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Pythagorean Life in Late Antique Biographies and in the First Ascetic Monks

In a conference on forms and transformations of Pythagoras and the ascetic lifestyle he was said to have promoted, a discussion of the possible influence of the Pythagorean tradition on the lifestyle of the early Christian monks should not be absent. I will take my point of departure at the beginning of last century when the relationship between neo-Pythagoreans and Athanasius' Life of Antony started to be discussed, and I will look first at the origin of this discovery (§ 1), then discuss the most recent developments (§ 2), followed by a closer analysis of parallels between the monks and the Pythagoreans, old and new (§ 2), and, finally, try to draw some conclusions (§ 4).