

## Plutarch's Portrait of Socrates

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Since the recent studies of K. Döring, it is clear that there was a renewal of interest in the person of Socrates in the first and second centuries A.D.<sup>1</sup> Such an interest is reflected, for example, by Dio of Prusa's speeches on Socrates (*Or.* 54 and 55), and by frequent references to him in the works of Seneca and of Epictetus. Indeed, as Döring observed in *Exemplum Socratis*, a study of Socrates' influence on the Cynic-Stoic popular philosophy of the early Empire, Plutarch was influenced by and contributed much to his contemporaries' concerns with Socrates,<sup>2</sup> writing at least three works on Socrates, two of which are lost: *A Defense of Socrates* ('Απολογία ὑπὲρ Σωκράτους), and *On the Condemnation of Socrates* (Περὶ τῆς Σωκράτους ψηφίσεως).<sup>3</sup> A third work, *On the Sign of Socrates* (Περὶ τοῦ Σωκράτους δαίμονιου or *De genio Socratis*) is still extant, and has recently received great attention.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the first of the *Platonic Questions*

<sup>1</sup> K. Döring, "Sokrates bei Epiktet" in *Studia Platonica. Festschrift für Hermann Gundert* (Amsterdam 1974) 195–226. See also his *Exemplum Socratis: Studien zur Sokratesnachwirkung in der kynisch-stoischen Popularphilosophie der frühen Kaiserzeit und im frühen Christentum = Hermes Einzelschriften* 42 (Wiesbaden 1979). For the importance of Socrates in later Greek thought, see also W. Schmid and O. Stählin, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, Pt. I, Vol. III: *Die klassische Periode der griechischen Literatur* (Munich 1940) 276–77.

<sup>2</sup> Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 9–11, briefly mentions aspects of Plutarch's treatment of Socrates, but he is mainly concerned with Seneca, Epictetus, and Dio of Prusa, and has little on Plutarch.

<sup>3</sup> These are No. 189 and No. 190 respectively in the so-called Lamprias Catalogue of Plutarch's works, on which see K. Ziegler, *Plutarchos von Chaironeia* (Stuttgart 1964) 60–64 = s.v. "Plutarchos," *RE* 21. I (1951) cols. 696–702.

<sup>4</sup> For example, by A. Corlu, *Plutarque, Le démon de Socrate* (Paris 1970); A. Aloni, "Osservazioni sul *De genio Socratis* di Plutarco," *Museum Criticum = Quaderni dell' Istituto di Filologia classica dell' Università di Bologna* 10–12 (1977) 233–41, and A. Aloni, "Ricerche sulla forma letteraria del *De genio Socratis* di Plutarco," *Acme* 33 (1980) 45–112; M. Riley, "The Purpose and Unity of Plutarch's *De genio Socratis*," *GRBS* (1977) 257–73; D. Babut, "Le dialogue de Plutarque *Sur le démon de Socrate*. Essai d'interprétation," *BAGB* (1984) 51–76; K. Döring, "Plutarch und das Daimonion des Sokrates (Plut., *de genio Socratis* Kap. 202–04)," *Mnemosyne* 37 (1984) 376–92; and P. Desideri, "Il *De genio Socratis* di Plutarco: Un esempio di 'storiografia tragica,'" *Athenaeum: Studi periodici di Pavia* 62 (1984) 569–85. A. Barigazzi is currently completing a study of Plutarch's *De genio Socratis*, a version of which was presented at a conference of the International Plutarch Society held in Athens, June, 1987 [see *infra*, No. 14].

(Πλατωνικὰ ζητήματα, 999C–1000E) deals with the problem of why god commanded Socrates to act as midwife to others, but prevented him from himself begetting.<sup>5</sup>

Speculation on Plutarch's lost treatises is futile. Possibly they were directed against Polycrates' *Accusation of Socrates* (Κατηγορία Σωκράτους), but as Döring noted, this matter "entzieht sich unserer Kenntnis."<sup>6</sup> Yet the extant *De genio Socratis*, and numerous references to Socrates in the *Moralia* and *Lives*, deserve attention, and contribute much toward a reconstruction of Plutarch's portrait of Socrates. Hence, this study's purpose is to present a comprehensive and detailed examination of Plutarch's treatment of Socrates, in which problems concerning Plutarch's sources and reasons for referring to Socrates are considered. It is hoped that such a study provides insights into an era when Socrates was once more in vogue, and illuminates Plutarch's own thinking as a representative of the Academy.<sup>7</sup>

For the moment, source questions require brief consideration: Plutarch knew the works of Plato and of Xenophon quite well.<sup>8</sup> That these two authors' accounts of Socrates were almost definitive for later antiquity, was stressed by G. C. Field and others,<sup>9</sup> and Plutarch's derivation of many

<sup>5</sup> For an excellent introduction to *Quaest. Plat.*, see H. Cherniss, *Plutarch's Moralia* XIII, Pt. I in the Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, Mass. 1976) 2–17. The text, translation, and notes are also quite valuable. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are from the Loeb Classical Library volumes, hereafter *LCL*.

<sup>6</sup> Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 2, note 5. For more on Polycrates, see chap. 4 of A. H. Chroust, *Socrates, Man and Myth* (London 1957), E. R. Dodds, *Plato, Gorgias* (Oxford 1959) 28 ff., and W.K.C. Guthrie, *Socrates* (Cambridge 1971) 11 ff. = *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Pt. 2, Vol. III (Cambridge 1969) 311 ff., hereafter *HGPH*.

<sup>7</sup> See Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 7–8. For the so-called Old Academy, there is no extant evidence of Socrates' importance. Beginning with Arcesilaus, however, there is evidence for interest in Socrates' disclaimer to knowledge and his use of the *elenchus*. Plutarch represented so-called Middle Platonism, on which see J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London 1977) 184–230.

<sup>8</sup> For Plutarch's knowledge of Plato, see the still valuable study of R. M. Jones, *The Platonism of Plutarch* (Menasha, Wisconsin 1916), and the many references in W. C. Helmbold and E. N. O'Neil, *Plutarch's Quotations*, APA Monograph 19 (Oxford 1959) 56–63. For Xenophon, *ibid.*, 75–76, and Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 286 = *RE* 21.1, col. 923, who affirms that Plutarch knew the writings of Xenophon (whom he considered a philosopher) "wirklich gut und gründlich."

<sup>9</sup> See G. C. Field, "Socrates and Plato in post-Aristotelian Tradition," *CQ* 18 (1924) 127 ff. Aristotle and Aristophanes are often considered sources for the historical Socrates. Aristotle, however, probably relied on Plato, Xenophon, and other Socratics for his information, and Aristophanes was not concerned with impartial examination of Socrates. For a judicious account of Aristotle and the comic poets, see Guthrie, *Socrates*, 35–37 = *HGPH*, 355–57. A useful treatment of Aristotle as a source for Socrates is T. Deman, *Le témoignage d'Aristote sur Socrate* (Paris 1942), who collected Aristotle's texts on Socrates, and who gave a summary (11–21) of previous scholarship on Socrates.

reports on Socrates from Plato's dialogues is beyond reasonable doubt. There are, for example, likely references to the *Apology* at 1116F and 1117E; to the *Phaedo* at 16C, 17F, 499B, 607F, 934F, and 975B; to the *Symposium* at 632B, 707A, 710C, 823D, and 1117E; to the *Theaetetus* at 999C ff., and to the *Meno* at 93B.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in combining historical narrative with philosophical discussion in *De gen. Socr.*, Plutarch used the *Phaedo* as a model, and various parallels between both works have often been noticed.<sup>11</sup> Plutarch also relied on Xenophon's *Symposium* and *Memorabilia* as sources, e.g., the former at 124E, 130F, 401C, 630A, 632B, 709E, 711E, and the latter at 124D, 328E, 513D, and 661F. In addition to works of Plato and of Xenophon, Plutarch was familiar with Aristotle's "Platonic writings" (see 118C, most likely a reference to Aristotle's *On Philosophy*),<sup>12</sup> Demetrius of Phalerum's *Socrates* (see *Aristid.* 1. 2 and 27. 3),<sup>13</sup> and with Panaetius' *Socrates* (*Aristid.* 1 and 27. 3). In this latter work Panaetius apparently denied that Socrates had a second wife, and it was perhaps due to Panaetius' influence that Socrates as a thinker who "brought philosophy down from the skies" (see *Cic. Tusc.* 5. 4. 10) became a popular belief.<sup>14</sup> Plutarch's other sources, e.g., at 486E, 512F, and 516C, are unknown, but the majority of his reports remain traceable to Plato and Xenophon.

That Plutarch's interest in Socrates was more than biographical, is well illustrated by a passage in *Quaestiones convivales* VIII.1 (717B ff.), where he states that "on the sixth of Thargelion we celebrated the birthday of Socrates, and on the seventh that of Plato." These dates also furnished Plutarch and his company with their topics: days on which some eminent persons were born, and stories of births from divine parents. Later in the symposium, Florus,<sup>15</sup> a friend of Plutarch very familiar with the

<sup>10</sup> See the notes on these passages in the appropriate *LCL* volumes. References to Socrates and Plato's *Apology* are also in the probably spurious *Letter of Condolence to Apollonius* (*Consolatio ad Apollonium*). On this work, see Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 158-65 = *RE* 21. 1 cols. 794-802.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Riley, *GRBS* 18 (1977) 258, or R. Hirzel, *Der Dialog*, Vol. II (Leipzig 1895) 148-51.

<sup>12</sup> See R. Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes = Acta Philosophica Fennica* 7 (1955) 282-83.

<sup>13</sup> On Demetrius and Peripatetic interest in Socrates, see Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 4-5 and Schmid-Stählin, *Geschichte*, 276.

<sup>14</sup> See Guthrie, *Socrates*, 98 = *HGPH*, 418, M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, Vol. I (Göttingen 1947), and Schmid-Stählin, *Geschichte*, 239. According to Plutarch, the story that Socrates had a second wife, Myrto, was doubted by Panaetius (*Aristid.* 27).

<sup>15</sup> On Florus, see Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 51-52 = *RE* 21. 1, cols. 687-88, and C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford 1971) 49. According to Jones, Florus "exhibits the same antiquarian tastes that had amused Vespasian long ago." It was through Florus that Plutarch obtained Roman citizenship.

philosophies of Plato and of Aristotle, claims that Apollo by Socrates' agency (διὰ Σωκράτους) made Plato heal greater ailments and illnesses than those cured by Asclepius (717D-E). For Plutarch himself, philosophy had practical results, and he did not believe that it consisted of *ex cathedra* pronouncements, or of learned commentaries. Philosophy involved all of daily life, and at *An seni republ. ger. sit.* 796D, he writes:

Socrates at any rate was a philosopher, although he did not set out benches or seat himself in an armchair or observe a fixed hour for conversing or promenading with his pupils, but jested with them, when it so happened, and drank with them, served in the army, or lounged in the market-place with some of them, and finally was imprisoned, and drank the poison. He was the first to show that life at all times and in all parts, in all experiences and activities, universally admits philosophy.

(H. N. Fowler's translation)

The above passage demonstrates well Plutarch's concern for ethics or practical morality, and his conviction that philosophy is, above all, the art of living well.<sup>16</sup> Similar views about Socrates are expressed at *Quaest. Plat.* 999E, *De curios.* 516C, and *Adv. Col.* 1117D-E. These passages reflect not only a "Zeitgeist," but also Plutarch's personal beliefs, beliefs often formed or held in opposition to rival philosophical schools. A clear illustration of this phenomenon is the *Adversus Colotem*. In order to understand Plutarch's polemic against Colotes, it must be remembered that Plutarch was probably a life-long opponent of Epicureanism, and that Socrates was much maligned by the Epicureans, e.g., by Zeno of Sidon, who considered Socrates *scurra Atticus*,<sup>17</sup> and by Colotes in his "On the Point that Conformity to the Views of the Other Philosophers Actually Makes it Impossible to Live."<sup>18</sup> When beginning his defense of the philosophers attacked by Colotes, Plutarch specifically mentions the "insolent rudeness" of Colotes' critique of Socrates (1108B). As R. Westman noticed, Colotes' attack on Socrates was enough "einen überzeugten Sokrates-Verehrer vor den Kopf zu stossen."<sup>19</sup> After Plutarch's

<sup>16</sup> D. Babut calls attention to Plutarch's interest in practical philosophy, an interest which is among "des traits communs dès l'époque hellénistique," *Plutarque et le Stoïcisme* (Paris 1969) 276 f.

<sup>17</sup> R. Flacelière's thesis that there was an evolution in Plutarch's attitude toward Epicureanism seems untenable. For his views, see "Plutarque et l'épicurisme," *Epicurea, in memoriam Hectoris Bignone*, (Genoa 1959) 197-215, and for criticism, see H. Adam, *Plutarchs Schrift non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum = Studien zur antiken Philosophie 4* (Amsterdam 1974) 3. For the Epicurean attack on Socrates, see Schmid-Stählin, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, Pt. I, Vol. III, 276, and Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, especially 60-66 and 274-75.

<sup>18</sup> The translation of the title is that of the *LCL*, on which see B. Einarson and P. De Lacy, *Plutarch's Moralia XIV* (Cambridge, Mass. 1967) 153 ff. The probably definitive study of this work is R. Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*.

<sup>19</sup> Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 123.

initial remark that Colotes' manner of "presenting Socrates with 'grass' and asking how comes it that he puts his food in his mouth and not in his ear," might cause laughter when thinking of Socrates' "gentleness and kindness" (πραότητα καὶ χάριν),<sup>20</sup> he discusses Colotes' charges in detail, providing more information about Colotes' book than in any other section of *Adv. Col.* (see 1116E–19C). Plutarch considers three matters in Colotes' treatment of Socrates: 1) the famous Delphic oracle in which Socrates was declared the wisest of mortals (1116E–17C); 2) Socrates' belief that sense perception is not accurate or trustworthy (1117D–18B; and 3) Socrates' inquiry into the nature of human beings (τί ἄνθρωπός ἐστι), and the famous Delphic inscription "know yourself" (1118C–19C).<sup>21</sup>

Each of Colotes' charges is met by Plutarch with polemics against the Epicureans. For example, Colotes' accusation that Chaerephon's report on the Delphic oracle is nothing but "a cheap and sophistical tale" (τὸ τελέως σοφιστικὸν καὶ φορτικὸν διήγημα, 1116F) is rebutted as follows: if this was a cheap sophist's trick, then adulation of Epicurus by his followers is equally cheap and sophistical. *Tu quoque* criticism is also in Plutarch's response to Colotes' attack on Socrates' views of sense perception, which are discussed at some length. Plutarch concludes: "of these matters Colotes will give us an occasion to speak again" (1118B–C), presumably in his account of the Cyrenaics and the Academy of Arcesilaus at 1120F–21E and 1123B–24B.<sup>22</sup>

Plutarch was angered by Colotes' "blasphemies" of Socrates (1117E), and Colotes' critique of Socrates' alleged scepticism especially disturbed him. Now some of Colotes' criticisms of Socrates are similar to those directed against Arcesilaus (see 1121F ff.), and hence there is reason for thinking that Colotes' treatment of Socrates as a Sceptic was partially influenced by Arcesilaus' views, and that Colotes' general accusation that the philosophers made life impossible, is a variant of his attack on the Academic Sceptics.<sup>23</sup>

Little is known about Arcesilaus, who was probably scholarch of the Academy when attacked by Colotes,<sup>24</sup> but Plutarch reports that sophists contemporary with Arcesilaus accused him of foisting his scepticism on Socrates, Plato, Parmenides, and Heraclitus (see 1121F–22A).<sup>25</sup> Hence, in

<sup>20</sup> Einarson and De Lacy, *LCL* XIV, 195, translate the phrase as "unruffled wit" (1108B).

<sup>21</sup> Each of Colotes' charges is discussed in detail by Westman who plausibly observes that Colotes derived his information about Socrates from Plato's dialogues. Yet Colotes apparently realized that Plato sometimes used Socrates as a spokesman for his own views. See Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 63, note 1.

<sup>22</sup> On Plutarch's defense of Arcesilaus, *ibid.*, 76–79, and 293–294.

<sup>23</sup> See the remarks of Einarson and De Lacy, *LCL* XIV, 153–57.

<sup>24</sup> See Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 77, note 3; *LCL* XIV, 154, note a; and Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 9.

<sup>25</sup> The "sophists" were probably the Theodorean and Bion. See *LCL* XIV, 277, note e. See also Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 294.

treating Socrates as a Sceptic, Colotes seems to agree with an Academic tradition possibly going back to Arcesilaus (cf. Cic. *Acad. post.* 1. 4. 15–18). In any case, Colotes attacked Socrates for denying the “plain evidence of the senses” (see 1117F), and for considering sense perception unreliable.

Was the basis for Colotes' polemic, then, a Sceptic interpretation of Socrates, and does *Adversus Colotem*, together with other works of Plutarch, show that Plutarch himself was an Academic Sceptic? This composite question can probably be answered in the negative.<sup>26</sup> First, in defending Arcesilaus against the charge of foisting his own belief about “the impossibility of infallible apprehension on Socrates,” Plutarch asserts at 1122A that Socrates and other thinkers did not need such an interpretation, and “we are thankful to Colotes and everyone who shows that the Academic reasoning came to Arcesilaus as an ancient tradition (ἀνωθεν ἦκειν εἰς Ἀρκεσίλαον).” Second, Plato's tremendous influence on Plutarch cannot be overlooked, and is far more important than that of any other thinker. For example, at *De aud. poet.* 17 D–F Plutarch argues that the poetic art is not concerned with truth, and that truth about divine matters is very hard to obtain, as Empedocles, Xenophanes, and Socrates realized.<sup>27</sup> In support of his mention of Socrates, Plutarch probably relies on Plato's *Phaedo* (69D). Also at *Quaest. Plat.* 999E–F Plutarch emphasizes Socrates' aversion to dogmatism:

So Socrates with his refutatory discourse (τὸν ἐλεγκτικὸν λόγον) like a purgative medicine by maintaining nothing claimed the credence of others when he refuted them, and he got the greater hold on them because he seemed to be seeking the truth along with them, not himself to be defending an opinion of his own.

(H. Cherniss's translation)

A similar opinion about Socrates is expressed at *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur* 72A, where Plutarch states that Socrates quietly took young men to task, “not assuming he himself was exempted from ignorance, but thinking that he along with them had to study virtue, and to seek for truth.”<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the idea of Socrates as someone who treated not the body, but purged “the ulcerous and corrupted soul” is found at *Quaest. Plat.* 1000C. As Cherniss noted, the source for this latter view of Socrates is Plato's *Sophist* 230c–231b, and inspiration for the first of Plutarch's

<sup>26</sup> J. Schroeter's belief that Plutarch was a Sceptic, *Plutarchs Stellung zur Skepsis* (Greifswald 1911), has been well argued against by P. De Lacy, “Plutarch and the Academic Sceptics,” *CJ* 49 (1953–54) 79–85.

<sup>27</sup> Schroeter cites this passage, *Plutarchs Stellung*, 24, as an example of Plutarch's scepticism, but Plutarch is thinking of the Socrates of Plato's *Phaedo*. Earlier in *De aud. poet.* (at 16C), Plutarch relies on the *Phaedo* when he reports that Socrates took up poetry and put Aesop's fables into verses.

<sup>28</sup> See also *Adv. Col.* 1117D, and Cherniss, *LCL* XIII, Pt. I, 22, note c.

*Quaest. Plat.* is clearly Plato's *Theaetetus*.<sup>29</sup> Nothing thus far indicates that Plutarch's portrait of Socrates was based on anything other than Plato's works.

Returning to *Adv. Col.* and to Colotes' polemic against Socrates: when Colotes attacked Socrates for denying the reliability of sense perception, he was probably not thinking of Socrates' often expressed conviction that he knew nothing. According to R. Westman, Socrates' disclaimer of knowledge was "allgemein und prinzipiell," whereas Colotes attacked a specific δόξα on sense perception's reliability.<sup>30</sup> Possibly Colotes thought of Socrates' critique of knowledge as sense perception in the *Theaetetus* (151e–186e), or still more likely, of *Phaedo* 83a, where Socrates claims that lovers of knowledge realize that "the eyes and the ears and the other senses are full of deceit (ἀπάτης)." In brief, there are no good reasons to look beyond Plato's writings either for Colotes' attack on Socrates, or for Plutarch's views on Socrates. Plutarch himself was not an Academic Skeptic, and his portrayal of Socrates goes back mainly to Plato, and not to Arcesilaus.

Any interpretation of Socrates as an Academic or theoretical Skeptic should also take account of Plutarch's other remarks on Socrates. At *Adv. Col.* 1117A he is called "a zealot (θεόληπτος, lit. 'inspired' or 'possessed') for virtue," and Plutarch later mentions the importance of Socrates' teaching for preservation of human society (1124D). Again, at 1126B Plutarch commends Socrates' refusal to escape from prison,<sup>31</sup> and his adherence to Athens' decrees. Other incidents in Socrates' public life cited at *Adv. Col.* 1117D are also in Plutarch's *Alcibiades* (7. 4–6). In brief, Socrates not only conversed with his fellow citizens (see also *De latenter viv.* 1128F) and cast doubt on sense perception: he was a thinker with an active role in his community, and a seeker after virtue.

This latter aspect of Plutarch's portrait also appears in *Alcibiades*.<sup>32</sup> Though Socrates competed with others for Alcibiades' affection, he somehow mastered (ἐκράτει) him to the extent that he respected only Socrates (6. 1). Whenever Socrates found Alcibiades full of debauchery and vanity (Θρύψεως καὶ χαννότητος), he influenced him with his talk, and Alcibiades learned ever more about his lack of virtue (6. 4). At Potidaea, Socrates was Alcibiades' "tent-mate and comrade-in-action," and defended the wounded man. Plutarch most likely draws on Plato's *Symposium*<sup>33</sup> to portray Socrates in his *Alcibiades* as a person of action: he campaigned at

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 and 22, note a.

<sup>30</sup> Westman, *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 62 ff.

<sup>31</sup> Plutarch's words on Socrates' refusal to escape, "klingen," according to Westmann, "wie ein Nachhall von Xen. *Mem.* 4. 4. 4," *Plutarch gegen Kolotes*, 274–75.

<sup>32</sup> For a very readable account of the *Alcibiades*, see D. A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London 1972) 117–29.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

Potidaea and at Delium (7. 4), and he was generally a restraint to the ambitious Alcibiades.

After narrating these incidents, Plutarch mentions Socrates only once more in *Alcibiades*, before the disastrous Sicilian expedition (17. 4):

Socrates the philosopher, however, and Meton the astrologer, are said to have had no hopes that any good would come to the city from this expedition; Socrates, as it is likely, because he got an inkling of the future from the divine guide (τοῦ δαιμονίου) who was his familiar. . .

(B. Perrin's translation)

Some fourteen years after this expedition, both Socrates and Alcibiades were dead.<sup>34</sup>

A contrast like that between the ambitious, dissolute Alcibiades and the serene, self-controlled Socrates is at *De tranq.* 466D–67C, where Plutarch briefly compares Socrates with the legendary Phaethon. In this “central passage” of *De tranq. an.*, Plutarch claims that reason and wisdom (τὸ φρονεῖν) produce contentment whatever life's circumstances may be.<sup>35</sup> A series of paired examples (παραδείγματα) supports this thesis: Alexander contrasted with Crates, Agamemnon with Diogenes, and Socrates with Phaethon. In each pair, the difference between contentment and discontent depends on reason and wisdom, and the philosopher is meant to be the more fortunate: Socrates conversed philosophically with friends in prison, whereas Phaethon, gone to heaven, wept “because no one would deliver to him his father's horses and chariots.”<sup>36</sup> Alcibiades' discontented life is not unlike Phaethon's, and in both cases Socrates exemplified the life of reason and reflection.

The friendship or love between Socrates and Alcibiades introduces a common theme of Middle Platonic literature: that of Eros, and especially Socrates' ἐρωτικὴ τέχνη.<sup>37</sup> For not only in the *Alcibiades*, but also in the *Amatorius* (primarily chaps. 13–21),<sup>38</sup> and in *Quaest. Plat.* 1. 4 (1000D–E),

<sup>34</sup> In Plutarch's “comparison” (σύγκρισις) of Alcibiades and Coriolanus, not a word is mentioned about Socrates.

<sup>35</sup> See D. A. Russell, *Plutarch*, 24–25.

<sup>36</sup> The pairing of Socrates and Phaethon may be Plutarch's own, but as D. A. Russell noted (*ibid.* 24–25) Socrates and Phaethon also appear as examples of wisdom and folly in *De exilio* 607F. Perhaps the contrast was an “inherited commonplace.”

<sup>37</sup> See *De Pythiae oraculis* 406A, where it is remarked that “it is not righteous nor honourable to say that the Academy and Socrates and Plato's congregation were loveless, for we may read their amatory discourses (λόγοις ἐρωτικοῖς).” See also Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 10–11, who notes that Plutarch's friend Favorinus composed a work on Socrates and his ἐρωτικὴς τέχνης.

<sup>38</sup> Commenting on Plutarch's views on love, A. Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (London 1974) 61, writes: “In the *Amatorius*, however, which is Plutarch's version of Plato's *Symposium*, the writer does expressly idealize love between man and woman as preferable to a pederastic relationship. There is some disagreement here between the Plutarch of the *Lives* and the



Plutarch deals with Socrates' "amatory art." In this latter work, Plutarch discusses Socrates' role as midwife, and asserts that Socrates' view of wisdom (σοφία), or what "he called passion for the divine and intelligible" ((τήν) περὶ τὸ θεῖον καὶ νοητὸν ἐρωτικὴν), is for mortals not a matter of procreation or of discovery, but of reminiscence (ἀνάμνησις). Plutarch also claims that Socrates taught nothing, but by arousing perplexities in young men, he helped them to deliver their "innate conceptions" (ἔμφυτοι νοήσεις).<sup>39</sup> Socrates called this procedure "obstetric skill" (μαιωτικὴν τέχνην). Platonic views of Socrates are obviously in Plutarch's mind, for explicit reference to the *Theaetetus* is at the beginning of *Quaest. Plat.* 1 (997D), and Socrates' beliefs about "wisdom," and the power of Eros are traceable to the *Republic* and *Symposium*.

Plutarch's *Amatorius*, one of his "loveliest creations," treats the concept of Eros at great length.<sup>40</sup> Without detailed analysis of the dialogue, the following observations seem sufficient. Plutarch's view of Eros in the *Amat.* is basically that of the *Phaedrus*, where Socrates claims that Eros "is a god or something divine" (θεὸς ἢ τι θεῖον, 242d-e). Hence, Plutarch's insistence on Eros' divinity (756A-63F) differs from the view of Eros in the *Symposium*, where Diotima claims that Eros is not a god, but a *daimon*, or a being intermediate between gods and mortals.<sup>41</sup> Second, Eros' function, according to Plutarch at 764E-66B and 766E-67B, is to guide souls of lovers by recollection (ἀνάμνησις) to Beauty "pure and genuine" (καθαρὸν καὶ ἀψευδὲς . . . κάλλος, 765A). Differences between the sun and Eros are noted: The sun is visible, Eros is intelligible; the sun directs attention away from intelligibles to sensibles, whereas Eros does the opposite (764D-E). In brief, in these sections of the *Amat.* Plutarch works with material taken from Plato, especially the *Phaedrus* (Socrates' palinode in 244a-57b), and the *Symposium* (the Diotima-Socrates passage, 201d-12a). Yet Plutarch does not merely borrow from Plato—he mingles his own thoughts with those of his master, e.g., the "quite un-Platonic" references to fair women and their importance in awakening the soul to beauty (766E ff.).<sup>42</sup>

Plutarch of the *Moralia*; yet it is probably true to say that both in the *Lives* and in the *Amatorius* his main target is pedreastic sexual indulgence."

<sup>39</sup> The conceptions are not "inbred" as they were for the Stoics. See Chemiss, *LCL* XIII, Pt. I, 28, note c.

<sup>40</sup> The phrase is Ziegler's who writes, *Plutarchos*, 159 = *RE* 21. 1, col. 796, that the *Amat.* ". . . zu seinen schönsten Schöpfungen zählt und auch kompositionell, in der Verschlingung der novellistischen Handlung mit der Erörterung des durch sie gelieferten Themas, besonders gelungen ist."

<sup>41</sup> I am especially indebted to H. Martin Jr.'s discussion for this and other observations on the *Amatorius*. See his "Plutarch, Plato, and Eros" *CB* 60 (1984) 82-88.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

In the *Amatorius* and *Quaestiones Platonicae* passages noted above, emphasis is on Eros' role in "recollection" (ἀνάμνησις) of the eternal Forms. Despite this similarity, the works are very different in genre, and in their treatment of Socrates. In *Quaest. Plat.* I, Socrates' role as midwife is the focus of the inquiry, whereas in the *Amat.* Socrates is mentioned only once at (762D) in connection with Anytus' friendship with Alcibiades and his prosecution of Socrates.<sup>43</sup> Given the works' different natures, Plutarch's reticence about Socrates in the *Amat.* may not be surprising. But it is possible to go further, as H. Martin, Jr. has argued.

The *Amatorius* opens with conversation between Plutarch's son Autobulus and Flavian.<sup>44</sup> Autobulus had agreed to narrate a dialogue learned from his father (748E ff.), and within this narrative Plutarch himself assumes the role of main speaker. Commenting on Plutarch in the *Amat.*, H. Martin, Jr. wrote:

... by casting himself as his own spokesman in the *Amatorius*, a role Plato has reserved for Socrates in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, Plutarch is thereby presenting himself as Socrates' successor . . .<sup>45</sup>

Martin's remark is persuasive. It calls attention to Socrates and Plato as Plutarch's spiritual ancestors, and explains his avoidance of Socrates' name other than at 762D. In brief, the *Amatorius* is an important work for Plutarch's understanding of the Platonic-Socratic concept of Eros.

Another popular subject of Middle Platonic literature was Socrates' *daimonion*; e.g., Apuleius' *De deo Socratis*, esp. chaps. 17–20, and Maximus of Tyre's lectures (Διαλέξεις), 8 and 9, represent interest in this phenomenon. There was apparently a "Dämonisierung" in the religious and philosophical beliefs of the early principate,<sup>46</sup> and so, not surprisingly, Plutarch devoted *De genio Socratis* to this topic. But his interest in Socrates' *daimonion* was not confined to this treatise. In *Quaest. Plat.* I (999D–E and 1000D), Plutarch refers to Socrates' "divine sign,"<sup>47</sup> and his references will be considered after examination of *De gen. Socr.*

In addition to A. Corlu's work on *De gen. Socr.* (1970), two other studies especially helpful for understanding this dialogue are those of M. Riley and D. Babut, both concerned with problems of the unity and purpose of *De gen. Socr.*<sup>48</sup> They seem agreed that the dialogue's true subject is neither the liberation of Thebes, nor the nature of Socrates' *daimonion*.

<sup>43</sup> As Wardman noted, *Plutarch's Lives*, 202–04, Plutarch says little either in the extant *Moralia* or *Lives* about Socrates' trial. In *Nicias* 23, for example, he mentions Protagoras' exile and Anaxagoras' imprisonment, and "for good measure in his illustration he throws in the trial of Socrates."

<sup>44</sup> On Flavian, see Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 39–40 = RE 21. 1, cols. 675–76.

<sup>45</sup> Martin, *CB* 60 (1984) 87.

<sup>46</sup> See Döring, *Exemplum Socratis*, 11.

<sup>47</sup> See Cherniss, *LCL* XIII, Pt. I, 21, note e.

<sup>48</sup> See note 4 of this study for bibliographical details.

Rather a main concern of *De gen. Socr.* is the relationship between the "practical life" (πρακτικὸς βίος) and the "contemplative" or "theoretical" life (θεωρητικὸς βίος). Beyond this point, their interpretations diverge. Riley saw tension between the two kinds of life "resolved completely in Socrates," who "was the only man who could combine both the role of the complete philosopher . . . and the role of the active citizen."<sup>49</sup> In bridging the "gap" between these roles, Socrates' *daimonion* had decisive influence, for "Socrates displayed concretely the type of soul that a *daimon* could guide."<sup>50</sup> Babut, however, found in *De gen. Socr.* a fundamental opposition between the practical and contemplative lives, and regarded Socrates not as combining them, but as the "divine" man, the pure philosopher who, like Epameinondas, "refuse les compromissions de l'action politique."<sup>51</sup>

Both scholars perhaps overstated their positions, and review of Plutarch's portrayal of Socrates in *De gen. Socr.* is in order. First mention of Socrates is at 588B, where Galaxidorus responds to Theanor's dependence on a divine sign (δαμόνιον) as an example of "humbug and superstition" (τύφου καὶ δεισιδαιμονίας). For him, philosophy is a matter of reason without recourse to divination and visions; Socrates is the true philosopher who avoided "humbug."<sup>52</sup>

The seer Theocritus objects, and cites Socrates' own *daimonion* as proof of divine guidance. His ensuing exchange with Galaxidorus is interrupted by Polymnis, who reports that some believed Socrates' divine sign was a sneeze which encouraged or prevented action contingent on its occurrence (581A–B).<sup>53</sup> Polymnis disbelieves this explanation, because Socrates' actions and convictions were not those of one guided by sneezes or voices, but "by a higher authority and principle to noble conduct" (581D).

While discussing Socrates' sign, Polymnis mentions some biographical particulars: Socrates' life-long poverty,<sup>54</sup> his safe retreat from Delium in response to his *daimonion*,<sup>55</sup> his prediction of Athenian failure in Sicily, his refusal to escape from prison, and his fearlessness toward death. These biographical details are probably important, as will be seen, for Plutarch's portrayal of Socrates in *De gen. Socr.*

<sup>49</sup> Riley, *GRBS* 18 (1977) 268–69.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>51</sup> Babut, *BAGB* (1984) 72–73.

<sup>52</sup> Galaxidorus probably offers only a partial view of Socrates. For Galaxidorus, and all persons of the dialogue, see Corlu, *Le démon de Socrate*, 13–22. Galaxidorus is discussed in 18–19 *et passim*. It is interesting to note that "humbug" (τύφος) appears in Plutarch's other descriptions of Socrates. The term was used by the Cynics, and may represent Cynic influence. See I. Nachov, "Der Mensch in der Philosophie der Kyniker," in *Der Mensch als Mass der Dinge*, ed. R. Müller (Berlin 1976) 375 and 380.

<sup>53</sup> On this view attributed to Tersion of Megara, see Corlu, *Le démon de Socrate*, 50.

<sup>54</sup> Socrates' poverty is mentioned elsewhere by Plutarch, e.g. at 84F of *Quomodo quis suos in virtute sentiat profectus*.

<sup>55</sup> Together with Alcibiades and Laches.

Galaxidorus then expresses interest in Simmias' views on Socrates, and briefly rebuts Polymnis by asserting that experts in divination see great significance in minor signs such as sneezes, just as readers learn about wars and rulers from the alphabet's letters, which mean nothing to illiterates. A sign can have divine origin; it is an instrument of a god used to communicate with mortals (581F–82C).

Discussion of Socrates' *daimonion* ends temporarily with the entrance of the mysterious visitor, Theanor.<sup>56</sup> At 588B it resumes with Simmias' interpretation of Socrates' sign. For him, this was a voice (φωνή) from the divine realm, and a guide in life (ἡγεμόνα πρὸς τὸν βίον, 589F). Socrates' intellect (νοῦς) and soul were guided by a superior intellect and more divine soul (ὑπὸ νοῦ κρείσσονος . . . καὶ ψυχῆς θειοτέρας, 589B), and so Socrates did not need to interpret the "symbols" of human speech in order to have contact with the divine.

Simmias then relates the experiences of Timarchus, also Socrates' disciple, in Trophonius' cave at Lebadeia.<sup>57</sup> Briefly, after a vision of the cosmos, Timarchus hears a voice describing the nature of *daimones* and of human souls (591D–92E). Every soul has a higher part which many call intellect or mind (νοῦς), but which should really be called the *daimon* (591E). "Daimonic" influence on human souls is as follows. There are souls so immersed in the body and distracted by passions, that they pay almost no attention to their *daimones*. Timarchus sees them moving about confusedly (591D). Other souls are partly submerged in the body and give their *daimones* some control, but move in jerks, since their *daimones* must occasionally pull on the reins guiding them (591E–92B). Still other souls obey their *daimones* from birth, and are inspired (θεοκλυτούμενον, 592C), or become obedient because of their nurture and education (διὰ τροφήν καὶ παιδείαν, 592A).

After Simmias' report of Timarchus' vision, Theanor gives a somewhat different account of *daimones*.<sup>58</sup> He explains how the gods guide the best mortals directly "by language expressed in symbols" (λόγῳ δια συμβόλων, 593B). Other mortals are guided by the signs and omens from which divination arises. According to Theanor, *daimones* are souls released from the cycle of rebirth and who assist mortals near their cycle's end, just as athletes help their successors (593D–94D). And for Theanor, Socrates' soul has almost reached its goal.

Despite the complexities and obscurities of Simmias' and Theanor's speeches, the following observations seem apposite. First, Socrates' soul, like that of Hermodorus of Clazomenae (592C), was born inspired, and remained obedient to its *daimon's* guidance. Both Socrates and Hermodorus

<sup>56</sup> On Theanor, see especially Corlu, *Le démon de Socrate*, 20–22.

<sup>57</sup> For a clear summary of Timarchus' vision, See Riley, *GRBS* 18 (1977) 264 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Riley, *ibid.*, 266 remarks that the accounts of Simmias and Theanor are "both equally exact or inexact."

were persons to whom, according to Simmias, *daimones* spoke directly. The character (ἦθος) of each was "calm and undisturbed" (ἀθόρυβον καὶ νήνεμον, 589D). And the souls of those with understanding (νοῦν ἔχειν, 591F), Timarchus sees as floating on high, not submerged in the body, or concerned with earthly affairs.

Now Polymnis had previously sketched Socrates as such a person, mentioning his poverty and courage toward death (581C ff.), and one theme of *De gen. Socr.* is restraint of the passions, and the importance of philosophical training. At 584A Epameinondas claims no disgust at poverty, and later argues (584E ff.) that desires or passions must be subdued by reason (ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου κολαζομένης). Similarly, in Simmias' report of Timarchus' vision, *daimones* beat the soul until subdued (κολαζομένη) like a tame animal (592B).

Philosophy provides training needed to overcome the desires, and Polymnis gave Epameinondas the "best upbringing" in philosophy (585D), a goal of which is freedom from passion (ἀπαθής, 588D, applied by Simmias to Socrates), or an undisturbed and calm character (589D). Socrates and Epameinondas are thus similar in being above human desires, and the latter, often considered a "Boeotian Socrates,"<sup>59</sup> had received a "distinguished and exceptional education" (παιδείας διαφόρου καὶ περιττῆς, 576D). In Simmias' account, Socrates also belongs to human beings who are "divine and exceptional" (θεῖος καὶ περιττοῖς ἀνδράσι, 589C),<sup>60</sup> and who alone receive direct messages from *daimones*. At 593B Theanor mentions mortals distinguished with "a peculiar and exceptional schooling" (ἰδίας τινὸς καὶ περιττῆς παιδαγωγίας). As Babut noted, the term "exceptional" (περιττός) seems significant in *De gen. Socr.*<sup>61</sup> Like Socrates, Epameinondas also belongs to exceptional persons guided through life by their *daimones*. They are among the few, select mortals to whom divinity manifests itself directly (cf. 593C).

Moreover, the long discussion between Epameinondas and Theanor on poverty and the value of riches (chaps. 13–14), emphasizes not only Epameinondas' moral character, but also the parallels between him and Socrates. For the poverty espoused by Epameinondas was an important part of Polymnis' description of Socrates at 581C: Socrates freely "remained poor throughout his life, when he could have had money which the donors would have been delighted and thankful to see him accept."

Hence, in *De gen. Socr.* Plutarch sketches portraits of "divine" persons such as Socrates, Epameinondas, and Theanor. Their moral or spiritual superiority was due to direct contact with the divine world, and to their freedom from physical desires. But there are also humans totally enslaved

<sup>59</sup> See Babut, *BAGB* (1984) 57.

<sup>60</sup> At *Adv. Col.* 1119C Plutarch concludes his defense of Socrates and mentions Epicurus' attack on the gods and "godlike men" (θεῖος ἀνδράσι).

<sup>61</sup> Babut, *BAGB* (1984) 57.

by their passions, and who like, Thebes' tyrannical rulers (see 578B), are blind to signs warning them of a dire fate. Between these extremes are Thebes' liberators, who lack freedom from their passions despite their courage and other moral qualities. That this "tripartition de l'humanité" exists in *De gen. Socr.*, has been noticed by Babut.<sup>62</sup> But his critique of Riley and others who see Socrates as the philosopher and citizen, a figure reconciling the theoretical and practical lives, is less convincing. Babut seems to forget Polymnis' description of Socrates (at 581D-E) when he writes that he is never presented as "un homme d'action ni même comme un citoyen."<sup>63</sup> Moreover, if there is opposition between theory and practice in Plutarch's view of Socrates in *De gen. Socr.*, it is not reflected in other works, e.g., in *Adv. Col.*, *An seni republ. ger. sit.* (769D), or *Quaest. Plat.* I, where Plutarch refers to Socrates' examination of others as a way of freeing them from "humbug" (τύφος, 999E), almost Galaxidorus' view of Socrates in *De gen. Socr.* Socrates is the critic of human opinions, not a contemplative thinker. Plutarch emphasizes divine influence on Socrates in *De gen. Socr.*, but this does not prevent him from being a friend to Alcibiades and others involved in Athenian affairs.

In sum, the following matters seem certain: first, Socrates' divine sign and the liberation of Thebes are two main subjects of *De gen. Socr.*, though their exact relationship in Plutarch's mind remains uncertain. Second, the importance of philosophical education and restraint of the passions is stressed, and both Socrates and Epameinondas are similar in demeanor and guided by their *daimones*. Moreover, in the dialogue's philosophical sections, Plutarch's account of *daimones* is not unlike those of *De sera num. vin.* (563E-68A) and of *De facie in orb. lun.* (942C-45D).<sup>64</sup> Third, whatever the purpose(s) of *De gen. Socr.* may have been, Plutarch tells an exciting story of political intrigue and revolution, the tension which is often relieved or increased by discussion of Socrates' divine sign. Despite the obscurities of *De gen. Socr.*, the views of Riley and others seem convincing: Socrates is not a pure or theoretical philosopher, but one who combined philosophical thinking with civic duty and responsibility to others, and who unlike many human beings was led through life by his *daimon*.

Thus far, examination of Plutarch's portrait of Socrates has shown considerable indebtedness to Plato. But both in *De gen. Socr.* and *Quaest. Plat.* I there appear to be divergences from Plato's account of Socrates'

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 71, note 6. His criticism of Riley, who considered Socrates' prediction of disaster in Sicily as political, is niggling. Babut says it is not political, because "Plutarque prend soin de préciser qu'elle est fait en privé, à quelques amis." The retreat at Delium is not quite explained by Babut.

<sup>64</sup> See Riley, *GRBS* 18 (1977) 264, note 16. Socrates is mentioned only once in *De fac. in orb. lun.* (at 923F) where there is brief reference to Socrates' myth about the earth in the *Phaedo* 1106 ff. See Cherniss, *LCL* XII, 140, note a.

*daimonion*. According to Plato (*Ap.* 31D), Socrates' sign always held him back from what he thought of doing, and never urged him forward (ἀεὶ ἀποπρέπει . . . , προπρέπει δὲ οὔποτε . . . ; cf. *Phdr.* 242C). At *Quaest. Plat.* 999E, however, Plutarch refers to a "divine and spiritual cause" which guided or instructed (ὑφηγήσατο) Socrates to examine others. Cherniss noted that ὑφηγήσατο cannot be used of the sign described by Plato's Socrates, and referred to Polymnis at *De gen. Socr.* 581B, according to whom Socrates *daimonion* either deterred or prompted him (. . . κωλύον ἢ κελεύον).<sup>65</sup> Such a description of Socrates' sign seems more consonant with Xenophon's reports, namely, that Socrates' inner voice always told him what he should or should not do (*Mem.* 4. 3. 12; 1. 1. 4; *Apol.* 12–13).<sup>66</sup> Yet even in Plato's account, Socrates' sign did not always oppose or stop him from a course of action (*Ap.* 40B), and even gave him some mantic powers (*Phdr.* 242C). In view, however, of Xenophon as a likely source for other reports of Plutarch on Socrates, it is quite possible that his description of Socrates' *daimonion* was also influenced by Xenophon.

Another example of Xenophon's influence on Plutarch is at *De cap. ex inim. util.* 90E, where in this originally extempore address<sup>67</sup> Plutarch states that Socrates bore with Xanthippe "who was irascible and acrimonious," for he thought that if he got along well with her, he would succeed in getting along with others. The source for Xanthippe's bad temper was probably Xenophon (*Mem.* 2. 2. 7), who reports her son's complaints about her nasty disposition, and who in the *Sym.* (2. 10) has Antisthenes ask Socrates why if he believed women to be as teachable as men, he had not trained Xanthippe, but continued to live with "the most troublesome woman of all time."<sup>68</sup> Other examples of Xenophon as Plutarch's source for Socrates can be cited; e.g., at *De tuenda sanitate praecepta* 124D–E Plutarch relates Socrates' advice against eating or drinking things which cause us to eat or drink when not hungry or thirsty, and adds that Socrates considered dancing a pleasant exercise. These reports are most likely based on Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 1. 3. 6 and *Symposium* 2. 17–20, respectively.<sup>69</sup> Xenophon is often a source for Plutarch's or his friends' remarks on Socrates in *Quaestiones convivales*, and at 629E Xenophon is called "the Socratic." Given the nature of Plutarch's own *Quaest. conviv.*, it is not surprising to discover likely references to Xenophon's *Symposium*,<sup>70</sup> e.g., at 632A and 711A, and some material in *Quaest. conviv.* is found elsewhere in Plutarch's

<sup>65</sup> See Cherniss, *LCL* XIII, Pt. I, 21, note e.

<sup>66</sup> See E. Edelstein, *Xenophontisches und platonisches Bild des Sokrates* (Berlin 1935) 18. Her chapter on "Vergleich des xenophontischen und platonischen Sokratesbildes," 63–77, remains especially worthwhile.

<sup>67</sup> See Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 167 = *RE* 21.1, col. 804

<sup>68</sup> On Xanthippe, see Guthrie, *Socrates*, 63.

<sup>69</sup> See notes a and c in *LCL* II, 228.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, F. Fuhrmann, *Plutarque, Oeuvres morales*, IX, Pt. I (Paris 1972), p. XXI

works, e.g., Socrates' advice against dishes tempting to eat when not hungry (661F, 124D-E, 513C, and 521E) or his praise of the dance (711D, 124E, and 130E).<sup>71</sup>

Before concluding, it is important to return to Plutarch's remarks on Socrates in the *Lives*. A. Wardman noted that "Socrates appears in the *Lives* only in passing references," and nowhere does Plutarch deal with the charge that Socrates corrupted the young.<sup>72</sup> Wardman's observation emphasizes the fact that Socrates' trial received almost no attention in the extant *Lives* or *Moralia*. Perhaps Wardman is correct in claiming that Plutarch considered the charge of corrupting the youth not "worth refuting in detail."<sup>73</sup> At the end of *Phocion* (38. 2), Plutarch suggests that the Athenians realized their error in killing Phocion was as serious as the execution of Socrates. Most likely, Socrates' trial and execution were treated in detail by Plutarch in his lost *Defense of Socrates* and *On the Condemnation of Socrates*, mentioned earlier in this study.

It is now time to conclude this attempted reconstruction of Plutarch's portrait of Socrates. If Schmid, Döring, and others are correct, Plutarch's works very much reflect his era's renewed interest in Socrates. Plutarch wrote in a tradition established by Plato and Xenophon, both of whom admired Socrates. Plutarch was not, however, bound by this tradition, and responded to it creatively by composing several works in which he transformed inherited material for his own purposes, among which were rebuttal of Epicureanism (*Adv. Col.*), the creation of an historical "Novelle" (*De gen. Socr.*),<sup>74</sup> and an unusual treatment of the Platonic concept of Eros (*Amat.*).

That Plutarch's primary sources were Plato and Xenophon is certain. He was, of course, extremely well read, and probably also used works of Aristotle, Demetrius of Phalerum, and Panaetius. With access to these and possibly other sources on Socrates, he makes many anecdotal references to Socrates throughout the *Moralia* and *Lives*. His main emphasis, however, is on Socrates as a "divine" man who followed his *daimon* throughout life (*De gen. Socr.*), performed his duties as an Athenian (*De gen. Socr.* and *Adv. Col.*), challenged his fellow citizens to reflect, while acting as a midwife (*Quaest. Plat.*), and who was somewhat sceptical about human beliefs and sense perception. Perhaps Plutarch regarded himself as Socrates' successor (*Amat.*). Certainly there is evidence for thinking that Plutarch, like some of his contemporaries, considered Socrates a model or paradigm for the best human life. Socrates followed his *daimon*, and led a busy life

<sup>71</sup> It is quite likely that Plutarch makes use of his *hypomnēmata* in these passages. On his *hypomnēmata*, see Cherniss, *LCL* XIII, Pt. II, 398 ff.

<sup>72</sup> Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives*, 202.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 202.

<sup>74</sup> See Ziegler, *Plutarchos*, 205 = RE 21. 1, col. 841.



while maintaining self-control and the capacity for quiet reflection. Plutarch's own life was not wholly different.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> I wish to thank Hubert Martin, Jr., University of Kentucky, and Philip A. Stadter, University of North Carolina, for reading an earlier version of this paper, and making suggestions for improvement.

