Katherine Marsengill

Painting Icons from Icons: The Theological Significance of Portraits in Late Antiquity

(Taf. 38–42, Abb. 1–13)

Abstract

In late-antique theological discourse, copying portraits of the saints – painting icons from icons, as Basil of Caesarea describes – proves a consistent metaphor for the spiritual perfection of the soul. Christians followed the saintly exemplars, endeavoring to trace the life of the spiritually accomplished in their own lives, to paint their souls with all the colors of virtue, indeed, to become icons of icons. We may dismiss this as mere rhetorical flourish. Yet there were underlying notions about the ability of portraiture to reveal spiritual transformation that influenced this theological trend. This paper examines the idea of saints as icons and looks at the role actual painted portraiture may have had in shaping conceptions about both metaphorical and real icons.

Sometime in the last decade or so of the 4th century, John Chrysostom presented to his congregation in Antioch one of his many sermons on Paul's epistles[1]. This particular sermon, the exact date of which is unknown, was largely inspired by a verse from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians 4, 16: "I beseech you, be you imitators of me, as I also am of Christ." A pithy verse; but John was nothing if not prolix when it came to his favorite subject, the apostle Paul[2]. In the homily he delivered that day, John shifted fluidly between exegesis of Paul's words and a literary portrait of Paul that lauded the apostle as the perfect follower of Christ. Paul, John explained to his congregation, tells Christians that it is possible to approach Christ more closely by following his example. To do this, one must have a model to emulate, a portrait. John expounded upon the meaning of the verse using a seal as metaphor: to imitate Paul is to imitate Christ, just as a seal may be impressed into another substance and yet the latter is just as if it had been pressed from the original mold: "For he who copies the perfect impression of the seal, copies the original model." He then described how copying a painted portrait of Paul, as a painter copies another image, does not permit true knowledge of the apostle in the same way as hearing his words and envisioning the metaphorical portrait John proposed to impart to them. He says,

"Let us see then in what way [Paul] followed Christ: for this imitation needs not time and art, but a steady purpose alone. Thus if we go into the study of a painter, we shall not be able to copy the portrait, though we see it ten thousand times. But to copy him we are enabled by hearing alone. Will ye then that we bring the tablet before you and sketch out for you Paul's manner of life? Well, let it be produced, that picture far brighter than all the images of Emperors: for its material is not boards glued together, nor canvas stretched out; but the material is the work of God: being as it is a soul and a body: a soul, the work of God, not of men; and a body again in like wise"[3].

In other words, if one desires to gaze upon the person of the beloved apostle, a much more accurate portrait can be found in the description of his soul, for his good deeds cannot fully be reproduced by limning his face on canvas stretched on panels, nor his character imitated with paint.

[1] Homily XIII 112; *PG* 61, 110; English translation: NPNF I 12, 132–133.

[2] Mitchell 2002.

[3] Above note 1.

In this way, John introduced the theme of his sermon. Using the comparable but inadequate example of a painted portrait, he commenced his description of Paul from feet to hands and head, using the body of the apostle not to illustrate his physical attributes, but to sketch the spiritual portrait after which he wanted his congregation to fashion their own spiritual likenesses.

John was not the only Christian to assert that knowledge of saints was gained through study of their words and deeds, not their physical appearances. Among others, Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium in the 4th century, claimed, "…there is no point in painting the physical faces of the saints with colors on tablets, since we do not need such things but rather to imitate their way of life by virtuous deeds of our own"[4]. We recognize in these words, as in John's, certain remnants of the Platonic conception of the body as lifeless and irrelevant material in comparison to the soul. Platonic philosophy, especially the spiritual aspects of Plato's thought, had influenced learned Christians of Late Antiquity just as it had become popular among well-educated pagans[5]. Besides philosophical influences, there was plenty of rhetorical precedent. The use of portraiture as a rhetorical device had already a long history by the end of the 4th century, serving as a foil for the superiority of the written word when forming an accurate picture of someone and found in the writings of various authors, both philosophical and otherwise[6]. It can be found, for example, in a verse by the 1st-century poet and wit, Martial, describing a portrait he had painted and sent to Bithynia-Pontus, along with his book, to his friend, Pliny the Younger. "While my portrait is being taken for Caecilius Secundus [Pliny], and the picture, painted by a skillful hand, seems to breathe, go, my book, to the Getic Peuce [Bithynia-Pontus] and the submissive Danube… You will be a little gift to my dear friend, but acceptable: my countenance will be more truly read in my verse than in the picture"[7]. Despite his insistence that words are more revealing of his countenance, the portrait is sent, as well. One does not negate the other. In the 4th century, Paulinus of Nola echoes the refrain when he answers his friend Sulpicius Severus in a letter addressing how Severus could acquire a portrait of Paulinus. Paulinus advises that Severus could have it sketched by an artist according to the description of Paulinus that Severus has in his heart (the two had never met)[8]. Paulinus, like Martial, acquiesces to his portrayal, even accepts the portrait's display in Severus' baptistery, though he wraps the circumstances of the portrait's display in rhetorical humility[9]. As contrast, one may consider the much more strident censure of the disciple, Amelius, by the 3rd century philosopher, Plotinus, who objected to having his portrait made because, he insisted, it would be "a spectacle to posterity, an image of the image"[10]. Such a dismissal of the portrait demonstrates the philosopher's belief in the body as a useless container of the transcendent soul, and the portrait as even further removed in its ability to express the nature of the person depicted.

Yet portrait painting also served a much more elevated purpose among 4th-century Christians than as a metaphor for superficial or inferior knowledge of the saints that John Chrysostom or Amphilochius describe. In other sources, the metaphorical images of the saints were the outlines sketched on the Christian heart, their virtues were the bright colors one used to paint the details of their lives on one's soul. John himself had elsewhere told catechumens to "consider your soul to be an image"[11]. Basil of Caesarea penned a letter to Gregory Nazianzus advising how one should go about reading and studying scripture. "As painters when they paint icons from icons," Basil says, "looking closely at the model, are eager to transfer the character of the model to their own work, so he who strives to perfect himself in all branches of virtue must look to the lives of saints as if to moving and living images and make their virtue his own by imitation"[12]. In these instances, portrait painting is not impugned as an inferior or impossible task. Without denigrating the visceral experience of a painting, Basil's words reflect the same underlying concept found in John's sermon,

[4] As he was quoted at Nicaea II in 754; Krannich *et al.* 2002, 54; Anastos 1954, esp. 155.

[5] See the seminal study on eastern Christian thought, including its philosophical origins, in Gross 1938; see also Frede 1999.

[6] On the subject, see also Francis 2003, who concludes that biographies of holy men and icons were dependent upon one another for their development.

[7] Martial, Epigrams 7, 84; English translation: Bohn 1897, 842. Recent critical edition with Latin-Spanish translation: Moreno Soldevila *et al.* 2005.

[8] Letter 30, 6; English translation: Walsh 1968, 123 f.; Latin: Hartel 1999.

[9] Letter 32; Walsh 1968, 134–137. For a discussion of the portrait of Paulinus, Marsengill 2013, 197 f.

[10] Porphyry, Life of Plotinus 1; Brisson *et al.* 1992, 132 f.

[11] *Ad illuminados catechesis* II 4; *PG* 49, 235; English translation: Mango 1986, 47.

[12] Epistle 2. 3; Courtonne 1957, 8.

namely, that one may imitate the saints as a way to imitate Christ. This mimesis serves as a mediate step. The saints, according to Gregory, are icons. Christians should follow the saintly exemplars and paint their souls with all the colors of saintly virtue, indeed, to become icons of icons[13].

I began with John because his sermon is the kind of evidence that scholars have upheld as indicative of the spirit of the age, when images were just one component in the overall sensuous experiences of the saints, experiences guided primarily by inner visualization enhanced by constructed holy atmospheres. Real, painted icons, it is held by scholars, had no role in the Early Church. But Basil's words are closer to the heart of my subject of scrutiny, demonstrating a subtle shift away from the emphasis of the spiritual over the material that is indebted to Platonism, Middle and Neoplatonism, a shift that was further developed in the writings of Athanasius, among others. The body was perceived to be instrumental to human salvation, the flesh elevated through the Incarnation, and thus was not to be discarded, but transformed into the likeness of the divine[14]. In this conception, it is possible to see a greater appreciation for portraiture and its implications, implications that I would argue were always under the surface even in the wake the most adamant of transcendental philosophers. Basil capitalizes on the painted icon as a conceptual tool, most famously in his use of imperial portraits to explain Christ's relationship to the Father, "…for the honor shown to the image is transmitted to the prototype"[15]. But was the portrait confined to the conceptual? Why use the portrait at all?

Certainly, Basil uses it to illustrate a Christological point, yet the metaphor he relies upon – the veneration of the imperial portrait – was one drawn from his reality. That painted imperial portraits were set up in cities and towns across the Empire, in public spaces, in judicial courts, in private homes and shops, is known from texts[16]. We have, however, only one imperial painted panel that has survived, that of Emperor Septimius Severus and his family, now in Berlin's Staatliche Museen[17]. On the other hand, though texts referring to images of the saints survive, as well as a few painted images of saints on walls and ceilings, the existence of panel icons during Basil and John's time is still not recognized. The painted saints' portraits that are referred to in the patristic literature are understood only as metaphors[18]. Images of saints during this period, it is argued, appear within narratives of their martyrdom, and cannot be described as isolated figures set out for veneration. Meanwhile, Christ is portrayed with generalized features and can be found in scenes illustrating his miracles or enveloped in a typified appearance such as the Good Shepherd, not adored in portraits. If there were portraits, as some primary sources would suggest, these were not icons. For it has long been accepted that icons did not come about until the 6th century at the earliest, and more recently, some scholars assert that icons cannot be said to have truly existed at all until after Iconoclasm[19].

---

[13] In another example, Gregory of Nyssa writes, "Therefore, just as if we were learning the art of portrait painting, when the teacher set before us some beautifully painted form on a panel, it would be necessary for each person to copy the beauty of that form completely in one's own painting, so that everyone be painted according to the example of beauty which had been set out. In the same way, since each person is a painting of one's own life, and the power of free will is the master crafter, and the virtues are the colors for finishing off the portrait, it is no small danger that the copying/imitation of the beauty of the prototype might alter the given shape into an ugly and misformed face, if with dirty colors they are sketching in the character of evil instead of the form of the master. But as it is possible, one must use the clean colors of the virtues, mixed with one another in accordance with a proper craft for such blends, so that we might become an image of an image, on account of this work of a sort of imitation, as best as possible having created an impression of the beauty of the prototype, as Paul used to do, in becoming a copyist of Christ through his life lived according to virtue." *De perfectione*; Jaeger 1977, 195. English translation: Mitchell 2002, 64 f.

[14] For example, the often repeated "He [God], indeed, assumed humanity that we might become God," written by Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 8, 54; Thomson 1971, 268; English translation NPNF 2, 4, 43.

[15] *De Spiritu Sancto,* XVIII; *PG* 32, 149; English translation: Mango 1986, 47.

[16] Grabar 1936; Bruun 1976, 122–131; Nowicka 1993, 33–66; Belting 1994, 102–109; Marsengill 2013, 203–207.

[17] Inv. 31328. It has been convincingly explained by Thomas Mathews that the panel was not originally a tondo at all, but a rectangular panel. In his joint lecture with Jaś Elsner, "New Faces from Egypt: Hellenistic Panel Paintings and their European Consequence," (April 19, 2012, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University), he presented his findings after close examination of the panel, including evidence for the center puncture made by a compass for cutting the panel into a circle sometime in more recent years.

[18] Haldon – Brubaker 2001, 54. See also, Brubaker 2009, esp. 94 f.

[19] The model of icon development was set by Kitzinger 1954. The 6th century as the advent of the icon was called into question more recently, by scholars who propose icons did not really exist until the 9th century. See Brubaker 1998; Barber 2002. Mathews – Muller 2016 argue for the 2nd-century advent of Christian icons modeled after pagan panels of gods, not within the tradition of portraiture, as I do.

I would like to reconsider this accepted theory and argue that images of Christ and the saints – what we call icons – emerged very early in Christianity, perhaps as early as the second century. Yet they have escaped scholarly attention precisely because contemporaries understood these images to be portraits. Modern scholars, on the other hand, have been searching for icons in their developed state, as objects set out for veneration, or serving as the focus of cult activities, perceived as such and therefore described thusly in the primary sources. Not surprisingly, they have not been able to locate holy icons during the early period. Part of the problem lies in terminology. How we define an icon is quite different than how the Byzantines did, who understood them to be portraits. These were not necessarily certain kinds of portraits painted for certain uses or contexts. Byzantine portraits of people, who were perceived to be saintly, holy, or effective intercessors, might be venerated alongside the imperial portrait, and their portraits might be reproduced and disseminated. When this occurs, we call the images icons. However, there was no word either in Late Antiquity or in Byzantium that designated one kind of portrait over another kind, such as a portrait of a friend or of an emperor, or a portrait of a holy person. The word for a painted portrait was simply *eikon*. The only distinctions in kinds of portraits that can truly be discerned in textual sources concern various materials – it seems that other terms come into play when describing sculptures, either full-length or in bust. There is little need to review these distinctions here. For the purposes of this study, the most important issue in Christian sources discussing images is not about kinds of portraiture, but about when a figural image is an idol[20]. In this case, Early Christian apologetic writers tell us that idols represent either deities that do not exist, or are representations of people who were posthumously deified long ago but were not actually gods. According to Early Christian writers like Lactanius when discussing pagan idolatry, commemorative ceremonies of once-living humans, regular people such as Hercules and even Jupiter, evolved into the idolatrous cults of Roman paganism[21].

There is another clarification that needs to be made in regard to the notion of metaphor. The use of the word "metaphor" to describe the literary constructions of Church Fathers urging fellow Christians to make themselves into icons after the saints is not quite correct, though a better word is lacking. I do not believe the Christians of Late Antiquity of Byzantium thought of this phenomenon in the same way we do, as a hypothetical model used to illustrate an abstract concept. The imitation of a saint was understood as something that resulted in perceptible effects, especially in the face, or countenance, which could be transformed to reflect the state of one's soul. In numerous sources throughout the centuries of Eastern Roman Christendom, descriptions of the holiest of persons tell us that they glowed, radiated, or otherwise shone with light[22]. This is not, I believe, a rhetorical "topos", but a phenomenon of perception, a change in beholders' ways of seeing that was generated by pilgrims' stories, hagiography, and other accounts, as well as the visual arts – the appearances of icons and other kinds of spiritualized portraiture – that affected the experience of encountering holy persons[23]. The Greek word "metamorphosis," is more appropriate for the context I wish to explore, describing instead a transfiguration, in this case, a transfiguration of the self from one state of being into another. In 2 Cor 3, 12–18, Paul describes how Christians are able to become images of Christ, declaring that we, "with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one glory to another." In this passage, the original Greek for "being changed into His likeness," is "eikona metamorphoumetha." A better translation, then, would be that Christians are "transfigured into [His] icon." When 4th-century Christians endeavored to make themselves into icons of saints, it was not meant metaphorically or symbolically. The desired result was their complete and perceptible spiritual transfiguration. That they needed intercessory saints to emulate and imitate in no way discredits the notion that they desired to be transformed into images of Christ. Again, the concept is that Christians become transfigured into the icons of those who have already become transfigured icons of Christ. In this context, an icon transcends its materi-

[20] For example, Lactanius' The Divine Institutes II 2, in which he is positive toward the practice ANF 7, 84; Bigham 2004, 9–13; 158–160. The Hieria in 754 was cautious to distinguish that the images that were being over zealously venerated were not idols.

[21] Based in 4th century BC, Euhermerism, named after the Greek philosopher who claimed the origins of the gods were historical personages. Finney 1994, 44.

[22] See Kazhdan – Maguire 1991, esp. 2; Marsengill 2013, 209–293.

[23] Frank 2000. My recent article (Marsengill 2018a) further explores this perception to include the self-framing of living holy men as icons using the visual idiom of the painted icon. Ultimately I conclude that ‚form' unites icon and person, coexistent, and that the person and his or her painted icon are both material expressions of the perfected form.

al state as a portrait to become actual appearances; icons are the countenances of the transfigured. In this way, we approach more closely the greater significance of portraiture as a means of revelation. Icons are not metaphors, they are ontological states.

It is now necessary to establish the historical circumstances for the portraits of the saints that I argue must have existed when 4th-century Church Fathers told their coreligionists to become icons of icons. This is a difficult task, especially when many sources, like John preaching about Paul, seem to advocate spiritual knowledge of the saints over visual[24]. So strident is the Early Christian apologies against the use of images that historians first posited that early church leaders were uniformly aniconic. This position has in more recent years been almost completely overturned. Most scholars today recognize that Christian apologists such as Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Lactanius, and others directed their attacks against pagan idolatry and the making of false images, the folly of worshipping something that had been fashioned out of material, and were not including in their assessments their own Christian images, not the narratives of the Bible, not even images of Christ. Others, like Origen and Clement, followed Platonic philosophy more closely in the conceptual abandonment of the material in pursuit of the spiritual realm and may indeed have eschewed religious images[25]. However, it would seem as these attitudes were hardly the majority and, in any case admitted a spiritual elite that surpassed the capabilities of most. The situation, as it turns out, was much more nuanced and complex than first considered.

Nevertheless, the historical narrative persists which describes icons as only those images that we see appearing in texts beginning in the 6th-century – when miraculous images and icon cults are attested – or in their developed states after Iconoclasm, from the 9th century on, when icons are given a sacred status and find their way into liturgy and ritual veneration. I have argued elsewhere that icon cults, like those that emerge in the 6th century, were part of a distinct phenomenon that have been mistakenly used by scholars as the standard by which we measure the veneration of icons[26]. Nor should they be placed in the same lineage as pagan panels, as has been argued, most assiduously by Thomas Mathews[27]. This connection to pagan icons, I believe, would have almost certainly caused much greater concern than what is evidenced in contemporary sources. Indeed, icons were first and foremost portraits, and therefore should be understood as part of the late antique portrait tradition[28]. As such, there was never mention of images of saints in relation to pagan idolatry, which addressed the worship of false images of non-existent deities. Centuries later the objections of the iconoclasts centered not on the question of whether or not portraits of Christ and his saints were idols, for clearly they were not. Rather, debates revolved around what exactly could be portrayed in an icon other than a mere likeness fashioned out of lifeless material. Were the physical features reason enough to warrant veneration? How could one avoid venerating material if the essence of the person portrayed was not available in a portrait? Much like the Platonists of old, Byzantine iconoclasts proposed that the physical appearances could not encapsulate spiritual reality, and thus were incomplete representations[29].

The reason there is so little about saints' portraits in the earliest Christian apologies against the use of images is not because they did not exist, but because in the discussion of idolatry, portraiture was not at issue. The word 'idol' is not used by Christian apologists within the context of describing a portrait. Several references to imperial portraiture, such as what we read in Basil's Christological metaphor, appear. This practice is not denigrated in spite of the fact that the imperial cult was hardly a thing of the past. It may have indeed been prudent for Christians not to object to imperial icons[30]; however, if it were that simple, the sub-

[24] Basil similarly remarks that holy writings are better, "because they provide a guide for conduct, together with the biographies of the blessed ones, that serve as living images of a godly life and inspiration for the emulation of god-like behavior." Epistle 2.3; Courtonne 1957, 8; Eng.: Anastos 1954, 154 f.

[25] Finney 1994, 42–44. See also Bigham 2004, 132–140.

[26] Marsengill 2011.

[27] Recently, Mathews 2006 and Mathews – Muller 2016; before him, there was Rassart-Debergh 1990.

[28] Sande 1993; Sande 2005. Even the Jews had portraits, despite what Josephus claims; see Bigham 2004, 55–57.

[29] Other objections that venerators of icons mistook wood and paint for saints were no doubt as consciously hyperbolic as the arguments of Early Christian apologists accusing pagans of worshipping stone and bronze. Porphyry commented on this very issue, saying that only the most simple minded would confuse the material with what it represents (Fragment, *Peri agalmatōn* ("On statues"); Smith 1993, frag. 351. See Finney 1994, 47–53, on the exaggerations by Early Christians to illustrate the follies of pagans, especially *hylotheism*.

[30] Finney 1994, 79.

ject of the veneration of imperial portraits could have just been avoided. Instead, the painted imperial portrait is evoked by Basil and John and revived by John of Damascus and other iconophiles to explain how it is possible to venerate the person through his or her icon[31]. Much earlier, before the Peace of the Church, Justin Martyr chastised those who refashioned imperial portraits into images of gods and worshiped them, but not the creation of imperial portraits as portraits[32]. A handful of other early instances discussing other kinds of portraits reveal little if any censure. The second-century Tatian, for example, writing about the virtuousness of Christian women who are not recognized by pagans as deserving of respect, describes numerous honorific statues of pagan women whom he feels unworthy, unchaste and altogether bad examples. Only one among them, a woman named Melanippi, is described as wise. We may presume Tatian felt she alone merited a commemorative portrait[33]. And possibly for similar reasons Gregory of Nazianzus takes the time to describe a portrait of a student of Xenocrates named Poleman; though merely a reformed profligate and not a saint, his portrait – kept in the home of a dissipated young man – inspired a visiting prostitute to give up her way of life[34]. Irenaeus of Lyons mentions a few portraits but evinces a distrust of them only when they become objects of worship, such as when a portrait of Simon Magus and his wife were remade into the image of Jupiter and Minerva[35].

Irenaeus also mentions a portrait of Christ kept by the Gnostics, which they believed was painted by Pontius Pilate[36]. The passage is not obscure and has long been recognized and discussed by scholars. And yet how this early instance of Christ's portrait is related to the development of icons remains unexplained. Of 4th-century Christian writers, the most famous regarding the subject of portraits of Christ and the apostles, of course, is Eusebius. Eusebius gives us our best evidence, if his letter to Constantia in which his opinion about her request for a portrait of Christ can be read is authentic[37]. Even if it is an iconoclastic invention, it is very telling in its own way. Denying that such images are used by Christians, either in churches or in private, he nevertheless explains how he had confiscated from a woman the portraits of two men whom the woman claimed were Paul and Christ and kept these for himself. Though he seems skeptical, he does not once describe the portraits as false. In the same letter, he says that the followers of Simon Magus worship paintings of the sorcerer, and also expresses his disapproval of the Manicheans for carrying around the image of their spiritual founder. Neither does he condemn as idols or false images. If he finds the behavior distasteful, it is likely that it is because the misguided disciples of Simon worship images of a mere man while the Manicheans honor a portrait of a heretic. In another passage from his "History of the Church", we find out that Eusebius has seen for himself portraits of Christ, Paul, and Peter that were painted during their lifetimes[38]. He is otherwise describing the circumstances for the dedication of a statue of Christ at Paneas set up by the woman with the issue of blood who was healed by Christ, which likewise he accepts as authentic. Although ultimately, he deems this to be a pagan practice – a tradition in which people honor their saviors with commemorative images, he does not dispute that Christians, too, possess such images.

Epiphanius of Salamis and Evagrius of Pontius stand out as ones who doubt the veracity of portraits. I will concentrate on Epiphanius, who overtly denies that images used by his congregation are actually modeled after real portraits of Christ and the saints[39]. He thinks the images are the fabrications of painters; and yet he does not think Christ had no physical appearance at all – indeed he is quite opinionated on the subject,

[31] Among others, for example, is Basil's *De spiritu sancto ad Amphilichium*, quoted by John of Damascus *De imaginibus* 1, 35; Kötter 1976, 147.

[32] First Apology 55, "Symbols of the cross;" Eng. ANF 1, 483.

[33] Address to the Greeks 33, "Vindication of Christian Women;" English translation: ANF 2, 157. We find in Athenagoras that it is not the portraits of famous people that are offensive, but that Greeks and Romans believe they have oracular powers or make sacrifices to them, etc., though they be but matter; A Plea for the Christians 26 (ANF 2, 319).

[34] Verses 1, 2, 10 (*PG* 37, 738), which were also cited at Nicaea II.

[35] *Adversus haereses* 1.23.4; English translation: ANF 1, 914; Crit. ed: Rousseau – Doutreleau 1979.

[36] *Adversus haereses* 1.25.6; English translation: ANF 1, 921. Ireneaus' skepticism of the portrait's authenticity may have more to do with Ireneaus' disapproval of the Gnostic's syncretistic worship of Christ among other philosophers; see Bigham 2004, 113–116.

[37] The fragments of the letter have been edited by von Stockhausen 2002, 92–112; English translation: Mango 1986, 17 f. On the authenticity of the letter, see Gero 1981. On the invention of the letter by Iconoclasts, see Bigham 2004, 193–199.

[38] *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7, 18, 4; English translation: Mango 1986, 16.

[39] Letter to the Emperor Theodosius; Holl 1928, 360–362; English translation: Mango 1986, 41 f.

stating that Christ should have short hair, not the long hair he is usually portrayed as having. He seems to feel as if it is possible to have an actual likeness, but it is not available, and more importantly, not necessary for worship. However, once again, if the texts are authentic, it should be noted that images of Christ and the apostles were being painted, and they were believed by others – if not Epiphanius – to be likenesses of their subjects.

To understand better the place of Christian portraiture in the 4th century, we must go back a little further. It is the 3rd century when we have our first appearances of Christian art, or what survives of it, and it has been duly noted for centuries that among the images painted by Early Christians, icons of Christ, Mary, and the apostles do not occur. This would indeed appear to be an insurmountable obstacle to my argument. Paul Corby Finney some 20 years ago advanced our interpretation of the earliest Christians writings on art past the one-sided view that it was actively and consciously resisted until around the year 200, when popular practices subverted and then eventually overwhelmed official protests. Instead, Finney argues, Christians finally gained economic status and cultural identity enough to begin participating in visual arts and to develop their own imagery. Still, he argues, the lack of iconic images in the 3rd-century catacombs demonstrates that early Christians were against portraiture, which he conjectures was most likely due to their unfortunate associations between the genre and previously enforced worship of the imperial image[40].

Let us take a closer look at this particular evidence – catacomb painting – from the vantage point of contemporary practices. We find that the figural representations in 3rd-century Christian tombs are not unlike those found in pagan tombs of the period. The painting is spare and mostly decorative, consisting of outlined vaults and walls framed by colored lines (linear, framing style), embellished with floral motifs and mythical or fantastical figures, and punctuated by abbreviated narrative scenes from their mythology. One of the earliest Christian underground tombs, the so-called cubiculum of the *velatio* in the catacomb of Pricilla, is in true linear style, with discrete floral and animal embellishment and two framed biblical scenes. The center of the vault displays the Good Shepherd (Abb. 1)[41]. There is the more elaborate 3rd-century tomb of the Corsini[42], the appearance of which survives in a 17th-century survey drawing (Abb. 2). We see the ceiling segmented by intricate borders in which various images are depicted. Among them are a row of cherubs, women standing at altars, scenes of boating, victories drawn in chariots, and sea creatures. Portraits of the deceased appear in the center medallion, their children presumably are the bust figures painted in the four corner medallions. Compare this to the ceiling of the 3rd-century demi-Christian hypogeum of the Aurelii (Abb. 3)[43], while the 3rd-century catacomb of the Giordani features an *arcosoleum* with a portrait medallion of the deceased, but the pagan mythological figures – winged victories and muses – are secondary, hardly iconic amid the geometric lines (Abb. 4)[44]. Pagan narrative scenes in niches and *arcosolea* show images of gods and heroes that are full-length with generalized features, not unlike the instances of Christ when he appears in scenes of his miracles[45].

Portraits of the deceased appear in both Christian and pagan tombs. In addition to the Corsini tomb and the portrait in the *arcosoleum* of the Giordani tomb, the example of the painted portrait of the pagan Aelia Arisuth (Abb. 5) serves to illustrate (4th c. Tripoli)[46]. Panel portraits of the deceased, too, were more common than surviving examples suggest. We have, for example, the framed painting of a woman from Hawara, Egypt, found in a tomb (Abb. 6) presumably hers, which dates to the 2nd century[47]. Though very damaged, the quality of the painting is evident, telling us that this was a woman of status. Far cruder is the funerary portrait of a young girl named Artemis (Abb. 7)[48], and there are a few other funerary portraits on panels[49].

40 Finney 1994, 102–108.
41 Borg 2013, 310; Nicolai *et al.* 1999, 97.
42 Nowicka 1993, 151 fig. 56; Polzer 1996, pl. 6 a.
43 See Toynbee 1971, 200. 209 f.; Bisconti 1985.
44 Dunbabin 1982, 83 and fig. 21.
45 One may compare, for example, the images of "Alcestis, Hercules, and Cerebus," from the Catacomb of the Via Latina, and "Christ and the Bleeding Woman," from the Catacomb of Saints Peter and Marcellinus.
46 Nowicka 1993, 149 pl. 4.
47 London, British Museum, inv. GR 1889.10188.1. Marsengill 2013, 24. 28 f.
48 Louvre, Département des Antiquités égyptiennes, inv. E9449; Marsengill 2013, 28. 42.
49 See Sörries 2003, for a catalogue of ancient panel paintings, including deities and portraits.

A 1st-century inscription from Apateira near Ephesos survives to tell us the inventory of tomb furnishings, which apparently included some 13 painted portraits of Nona and Paula (*"eikones graptai Nonis tis kai Paulis thekatreis"*)[50]. The most abundant evidence is the mummy portraits from Egypt, encaustic and tempera paint on boards that were placed in the mummy wrappings, used in these cases in place of the ancient tradition of mummy masks. Though some of these were cut down from panels, it seems that the manufacture of such portraits became its own industry, fulfilling this precise role[51]. However, it might be helpful if we keep in mind that such painted portraits existed before they were placed on mummies, a Greek and Roman art that was adapted in Egypt for this purpose[52].

Among Christian examples, the Roman catacombs offer many, usually half or full-length portraits with the deceased shown in *orans*. The *donna velata* from the Catacomb of Saint Pricilla is a famous example[53]. Though her identity is unknown, the individual imagery – a woman and her child to the right of the praying figure, her husband and other children on the other side – leaves little doubt that this is a portrait. And we must not forget portraits executed in gold glass (Abb. 8) that were embedded in the mortar closing *loculi*, upon which iconic saints' images as well as portraits of living popes also appeared early[54].

If portraits of gods and goddesses appeared in pagan tombs – portraits in bust, as we would expect the icons of Christ and the saints to look – they were portable, either small statues or paintings. However, the reason why neither portrait-like images of pagan deities nor Christian saints appear in 3rd-century funerary art, I would argue, is because these images were more appropriate for the context of private households. That said, it is not always easy to find portraits of deities that make strong cases as precedents for Christian icons. Most painted images of deities that were situated in places set up for worship show full-length figures. The *lararia* of Pompeii that feature figural imagery usually have more than one household deity painted within a niche, upon which would also be placed statuettes as well as panel paintings of gods[55]. There is one example of a bust-length Mercury set in a niche, which implies that others certainly existed[56]. Portrait-like images of gods are found elsewhere decorating the homes, like a medallion with an image of Aphrodite painted above a doorway in the home of Marcus Fabius Rufus, a series of gods that surround a shop entrance (Abb. 9–10)[57], and the bust portraits featuring personifications of the months and days, also in the house of Marcus Fabius Rufus, represented by a gods such as Diana, but also by a variety of minor deities such as Selena[58].

Among portraits that were venerated, both in private households and in tombs, were those of family members. Of this tradition, we have more information, from Pliny in the 1st century to Augustine in the 4th century, telling about portraits of ancestors that were displayed in atria for public acknowledgment, as well as kept in cupboards, shrines, and at tombs for private worship[59]. These varied in material and included the wax masks that were used in funerary rituals and stored in home shrines, the bronze and silver clipeate portraits that lined the atria, and the encaustic portraits that demarcated family trees[60].

---

[50] Kubinska 1968, 125; Nowicka 1993, 141.

[51] Marsengill 2013, 28.

[52] Nowicka 1993, 158.

[53] Nicolai *et al.* 1999, 106–108.

[54] Grig 2004.

[55] Numerous statuette busts of deities survive, but few bust paintings; see Boyce 1937. Of the panel paintings of gods and goddess that survive, most are full length; see Sörries 2003. Mathews and Muller have published their corpus of pagan panels from Egypt; there are only a few of bust images of pagan deities that perhaps served as central images for cultic purposes, though there are examples of bust images that are painted on the doors of shrines. For statuettes of emperors, which were often used in shrines, see Schneider 1976.

[56] Casa del Criptoportico; see Boyce 1937, 25 pl. 9 fig. 3.

[57] Boyce 1937, 111 no. 24.

[58] See Bragantini – Sampaolo 2009, 530–533 nos. 309–312; Pappalardo 2009, 214–216.

[59] Pliny, Natural History 35, 2, 4–6; English: Rackham 1952, 265. Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* 34, 75; English translation: *CSEL* 90, 81.

[60] A few of these objects survive, perhaps the framed panel from Hawara, although the exact use of this example before or after it was brought to the tomb cannot be known, as well as a home shrine for a deceased child in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, inv. M 33269. There are also several wall paintings from Pompeii with portraits. Clearer evidence of framed portraits of individuals survives in an interior painting of a 1st-century sarcophagus showing a painter in his studio with various kinds of portraits hanging on the wall behind him (1st century, from Pantikapaion, Bosporan Kingdom [present-day Kerch, Crimea], The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, inv. P-1899.81). However, like tomb portraits painted directly on walls that mimic framed

I will not present evidence for portraits or discuss their function in Roman ancestor cults, because this is not the purpose of this article. Indeed, what is perhaps more remarkable for the decoration of houses in the early centuries of the Common Era is the presence of philosopher portraits, and it is here that I think we might find some answers to the questions about early Christian icons. The most esteemed philosophers of Late Antiquity – Aristotle, Plato, and so on – are commonly portrayed in bust, painted on walls and ceilings and also depicted in floor mosaics (Abb. 11–12)[61]. Their images are not just decorative, but indicative of the values of the elite and well-educated Romans of the time, many of whom placed greater value on the spiritual writings of the philosophers than in the ancient pantheon of gods. Philosopher "cults" began to take firmer shape in Rome with the Neoplatonists, though Pliny's mention of Epicurus' disciples and their private devotions to the philosopher's images indicates earlier roots, as do the plentiful images of philosophers in the houses of Pompeii[62]. Philosophers were thus the subjects of veneration, and their images reflected this role[63]. Dio Chrysostom, for example, comments that images of philosophers show them clothed and bearded as if male divinities, resembling Zeus, Poseidon, Asklepeos, and Sarapis[64]. It is an interesting observation that philosophers were fashioned in the likenesses of the gods and yet, in later centuries, the image of the philosopher evolved into a portrait type after which so many Roman men of letters and aristocratic Hellenophiles modeled their own portraits[65].

Alexander Severus had two *lararia*; the larger had, among others, a portrait of Apollonius of Tyana, but which also had portraits of Christ and Abraham; the smaller included an image of Plato[66]. Similarly, Marcus Aurelius' *lararium* had golden images of famous teachers[67]. That some philosophers' portraits were painted, though none survives, is attested in extant epigrams, such as one recorded as having been inscribed on a picture of Socrates, stating, "Painter, who hast reproduced the form of Socrates, would thou couldst have put his soul into the wax!"[68]. In the syncretic environment of the second to fifth centuries, Jesus appears to have

portraits, there are portraits on the walls of the homes of Pompeii that allow us to glimpse the appearances of such objects. The famous couple, the baker and his wife, shows us a combined portrait. The so-called „Sappho" from Pompeii is probably a portrait of a woman in the guise of a muse, while another image of young man with a laurel crown and scroll is also likely a portrait of a family member as a poet. Several others survive that we can assume were portraits, though their subjects are in the guise of deities. A mosaic discovered on the floor of a bedchamber of a private home shows what is unquestionably the portrait of the matron of the household. It has been further suggested that the painter-like qualities are signs that it was made after a painted image, undoubtedly an encaustic portrait on panel (for these and other portraits from Pompeii, Bragantini – Sampaolo 2009, esp. 94–98; 516 no. VI.1 (mosaic portrait); 517 no. VI.2 (baker and his wife); 526 f. no. 305 („Sappho"); 528 no. 306 (poet [portrait?]); 522 no. 302 (Dionysius, Maenad, and Satyr [portraits?]).

[61] Wall paintings include numerous from Pompeii of seated philosophers and philosopher bust portraits and examples from an excavated home in Ephesus (see Strocka 1977, fig. 264). The Trier ceiling from the early 4th century (Trier, Episcopal Museum) is probably the most famous example with philosopher portraits; the most numerous surviving examples are, of course, floor mosaics, including Cologne's Philosopher mosaic in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Köln from the late 2nd–mid 4th century (see Lorenz 1965, 34, along with numerous other depictions in various media, sculpture, relief sarcophagi, mosaic). Nowicka 1993, 90–104, discusses philosopher portraits.

[62] Natural History 35, 2, 5; Eng. Rackham 1952, 263. Frischer 1982, 247, remarks that in the statue of Epicurus (Göttingen University, Abgusssammlung) he is seated on a throne almost exclusively reserved for divinities. On the importance of theurgist philosophers in late antiquity, see Fowden, 1982; Brown 1980. For a wider discussion of the influence of philosophers on Roman visual culture beginning around 200 AD, see Zanker 1995b, and Borg 2004b. The philosophers' marble shield portraits in Aphrodisias testifies to their elevated position in the 4th and 5th centuries; see Smith 1990. Perhaps due to our conception of philosophy, despite the numerous texts referring to the deification of late antique philosophers, testimony of their disciples and larger followings, and the numerous pictorial representations of them, even their veneration in *lararia* (see below), the notion of larger philosopher "cults" is not one that appeals. Susan Walker (Walker 1995, 42) for example, will only go so far as to say that portraits of philosophers are "emblems of a much-admired culture". My recent article (Marsengill 2018b) looks a little bit deeper into the influence of philosopher portraits in the early development of Christian icons of saints.

[63] Grabar 1968, 85.

[64] *Peri tou schymatos* 72. 2; 72. 5. See Frischer 1982, 246.

[65] See Zanker 1995b.

[66] As written in the history of Augustus Severus by Lampridius; *Historia Augusta, Severus Alexander* 29, 2; Magie 1953, 235.

[67] *Historia Augusta, Marcus Antonius* 3, 5; Magie 1921.

[68] Patton 1917, 331.

been counted as one of the philosopher-sages, not just by pagans, but by some Christians, as well[69]. That Christianity was integrated into larger philosopher cults is amply illustrated in the early 3rd century tomb of the Gnostic Aurelii with its program dominated by images of philosophers and Christian subjects, and especially dedicated to Pythagoras, the "patron saint of theurgical Neoplatonism," whose "great status rested not on geometry but on his unrivalled knowledge of divine cult and mysteries"[70]. Additionally, well learned Christian Romans fashioned themselves into the images of philosophers, as the 3rd century sarcophagus from Santa Maria Antiqua of a married couple with biblical scenes such as Jonah under the gourd vine indicates, the husband in the guise of the seated thinker with a scroll, the wife in the combined role of muse and orante[71].

Christians were not immune to this influence. Irenaeus of Lyons, as I mentioned earlier, reveals the existence of an early portrait of Christ. The image, believed to have been made by Pontius Pilate, was venerated by misguided Gnostics along with portraits of Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras. The charge is taken up again by Augustine in the late 4th century, who describes Marcellina as kneeling before the images of Pythagoras, Plato, Christ, and Paul[72]. These were likely painted portraits, since it would be a weak claim by the Gnostics if they asserted Pilate to have been a sculptor. The earliest textual evidence for Christian portraiture can be found in the Apocryphal Acts of John, composed sometime in the first quarter of the second century, which describes how a man named Lycomedes set up a painted portrait of John in his private room, garlanded and censed it, and placed oil lamps in front of it[73]. In this way, he venerated the portrait of his spiritual leader and savior. Upon seeing it, John's reaction is filled with Platonic sentiment, telling Lycomedes that he had painted "a dead likeness of that which is dead." Plontinus' portrait was similarly painted in secret one assumes for his disciples and for posterity. We might also conjecture from Constantia's request for a portrait of Christ that this is what Christians were doing with the portraits – keeping them as personal objects of veneration[74].

By way of conclusion, I would like to once again consider John Chrysostom and his literary portrait of Paul. Margaret M. Mitchell has written extensively on this subject, and I would defer to her authority concerning the spiritual kinship John felt toward the apostle. As far as I know – and Mitchell only says that John possessed literary, not graphic portraits – John never wrote about whether or not he possessed his own image of Paul, though his biography as it was written down at the beginning of the 7th century does describe how John kept an icon of Paul in his room. Yet images of Paul were far from uncommon in the late 4th century. Gold glass and tomb paintings survive from the 4th century with Paul's portrait (Abb. 13). His features, like Peter's, had become fixed into a recognizable appearance. And though John asserted the superiority of the written word as a means to gain knowledge of the saint, he was unhesitant in the declaration of his desire to go to Rome and embrace Paul's relics for himself, suggesting some closeness to the apostle's spirit might be gained beyond contemplation of his epistles[75]. Moreover, John seems to directly contradict himself when he says that not just teaching of the saints but also their appearances have benefits, "even the very style of their garments and their type of sandals"[76].

[69] Hanfmann 1951, esp. 216 f., provides examples of early Christians and contemporary pagans who made comparisons between Christ and Socrates, or else thought of Christ in the same terms as the philosophers: a letter by Mara bar Sarapion from Samosata (late 2nd or early 3rd century) who from prison wrote his own defense, including among his quoted philosophers, Pythagoras and Socrates, "the wise king of the Jews," described as one who was also wrongly put to death. Celsus (*True Logos*) suggests that Christ studied Plato. Justin Martyr, in his second *Apology*, made explicit comparison between Socrates and Christ. Origen and Clement likewise ponder the similarities between Socrates and Jesus. Tertullian's attack on Socrates (*De anima* I) indicates the importance of philosophy to early Christians and the circulating notions of the relationship between Socrates and Christ.

[70] Quote from Smith 1990, 143, though not discussing this particular tomb, the program of which is discussed by Carcopino 1956.

[71] Zanker 1995b, 286.

[72] *De haeresibus* 7; English translation: Müller 1956, 139.

[73] Acts of John 24–29; English translation Elliot 2005, 313–14.

[74] But not all comparisons drawn between holy figures and Greek philosophers made by Christians were negative. Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 11), as Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 1, 22, 150), quotes Numenius by calling Plato an Attic-writing Moses. See Ridings 1995.

[75] Mitchell 2002, 40 states that his portraits were word portraits and "not graphic artistic renderings."

[76] *In illud:salutate Priscillam et Aquilam*, (Rom. 16.3) *et quae sequentur, Sermo* 2; *PG* 51, 196; English translation: Mitchell 2002, 46 n. 56.

I cannot believe that John was unaware or disinterested in Paul's portraits. Indeed, the philosophic tradition in which he was educated would suggest otherwise. Just as Martial sent his portrait to Pliny, the Gnostics and Alexander Severus possessed portraits of philosophers, and Plotinus' followers limned his features in secret to conserve his portrait for future generations, John would have deemed it common and even expected that one should keep a portrait of one's spiritual leader and inspiration. His own teacher, Libanius, was dedicated to the writings of the second century Sophist, Aristeides. In a letter to a friend, Libanius mentions three portraits of Aristeides, two that he owned and one that he desired to own. He expresses his gratitude to his friend for the gift of a portrait of the philosopher, which he says he gazes at while studying, feeling as if the image were the living man. This was evidently a bust portrait, since he also requests another, one that includes hands and feet, which Libanius admits an eagerness to see[77].

In what is perhaps one of John Chrysostom's most famous statements, for it was quoted by the Iconoclasts in 754, he says, "We enjoy the presence of the saints in their writings, in which we have images, not of their bodies, but of their souls, since their words are images of their souls"[78]. Yet John was not speaking out against images by vaunting the written word, nor relating to us scholars 1700 years later that painted images of saints were not desired by the Early Church and therefore did not exist. We cannot find criticism, for example, in his funerary encomium for Meletius, in which he states that Antiochenes were keeping portraits of their deceased bishop depicted on rings and painted on bowls and on walls[79]. The physical appearances of Christ and the apostles were most likely unknown in reality. I certainly do not mean to argue here that Jesus or his apostles had actual portraits that were universal and copied already by the 2nd or 3rd century. However, it seems clear that some believed they were in possession of such objects or interpolated existing images as portraits of these Christian holy figures. As portraiture was important in posthumous veneration of spiritual leaders among pagans, so Christians may have engaged in such activity as well, with images presented and accepted, unthreatening in the guise and tradition of portraiture and therefore rarely commented upon until episodes of overzealous veneration brought them to the minds of contemporaries. They also have therefore remained unnoticed by modern scholars who, though they have traced the iconography of philosopher portraits into later images of the apostles and the development of the iconography of the philosopher-Christ, have not considered the prominent role of portraiture, especially that of esteemed spiritual leaders, in Late Antiquity.

Katherine Marsengill
Independent Scholar
kmarsengill@gmail.com

[77] Epistle 143; Norman 1992, 295–297. It is interesting to note that, upon receiving a portrait of Aristeides previously, he believed it to have been an image of Asclepius and so he dedicated the portrait to the Temple of Zeus Olympius near a painting of Apollo with Asclepius and Hygieia. The mistake was made due to the abundance of hair, which one might assume Libanius considered atypical of philosophers, which were more appropriately portrayed bald as a physiognomic indicator of intelligence. Indeed, portraits of Aristeides that survive show him as balding.

[78] Krannich *et al.* 2002, 52 f.

[79] Homily on Meletius (*PG* 50, 516); Mayer – Neil 2006, 39–48, esp. 43.

Bibliographie

Anastos 1954
M. V. Anastos, The Ethical Theory of Images Formulated by the Iconoclasts in 754 and 815, DOP 8, 1954, 151–160.

ANF
Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Barber 2002
C. Barber, Figure and Likeness: On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm (Princeton 2002).

Belting 1994
H. Belting, Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art (Chicago 1994).

Bianchi Bandinelli 1971
R. Bianchi Bandinelli, Rome, the Late Empire: Roman Art, A.D. 200–400 (New York 1971).

Bigham 2004
S. Bigham, Early Christian Attitudes toward Images (Rollinsford, New Hampshire 2004).

Bisconti 1985
F. Bisconti, L'ipogeo degli Aureli in Viale Manzoni: In esempio di sincresi privata, Augustinianum 25, 1985, 889–903.

Bohn 1897
H. G. Bohn (ed.), The Epigrams of Martial (London 1897).

Borg 2004a
B. Borg (ed.), Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic (Berlin 2004).

Borg 2004b
B. Borg, Glamorous Intellectuals: Portraits of papaideumenoi in the Second and Third Centuries AD, in: Borg 2004a, 157–178.

Borg 2013
B. Borg, Crisis and Ambition: Tombs and Burial Customs in Third-Century CE Rome (Oxford 2013).

Boyce 1937
G. K. Boyce, Corpus of Lararia of Pompeii, MemAmAc 14, 1937, 5–112.

Bragantini – Sampaolo 2009
I. Bragantini – V. Sampaolo (eds.), La pittura pompeiana (Naples 2009).

Brisson *et al.* 1992
L. Brisson *et al.*, Porphyrius: La vie de Plotin. 2. Études d'introduction, texte grec et traduction française, commentaire, notes complémentaires, bibliographie, Histoire des doctrines de l'antiquité classique 16 (Paris 1992).

Brown 1980
P. Brown, The Philosopher and Society in Late Antiquity: protocol of the thirty-fourth colloquy, 3 December 1978 (Berkeley 1980).

Brubaker 1998
L. Brubaker, Icons before Iconoclasm?, in: Morfologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo 2 (Spoleto 1998) 1215–1254.

Brubaker 2009
L. Brubaker, Image, Meta-text and Text in Byzantium, in: S. Sato (ed.), Herméneutique du texte d'histoire: orientation, interprétation et questions nouvelles (Tokyo 2009) 93–100.

Bruun 1976
P. Bruun, The Transmission of Imperial Images in Late Antiquity, in: K. Ascani – T. Fischer-Hansen – F. Johansen – S. Skovgaard Jensen – J. E. Skydsgaard (eds.), Studia Romana in Honorem Petri Krarup Septuagenarii (Odense 1976) 122–131.

Carcopino 1956
J. Carcopino, De Pythagore aux apôtres (Paris 1956).

CSEL
Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

Courtonne 1957
Y. Courtonne, Saint Basile, Lettres 1 (Paris 1957).

Dunbabin 1982
K. Dunbabin, The Victorious Charioteer on Mosaics and Related Monuments, AJA 86, 1982, 65–89.

Elliot 2005
J. K. Elliot, The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation (Oxford 2005).

Finney 1994
P. C. Finney, The Earliest Christians on Art (New York 1994).

Fowden 1982
G. Fowden, The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society, JHS 102, 1982, 33–59.

Francis 2003
J. A. Francis, Living Icons: Tracing a Motif in Verbal and Visual Representation from the Second to Fourth Centuries CE, AJPh 124/4, 2003, 575–600.

Frank 2000
G. Frank, The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity (Berkeley 2000).

Frede 1999
M. Frede, Monotheism and Pagan Philosophy in Later Antiquity, in: P. Athanassiadi – M. Frede (eds.), Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity (Oxford 1999) 41–67.

Frischer 1982
B. Frischer, The Sculpted Word: Epicureanism and Philosophical Recruitment in Ancient Greece (Berkeley 1982).

Gero 1981
S. Gero, The True Face of Christ: Eusebius' Letter to Constantia Reconsidered, Journal of Theological Studies 32/2, 1981, 460–470.

Grabar 1936
A Grabar, L'Empereur dans l'art byzantine: recherches sur l'art officiel de l'Empire d'Orient (Paris 1936).

Grabar 1968
A. Grabar, Christian Iconography: A Study of its Origins (Princeton 1968).

Grig 2004
L. Grig, Portraits, Pontiffs and the Christianization of Fourth-Century Rome, BSR 72, 2004, 203–230.

Gross 1938
J. Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les pères grecs: Contribution historique à la doctrine de la grâce (Paris 1938).

Haldon – Brubaker 2001
J. Haldon – L. Brubaker, Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680–850): The Sources: An Annotated Survey (Aldershot 2001).

Hanfmann 1951
G. M. A. Hanfmann, Socrates and Christ, HarvStClPhil 60, 1951, 205–233.

Hartel 1999
G. De Hartel (= W. von Hartel) (ed.), *Sancti Pontii Meropii Paulini Nolani Opera* 1: *Epistulae, CSEL* 29 (Vienna 1999).

Holl 1928
K. Holl, Epistulae ad Theodosium fragmenta, in: K. Holl (ed.), Gesammelte Aufsatz zur Kirchengeschichte 2 (Tübingen 1928) 360–362.

Jaeger 1977
W. Jaeger, Gregorii Nysseni Opera 8/1 (Leiden 1977).

Kazhdan – Maguire 1991
A. Kazhdan – H. Maguire, Byzantine Hagiographical Texts as Sources on Art, DOP 45, 1991, 1–22.

Kitzinger 1954
E. Kitzinger, The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm, DOP 8, 1954, 83–150.

Kötter 1975
B. Kötter (ed.), Orationes de imaginibus tres, in: Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos 3 (Berlin 1975).

Krannich *et al.* 2002
T. Krannich – C. Schubert – C. Sode (eds.), Die Ikonoklastische Synode von Hiereia 754: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung (Tübingen 2002).

Kubinska 1968
J. Kubinska, Les monuments funéraires dans les inscriptions grecques de l'Asie Mineure (Warsaw 1968).

Lorenz 1965
T. Lorenz, Galerien von griechischen Philosophen- und Dichterbildnissen bei den Römern (Mainz 1965).

Magie 1921
D. Magie, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* 1 (Cambridge, Mass. 1921).

Magie 1953
D. Magie, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* 2 (London 1953).

Mango 1986
C. Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents (Toronto 1986).

Marsengill 2011
K. Marsengill, Icons and Portraits in Late Antiquity, in: A. Lazaridou (ed.), Transition to Christianity: Art of Late Antiquity, 3rd–7th Century A. D. (New York 2011) 55–60.

Marsengill 2013
K. Marsengill, Portraits and Icons: Between Reality and Spirituality in Byzantine Art (Turnhout 2013).

Marsengill 2018a
K. Marsengill, The Influence of Icons on the Perception of Living Holy Persons, in: J. Bogdanović (ed.), Perceptions of the Body and Sacred Space in Late Antiquity and Byzantium (New York 2018) 87–104.

Marsengill 2018b
K. Marsengill, Painted Panels and Early Christian Icons, in: M. Jensen – M. D. Ellison (eds.), Routledge Handbook of Early Christian Art (London 2018) 191–206.

Mathews 2006
T. Mathews, Early Icons of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai, in: R. S. Nelson – K. M. Collins (eds.), Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai (Los Angeles 2006) 39–55.

Mathews – Muller 2016
T. F. Mathews – N. E. Muller, The Dawn of Christian Art in Panel Paintings and Icons (Los Angeles 2016).

Mayer – Neil 2006
W. Mayer – B. Neil, The Cult of the Saints: Select Homilies and Letters By Saint John Chrysostom (Crestwood/NY 2006).

Mitchell 2002
M. M. Mitchell, The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation (Louisville 2002).

Moreno Soldevila *et al.* 2005
R. Moreno Soldevila – J. F. Valverde – E. Montero Cartelle (eds.), Marco Valerio Marcial. Epigramas 2 (libros 8–14) (Madrid 2005).

Müller 1956
L. C. Müller, *De haeresibus* of Saint Augustine (Washington D.C. 1956).

Nicolai *et al.* 1999
V. F. Nicolai – F. Bisconti – D. Mazzoleni, The Christian Catacombs of Rome: History, Decoration, Inscriptions (Regensburg 1999).

Norman 1992
A. D. Norman (ed.), Autobiography and Selected Letters 2 (Cambridge 1992).

Nowicka 1993
M. Nowicka, Le portrait dans la peinture antique (Warsaw 1993).

NPNF
Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church.

Pappalardo 2009
U. Pappalardo, The Splendor of Roman Wall Painting (Los Angeles 2009) 214–216.

Patton 1917
W. R. Patton, The Greek Anthology 3 (London 1917).

PG
Patrologia Graeca (J.-P. Migne [ed.], P*atrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca* [Paris 1857–1866])

Polzer 1986
J. Polzer, A Late Antique Goddess of the Sea, JbAC 29, 1986, 71–108.

Rackham 1952
H. Rackham, Pliny, Natural History 9: Books 33–35 (Cambridge 1952).

Rassart-Debergh 1990
M. Rassart-Debergh, De l'icône païenne à l'icône chrétienne, Le Monde Copte 18, 1990, 39–70.

Ridings 1995
D. Ridings, The Attic Moses: The Dependency Theme in Some Early Christian Writers (Göteborg 1995).

Rousseau – Doutreleau 1979
A. Rousseau – L. Doutreleau, Irénéé de Lyon: Contre les hérésies (Paris 1979).

Sande 1993
S. Sande, The Icon and its Origins in Graeco-Roman Portraiture, in: L. Ryden – J. O. Rosenquist (eds.), Aspects of Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium (Istanbul 1993) 75–84.

Sande 2005
S. Sande, Pagan Pinakes and Christian Icons, Continuity or Parallelism?, ActaAArtHist 18, 2005, 81–100.

Schneider 1976
B. Schneider, Studien zu den kleinformatigen Kaiserporträts von den Anfängen der Kaiserzeit bis ins 3. Jh. (Diss. München 1976).

Smith 1993
A. Smith, Porphyrius Fragmenta (Leipzig 1993).

Smith 1990
R. R. R. Smith, Late Roman Philosopher Portraits from Aphrodisias, JRS 80, 1990, 127–155.

Sörries 2003
R. Sörries, Das Malibu-Triptychon: ein Totengedenkbild aus dem römischen Ägypten und verwandte Werke der spätantiken Tafelmalerei (Dettelbach 2003).

von Stockhausen 2002
A. von Stockhausen, Letter to Constantina, in: T. Krannich – C. Schubert – C. Sode (eds.), Die Ikonoklastische Synode von Hiereia 754: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung (Tübingen 2002).

Strocka 1977
V. M. Strocka, Die Wandmalereien der Hanghäuser in Ephesos, FiE VIII, 1 (Vienna 1977).

Thomson 1971
R. W. Thomson, *Contra gentes* and *De Incarnatione* (Oxford 1971).

Toynbee 1971
J. M. C. Toynbee, Death and Burial in the Roman World (Baltimore 1971).

Walker 1995
S. Walker, Greek and Roman Portraits (London 1995).

Walsh 1968
P. G. Walsh, Letters of St. Paulinus of Nola 2 (London 1968).

Zanker 1995b
P. Zanker, The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity (Berkeley 1995).

Abbildungen

Abb. 1: Vault of the *cubiculum* of the *velatio*, 3rd century, Catacomb of Pricilla, Rome (From: Nicolai *et al.* 2009, fig. 107)
Abb. 2: Funerary portrait of a couple, 3rd century, Tomb of the Corsini, Rome (From: Nowicka 1994, fig. 56)
Abb. 3: Vault, 3rd century, Hypogeum of the Aurelii, Rome (From: Nicolai *et al.* 2009, fig. 76)
Abb. 4: Portrait of the deceased, 3rd century, Catacomb of the Giordani, Rome (From: Nowicka 1994, fig. 54)
Abb. 5: Tomb and portrait of Aelia Arisuth, 4th century, Gargaresh, Libya (From: Bianchi Bandinelli 1971, fig. 242)
Abb. 6: Portrait of a woman from Hawara, 2nd century, London, British Museum (© Trustees of the British Museum)
Abb. 7: Funerary portrait painting of Artemis, 3rd century, Museé du Louvre, Paris (Photo: Hervé Lewandowski ©RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, New York)
Abb. 8: Portrait of a man, gold glass, 4th century, Catacomb of Panfilo, Rome (From: Nicolai *et al.* 1999, fig. 152)
Abb. 9: Aphrodite fresco, 1st century, House of Marcus Fabius Rufus, Pompeii (From: Pappalardo 2008, 216)
Abb. 10: Portraits of gods and goddesses, shop exterior, 1st century, Pompeii (Photo: Katherine Marsengill)
Abb. 11: Portrait of a philosopher, detail from the painted ceiling at Trier, early 4th century, Trier, Episcopal Museum (Photo: Marco Prins, livius.org, CC0 1.0 Universal)
Abb. 12: Floor mosaics with philosophers' portraits, 2nd–4th century, Cologne, Römisch-Germanisches Museum (Mr. Arifnajafov for Wikimedia commons)
Abb. 13: Portrait of Saint Paul, Catacomb of St. Thecla, mid-4th century, Rome (Wikimedia commons)