"Gentle as a nurse": The Cynic
Background to 1 Thess ii

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Paul's description of his Thessalonian ministry in I Thess. ii has in recent years been variously interpreted. The discussion has revolved in part around the question whether vss. 1-12 are to be understood as an apology directed to a concrete situation in Thessalonica in the face of which Paul had to defend himself, or whether the language that seems to support such a view can be understood in another way. A major statement in favor of the latter option had been made by VON DOBSCHÜTZ, who claimed that the “apology” reflects the mood of Paul at the time of writing rather than a strained relationship with the Thessalonians 1). MARTIN DIBELIUS represented a somewhat similar view, but saw this as a favorite theme of Paul that he could have introduced without his having been forced to do so by circumstances in Thessalonica. DIBELIUS pointed out that it was necessary for Paul to distinguish himself from other preachers of his day without actually having been accused of being a charlatan. To illustrate his point he brought into the discussion descriptions of wandering Cynics 2). More recently, GÜNTHER BORNKAMM has lent his support to DIBELIUS 3). A.-M. DENIS does not specifically address himself to the problem, yet sees the main thrust of vss. 1-6 to be Paul’s presentation of himself as the messianic prophet to the Gentiles 4).

The most exhaustive recent treatment is that of WALTER SCHMITHALS, who argues forcefully that Paul is defending himself against specific charges that had been made against him 5). SCHMITHALS

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1) E. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, Die Thessalonicherbriefe (1909), pp. 106 f.
2) MARTIN DIBELIUS, An die Thessalonicher I. II (1937), pp. 7-11.
emphasizes that Paul’s language in I Thess. ii is in many respects similar to that of his Corinthian correspondence, and he claims that the same kind of Jewish Christian Gnostics are responsible for Paul’s apologies in both groups of letters. He admits that there are parallels in I Thess. ii to the descriptions of the Cynics cited by DIBELIUS, and accepts the necessity of genuine preachers having to distinguish themselves from the charlatans. However, he points out that there are no close verbal parallels to Paul in the material cited by DIBELIUS. More important to him, though, is that the form of Paul’s description of his work in Thessalonica is of such a nature that it demands being viewed as an apology 1). SCHMITHALS is not explicit at this point, but what seems to make him think that Paul protests too much is Paul’s antithetic statements that could be understood as denials of accusations: τὴν εἰσοδον . . . οὐ κανή . . ., ἀλλὰ ἐν πολλῷ ἀγώνι (v. 2), οὐχ ἐν πλάνης οὔδὲ ἐξ ἀκαθαρσίας οὔδὲ ἐν δόλῳ, ἀλλὰ . . . (vss. 3 f.), οὐχ ὡς ἀνθρώπως ἀφέσκοντες, ἀλλὰ θεοὶ . . . (v. 4), οὕτως ἐν λόγῳ κολακείας . . . οὕτω ἐν προφάσει πλεονεξίας . . . οὕτω ζητοῦντες ἐξ ἀνθρώπως δόξαν, οὕτω . . . δυνάμενοι ἐν πάσαι εἰσα . . . ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν ἔπιοι (vss. 5-7 2).

This article seeks to contribute to the discussion by examining in greater depth the Cynic background posited by DIBELIUS. Attention will be directed to the diversity that existed among wandering preachers and among the Cynics themselves, and to the self-descriptions of serious-minded Cynic philosophers in this context.

I

Given the situation described by such writers as Lucian of Samosata 3), it is to be expected that the transient public speakers were viewed with suspicion 4). It is understandable that the genuine philosophic missionary would want to distinguish himself from other types without his having explicitly been accused of acting like a

1) Op cit, p 111
2) Cf also Willi Marxsen, “Auslegung von I Thess 4, 13-18”, ZTK, 66 (1969), p 24, who in a preliminary statement on the problem holds that one can speak of an apology in I Thess 11 1-12, but of the Gospel, not of the apostle He does, however, leave the matter open, and does not accept SCHMITHALS’S hypothesis
4) Cf L Friedlaender, Darstellungen aus der Sittengeschichte Roms (1910), IV pp 301 ff for the reactions of different classes of people to philosophers.
particular type. A good illustration of how a wandering philosophic teacher of the better type described himself and his work is provided by Dio Chrysostom, the orator-turned-Cynic philosopher (A.D. 40-c. 120?). Although Dio is in some ways atypical of the Cynics, his descriptions of these preachers are some of the most systematic available to us, and serve to illuminate our problem. In the proemia to four of his discourses, namely the Olympic Oration (Orat. 12), the oration to Alexandria (Orat. 32), the first oration to Tarsus (Orat. 33), and the oration to Celaenae (Orat. 35), he speaks of his relationship to his audience in a manner of interest to us. These speeches come from a period in Dio's life after he had lived in exile and taught as a wandering Cynic ¹). Dio had been invited to deliver these addresses, and there is no question of his having to defend himself here against specific charges that he was a charlatan ²). Nevertheless, he is aware of the suspicion of the crowd ³), and he sets out to make clear what kind of preacher he in fact is. In doing so he distinguishes himself on the one hand from the sophists and rhetoricians, and on the other hand from the so-called Cynics. In examining his description of the ideal philosopher we shall concentrate on Oration 32 ⁴), adducing material from his other discourses as well as from other Cynic sources to fill out the picture. Although passing reference is occasionally made to this discourse in discussions of I Thess. ii, it has never been examined in detail in this connection.

The first type of philosopher Dio describes (32,8) are the resident philosophers who "do not appear in public at all, and prefer not to run the risk, possibly because they despair of being able to improve the masses." He seems to have in mind men like Seneca and Cornutus, who were either members of large private households which they served as philosophic chaplains, or who were to be found at court ⁶). These men, according to Dio, wish to maintain


²) On these discourses, see H. von Arnim, Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa (1898), pp. 438 f., 460 ff.; Elliger, op. cit., p. XVI.

³) Cf. Orat. 12, 1.8 f., 15; 13, 11; 34, 1-3; 35, 2-56.


their dignity, and are useless (ἀνωφελείς). They are like make-believe athletes who refuse to enter the stadium where they would enter the contest of life 1). The description of a Cynic’s battles with hardships, human passions and men who are enslaved to them as an ἀγών is well-known 2). Another type of resident philosopher is the one who “exercises his voice in what we call lecture-halls, having secured as hearers men who are his allies and can easily be managed by him” (32,8) 3). Evidently he has in mind philosophers like Musonius, Epictetus and Demonax 4).

II

The next type Dio mentions are the so-called Cynics who were to be found in great numbers in the city 5). These are the hucksters Lucian satirizes so mercilessly. Dio describes them as a bastard and ignoble race of men. They have no knowledge whatsoever, he says, but adds with tongue in cheek, ‘they must make a living . . . Posting themselves at street-corners, in alley-ways, and at temple-gates, they pass around the hat and deceive (ἀπατώσιν) lads and sailors and crowds of that sort by stringing together puns (σκώματα) and philosophical commonplaces (σπερμαλογίαν συνείροντες) and ribald jokes of the marketplace’ 6). From other descriptions of this type it appears that they deceived (πλαναν, ἀπαταν) men by flattery (κολακεύειν, θωπεύειν) rather than speaking with the boldness and frankness of the true philosopher 7). The result, Dio says, is that

1) Cf Orat 32, 20-24 On ὄφελες as motivation of the Cynics, see G A Gerhard, Phoinix von Kolophon (1909), pp 33 f, 36, 39
3) Nigrimus called the lecture-halls ἔργαστήια and καπηλεία, cf Lucian, Nigrinus 25
4) For this type, see von Arnim, op cit., pp 446 ff; Fридландф, op cit., p 339
5) For the great number of Cynics abroad, see Orat 72, 4, Lucian, Bis accus 6, Fug 3 ff, Philo, De plant 151
6) For Cynics in the streets and market-places, see Dio, Orat 77/78, 34 f., Julian, Orat VII, 224A f., Lucian, Peregr 3, Origen, C Cels III, 50 For συνείρειν, see Dio, Orat 33, 5, for σκώπτειν, Orat 9, 7, 32, 22 30, 33.
7) For σπερμαλογία see Acts xvii.18, Plutarch, Quomodo adulator 65B, Philostratus, Vit soph I, 524 (cf Philo’s description of the sophists as οἱ λογοθέται, Moses II, 212) On pleasing the crowd, see Dio, Orat 32, 7, 35, 8, 66, 26
8) ἀπάτη is the more common of the two terms among the Cynics, but they
they achieve no good at all, but accustom thoughtless people to de­
ride philosophers in general 1). Such derision was most commonly
expressed in the charges that the Cynics were out for their own

glory (δόξα), sensual gratification (ηδονή) and money (χρήματα), the
very things against which serious Cynics pitted themselves in their
(2 γών 2).

III

Dio then turns to excoriate a type of Cynic that was difficult to
distinguish from rhetoricians (32,10 3). To their hearers they made
epideictic speeches or chanted verses of their own composition. 
Epideictic speech is described by ancient handbooks on rhetoric as
being intended" not for the sake of contest (2 γών), but of demonstra­
tion" 4). Sophists who delivered such speeches felt no real in­
volve ment in the occasion on which they were delivered. Conse­
quently, since they lacked substance and did not result in anything
positive, they were described as vain or empty (vanus, vacuus,
inanis, or κενός) 5). Dio accuses the orator-philosophers of preaching
for their own gain and glory. They have no desire to benefit their
listeners; in fact, they corrupt them. It is like a physician who, in­
stead of curing his patients, entertains them 6).

1) For the reproof they brought on philosophy, see Lucian, Fug 21,
Pisc 34. Julian, Orat VII, 225A f On achieving no good because of a
softened message, see Dio, Orat 33, 10 15

2) On the joining of φιλόδοξος, φιλήδονος, and φιλοχρήματος, see GER­
HARD, op cit., pp 58 ff, 87 f

3) Among them were the κιθαρωδοί Κυνικοί, a breed Dio considered a
peculiarly Alexandrian phenomenon (cf 32, 62 68) On his assess­
ment of the rhetoricians, see Orat 2, 18, 4, 35 ff, 12, 10, 33, 1-6 23, 35, 1 9 f For this
type, see FRIEDLAENDER, op cit., pp 345 ff

4) Rhetorica ad Alexandrum 1440b 13 Cf George Kennedy, The Art of
Persuasion in Greece (1963), pp 152 ff., 167 For 2 γών as a philosophical
argument, see Sext Emp, Adv math VII, 324, XI, 19, Plutarch, Quemodo
in virtute 80B

5) Cf Quintillian, Inst orat XII, 10, 17, 73, Plutarch, Non posse suaviter
1000A, Dio, Orat 31, 30, Seneca, Ep mor 114, 16

6) For the Cynic as a physician of sick souls, see also Orat 32, 17, 33,
6 ff 44. Cf K HOLL, "Die schriftstellerische Form des griechischen Heiligen­
lebens", Neue Jahrb f d klass Altertum, 19 (1912), p 418
Dio knows of yet another type of Cynic who demands more of our attention. This type does speak with παρρησία, that boldness of the philosopher who has found true personal freedom, and who on the basis of this freedom strives to lay bare the shortcomings of his audience as the first step in improving them (32,11). The fault with men of the type Dio has in mind is that they display their boldness sparingly, "not in such a way as to fill your ears with it, nor for any length of time. No, they merely utter a phrase or two, and then, after railing (λοιδορήσαντες) at you rather than teaching you, they make a hurried exit, anxious lest before they have finished you may raise an outcry and send them packing." This type of speaker thus confused λοιδορία with παρρησία. In Imperial times reviling, berating Cynics were such a common sight that the legendary figure Timon the misanthrope was remembered as a Cynic. Whether or how a philosopher's outspokenness should be tempered became an important topic of discussion.

The Cynic, the morally free man, conceived it his right and duty to speak with παρρησία and to act as an example. He did so because of his φιλανθρωπία, his desire to do good to men. As humane a person as Dio was convinced that it was necessary for the serious philosopher to be harsh when the occasion demanded it. He himself spoke with παρρησία, but adapted his message to his hearers' needs.

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2) Note that in Orat 33, 6 ff Dio also moves from the example of the physician to discuss a limitation in παρρησία. Cf also Epictetus, Diss 3, 23, 30-38, who regards protreptic as the proper style of the philosopher in his lecture room, the ἰατρεῖον, rather than, for example, epideictic.


4) E.g. Plutarch, Quomodo adulator 65F-74E.


7) Cf Orat 32, 19 ff 27 33, 33, 7 11 ff.
needs), and remained with them. Dio contrasts the genuine philosopher with the low-class Cynic: “But as for himself, the man of whom I speak will strive to preserve his individuality in seemly fashion and with steadfastness, never deserting his post of duty, but always honoring and promoting virtue and sobriety and trying to lead all men thereto, partly by persuading and exhorting, partly by abusing and reproaching, in the hope that he may thereby rescue somebody from folly and low desires and intemperance and soft living, taking him aside privately individually and also admonishing them in groups every time he finds opportunity, with gentle words at times, at others harsh.” Even when his listeners scorn him, “he is not vexed; on the contrary, he is kinder to each one than even a father or brothers or friends.” His concern is especially shown in the individual attention he gives.

The charlatans were also sometimes harsh, but for different reasons. They made up for the lack of content of their speeches by railing at the crowd, in this way hoping to secure its admiration. They made a profession of abusiveness, considering shamelessness to be freedom, the incurring of hatred outspokenness, and avarice benevolence. Naturally, they caused the γύρις of the crowd before too long and took their departure before they were attacked.

Of special interest is the harshness of some Cynics that resulted from a pessimistic view of mankind. While all serious philosophers were conscious of the shortcomings of the masses, few were as uncharitable as these men were. They saw no hope of improving
man except by the most abusive scolding. It was especially these
men who were accused of misanthropy. Melancholy Heraclitus
provided a perfect figure to whom letters from Imperial times re-
presenting this view of mankind could be ascribed. In ps.-Heraclitus,
Epistle 7, he is represented as defending himself against the charge
of misanthropy, for which the residents of Ephesus want to banish
him from the city 1). In response, he denies that he hates men; it is
only their evil that he hates. That is what had robbed him of the
divine gift of laughter. Even within the city he is not really a part
of them, for he refuses to share in their wickedness. Would that he
could laugh, but, surrounded by enemies, and with the flagrant
vices of mankind on every hand, he wonders how anyone could
laugh. He will retain his dour visage even if it should mean his exile.

As can be expected, a reaction set in against the stress on the
harshness of Cynic preaching 2). It was now emphasized that at
least as early as Crates Cynics had been known for their under-
standing of human nature and even for their gentleness at times 3).
The stress on the gentleness of Musonius 4), Dio 5), and Demonax 6)
should be seen against this background. What is of particular interest
to us is the way in which the different kinds of preaching were
described.

A widespread gnomic statement clarified the difference between
admonition and reviling: πλείστον διαφέρει το νουθετεί ν του όνειδίζειν·
to μεν γὰρ ἕπιον τε καὶ φίλον, τὸ δὲ σκληρὸν τε καὶ ὑβριστικὸν· καὶ τὸ
μεν διορθοῖ τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας τὸ δὲ μόνον ἐλέγχει 7). Without denying

letters, e.g. ps.-Heraclitus, Ep. 2 p 280 Ἱφρ�ίρ, 4 p 281 Ἱτ., 5 p 282 Ἱτ.,
17, 28 43 pp 301 303 Ἱτ. On these letters, see K. Helm, Lucian and Menipp
(1906), pp 90 f., P. Wendland, Philo und die kynisch-stoische Diatibe
(1895), pp 38 f., Gerhard, Phoynix von Kolophon, pp 67 f., 156 ff., 165 ff.,
170 ff.

1) Pp 283-285 He See J. Bernays, Die heraklitischen Briefe (1860)
2) Cf. Gerhard, Phoynix von Kolophon, pp 39 ff
3) See Plutarch, Quaest. conv. 632E, Julian Orat. VI, 201B, Crates ἑπετίμη
δὲ οὐ μετὰ πίστεις, ἀλλὰ μετὰ χάριτος Cf. E. Wibcr, De Drahe Chrysos-
tomo Cynicorum sedatore ("Leipziger Studien" 10 [1887]), p 211, Gerhard,
op cit., p 170 f., Ragnar Hoiland, Cynic Hero and Cynic King (1948), pp
127 ff
4) Cf. Cora E. Lutz, Musonius Rufus "The Roman Socrates" ("Yale
Classical Studies" 10) (1947), p 29
6) Cf. K. Funk, "Untersuchungen über die Lucanische Vita Demonactis",
Philo
gos, Supplementband X, (1905-1907), pp 595 f
7) Eg Gnom Byz. 59 p 176 Wachsmuth, cf also nos. 258 f
the need for harshness when the occasion demands it, the value of admonition (νουθεσία) was now affirmed 1). The word ήπιος is widely used as a synonym for φιλάνθρωπος, the quality that the philosopher must have before he can speak with παρρησία 2), and it is used in the descriptions of the philosopher’s speech. Thus an ancient characterisation of Epictetus says that he was τὴν μὲν δψιν σεμνός, τὴν δε όμιλίαν ήπιος, τὸν δὲ τρόπον ήμερος 3).

It is not surprising that in ancient times the subject of gentleness should call to mind the figure of the nurse crooning over her wards. In addition to their physical attributes, the main qualification given in hellenistic discussions of nurses is that they were not to be irrascible 4). That men remembered their nurses in this way is illustrated by the large number of tomb inscriptions which describe nurses affectionately as being kind 5). It became customary to contrast the harshness of a certain kind of παρρησία with gentle speech such as that of a nurse who knows her charges.

Maximus of Tyre illustrates one such use. Especially in a discourse in which he argues that the philosopher’s speech must be adapted to every subject, does he show a sympathetic view of man. The mass of men, the common herd, is to him naturally mild, but is difficult to persuade only because it has been fed with depraved nutriment. What it requires is a musical shepherd who does not punish its disobedience with whip and spur 6). Elsewhere he elaborates on the contrasts he has in mind here. What is naturally adapted

1) Cf Diog Laert VI, 86; Dio, Orat 32, 26 f For the contrast between λοιδορία (παρρησία) and νουθεσία see Plutarch, De capienda 89B; De superstitione 168C, Dio, Orat 77/78, 38 Cf E Weber, op cit, p 208
3) Moschion 3 p 485 Schenkl.
4) E.g Sofronius, Περί Γυναικείων XXXII p 263 f Rose, Orbasius III p 122, 3 Bussemaker-Daremberg, Favorinus, ap Aulus Gellius, Noct Att XII, 1, 21, ps -Pythagoras, Ep 12 p 609 He On the subject, see W. Braams, “Zur Geschichte des Ammenswesens im klassischen Altertum”, Jenaer medizin-historischer Beiträge, Heft 5 (1913), pp 8 ff, Wilhelm Schick, Favorini peri παιδων προφήτης und die antike Erziehungslehre (1912); Egon Eichgrun, Kalimachos und Apollomos Rhodos (1961), pp 185 ff. C Moussy, Recherches sur "trepho" et les verbs Grecs signifiant "nourir" (1969) has been unavailable to me in this study
6) Orat I p 5, 17 ff Hobein
to mankind is "a certain musical and milder philosophy which might popularly allure and manage it, in the same manner as nurses charm through fabulous narrations the children committed to their care" 1). Maximus then states that he much prefers this treatment of the masses to the παρρησία of the philosophers. The word philosopher, he says, is hard or oppressive (βαρύ) to the multitude. The philosophers would do well to follow the example of the ancient philosophers who clothed their philosophy in fables, just as physicians mix bitter medicines with sweet nutriment 2).

Pseudo-Diogenes represents a completely different view of man and therefore of the way in which a philosopher should approach him. He sees gentleness as the method of the flatterer, or as showing ignorance of man's true condition 3). His Epistle 29 appears to be a response to those Cynics who held that the philosopher should be gentle as a father or nurse: Those who associate with the masses do not understand with what vehemence the disease of evil has laid hold of them. They have been gravely corrupted. It is now necessary to perform cautery and surgery and to use strong drugs on them. "But instead of submitting to such care, like children you have summoned to your sides mammies and nurses who say to you, 'Take the cup, my pet. Show that you love me by pouring a little of the medicine and drinking it'" 4).

Dio Chrysostom uses the figure of the nurse in an ambivalent manner. In Oration 4, 73 ff. he describes a conversation between Alexander the Great and Diogenes. Diogenes is aware that Alexander despises him for the way in which he had been taking the king to task. In order to set him at ease, Diogenes then tells Alexander a fable "just as nurses, after giving the children a whipping, tell them a story to comfort and please them." The purpose

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1) Orat IV p 43, 17 ff Hobein See also Julian, Orat VII, 204A. Julian, who holds that the Cynic's παρρησία should not be without a civilized mildness, rejects the use of myths, which nurses use. He may have used Dio Chrysostom as a source, cf R Asmus, Julian und Dion Chrysostomus (1895), although the similarities between them could be due to the use of common sources

2) Cf Diogenes, Fr. io Mullach, Themistius, Orat V, 63B; XXIV, 302B, Περί 'Αρετῆς 18 See, however, Max Tyr., Orat XXV p 303, 11 ff. Hobein A skilled physician may mix brief pleasure with the pain of the remedy, yet to impart pleasure is not the function of Asclepius but of cooks


4) Ep 29, 4 5 p. 244 Ht
of the myth is to show that the passions are irrational and brutish ¹). The nurse is thus used with approval as an example of understanding human nature. In Oration 33, however, a nurse is used to symbolize something of which he disapproves. In the proemium to this oration, Dio distinguishes himself from the flatterers who praise their hearers. He promises that he will speak with παρρησία, but cautions that he will not touch on all their ailments ²). He will be the genuine physician who will help them, and he may subject them to abuse. In this he promises to follow the example of Socrates who censured and rebuked his listeners, unlike the comic poets who “flattered the assembled multitude as one flatters a master, tempering their mild snapping with a laugh, just as nurses, whenever it is necessary for their charges to drink something rather unpleasant, themselves smear the cup with honey before they hold it out to the children” ³). What is common to both uses is that the figure of the nurse is used in connection with the amelioration of the philosopher’s imperiousness ⁴).

Plutarch insists that παρρησία, like any other medicine, must be applied properly. Men need friends to speak to them frankly in times of good fortune. But in times of misfortune there is no need for a friend’s παρρησία or for harsh words (λόγων βάρος ἐχόντων) or stinging reproof (δῆγμον) ⁵). It is intolerable for a sick man to be reminded of the causes of his illness. The very circumstances in which the unfortunate find themselves leave no room for παρρησία, but require gentleness and help. “When children fall down, the nurses do not rush up to berate them, but they take them up, wash them, *

¹) The myth is recounted in Orat 5, cf par 16
²) Orat 33, 7 44 On the limitation of a subject, see Epictetus, Diss 1, 29, 30 f 64; Musonius I p 5, 3 ff HENSE That this is a rhetorical cliche is argued by K Thraede, “Untersuchungen zum Ursprung und zur Geschichte der christlichen Poesie, I”, Jahrb f Antike und Christ, 4 (1961), pp 108-127
³) Orat 33, 10 On the comic poets’ ineffective παρρησία, see Plutarch, Quomodo adulator 68C
⁴) Epictetus mostly uses the figure of the nurse in a pejorative manner when he speaks of those who do not wish to advance in their philosophic understanding, cf e.g Diss 2, 16, 25 28 39 44
⁵) Quomodo adulator 68 ff Plutarch uses βάρος in this kind of context almost as a synonym for δῆγμος, cf 59C, 72A For βαρύς used of the misanthropist, see Eurip., Heraclid 2 ff (cf Gerhard, op cit, p 31) For the biting character of Cynic speech, see Demetrius, De elocutione 259 ff, πάν τὸ εἴθος τοῦ Κυνικοῦ λόγου σάλωντι ἑμα τοῖς τῷ καὶ δέχοντι, and cf Diogenes, Fr 35 Mullach, Plutarch, De tranquillitate animi 468A, ὀλαχμα τὴν τοῦ Κυνικοῦ βλασφημίαν (contrast 468C, ἢπιος)
and straighten their clothes and, after all this is done, then rebuke them and punish them" 1).

V

We return to Dio’s description of the Cynics. His criticisms of the various Cynics can be summarized as follows: Some did not really become involved in the ἄγων of life, either because they lacked the courage, or because their empty speeches were not designed to involve them in the situations to which they spoke. The common market-place preachers are accused of error (ἀπάτη, πλάνη), flattery (κολακεία), and preaching for reputation (δόξα) and money (χρήματα), and to satisfy their sensual appetites (ἡδονή). A special complaint is that the transients were sometimes brutally harsh rather than seeking to benefit their hearers. This harshness (βάρος), we learn elsewhere, is justified by an insistence on the philosopher’s παρρησία that would allow no gentleness (ἡπιότης) under the circumstances.

After thus describing the different Cynics, Dio characterizes the ideal Cynic in negative and antithetic formulations designed to distinguish him from them (32, 11 f.): “But to find a man who with purity and without guile speaks with a philosopher’s boldness (καθαρώς καὶ ἄδόλως παρρησιαζόμενον), not for the sake of glory (μήτε δόξης χάριν), nor making false pretensions for the sake of gain (μήτ’ ἐπ’ ἄργυρίω), but (ἄλλ’) who stands ready out of good will and concern for his fellowman, if need be, to submit to ridicule and the uproar of the mob—to find such a man is not easy, but rather the good fortune of a very lucky city, so great is the dearth of noble, independent souls, and such the abundance of flatterers (κολάκων), charlatans and sophists. In my own case I feel that I have chosen that role, not of my own volition, but by (οὐκ’ ἀπ’ . . . ἄλλ’ ὑπό) the will of some deity. For when divine providence is at work for men, the gods provide, not only good counsellors who need no urging, but also words that are appropriate and profitable to the listener.”

Dio’s insistence on the philosopher’s boldness, and his statements of the philosopher's qualifications in negatives and antitheses, namely that he should speak without guile, not for the sake of glory or gain, but as one who has a concern for men, and in opposition to flatterers, charlatans and sophists, is meaningful against the background he has sketched. It is natural for him to express himself in this manner even though a personal attack had not been made on

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1) Quomodo adulator 69BC.
him. Some of his other qualifications, however, deserve further attention.

He states that the philosopher must speak καθαρῶς καὶ ἀδόλως. Καθαρῶς may mean "clearly", "plainly," and thus merely refer to clarity of expression 1). It is probable, however, that it has greater significance. Elsewhere, Dio says that the Cynic must purify his mind by reason, trying to free it from the slavery to lusts and opinions. This purification is his fight for his own freedom which is the basis of his παρρησία 2). Epictetus also, in distinguishing the ideal Cynic from the charlatan, emphasizes that the Cynic must begin by purifying his own mind. It is the Cynic's conscience, his knowledge of his own purity, and that he is a friend and servant of the gods, that allows him to speak with παρρησία 3). Thus when Dio describes the true Cynic as καθαρῶς παρρησιαζόμενος he is referring to the Cynic's speaking with purity of mind, thus requiring that the frankness of such a man be based on true freedom, and he probably does so with the charlatans in mind who claimed to speak as philosophers, but who had not purified themselves 4).

Again, Dio's emphasis on his divine commission is noteworthy 5). The way in which the statement is formulated (οὐκ ... ἄλλ') suggests that this qualification of the true Cynic is also given with the hucksters in mind. Epictetus also, when he describes the divine call of the Cynic, does so by contrasting the crude charlatan with the man who had been sent by God 6). That the Cynic could endure the ὕβρις of the crowd proves his divine call 7). It is possible, on the

1) See J C G ERNSTI, Lexicon Technologiae Graecorum Rhetoricae (1795), s.v
2) Orat 77/78, 40 Stated in a different manner, it is the Cynic's giving heed to the injunction γνώθι σαυτόν. See Plutarch's quotation of the Delphic command at the beginning of his tractate on παρρησία, Quomodo adulator 65F, cf Quomodo in virtute 81C f This view is especially characteristic of Julian, cf Orat VI, 188 A True Cynic παρρησία is the verbal expression of inner ἕλευθερος, and is nothing other than ἔλευθεροστομεῖν, cf O HENSE, "Bion bei Philon", Rhein Mus, 48 (1892), p 231 That this is also Dio's understanding of the true philosopher is clear from Orat 4, 57 f, 67, 80, cf E WEBER, op cit, pp 141-153
3) Diss 3, 22, 19 93 ff
4) Cf Orat 77/78, 36 ff where the philosopher's παρρησία is described in antithesis to flatterers, cf also Orat 51, 4
5) Cf Orat 13, 32, 21, 34, 4 f
6) Eg Diss 3, 22, 29 ff 50 ff 53 ff For the same contrasting formulation in Dio, see Orat 34, 4, 45, 1 Cf HOLL, op cit, p 420 n 3
7) Epictetus, Diss 4, 24, 1-10, Dio, Orat 9, 9, 12, 9, 32, 21 f
other hand, that, rather than those masquerading under the Cynic cloak, Dio and Epictetus wanted to distinguish themselves from Cynics like Oenomaus of Gadara, who did away with the reverence of the gods 1).

VI

Paul's description of his Thessalonian ministry in I Thess. ii is strikingly similar to the picture sketched by Dio, both in what is said and in the way in which it is formulated:

Dio says that some Cynics fear the ὕβρις of the crowd and will not become involved in the ἀγών of life. The speech of some of them can be described as κενός. The true philosopher, on the contrary, faces the crowd with παρρησία because God gives him the courage. Paul says that although he had suffered and experienced violence (ὑβρισθέντες) in Philippi, his sojourn in Thessalonica was not empty (κενή), but he spoke boldly in God (ἐπαρρησιασάμεθα εν τῷ θεῷ) in a great struggle (ἐν πολλῷ ἁγῷ) (vss. 1, 2).

Dio says the charlatans deceive (ἀπατῶσιν) their hearers and lead them in error (πλάνη). Paul says he did not preach out of error (οὐκ ἐκ πλάνης) (v. 3).

Dio says the ideal philosopher must speak with purity of mind (καθαρώς) and without guile (αδόλως). Paul says he was not motivated by uncleanness (οὐκ ἐξ ακαθαρσίας), nor did he speak with guile (οὔτε εν δόλω) (v. 4).

Dio says that the true philosopher will not preach for the sake of glory (μὴ δόξης χάριν), nor for personal gain (μὴ έπ’ ἀργυρίῳ), nor as a flatterer (κολάκων). Paul claims that he did not use a cloak for greed (οὐτε ἐν προφάσει πλεονεξίας), nor did he seek glory from men (οὐτε ζητούντες εξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν), or flatter them (οὔτε . . . ἐν λόγῳ κολακείας) (vss. 5, 6).

Dio claims that he was divinely directed to speak. So does Paul (v. 4).

Dio emphasizes that the philosopher, in spite of personal danger, seeks to benefit his hearers by adapting his message to their situation, and being kinder to them individually than even a father.

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He represents the view that the philosopher should not consistently be harsh (βαρύς), but should on occasion be gentle (ήπιος) as a nurse. Paul says that he was prepared to lay down his life for his converts (v. 8), that, like a father with his children, he worked with each one individually (ἐνά ἑκαστον ὑμῶν, v. 10), and that, although as an apostle of Christ he could have been demanding of them, he was gentle as a nurse (δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει... ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν ἡπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, ὡς ἐκν τρόφος θάλπη τα ἑαυτῆς τέκνα, vss. 6 f.) 1)

The similarities between Paul and Dio, and between Paul and Cynicism in general, can be extended, but these suffice to show that there are verbal and formal parallels between Paul and Dio that must be taken into account in any consideration of I Thess. ii. One is not obliged to suppose that Dio was responding to specific statements that had been made about him personally. In view of the different types of Cynics who were about, it had become desirable, when describing oneself as a philosopher, to do so in negative and antithetic terms. This is the context within which Paul describes his activity in Thessalonica. We cannot determine from his description that he is making a personal apology.

Two final cautions are in order. In the first place, to point out these striking similarities of language does not obviate the need to give serious attention to the exegetical problems in I Thess. ii and elsewhere where the same subject is discussed. In the second place, to point out that Paul had the same practical concerns as Dio, and that he used the same language in dealing with them, does not imply that he understood these words to mean the same thing they did to Dio. As we have seen, the Cynics differed among themselves as to what they meant by the same language. The further step must be taken of coming to a clearer perception of the self-understanding(s) of the Cynics before investigating Paul's thinking on his ministry against the background. This study has attempted to demonstrate that such an effort will be fruitful.

1) Pedro Gutierrez, La paternité spirituelle selon Saint Paul (1968), pp. 87-117, does not seriously consider the possibility of the Cynic background of this passage. For the same παρενησια-φιλία τόπος elsewhere in Paul, see Philem. 8 f.