frequently retold in Athens and it did fit with sentiments about Plato's divinity that Speusippus himself expressed.⁵³ It has been suggested that the introduction of the divine conception of Plato may be an attempt to create a rhetorical link between Plato and Pythagoras.⁵⁴ Speusippus' enthusiasm for Pythagorean ideas crept into his teaching and, if artfully done, the manufacture of a connection between Plato and Pythagoras would not hurt the profile of Pythagorean doctrines in the Academy.⁵⁵ All the same, it appears that Speusippus neither endorses the idea of Plato's divine parentage nor places much argumentative weight upon it. He simply indicates that such a story was told in Athens and leaves it to his audience to evaluate its plausibility.

Plato's property (e.g. Glucker (n.11) 231). Note, however, the discussion of S.C. Todd, *The Shape of Athenian Law* (Oxford 1993) 216-27. Todd argues for the possibility of non-agnate inheritance in Athens, creating a situation in which Speusippus could have been designated an heir. I thank Matt Christ for this reference.

⁴⁶ For discussion of these, see Tarán (n.25) 12-85 as well as the collection of Speusippian fragments in the same study. Note as well, Dillon (n.2) 40-88.

⁴⁷ Speusippus' influence on Aristotle is particularly evident in his discussions of classification and *diarexis*; cf. Tarán (n.25) 64-77 and 109-11.

⁴⁸ On Heraclides' atomist ideas, see Gottschalk (n.31) 37-57 and Dillon (n.2) 204-11.

⁴⁹ Diog. Laert. 5.86. On this passage, note as well the comments of Gottschalk (n.31) 3-4.

⁵⁰ This is *Plato's Funeral Feast*, an otherwise lost work. For discussion about the possibility that Diogenes Laertius has confused Speusippus' title with that of another author's work, see Tarán (n.25) 230-2, 236-7.

⁵¹ Diog. Laert. 3.2. Note as well the similar narrative in Jer. *Adv. Iovinian.* 1.42.

⁵² Speusippus must have known that Plato had older siblings, a fact suggested by *Ap.* 33C-34A. Both Speusippus' statement that he worked out the early life of Plato through family documents (*Apul. De dog. Plat.* 1.2) and his epigram to Plato suggest that he was aware of his uncle's true parentage. On this, see Dillon (n.2) 38 n.21.

⁵³ In a funerary epigram, Speusippus wrote 'Earth conceals in her bosom the body of Plato, but the soul of the son of Ariston has its immortal station amongst the Blessed. Him every good man, even if he dwells far away, honours as one who discerned the divine life.' This is *Anth. Pal.* 7.61 = Tarán (n.25) *fr.* 87a = Diog. Laert. 3.44.

⁵⁴ Dillon (n.2) 38.

⁵⁵ Note, for example, [Iamblichus], *Theologoumena Arithmeticae* 82.10-85.23 = Tarán (n.25) *fr.* 28 as well as Tarán's commentary on 259-61.

Other members of the post-Platonic Academy made less tentative uses of Plato's historical legacy. In addition to Speusippus' funeral oration, the first generation of Platonists wrote a number of works discussing the life and deeds of their master. From the few surviving fragments, it is clear that Plato's followers circulated a number of very different ideas about his life. Furthermore, it seems that these biographies were both illustrations of his deeds and explications of his doctrines. Plato's student Xenocrates apparently included discussions of Plato's ideas in his biography, as did another follower, Hermodorus of Syracuse.⁵⁶ It is to this latter work that we owe the information that Plato fled to Megara after the death of Socrates. The doxographic section of the work also may have included a discussion of the dating of Zoroaster, perhaps an attempt to lend a Persian flavour to Plato's legacy.⁵⁷ These two extremely fragmentary compositions suggest that Plato's immediate followers saw some benefit in creating a picture of Plato's life in which his ideas and deeds were mutually reinforcing.

A more substantial impression of the power of the Platonic legacy can be drawn from the efforts of Philippus of Opus. Philippus is described in later traditions as a mathematician and astronomer, a picture seemingly confirmed by the remains of his work.⁵⁸ In the last years of Plato's life, Philippus served essentially as his personal secretary and, when Plato died without completing a final edition of the *Laws*, it was Philippus who took responsibility for transferring the text which Plato had left 'in the wax'.⁵⁹ As the final editor of Plato's works, Philippus was already somewhat responsible for crafting Plato's historical legacy, and in two other compositions one begins to see how he took up this task. The most important of these is the *Epinomis*, a dialogue written in a reasonable imitation of Platonic style that has often passed as a part of the Platonic corpus.⁶⁰ The text itself provides a discussion of 'what a mortal man should learn in order to be wise' and, in so doing, seems to build upon ideas that were left without clarification in the *Laws*.⁶¹

John Dillon has argued convincingly that this work should be seen as Philippus' own understanding of Plato's doctrines.⁶² If this is true, the *Epinomis* probably contains a mixture of Platonic ideas that circulated orally within the Academy and notions framed by Philippus himself.⁶³ Indeed, Proclus claims that Philippus even received Plato's explicit instruction to study mathematics in order to continue his own investigation into 'all the problems that he thought would contribute to Plato's philosophy'.⁶⁴ If, as seems reasonable, Proclus' statement has some factual foundation, the *Epinomis* then represents a unique method of preserving and defining Plato's legacy within the Academy. It was not, strictly speaking, a Platonic work, a fact evidently acknowledged within the Academy.⁶⁵ It was, however, a work inspired by Plato and, as such, its contents were germane to the Academic intellectual environment.

⁵⁶ For discussion of Xenocrates' text, see Simplicius, *in Phys.* 10.1165 and *in Cael.* 7.12 = M. Isnardi Parente, *Senocrate-Ermodoro. Frammenti* (Naples 1982) *fr.* 264-6 (Xenocrates). For Hermodorus, see Isnardi Parente, *Senocrate-Ermodoro* *fr.* 6 (Hermodorus) and her commentary on 438-9.

⁵⁷ In Diog. Laert. 1.2, this material is attributed to the *Περὶ μαθημάτων* of Hermodorus. On the possibility that this is a misattribution on the part of Diogenes Laertius (and a discussion of the possible implications of an identification of this with Hermodorus' *Life of Plato*), see Dillon (n.2) 199-201.

⁵⁸ See Proclus, *In Eucl.* 67.23-68.6. For the extant sources referring to Philippus of Opus, see Tarán (n.30) 115-39. His publications are also described by Dillon (n.2) 181. The *Epinomis*, the most important of these, will be discussed below.

⁵⁹ Diog. Laert. 3.37, cf. *Anon. Proleg.* 10.24.10-15, Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 3.36-41. On this passage as well as the curious phrase ὄντας ἐν κηρῷ, see the discussion of Tarán (n.30) 128-33.

⁶⁰ For the history of the text and its disputed place in the Platonic corpus, see the excellent discussion of Tarán (n.30) 3-47.

⁶¹ *Epinomis* 973 b2-4 (Tarán): τί ποτε μαθὼν θνητὸς ἄνθρωπος σοφὸς ἂν εἴη. On this passage as well as its connection to the *Laws*, note the discussions of Tarán (n.30) 203, 206; and Dillon (n.2) 183.

⁶² Dillon (n.2) 182-97.

⁶³ For a discussion of the relationship of the dialogues to the 'oral doctrines' of Plato, see J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (Ithaca, NY 1977) 2-11.

⁶⁴ Proclus, *Comm. in Eucl.* 67.23. The translation is that of Dillon (n.2) 180-1.

⁶⁵ E.g. Diog. Laert. 3.37.

Given that Plato's dialogues seem to have served as a starting point for intellectual exchanges in the Academy during his lifetime, one can understand why Philippus (and, if Proclus is believed, Plato himself) would have seen the benefit of a work such as the *Epinomis*. Billed as Philippus' continuation of Plato's train of thought in the *Laws*, the *Epinomis* had the potential to stimulate discussion within the Academy and direct its members' intellectual energies towards a goal that had interested their late master. In fact, if one assumes that the *Laws* circulated in the Academy only after Philippus had edited the text, the *Epinomis* would be the second dialogue that Philippus introduced to the Academy on Plato's authority. Presumably Academic procedure would then have held that the work would be read and its general ideas discussed.⁶⁶

A second intriguing fragment of Philippus' corpus suggests another way that he worked with Plato's legacy. This is a passage derived from his *Life of Plato* and it describes how 'when he was already an old man, Plato received a Chaldean visitor'.⁶⁷ Though Philippus does not say so explicitly, we can probably assume that the guest would have told Plato about Chaldean astronomy.⁶⁸ With so little surrounding context, the significance of this statement remains somewhat opaque. It may arise from Philippus' desire to convey Plato's personal sanction of his investigations into mathematics and astronomy. Indeed, in a setting in which Plato had left his doctrines and intellectual legacy somewhat ill-defined, there was ample space for a person like Philippus to appropriate this legacy to support his own ideas.

Though these are small and disconnected fragments of larger discussions of Plato's life, the efforts of Speusippus, Hermodorus, Xenocrates and Philippus reveal a number of significant things about Plato's legacy within the post-Platonic Academy. First, the texts that combined biographical and doxographical studies of the master show that, in the years immediately following Plato's death, there already existed an understanding that his doctrines and his deeds were mutually reinforcing. In addition, amidst the growing diversity of philosophical approaches taken by the members of the Academy, an idea arose that the presentation of Plato's personal and intellectual legacy could be shaped by an Academic author to create a Platonic sanction of his own philosophical interests and objectives. Even within our meagre evidence for this period there is an indication that Philippus of Opus and Xenocrates presented contrasting views of the Platonic legacy in an attempt to argue two different things about the five elemental regions of the cosmos.⁶⁹ Much of this is, of course, due to the particular nature of the Academy under Speusippus. The circle retained the same, decentralized structure it had under Plato's stewardship but, with Plato gone, it lacked the charismatic leadership around which these diverse interests coalesced. The school required a strong centre of personal and intellectual gravity and, with this much diminished under Speusippus, it is not surprising to see Plato's malleable historical legacy drawn upon to provide charismatic support for different philosophical approaches.

THE ACADEMY AFTER SPEUSIPPUS

Following the death of Speusippus in 339, both the leadership and the structure of the Academy changed. Much of this has to do with the manner in which succession was determined. We are told that, when Speusippus died:

⁶⁶ Aside from some possible engagement by Xenocrates in his *Life of Plato* (Xenocrates *frr.* 264-6, Isnardi Parente), there is little that remains of this discussion.

⁶⁷ Quoted by Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 3-5 (Dorandi). The nature of this work is unclear but, like the efforts of Hermodorus and Xenocrates, it may have contained a discussion of Plato's doctrines along with an account of his life.

⁶⁸ Dillon (n.2) 181 n. 6.

⁶⁹ See, for example, the discussion of Tarán (n.30) 39-40, 152 and that of Dillon (n.2) 193-5. It is possible that each of these were based upon different representations of Plato's oral teaching, though Tarán's objections to this idea are convincing.

The youths, electing one of these men as a leader, chose Xenocrates the Chalcedonian. Aristotle was absent in Macedonia, Menedemus the Pyrrhian and Heraclides from Heraclea fell short by a few votes. The one, that is Heraclides, went away to Pontus, the other, Menedemus, prepared another place to walk and teach. But those who were in the Academy were said to have judged for Xenocrates since they admired his temperance.⁷⁰

The challenges that this situation posed to the Academy are self-evident. Speusippus' seniority and family connection to Plato had allowed him to assume control of the Academy without dissent.⁷¹ Xenocrates possessed neither of these things and, as Philodemus suggests, he faced a number of other aspirants who were roughly the same age and possessed the same experience with the school as he did. These men were likely the heads of their own inner circles within the loose Academic structure and, for this reason, each probably had a dedicated group of supporters who could not easily be persuaded to support anyone else. A vote was perhaps a natural way to resolve such an intractable dispute.⁷² It is important to note that, when this vote was taken, the students of the Academy were still operating within the scholastic context that Plato had created and Speusippus had sustained. The electors must have conceived of the Academy as an institution quite like the decentralized (and somewhat cacophonous) circle set up by Plato and, in choosing a new head, they would have been evaluating a candidate's ability to provide the charismatic and authoritative philosophical leadership that the Platonic Academy required. It is telling that, evidently, Xenocrates was chosen because he possessed unmatched temperance, a quality that one can assume was connected to authority within the early Academy.⁷³

Xenocrates' temperance enabled him to claim a unique philosophical identity that distinguished him from his more ostentatious competitors Aristotle and Heraclides.⁷⁴ Whereas Aristotle dressed in expensive, flashy clothing and the portly Heraclides worked to have himself divinized in Heraclea, Xenocrates showed himself immune to the temptations of wealth, glory and power.⁷⁵ More notably, Xenocrates' personal moderation seems to have represented a practical application of his ethical theory that *eudaimonia* arose in part from seeking only the minimum physical resources necessary to service our proper virtues.⁷⁶ Xenocrates' authority within the Academy evidently derived from the unique and compelling way in which his temperate lifestyle manifested his philosophical privileging of moderation.

While Xenocrates' temperance may have convinced a plurality of the youths in the Academy of his authority, a large segment of the school remained unpersuaded and, when Xenocrates assumed control, the senior scholars Aristotle, Menedemus and Heraclides all broke from the

⁷⁰ οἱ δ[ὲ] νεανίσκοι ψηφ[ο]φορή[σαν] τ[ε]ς ὄσ[τ]ις αὐτῶν ἡγή[ς]ισετα[ι], Ξενοκράτη[ν] εἶλοντο | τὸν [Κα]λχηδόνιον, Ἀρι[σ]τολλτέλους [μ]ὲν ἀποδέδημη| κότης εἰς Μακεδονίαν, Μελνεδήμου δὲ τοῦ Πυρραίου | καὶ Ἡρακλείδου τοῦ Ἡρακλειώτου παρ' ὀλίγας ψήφους ἠττηθέντων· [ὁ] μὲν οὖν Ἡ[ρα]κλειίδης ἀπῆ[ρ]εν εἰς τ[ὸν] Πόντον, ὁ δὲ [Μενεδήμ]ος ἕτερον περίπατον καὶ [δι]ατριβὴν κατε[σ]κευάσατο· [οἱ δ'] ἐν | Ἀκαδημαίαι [λ]έ[γ]οντ[αι] | προκρίνα[σ]ι [τὸν] Ξενοκρά[α]την | ἀγασθέντε[ς] αὐτοῦ τ[ῆ]ν σωφροσύνην (Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 6-7 = Isnardi Parente (n.56) *fr.* 1.15-24 = Tarán (n.25) *Test.* 2.14-31). Note as well on this passage the discussion of Gaiser (n.33) 465-9.

⁷¹ Philodemus says simply that he διεδέξατο τῆν διατριβήν (*Hist. Acad.* 6 = Tarán (n.25) *Test.* 2.2).

⁷² Note Dillon (n.2) 15-16 on the voting procedures in the Academy.

⁷³ Temperance plays a large role in much of the surviving discourse of the Xenocratean Academy and, for

this reason, Philodemus' statement is not unproblematic. All the same, it does seem broadly consistent with what can be reconstructed of the historical reality of Xenocrates' school.

⁷⁴ For Aristotle's ostentation, note Ael. *VH* 3.19. We are also told that Heraclides was called 'Pompikos' behind his back (Diog. Laert. 5.86), an evident play on his arrogance and Pontic origins.

⁷⁵ Various traditions describing Heraclides' attempts to have himself recognized as a blessed figure are found in Diog. Laert. 5.89-91; *cf.* Heraclides *fr.* 14a, 16 (Wehrli). The reliability of this can be questioned, however (e.g. Wehrli (n.32) 63-4; Dillon (n.2) 205 n.73).

⁷⁶ Clement, *Strom.* 2.22 = Isnardi Parente (n.56) *fr.* 232. For discussion of this idea, see Dillon (n.2) 141-9. This seems to have been a part of a larger ethical system in which perfected virtues derive from natural impulses. These ideas are described further below.

Academy, probably along with the students who belonged to their inner circles.⁷⁷ Their defections produced a smaller, more homogeneous Academy that differed from the multiform and philosophically diverse circles of Plato and Speusippus. The school was now populated in large part by students loyal to Xenocrates and his ideas. As a result, Xenocrates found himself able to shape a distinct, coherent philosophical identity for the Academy and its teaching – a task that his predecessors were either unwilling or unable to do.⁷⁸ Despite the fragmentary nature of our sources, one can see, in general terms, how Xenocrates defined an Academic institutional identity in a hostile environment now populated by the competing teaching circles of Heraclides, Menedemus and Aristotle.⁷⁹ This was done by capitalizing upon Xenocrates' temperance, one of the most unique and valuable assets the truncated Academy still possessed, and it seems that discourse in and around the Academy began to advertise this virtue and its advantages for potential students.

Extant sources preserve a small but not insignificant array of Xenocratean anecdotes, the general tenor of which one can appreciate from three of the most popular examples.⁸⁰ The first recounts a drinking contest held at the court of Dionysius of Sicily. The prize for this was a golden crown and, when Xenocrates won the contest, he showed his contempt for worldly goods by placing his prize atop a statue of Hermes and walking off.⁸¹ A second group of anecdotes describes his insusceptibility to carnal temptation by emphasizing the inability of various courtesans to seduce Xenocrates, despite his willingness to give them shelter and sleep beside them.⁸² The third focuses upon the popular trope of the interaction between a philosopher and a king. There are a number of variations on this theme among the *testimonia* related to Xenocrates, but the most notable concerns a large gift of money sent by Alexander the Great. Xenocrates took from this a small amount and sent the rest back, saying that it was of more need to a king than a philosopher.⁸³ Consistent with his ethical theory of moderation, Xenocrates accepted only the amount of Alexander's gift that was required to meet his basic needs and returned the rest.

Each of these anecdotes demonstrates the particular ways in which Xenocrates' lifestyle illustrated his ethical teachings, but the best-known and most memorable story told about Xenocrates concerns the philosophical conversion of Polemo. It presents both Xenocrates' own personal qualities and the effect that they had on students.⁸⁴ Polemo was a wealthy young Athenian infa-

⁷⁷ Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 7. As Philodemus suggests, some of them formed new teaching circles after breaking with the Academy. Aristotle, of course, founded the Lyceum. Menedemus founded some sort of school, though none of his pupils are known. Heraclides taught Dionysius 'the Renegade' and, perhaps, Chamaileon (Diog. Laert. 7.166 = Heraclides *fr.* 12 (Wehrli); Gottschalk (n.31) 2, 4), but it is unclear whether this teaching occurred within the context of a newly founded school.

⁷⁸ Dillon (n.2) 89 speaks convincingly of Xenocrates' efforts to systematize Platonic thought. Our concern here is the way in which he simultaneously crafted a distinctive Academic philosophical and institutional identity.

⁷⁹ As Dillon has suggested (n.2, 136-7), his ethical system probably owes much to his understanding of Plato's teaching, with some attempts to develop further these ideas in his own direction. As only the slightest traces of Xenocrates' system survive, it is impossible to know how well formed these ideas were when Xenocrates assumed control of the school.

⁸⁰ On these, note M. Isnardi Parente, 'Per la biografia di Senocrate', *Rivista di filologia classica* 109 (1981) 129-62.

⁸¹ This story appears often (e.g. Diog. Laert. 4.8; Ath. 10.437 b-c; cf. Isnardi Parente (n.80) 132-3).

⁸² See, for example, Val. Max. 4.3 ext. 3a and Diog. Laert. 4.7.

⁸³ Diog. Laert. 4.8; Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 5.32.91; Stobaeus, *Flor.* 3.5.10; Val. Max. 4.3 ext. 3b; and Isnardi Parente (n.56) *fr.* 23-9. Note as well the comments of Isnardi Parente (n.80) 156-7 on the implied contrast between Academic and Peripatetic attitudes towards Macedon.

⁸⁴ For versions of this story, see Isnardi Parente (n.56) *fr.* 43-7 and, more exhaustively, M. Gigante, 'I Frammenti di Polemone Academico', *Rendiconti dell'Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti di Napoli* 51 (1976) 91-144, *fr.* 15-33. The most detailed versions of the anecdote are found in Diog. Laert. 4.16 = Gigante *fr.* 16 and Val. Max. 6.9 ext. 1 = Gigante *fr.* 20. For discussion of the ways in which this story is connected to Polemo's views of practical ethics, see Dillon (n.2) 158. This tradition was so memorable that, in the Roman period, it became emblematic of the transformative effect of Academic teaching (e.g. Lucian, *Double Indictment* 17 = Gigante *fr.* 25).

mous for his dissolute lifestyle.⁸⁵ One morning, fresh from a night of drinking, he came upon a lecture being delivered by Xenocrates. Polemo burst in, sat down and attempted to raise Xenocrates' ire by heckling him. 'Xenocrates, without changing countenance, dropped the topic on which he was discoursing and began to speak of modesty and temperance. The gravity of his words brought Polemo to his senses ... he stripped away luxury in its entirety and, healed by the salutary medicine of a single speech, from notorious debauchee, he ended up a great philosopher.'⁸⁶

Polemo's dramatic philosophical conversion makes this anecdote memorable and seems to have been responsible for its frequent retelling in later sources, but the portrayal of Xenocrates is just as notable. When Polemo interrupted his class, Xenocrates' demeanour did not change and he showed no sign of the anger that he certainly must have felt.⁸⁷ Xenocrates simply decided to change the lesson he was presenting and began a discussion of temperance instead, a decision that resulted in Polemo's conversion to a philosophical life. Though Valerius Maximus attributes Polemo's lifestyle change to the impact of Xenocrates' words, there should be little doubt that Polemo was affected by the entire experience of Xenocrates' lesson. In fact, Xenocrates' initial display of emotional control laid the foundation for his later discussion of temperance because it illustrated the practical application of his doctrines. Accounts of Polemo's conversion then seem to operate on a number of different levels. They describe Xenocrates' remarkable emotional impassivity, underline the connection between this behaviour and his ethical teaching and, most importantly, emphasize the powerful transformative effect that Xenocrates' words and deeds could have. In short, they display the distinctive attributes of Xenocrates' Academy. His character and lifestyle then came to define the school as much as the doctrines they illustrated.

It is significant, then, that the historical traditions attached to Polemo, Xenocrates' eventual successor, reveal a similar dispassionate nature. After his 'conversion', Polemo was said to be completely calm in all circumstances, never varying his expression or tone of voice.⁸⁸ He evidently enjoyed watching tragedies and listening to readings from Homer, but he remained unaffected by their emotional content.⁸⁹ There was even a story in circulation that he was bitten in the thigh by a rabid dog but remained completely undisturbed by this.⁹⁰ As was the case with Xenocrates, these anecdotes provide a practical illustration of Polemo's ethical theories. In fact, Diogenes Laertius claims that Polemo saw the practical exercise of virtue as a fundamental defining characteristic of a philosopher and shaped his behaviour accordingly.⁹¹

One can (and probably ought to) question the historicity of the traditions describing Xenocrates and Polemo, but it is clear that they derive from a specific Academic historical discourse that focused upon the temperance of the leaders of the Academy and drew upon their moderate, even-tempered personal behaviour to illustrate the power and practical advantages of Academic philosophical teaching. This was a distinctive discourse framed in response to the dissolution of the broad Speusippian Academy and constructed to capitalize upon the unique personal characteristics that Xenocrates and Polemo brought to the Academy.

⁸⁵ On his background, see Gigante, *fr.* 10-12 (on his family) and 13-14 (youthful vices).

⁸⁶ Val. Max. 6.9 ext. 1 (trans. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL).

⁸⁷ This is perfectly consistent with other descriptions of Xenocrates' demeanour. It was said that Xenocrates was such a man that, throughout his life, 'never did the expression of his face dissolve, nor did he alter his bearing or the tone of his voice, but he preserved these things even if he was angry' (Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 13.10ff.).

⁸⁸ Diog. Laert. 4.17. Note as well Suda, *Lexicon Διογένης* = Gigante *fr.* 106.

⁸⁹ Diog. Laert. 4.18; cf. Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 13 = Gigante *fr.* 109.

⁹⁰ Diog. Laert. 4.17; cf. Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 13 = Gigante *fr.* 107.

⁹¹ Diog. Laert. 4.18; cf. Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 13.41-14.3 = Gigante *fr.* 100. For a larger discussion of Polemo's ethical doctrines (or, at least, such of them as can be recovered), see Dillon (n.2) 159-66. Of particular interest is the possibility that Polemo provided a philosophical foundation upon which Zeno could construct the Stoic idea that virtue alone was sufficient for happiness.

While narratives illustrating the temperance of Xenocrates and Polemo are relatively common and seem to have been connected to the particular challenges they faced as leaders of the Academy, one sees a similar emphasis on temperance in some historical traditions about Plato. Indeed, this is perhaps not surprising given that Xenocrates himself authored a biography of Plato describing both his deeds and his doctrines. The anecdotes and other historical traditions about Plato's temperance are diverse and their sources are frequently difficult to isolate, but a number of them bear a strong resemblance to the traditions associated with Xenocrates and Polemo. We are told, for example, that Plato was so composed that he never laughed outright.⁹² A more popular anecdote, which almost certainly has an Academic origin, describes how Plato became angry at a gluttonous slave. He then called Xenocrates and asked him to beat the slave because he was too angry to do it himself.⁹³ Though Pythagorean sources emphasize the desirability of a philosopher's refusal to beat a slave in anger,⁹⁴ the presence of Xenocrates in this presentation of Platonic *enkrateia* suggests that this story served a particular Academic purpose. Not only did it describe a personal relationship between Plato and Xenocrates, but it also provided a Platonic parallel to the temperate and self-controlled behaviour that distinguished Xenocrates.

Platonic historical tradition mirrors Xenocratean discourse even more clearly when it discusses the way in which Plato converted Speusippus to philosophy from a life of great indulgence. He did this through 'his own way of life, that of the philosopher, which showed [Speusippus] a way to distinguish the difference between what is shameful and what is honourable'.⁹⁵ It is particularly telling that, at another point, Plutarch equates this tradition with that of Polemo's conversion by Xenocrates.⁹⁶ Indeed, this can hardly be an accidental similarity. In each case, a particularly difficult and intemperate youth is converted to the philosophical life of the Academy by his careful observation of the moderate behaviour of his teacher. As had happened in the Speusippian Academy, it seems that the Academy of Xenocrates and Polemo presented Plato's personal legacy in a way that supported its particular philosophical approach.⁹⁷ This effort represents another attempt to craft, describe and define a coherent historical legacy for the Academy as an institution by drawing upon the personal histories of its leadership.

The nature of our surviving sources prevents us from knowing precisely whether Academic tradition shaped the stories of Plato to mimic those associated with Xenocrates and Polemo or whether those of Xenocrates and Polemo were presented in a way that mirrored existing Platonic traditions. It is clear, however, that an effective and well-publicized Academic *enkrateia/sophrosunē* historical discourse became so prominent in the time of Polemo that it prompted a strong response from members of other philosophical circles. These anti-Academic authors levelled attacks against Polemo, Xenocrates, Speusippus and even Plato himself. In general terms, they attacked Plato for pride, gluttony and even plagiarism.⁹⁸ Speusippus was presented as emotion-

⁹² Diog. Laert. 3.26; cf. Riginos (n.13) anecdote 106.

⁹³ This is an extremely popular anecdote. For a list of ancient references to it, see Riginos (n.13) anecdotes 113a-c. Speusippus is substituted for Xenocrates in Plut. *De Liberis Educandis* 10 D; Seneca, *De Ira* 3.12.5-7; and Val. Max. 4.1.15.

⁹⁴ Note Riginos (n.13) 156 n.16; cf. Iambl. *VP* 197.

⁹⁵ Plut. *De frat. amor.* 491F-492A (trans. Loeb, slightly adapted).

⁹⁶ 'Plato used to say that he admonished Speusippus by his way of life, just as Polemo, when he saw Xenocrates in the lecture room, was converted to it [i.e. his way of life] and changed' (*Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur* 71E).

⁹⁷ It is notable that Arcesilaus ultimately seems to have abandoned this discourse when he turned towards scepticism. In so doing, he opened himself up to charges of intemperance from Stoics and Peripatetics (e.g. Diog. Laert. 4.40-2).

⁹⁸ Plato's pride is largely the subject of Cynic attacks. See Riginos (n.13) anecdotes 46, 71. His gluttony is suggested by the Peripatetic Hermippus (in Diog. Laert. 3.2); note on this also the Cynic traditions about Plato that make up Riginos (n.13) 68, 69. Hermippus is the immediate source for the plagiarism charge (in Diog. Laert. 8.85), though Aristoxenus may be the ultimate source. Riginos sees this as a particularly hostile version of the materials represented by anecdote 127.

ally unstable and devoted to pleasure.⁹⁹ Xenocrates was stupid, clumsy and disloyal.¹⁰⁰ And Polemo was ridiculed with stories about his vicious past.¹⁰¹ Though different criticisms are levelled at each scholar, these hostile traditions are designed to cut away specifically at the characteristics that made the Academy a unique institution under Xenocrates and Polemo.

In most cases, this discourse is either undatable or clearly attributed to much later authors (like Hermippus).¹⁰² However, the literary remains of Aristoxenus of Tarentum and Antigonus of Carystus, two of Polemo's near contemporaries, suggest quite strongly that an anti-Academic discourse arose almost immediately in response to the intellectual and historical notions coming out of the Academy. Of particular interest are the different ways in which these responses are crafted. Antigonus of Carystus, a former student at the school of Menedemus, chose to focus upon the moral character of Polemo himself. Aristoxenus, a former student of Aristotle with Pythagorean interests, directed his attacks against the intemperance and poor character of Socrates and Plato, in his mind the earliest links in the Academic historical tradition.¹⁰³ Though the work of each is extremely fragmentary, their writings suggest that, by the time of Polemo, the notion of an Academic institutional history emphasizing the temperance of its leaders (both current and former) was sufficiently well known to merit a response from followers of Xenocrates' displaced rivals.

Antigonus of Carystus' discussion of Polemo in his *Biographies* is a good example of such a response.¹⁰⁴ Antigonus' *Biographies* were apparently designed to describe the personalities of the major philosophers of his day, including biographies of contemporary Academics as well as the Stoic founder Zeno of Citium.¹⁰⁵ Antigonus was himself a student of the Eretrian school, the teaching circle founded by Menedemus of Eretria, and, from our surviving materials, it seems that Menedemus came out the best in the work.¹⁰⁶ Antigonus presents Menedemus as pugnacious

⁹⁹ Note, for example, Diog. Laert. 4.1. He mentions Speusippus throwing a dog into a well and charges him with making a trip to Macedonia in order to sample the buffet at the wedding of Cassander. The ultimate source for each is unclear. On the historicity of these anecdotes, see Dillon (n.2) 31-2.

¹⁰⁰ On his clumsiness, see Diog. Laert. 4.6 and Plut. *Coniug. praecept.* 141F = Isnardi Parente (n.56) fr. 5. On the charges of stupidity, see Plut. *De recta ratione audiendi* 47E = Isnardi Parente (n.56) fr. 4. For discussion, see Isnardi Parente (n.80) 130-1. Many of the negative traditions associated with Xenocrates seem to recall the initial contested election for Speusippus' successor and, while they concede to Xenocrates the unique authoritative attributes that he claimed, they also highlight how he lacked qualities possessed by rivals like Aristotle. By the same token, Academic counter-attacks against Aristotle and his immediate successors highlight their intemperance while implicitly conceding their grace and intellectual flair. Examples include Plut. *Alex.* 668 and, more remotely, Ath. 12.547D-548B.

¹⁰¹ Some of this emphasis can be seen in Diogenes Laertius' account of his early life (Diog. Laert. 4.16). Note as well the account of Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 4-13 and the discussion of Dillon (n.2) 156-7.

¹⁰² Diog. Laert. 4.6 = Isnardi Parente (n.56) fr. 2.

¹⁰³ It is extremely difficult to reconstruct how Socrates was seen by the Academy of Xenocrates or that of Polemo. Though he certainly occupies a central place in the Platonic corpus as well as later Academic historical traditions, the limitations of our evidence would seem to

make it impossible to distinguish what role, if any, he played in the particular historical discourse promoted by these two scholars. It is worth remarking on the important work that has been done on the pseudo-Platonic *Theages*, a dialogue that uses the character of Socrates to develop a particular idea about the importance of *erôs* in the most effective educational relationships. R. Tarrant ('Socratic *synousia*: a post-Platonic myth?', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 43.2 (2005) 131-55) has argued plausibly that this text seems to arise out of the Academy of Polemo, a moment when scholars and their successors lived together. If he is correct, one has strong evidence that the Academic manipulation of its Socratic past continued well into the third century. On the *Theages* and its context, note as well M. Joyal, *The Platonic Theages. An Introduction, Commentary, and Critical Edition* (Stuttgart 2000), especially 121-34. On Aristoxenus' Socrates as well as his general anti-Academic attitudes, see P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity. A Quest for the Holy Man* (Berkeley 1983) 10.

¹⁰⁴ For discussion of his background, see Momigliano (n.7) 81. The best larger study of Antigonus remains that of U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, *Antigonos von Karystos* (Berlin 1881). Note as well the comments of Gaiser (n.33) 129-31.

¹⁰⁵ Note Momigliano (n.7) 81.

¹⁰⁶ Momigliano (n.7) 81 holds that he was a student of Menedemus. This Menedemus must be distinct from Plato's student Menedemus of Pyrrha. On this, note the comments of Dillon (n.2) 14 n.26.

in argument but generally possessing a mild and incorruptible personal character as well as an abstemious lifestyle.¹⁰⁷ His description of Polemo contrasts with this in a significant way. Though he admits that Polemo later exemplified great personal moderation,¹⁰⁸ Antigonus also emphasizes his complete personal dissipation before his conversion to philosophy. He tells about Polemo's schemes to conceal money so that he could gratify himself whenever the need arose,¹⁰⁹ he describes how his wife charged him with cruelty because of the nature of his life,¹¹⁰ and he even suggests that Polemo once buried three obols beside a pillar in the Academy itself in case he needed to satiate an urgent bodily impulse.¹¹¹ Antigonus has then drawn a rather deceptive picture of Polemo. He acknowledges that Academic ideas about Polemo's later temperance have some foundation while he uses specific examples to attack Polemo's earlier dissolute character. Furthermore, he also subtly challenges the Academic narrative of Polemo's conversion. Antigonus introduces the lawsuit brought by Polemo's wife to suggest that his drunkenness extended beyond simple youthful indiscretion,¹¹² and draws upon gossip about Polemo's three buried obols to suggest that his conversion may not have been as immediate as Academic tradition suggested. This portrait is even more interesting when juxtaposed with Antigonus' portrait of Menedemus, the founder of his own philosophical tradition. Antigonus' Menedemus possessed all of the virtues that Polemo would eventually acquire but never exhibited any of the personal vices that typified Polemo's earlier life. Antigonus then provides a polemic that dates almost to Polemo's own lifetime, diminishes the significance of Polemo's conversion to philosophical temperance, and raises the profile of a competing school.

Antigonus' earlier contemporary Aristoxenus shows that rivals also attacked the farther-reaching historical traditions tying previous Academic leaders to this temperance discourse. Born probably around 370, Aristoxenus was an exact contemporary of Polemo and was among the first generation of Aristotle's students.¹¹³ He was initially a Pythagorean before he turned to the teaching of Aristotle and, though he remained loyal to the school until Aristotle's death in 322, he apparently broke with it when Theophrastus was chosen over him to be Aristotle's successor.¹¹⁴ Though far better known for his musicological work, Aristoxenus also wrote biographies of Pythagoras and the Pythagorean Archytas as well as Socrates and Plato.¹¹⁵ Though favourable towards the Pythagoreans, Aristoxenus' views of Plato and, especially, Socrates are remarkably hostile. His Plato is a plagiarist who stole much of the *Republic* from the *Antilogikoi* of Protagoras,¹¹⁶ lived as a parasite while at the court of Dionysius in Sicily,¹¹⁷ and collected the works of Democritus in order to have them burned.¹¹⁸ None of these, of course, is consistent with the moderate and temperate Plato of the Academic tradition.¹¹⁹

¹⁰⁷ Diog. Laert. 2.136, 140. Though Diogenes Laertius indicates that this comes from Lycophron and not Antigonus, the description of Menedemus' deliberately meagre dinner parties (Diog. Laert. 2.139) suggests that Menedemus styled himself as a most moderate individual.

¹⁰⁸ Diog. Laert. 4.17.

¹⁰⁹ Diog. Laert. 4.16. Dillon (n.2) 157, with good reason, sees this as originally derived from Antigonus. Note as well Philodemus, *Hist. Acad.* 4-13.

¹¹⁰ Diog. Laert. 4.17.

¹¹¹ Diog. Laert. 4.16.

¹¹² Dillon (n.2) 157 n.5 first notes this by calling attention to Athenaeus' version of the story (2.44E). Athenaeus, who explicitly draws upon Antigonus for this account, says that Polemo was 30 at the time of this lawsuit.

¹¹³ On Aristoxenus, note the thorough treatment of Momigliano (n.7) 73-6.

¹¹⁴ Momigliano (n.7) 74.

¹¹⁵ E.g. his *Elementa harmonica* and *Elementa rhythmica*. The fragments of his biographical works are found in F. Wehrli (ed.), *Die Schule des Aristoteles* 2 (2nd edn, Basel 1967) 10-41. On the interrelationship between these portraits, see as well Cox (n.103) 10-11.

¹¹⁶ Aristox. *fr.* 67 (Wehrli); cf. Riginos (n.13) 165 n.3.

¹¹⁷ Note Riginos (n.13) 71, drawing upon Aristox. *fr.* 62 (Wehrli).

¹¹⁸ Riginos (n.13) 166, drawing upon Aristox. *fr.* 131 (Wehrli). This seems not to have come from the Platonic life but from another lost text.

¹¹⁹ Aristoxenus' ideas had an impact; it seems that, in Clearchus' *Encomium of Plato*, a more favourable response to this hostile tradition was rapidly framed. On this, see Momigliano (n.7) 77.

Even more remarkably, Aristoxenus' portrait of Socrates presents a man who in every way embodies the opposites of the Xenocratean ethical system. In his ethical works, Xenocrates put forth a basic structure in which justice, wisdom, moderation and a form of courage all contributed to virtue.¹²⁰ Aristoxenus' Socrates is remarkably deficient in each area. In the context of justice, Xenocrates evidently saw the natural familial affection of parent-child and husband-wife relationships as the most basic manifestation of this higher virtue.¹²¹ Aristoxenus' Socrates, however, did not manifest even this basic justice. He had two wives, neither of whom he treated particularly well.¹²² In place of wisdom, Aristoxenus describes him as a flawed and unoriginal thinker whose ideas were ridiculed by more intelligent contemporaries.¹²³ He was also lacking in any sort of moderation. Aristoxenus says that 'when he was inflamed by some passion, he was fearsomely ugly and held back from no word or deed. And bringing such things about, he showed himself fully a slave to pleasures.'¹²⁴ Not only was he frequently angry, but Socrates was also 'most eager to partake in sexual pleasures'.¹²⁵ In addition, Socrates was a money lender who continually reinvested his profits in additional loans.¹²⁶ Most interesting, however, was Aristoxenus' portrait of a Socrates who was cowed by his wives and unwilling to speak up against them at home.¹²⁷ Far from exhibiting the 'great-souledness'¹²⁸ advocated by Xenocrates, this cowardly Socrates existed in a far more humble category.

Though one cannot establish a direct textual interaction between Aristoxenus and his older contemporary Xenocrates, the inverse correlation between the conduct of Aristoxenus' Socrates and the value structure advanced in Academic discourse suggests that Aristoxenus was aware of both Xenocrates' ethical theories and his use of the behaviours of Academic leaders, both former and current, to illustrate the practical application of these theories. The Peripatetic Aristoxenus' *Life of Socrates* then seems to be a polemical response to an Academic historical discourse, a connection that is especially suggestive given its pairing with his equally hostile *Life of Plato*.

Within both the Academic tradition and the texts hostile to it, one can see the outlines of a historical discourse that mirrored the emphasis upon moderation and temperance so characteristic of the regimes of Xenocrates and Polemo. Academic sources highlighted how the personal behaviours of past leadership, Plato in particular, manifested the same characteristics that made Xenocrates and Polemo exemplars of their ethical systems. Hostile authors, Peripatetic and otherwise, attacked the personal attributes of contemporary leaders like Xenocrates and Polemo as well as the character of previous leaders of the Academy like Plato, Speusippus and Socrates. This was evidently a powerful discourse produced by a diverse philosophical environment in which the significance of the Platonic past had great bearing upon the validity of philosophical approaches in the present.

¹²⁰ On this ethical system, see Dillon (n.2) 137-45.

¹²¹ This is on the basis of Cicero, *Fin.* 4.17-18. Note here the ideas of Dillon (n.2) 144-5.

¹²² Aristox. *fr.* 54a-b (Wehrli) = Cyril, *Contra Julianum* 6, Theodoret, *Graec. affect. curatio* 12.61; cf. Aristox. *fr.* 57 = Ath. 13.555D and Aristox. *fr.* 58 = Plut. *Arist.* 27.

¹²³ Aristox. *fr.* 53 (Wehrli) = Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 11.3. See as well, Aristoxenus, *fr.* 55 = Plut. *De Herodoti malignitate* 856.

¹²⁴ Aristox. *fr.* 54b (Wehrli) = Theodoret, *Graec. affect. curatio* 12.61; cf. Aristox. *fr.* 56 = Synesius, *Encomium calvitatis* 81 a cap. 17.

¹²⁵ Aristox. *fr.* 54b (Wehrli) = Theodoret, *Graec. affect. curatio* 12.61.

¹²⁶ Aristox. *fr.* 59 (Wehrli) = Diog. Laert. 2.20.

¹²⁷ 'Although the wives battled one another, when they were stopped, they turned their attention to Socrates and, on account of this, he never again prevented their fights, but they laughed with one another and fought with him' (Aristox. *fr.* 54b).

¹²⁸ Μεγαλοψυχία. On this term in Xenocrates, see Dillon (n.2) 144.

CONCLUSION

The growth of the Academy from the life of Plato until the death of Polemo provides us with one of the more remarkable examples of institutional development in the ancient world. Schooled as we are in the great Hellenistic and Roman imperial schools of philosophy, it may seem self-evident that the Academy founded by Plato would continue to exist for many generations after his death. But there is no reason to think that such continuity would have seemed natural to Plato nor is there any indication that Plato and his immediate successors particularly understood how to ensure the long-term survival of the Academy. Planning for the future of an intellectual centre seems to have been a new and unfamiliar task and, judging by the messy process of electing a successor following the death of Speusippus, the Academy made obvious missteps in its attempts to perpetuate itself. In addition, Plato's successors seem not to have appreciated initially the degree to which their assumption of control of the school would change its institutional culture.

Though the leaders of the Old Academy faced a new sort of challenge in planning for the future of the school, they also possessed a resource that the Socratic and Athenian sophistic circles had lacked. Under Speusippus, Xenocrates and Polemo, the Academic leadership could draw upon the institution's powerful Platonic historical legacy to help them argue that the course they had set for the Academy was supported by their illustrious predecessors. This process evidently began under Speusippus. The scholarch himself introduced anecdotes from Plato's life into Academic discourse while lesser lights like Hermodorus of Syracuse and Philippus of Opus worked to shape Plato's historical legacy in ways that supported their own intellectual inclinations.

Xenocrates and Polemo seem to have drawn upon their own personal histories to demonstrate their philosophical authority in the face of often quite aggressive criticism from rivals. There are indications in both Academic and hostile discourse that Xenocrates and Polemo also drew upon the Platonic historical legacy to fashion an anecdotal picture of Plato in which the scholarch behaved much like Xenocrates and demonstrated a similar type of personal authority. This is not surprising, especially in light of the different ways in which Plato's personal history was used by various factions of the Speusippian Academy. However, when Xenocrates took control of the school, an interesting thing happened to this Platonic historical discourse. Whereas Plato's historical identity was contested within the Speusippian Academy, Xenocrates, following his election as the head of the Academy, became the one individual who could legitimately claim the Platonic intellectual legacy. From all indications, his competitors and former colleagues Menedemus, Heraclides of Pontus and Aristotle, turned away from any claim to the Platonic historical legacy. Though they perhaps had as much a right to Plato's legacy as Xenocrates or Polemo, none of their followers ever contested the Academy's right to claim Plato as an intellectual ancestor or the propriety of it drawing upon his intellectual legacy. Plato's historical legacy had become a part of an Academic historical discourse defined by the philosophical and administrative needs of the contemporary Academy and moulded to evoke the personal histories of its leadership.

Ultimately one finds an Academy defined as much by the conduct and lifestyles of its current and former scholarchs as by the doctrines they taught. Nevertheless, the specific ideals illustrated by the behaviours of these Academic leaders were fluid. The Old Academy then reveals a malleable Platonic and larger Academic historical legacy that was freely shaped to fit the contemporary contours of the institution. This history illustrated the practical significance of Academic learning as well as the nature of the school itself. For this reason, as the Academy developed, there seems to have been as much concern about crafting and preserving the institution's history as there was for planning for its future. The addition of these two new concerns to Athenian philosophy represents one of the Academy's least acknowledged but most important contributions to ancient intellectual life.