



# The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch

*Raffaella Cribiore*

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## **The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch** Raffaella Cribiore

This book is a study of the fourth-century sophist Libanius, a major intellectual figure who ran one of the most prestigious schools of rhetoric in the later Roman Empire. He was a tenacious adherent of pagan religion and a friend of the emperor Julian, but also taught leaders of the early Christian church like St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great. Raffaella Cribiore examines Libanius's training and personality, showing him to be a vibrant educator, though somewhat gloomy and anxious by nature. She traces how he cultivated a wide network of friends and former pupils and courted powerful officials to recruit top students. Cribiore describes his school in Antioch--how students applied, how they were evaluated and trained, and how Libanius reported progress to their families. She details the professional opportunities that a thorough training in rhetoric opened up for young men of the day. Also included here are translations of 200 of Libanius's most important letters on education, almost none of which have appeared in English before.

Cribiore casts into striking relief the importance of rhetoric in late antiquity and its influence not only on pagan intellectuals but also on prominent Christian figures. She gives a balanced view of Libanius and his circle against the far-flung panorama of the Greek East.

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