Received: 20th October 2023 Accepted: 7th March 2024

Preliminary Stages or Final Destinations? Plutarch's Remarks on the Subjects of Most Interest to Beginners in Philosophy

[*Αρχικά στάδια ή τελικοί προορισμοί; Το σχόλιο του Πλουτάρχου για τα αντικείμενα που ενδιαφέρουν περισσότερο αυτούς που ξεκινούν να ασχολούνται με τη φιλοσοφία*]

by

Theofanis Tsiampokalos

Trier University

tsiampokalos@uni-trier.de

orcid.org/0000-0002-7312-9759

Abstract

In his influential doctoral dissertation Fritz Krauss adopted Rudolf Hirzel's view that as a young man Plutarch had turned from the study of rhetoric to the study of philosophy. His aim was to establish that any of Plutarch's surviving texts that display explicit traces of rhetorical conventions date to his early years. However, Krauss provided only one piece of positive evidence to support Hirzel's conjecture: a passage from *On Progress in Virtue*. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that, upon closer examination, this passage does not depict engagement with rhetoric as a preliminary stage in the education of young men, but rather, it describes the opposite process.

Key-words: Philosophy, Progress, Rhetoric, Virtue.

Περίληψη

Στη σημαντική διδακτορική διατριβή του Fritz Krauss υιοθέτησε την υπόθεση του Rudolf Hirzel, σύμφωνα με την οποία ο Πλούταρχος νέος είχε μεταστραφεί από τη μελέτη της ρητορικής στη μελέτη της φιλοσοφίας. Ο Krauss χρησιμοποίησε το σχήμα αυτό ως κριτήριο για την πρώιμη χρονολόγηση κειμένων του Πλουτάρχου που εμφανίζουν σαφέστερα ίχνη ρητορικών συμβάσεων. Εντούτοις, το μόνο θετικό στοιχείο που ο ίδιος παρέθεσε στη διατριβή του για να στηρίξει την εικασία του Hirzel είναι ένα χωρίο από το κείμενο *Πῶς ἄν τις αἴσθοιτο ἑαυτοῦ προκόπτοντος ἐπ' ἀρετῆ*. Σκοπός της παρούσας εργασίας είναι να δείξει ότι, κατόπιν προσεκτικότερης ανάγνωσης, το εν λόγω χωρίο δεν απεικονίζει την ενασχόληση με τη ρητορική ως προκαταρκτικό στάδιο στην εκπαίδευση των νέων, αλλά μάλλον απεικονίζει το αντίθετο.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά· Αρετή, Πρόοδος, Ρητορική, Φιλοσοφία.

It is well known that Plato, in the *Gorgias*, disapproves deeply of rhetoric[1]. The only 'rhetoric' that he was willing to countenance was the kind propagated in the *Phaedrus* and possibly displayed in the long speech of the *Timaeus*, namely a philosophical eloquence that sharply contrasts with the so-called 'formal' rhetoric employed by contemporary rhetoricians[2]. Throughout the Hellenistic period, Plato's moral criticism of rhetoric, expressed mainly in the *Gorgias*, continued to live and sometimes even to offer an argumentative schema to authors hostile towards rhetoric[3]. In contrast to Plato, however, Plutarch does not appear to disapprove of any kind of rhetoric, and indeed does not even make a distinction between 'philosophical' and 'formal' rhetoric, even though he systematically presents himself as a philosopher in the Platonic tradition[4]. For

1 For general treatments of how Plato's conceptualises rhetoric in the *Gorgias*, see, e.g., YUNIS 1996: 117-171; PERNOT 2000: 69-72. On the significance of rhetoric and rhetorical education in the context of Athenian democracy, see, e.g., OBER 1989: 156-191 and YUNIS 1996: 1-23.

2 However, both the idea that rhetoric is a 'spurious imitation' (εἴδωλον) of another genuine art – and hence a kind of 'flattery' (κολακεία) – and the view that a reconciliation between rhetoric and philosophy is possible had already appeared at *Grg*. 463A-466A and *Grg*. 503A-B, 504E, 527C respectively; cf. also *Apol.* 17B, 18A. On Plato's reassessment of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus*, see esp. YUNIS 1996: 172-210; PERNOT 2000: 74-76; UEDING & STEINBRINK 2011[5]: 21-23; PERNOT 2022: 15-22. Scholars have seen attempts to implement the account of rhetoric propagated in the *Phaedrus* in both the *Laws* (see, e.g., YUNIS 1996: 217-236, cf. already MORROW 1953: 141-142) and the *Timaeus* (see HARTMANN 2021: 22-48, an abbreviated version of HARTMANN 2017).

3 For instance, Quintilian, in a passage from the second book, in responding to various critics of rhetoric, also mentions those writers who claimed that historically important cities, such as Sparta and Athens, expelled rhetoric from their territories, on the grounds that it harmed both individuals and the common good (2.16.4). The argument derives from Plato (see *Grg*. 480B-C, 502D-E, alongside KARADIMAS 1996: 227 and PERNOT 2022: 93-113). Sextus Empiricus later associates this argument with Critolaus and Charmadas (*Math*. 2.20-43). For a detailed analysis of the argument, see LIEBERSOHN 2011: 102, 104-105, 108-113. Charmadas was a major representative of the later Hellenistic Academy. On Charmadas, see, e.g., GLUCKER 1978: 109-111; BRITTAIN 2001: 312-328; FLEISCHER 2014: 65-75. In the first century CE, the conflict was still ongoing, as a closer look at Quintilian, especially the second book of his *Institutio oratoria*, suggests, and it seems to have acquired a new intensity in the second century CE, as the examples of Aelius Aristeides and Sextus Empiricus clearly demonstrate. For a useful general overview of the conflict, cf. KARADIMAS 1996: 1-4.

4 On Plutarch's Platonism, see the seminal work of JONES 1916. For more recent discussions, see DILLON 1988: 357-364; *id*. 1996[2]: 184-186; *id*. 2014: 61-72. For the Platonic/Academic tradition, see NIKOLAIDIS 1999: 398, as well as the remarks of FREDE 1999: 771, 776-782. Cf. also *Lampr*. *Cat*. no. 63: Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος

him, rhetoric is, generally speaking, a necessary instrument for a righteous individual, whether a philosopher or a philosophically-oriented statesman, who might wish to exert a positive influence over a wider public (see, e.g., *Praec. ger. reip.* 801C-D)[5]. In holding this view, Plutarch thus aligns himself with certain more recent figures in the Platonic tradition who also showed an interest in reconciling philosophy and rhetoric, including Philo of Larissa, Cicero and, later, Longinus[6]. At the same time, however, Plutarch's interest in rhetoric in some sense brings him closer also to certain representatives of the 'Second Sophistic'[7], thus allowing us to examine him alongside a number of other authors from more or less the same period, such as Dio Chrysostomus, Favorinus, the emperor Marcus Aurelius or Lucian[8], who also found themselves occupying a middle ground between rhetoric/sophistry and philosophy.

Unfortunately, while Plutarch's attitude towards rhetoric has attracted attention since the early days of classical scholarship, much of this work has been somewhat misguided and its influence is still evident today. Plutarch himself was obviously highly trained in rhetoric, as demonstrated above all by his ability to use complex narrative structures in

Ἀκαδημίαν, *On the Unity of the Academy since Plato*. On Plutarch's attitude towards rhetoric in particular, see, e.g., Harrison 1987: 271-279; Karadimas 1996: 9; Martin 1997: 715-736; Cosenza 2000: 109-129; Lauwers 2015: 53-59; Tsiampokalos 2021: 207-221; *id*. 2024: *passim*. On the differences between Plato's and Plutarch's views on rhetoric, cf. also Gonzáles Julià 2009: 83-84; Goeken 2017: 279-288, esp. 287–288; Fernández Delgado & Pordomingo 2017: 289-295; Ginestí Rosell 2023: 110-111

5 Cf. Tsiampokalos 2020: 502-509; *id*. 2024: 124-131

6 On Philo, see esp. Brittain 2001. For a general overview of both Cicero's oratory and his views on rhetoric, see, e.g., Pernot 2000: 142-162; Ueding & Steinbrink 2011[5]: 33-38; Remer 2017: 1-25. On similarities between Plutarch and Longinus, see Männlein-Robert 2001: 88. On Longinus' rhetorical studies, see Männlein-Robert 2001: 56-58; *ead*. 2017: 161-178.

7 The Second Sophistic (for the term, cf. Philostr., *VS*. 1,481 Ol.) more or less covers the time from the mid-first to the mid-third century, which was characterised by an increased interest in declamation and, of course, the great success and fame enjoyed by a number of individuals across the Roman Empire as the result of their activities as public speakers and debaters in declamation contests. These individuals are also referred to in our sources as 'sophists', whence the use of the term 'Second Sophistic' in contrast to the 'Old Sophistic' of Socrates' and Plato's time. For more on the 'Second Sophistic', see, e.g., Schmitz 1997: 9-38 and Whitmarsh 2005: 3-22. For the Latin part, see Habinek 2017: 25-37.

8 See, e.g., Karadimas 1996: 7-25, cf. Lawers 2015: 46-52, 65-72, 83-103; Pernot 2022: 275-287, 317-318, 381-382, 395-404. Philostratus, too, deals with Dio Chrysostomus and Favorinus in a separate section (*VS* 1,484-492 Ol.), as philosophers who had acquired the reputation of sophists; *VS* 1,486-487 Ol. and 1,489-492 Ol. respectively.

his writings[9], along with more formal rhetorical elements, such as proems, anecdotes and antithetical comparisons[10], not to mention his rhythmic prose, the careful avoidance (or occasionally even tolerance) of hiatus, his well-formed periods and his expansive vocabulary[11]. However, his consistently harsh criticism of contemporary 'sophists', found in texts that can be clearly dated to the mature phase of his writing career, led Rudolf Hirzel to conclude that, as a young man, Plutarch had switched from the study of rhetoric to that of philosophy, in a fashion similar to the conversion that Synesius thought that Dio Chrysostomus (Syn., *Dion* 1) had undergone[12]. Having accepted Hirzel's conjecture, Fritz Krauss subsequently went further in suggesting that such a scheme can be used to date to Plutarch's early years any of his texts that display explicit traces of rhetorical conventions[13]. Although serious objections had already been levelled against Hirzel's 'conversion' hypothesis[14], Krauss's approach has been followed by an array of influential figures[15], with the result that several of Plutarch's texts that display a somewhat

9 For this, see, e.g., PELLING 1988: 10-18; *id*. 1995: 206-208 (= 2002: 237-239); STADTER 1997: 65-81 (= 2015: 215-230); DUFF 1999: 52–71; STADTER 2000: 493-510 (= 2015: 231-245); *id*. 2003/2004: 89-96; DUFF 2004: 285-287; LARMOUR 2005: 43-51; ALEXIOU 2007: 275-279; DUFF 2007/2008: 3-18; *id*. 2011b: 59-82; CHRYSANTHOU 2018: 1-25; *id*. 2019: 46.

10 On the proems, see STADTER 1988: 275-295; ROSENMEYER 1992: 205-230; DUFF 2011a: 218-224 and 224-228. On the use of anecdotes (χρεῖαι), see ALSUP 1981: 15-27; ROBBINS 1981: 29-52; BECK 1998: *passim*; *id*. 1999: 173-187; *id*. 2003: 169-192. On comparisons (συγκρίσεις), see, e.g., ZIEGLER 1951: 936-937; ERBSE 1956: 348-424; PELLING 1986: 83-96; LARMOUR 1992: 4154-4200; MARTIN 1997: 724-729; DUFF 1999: 243-286; RUSSELL 2001[2]: 110-115; DUFF 2011a: 253-259.

11 For Plutarch's rhythmic prose, see, e.g., HUTCHINSON 2018, esp. the comparison with other ancient authors in pp. 19-28. For the hiatus, see, e.g., ZIEGLER 1951: 932-935. For Plutarch's periodicity, see also ZIEGLER 1951: 937-938, cf. YAGINUMA 2016: 4727-4741. For Plutarch's vocabulary, which is often categorised as exemplifying the middle ground between koine and Atticism, see, e.g., SCHMID 1887: 26; *id*. 1896: 640-643; JEUCKENS 1907: 55-59 (which also contains exhaustive references to the passages from Plutarch in which Atticism is mentioned); ZIEGLER 1951: 931-932; JAŻDŻEWSKA 2019: 66-70. For more general treatments of Plutarch's language, see WEISSENBERGER 1895: *passim*; TORRACA 1998: 3487-3510.

12 See, e.g., HIRZEL 1895: 2.124-127. For more recent treatments of Dio's alleged conversion, see, e.g., STANTON 1973: 353-354; WHITMARSH 2005: 17-18.

13 See KRAUSS 1912, esp. 12-58.

14 See JEUCKENS 1907: 7-8.

15 See, e.g., ZIEGLER 1951: 716-717, 931; JONES 1966: 70; HAMILTON 1969: xii–xxiii; JONES 1971: 14-16, 67, 135; SWAIN 1989: 503 n. 3; MARTIN 1997: 719-720; GALLO 1998: 3535; SIRINELLI 2000: 75-87.

stronger rhetorical influence are currently classified by most scholars as juvenilia[16], if only by convention[17], and so regarded as marginal to the Plutarchan corpus. However, as John Moles has very astutely pointed out[18], the reasoning underlying this characterisation is circular.

In the present paper I would like to strengthen further the case against the 'conversion' hypothesis by pointing out that the main positive textual evidence that Krauss provides to validate his approach does not, in fact, support his interpretation. This evidence is a passage from the text *On Progress in Virtue* (*De prof. in virt*. 78E-79B), in which Plutarch supposedly describes engagement with rhetoric as a preliminary stage in the education of young men, before they eventually delve deeper into philosophy[19]. My purpose is to demonstrate that, upon closer examination, this passage actually describes the opposite process.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section presents the passage in question. The second section examines Krauss's reading of the passage and shows, I hope, why this is unsustainable. The third section puts the passage in question in its historical context and explains the point Plutarch is trying to make.

1. *The interests of the beginners in philosophy*

The text *On Progress in Virtue* (*Quomodo quis suos in virtute sentiat profectus*, 75A-86A) examines various ways in which students of philosophy, who – contrary to what the Stoics claimed – are engaged in a slow process of moral formation, may become aware of their progress, so that they do not become disappointed and so give up their studies[20]. At some point, eloquence enters the discussion too. Disengagement from one kind of discourse that reveals technical sophistication and then engagement with another kind of discourse that both expresses the speaker's righteous ethos and touches on the emotions indicates progress toward virtue (78E-79B). This is the passage, which Krauss was interested in. I will not quote it here, although I will summarize the main points of Plutarch's argumentation as they appear in the text.

16 So far, only the following scholars have clearly expressed scepticism: Jeuckens 1907: 7-8; Russell 1972: 226-227; Moles 1978: 80; Russell 2001[2]: 3; *id*. 2012: 1165; Frazier 2003[2]: 15-16, 166-167; Froidefond 2003[2]: 106-108.

17 See, e.g., Beck 2003: 170.

18 See Moles 1978: 80.

19 Krauss 1912: 6-11, esp. 10.

20 On the text in general, see Wyttenbach 1820: 438-490 and Grese 1978: 11-31, cf. also von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1905: 149-151 (= KS IV: 202-205); Krauss 1912: 7-10; Brokate 1913: 31-39; Babut 1969: 47-54; Giangrande 1991: 265-274; Roskam 2005: 220-361; Wright 2008: 136-150; Tsiampokalos 2024: 152.

The passage begins with a litotes to the effect that "of no slight significance, either, is the change that occurs in one's discourse" (οὐκ ἔστι δὲ μικρὸν οὐδ' ἡ περὶ τοὺς λόγους μεταβολή)[21]. Plutarch sets out to explain this claim by pointing out that those who take up philosophy are at first more interested in the kinds of discourse that "make for repute" (τοὺς πρὸς δόξαν διώκουσι μᾶλλον). Thus, some individuals are attracted to the discourses of natural philosophy (τῶν φυσικῶν). Others, who find satisfaction in disputes and controversies, gravitate towards discourses that fall within the wider field of eristics, namely "disputations, knotty problems, and quibbles" (ἐπὶ τὰς ἔριδας καὶ τὰς ἀπορίας χωροῦσι καὶ τὰ σοφίσματα). Many others first show an interest in dialectic, since through dialectic they prepare themselves for sophistry (τοῖς διαλεκτικοῖς ἐνδύντες εὐθὺς ἐπισιτίζονται πρὸς σοφιστείαν). Finally, some students go about compiling collections of didactic and historical examples (ἔνιοι δὲ χρείας καὶ ἱστορίας ἀναλεγόμενοι περιίασιν).

However, the contribution of philosophy to the acquisition of eloquence is, properly speaking, greater, even though it requires more time. Plutarch illustrates the point (78E-79A) with a humorous story by the comic poet Antiphanes, which someone is said to have used to describe the impact of Plato's teaching upon his students[22]. Antiphanes said that there was a city that was so cold in the winter, that any words spoken during this season were immediately froze and were not heard until the summer. Plutarch's unnamed source added that this applies to the teachings of Plato, which his students cannot fully comprehend, until they have become old men, that is, until they have reached a certain state of maturity. Plutarch, in turn, generalizes this point, arguing that it is only when one's "judgement" (κρίσις) acquires a "healthy stability" (κατάστασιν ὑγιεινήν) that a better kind of eloquence emerges. To define such eloquence in textual terms, Plutarch draws a parallel with Aesop's fable of the fox before the lion's den (no. 139 Perry). The discourse, "whose footprints are turned toward us rather than away from us", (79A-B: εἴσω μᾶλλον ἢ ἔξω τὰ ἴχνη τέτραπται) is, if we consider the analogy with the lion's den, a kind of discourse that turns the listener into prey without giving the impression of doing so.

The whole process is subsequently (79B) compared with the procedure that Sophocles supposedly underwent in forming his own poetic style. According to an unknown account, Sophocles once declared that only after first trying to play with the "turgidity" (ὄγκον)

21 Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the Greek and the English translations are taken from the edition by BABBITT 1927: 418-421.

22 Antiph., fr. 304 Koch. Alternatively, this could refer to Antiphanes of Berge, as noted by von WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF 1905: 149 (= KS IV: 203).

of Aeschylus and then after studying Aeschylus' "harshness and artificiality in composition" (τὸ πικρὸν καὶ κατάτεχνον τῆς αὐτοῦ κατασκευῆς), was he able to formulate his own particular style, which "has the most to do with moral character and goodness" (ὅπερ ἠθικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ βέλτιστον)[23]. Likewise, as soon as students of philosophy have made some progress in virtue, they manage to distance themselves from discourses, such as those delivered at festivals and characterized by precision in the application of the rules of art, and so begin composing "the kind of discourse which deals with character and feeling" (ἐκ τῶν πανηγυρικῶν καὶ κατατέχνων εἰς τὸν ἁπτόμενον ἤθους καὶ πάθους λόγον μεταβῶσιν)[24].

2. *Preliminary stages or final destinations?*

In the introduction to his doctoral dissertation, Fritz Krauss reads the passage above as a description of a process of moral progress that is completed in two stages. As part of their education, young people are initially concerned with subjects that correspond more to a school-oriented rhetorical education. Then, with the help of philosophy, they acquire the maturity needed to develop a more personal mode of expression that corresponds to their moral development that has taken place in the interim[25]. However, this interpretation by Krauss is not without difficulties. The discourses of natural philosophy, the disputes, the questions and the sophisms, as well as the discourses relating to sophistry and the collections of historical and didactic examples, which for Krauss correspond to a school-oriented rhetorical education, are not described in text as an initial stage. In fact, these are forms of engagement with kinds of discourse are situated in autonomous territories outside the field of philosophy as represented by Plutarch[26].

This, at least, is what the choice of words in the text suggests, as they all indicate a kind of movement that diverges from the right course forward. Students attracted by natural philosophy "like birds, come down" (ὥσπερ ὄρνιθες […] καταίροντες) to the grandeur of the corresponding discourses. Other students "retreat" (χωροῦσι) towards discourses in the field of eristics, while others, through

23 Soph. test. 100 Radt (= Aesch. test. 116 Radt). On the statement attributed to Sophocles, see Bowra 1940: 385-401 and Pinnoy 1984: 159-164. Cf. also von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1905: 150-151 (= KS IV: 204-205).

24 Cf. Plut., *Per*. 15.2: ἔδειξε τὴν ῥητορικὴν κατὰ Πλάτωνα ψυχαγωγίαν οὖσαν καὶ μέγιστον ἔργον αὐτῆς τὴν περὶ τὰ ἤθη καὶ πάθη μέθοδον, […]. Related to this are also Plutarch's remarks in *Praec. ger. reip*. 802E-804C on the question how the politician's speech should be like. For more on this passage, see esp. van der Stockt 2006: 1038-1039 and Tsiampokalos 2024: 160-165.

25 See Krauss 1912: 10-11.

26 Cf. Anon. Epic., *fr*. 5, col. XXV, 1–3 Vogliano; Clem. Al., *Strom*. 7.16.101.4.

dialectic, "stock themselves up for the practice of sophistry" (ἐπισιτίζονται πρὸς σοφιστείαν), which is obviously a different field from that of philosophy. Finally, students who are occupied with collecting examples "perfect themselves"[27] (περιάσιν) in this task, that is they remain stuck in a stage, in which there seems to be no substantial progress. Hence, they end up divorced from the type of philosophical education positively presented in the text.

For Krauss's thesis, i.e. that certain texts of the Plutarchan *corpus* in which a greater degree of rhetorical sophistication is to be seen belong to a juvenile period of Plutarch's career as a writer, it was important to put these forms of engagement with discourse just mentioned into two temporal phases, as we have said[28]. Yet the chronological sequence suggested by Plutarch's text is actually the reverse: the young are initially directed towards philosophy, although their intention is to find their way soon into other fields. The reference to those who attend classes of dialectic, in order to prepare themselves for sophistry, makes the point in this respect.

3. *Philosophy dropouts*

It goes without saying that the overall message of this passage is that progress in virtue contributes to the creation of a discourse which appears to be better by both moral and practical standards. This is what the comparison with Sophocles at the end implies after all. Plutarch follows here the canon of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Imit*., *fr*. 31.2.10-11), according to which Sophocles' style is the ideal medium between the grandeur of Aeschylus and the triviality of Euripides. The contrast between a discourse that demonstrates precision in the application of the rules of art and another discourse that is able to express character and touch on emotions is made on the basis of the opposition "artificial" – "natural", which has both a practical and an ethical aspect[29]. As far as the ethical aspect in particular is concerned, this can already be read between the lines of the obviously negative descriptions of the *other* subjects which the beginners in philosophy are interested in: the discourses of natural philosophy are characterized (79E) by "flightiness" (κουφότητος) and "ambition" (φιλοτιμίας), while those that fall within the broader field of eristics, are related (79E-F; cf. Pl., *Rep*. 539B) to people who look "like puppies, delighting in pulling and tearing" ("ὥσπερ τὰ σκυλάκια," […] "τῷ ἕλκειν καὶ σπαράττειν χαίροντες"). As for as collecting examples, the contrast is outlined on the basis

[27] Translation is mine.

[28] See KRAUSS 1912: 4.

[29] On the practical aspect, see, e.g., Arist., *Rh*. 1.2,1356a 6-7, cf. also Isoc., 15.278; Anaxim. Lamps., *Rh. Alex*. 35.17-18.

of "utility". Plutarch explicitly adds later in text that these people collect examples without really being interested in putting them into use (78E). We are dealing with forms of engagement with discourse alternative to philosophy which Plutarch does not approve.

The obvious reason for this moral hierarchy is that Plutarch is reacting here to the phenomenon of either students who abandon their studies in philosophy or students from other fields of study, who show only an opportunistic interest in philosophy. This phenomenon is historically attested. There is evidence that teachers of rhetoric encouraged their students to take courses in philosophy as well, so that they acquired the theoretical and moral apparatus needed for their future development either as orators or as men of letters in general (see, e.g., Theon, II,59 Spengel = I,145 Walz)[30]. On the other hand, there was a wider interest on the part of rhetoricians in ready-made didactic examples and maxims that were to be found both in poetic texts (see, e.g., Quint., 1.1.35-36, 10.5.4-11) and in texts by famous earlier historians and philosophers. For instance, Menander Rhetor in the late third century CE suggests that his readers study the *Lives* of Plutarch for this very purpose, that is, in order to amass from them historical examples, apophthegms, proverbs and didactic stories (III,392 Spengel = IX,253-254 Walz).

Of course, any philosopher active in the field of higher education could not tolerate such a mercenary approach to his teaching. Plutarch is no exception, which is made even clearer in the passages that follow the one employed by Krauss to support his theory. Later in the text, Plutarch criticizes in more detail those who mine the texts of philosophers for Attic words, rather than seeking in them any lessons of use in their life (79B-D)[31]. Plutarch likens all these students of philosophy whose sole aim is to find in the writings of philosophers a few impressive words that will earn them a reputation in other fields to apothecaries, who sell medicines without knowing how to cure the sick. Plutarch presents such individuals as "sophists", who will subsequently offer their own students philosophical knowledge in such a way that neither they nor, by extension, their students will be able to make any real use of it (80A-B).

The polemical mood makes it clear that Plutarch is worried above all by the thought that philosophy might be subject to opportunistic pursuit. He is not concerned with the interests that young students might have before they delve deeper into philosophy, which is what Krauss's theory demands. Plutarch's passage concerns the interest in philosophy that certain students have only

[30] Cf. also Isoc., 12.26-28; Cic., *de Orat*. 1.53-69, 3.76–77, *Off*. 1.1-2; Quint., 1.proem.9.

[31] On Plutarch's attitude towards Atticism, see n. 11 above.

because they subsequently intend to go more deeply into another subject. For these students are more likely to give up their studies before they even realise that philosophy and the progress in virtue could also give them what they want. Hence the passage cannot really sustain Hirzel's theory about Plutarch's conversion from rhetoric to philosophy, since it does not directly amount to evidence that it was normal practice in antiquity for students of philosophy to have had an early engagement with a school-oriented rhetorical education they would subsequently abandon. The passage actually describes the opposite process[32].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ALSUP, J. E.,
- "Type, Place, and Function of the Pronouncement Story in Plutarch's *Moralia*," *Semeia*, 20 (1981) 15-27.

BABBITT, F. C.,
- *Plutarch.* Moralia, volume I (LCL 197), Cambridge, Mass.-London, Harvard UP 1927.

BABUT, D.,
- *Plutarque et le Stoïcisme* (Publications de l'Université de Lyon), Paris, Presses Universitaires de France 1969.

BECK, M. A.,
- *Plutarch's Use of Anecdotes in the Lives*, Diss. University of North Carolina 1998.
- "Plato, Plutarch and the Use of Manipulation of Anecdotes in the *Lives* of Lycurgus and Agesilaus", in A. PÉREZ-JIMÉNEZ, J. GARCÍA LÓPEZ & R. M. AGUILAR (eds.), *Plutarco, Platón y Aristóteles. Actas del V Congreso Internacional de la I.P.S. (Madrid-Cuenca, 4-7 de mayo de 1999)*, Madrid, Ediciones Clásicas 1999: 173-187.
- "Plutarch's Declamations and the Progymnasmata", in B.-J. SCHRÖDER & J.-P. SCHRÖDER (eds.), *Studium declamatorium. Untersuchung zu Schulübungen und Prunkreden von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 176), Munich-Leipzig, K. G. Saur 2003: 169-192.

BOWRA, C. M.,
- "Sophocles on His Own Development", *AJPh*, 61 (1940) 385-401.

BRITTAIN, C.,
. *Philo of Larissa: The Last of the Academic Sceptics*, Oxford, Oxford UP 2001.

BROKATE, K.,
- *De aliquot Plutarchi libellis*, Diss. University of Göttingen 1913.

CHRYSANTHOU, C.,
- *Plutarch's Parallel Lives: Narrative Technique and Moral Judgement* (Trends in Classics Suppl. 57), Berlin-Boston, W. de Gruyter 2018.
- "Reading History Ethically: Plutarch on Alexander's Murder of Cleitus (*Alex.* 50-52.2)," *Ploutarchos* n.s., 16 (2019) 45-56.

COSENZA, P.,
- "L'uso dello σκῶμμα e del γελοῖον nei *Praecepta gerendae reipublicae* di Plutarco," in L. VAN DER STOCKT (ed.), *Rhetorical Theory and Praxis in Plutarch: Acta of the IVth International Congress of the International Plutarch Society, Leuven, July 3-6, 1996*, Leuven-Namur, Peeters 2000: 109-129

[32] My thanks are due to Stylianos Chronopoulos (Ioannina), with whom I had discussed some of the ideas expressed in this article. His remarks had been valuable, as always. I am also indebted to Georg Wöhrle (Trier) for valuable remarks and comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I am likewise grateful to the editorial board of this journal and the anonymous referees for their insightful comments and suggestions.

Dillon, J.,
- "Plutarch and Platonist Orthodoxy", *ICS*, 13, (1988) 357-364.
- *The Middle Platonists, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220*, London, Cornell UP 1996[2] [1977].
- "Plutarch and Platonism", in M. Beck (ed.), *A Companion to Plutarch* (Blackwell Companions of the Ancient World 98), Malden-Oxford-Chichester, Blackwell 2014: 61-72.

Duff, T. E.,
- *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, Oxford-New York, Oxford UP 1999.
- "Plato, Tragedy, the Ideal Reader and Plutarch's *Demetrios* and *Antony*", *Hermes*, 132 (2004) 271-291.
- "Plutarch's readers and the moralism of the *Lives*," *Ploutarchos* n.s., 5 (2007/2008) 3-18.
- "The Structure of the Plutarchean Book," *CA*, 30 (2011a) 213-278.
- "Plutarch's *Lives* and the Critical Reader", in G. Roskam & L. van der Stockt (eds.), *Virtues for the People: Aspects of Plutarchan Ethics*, Leuven, Leuven UP 2011b: 59-82.

Erbse, H.,
- "Die Bedeutung der *Synkrisis* in den Parallelbiographien Plutarchs," *Hermes*, 84 (1956) 398-424.

Fernández Delgado, J. A., & Pordomingo, F.,
- "*Theseis* rather than *quaestiones convivales*', in A. Georgiadou & K. Oikonomopoulou (eds.), *Space, Time and Language in Plutarch* (Millennium-Studien/ Millennium Studies 67), Berlin-Boston, W. de Gruyter 2017, 289-295.

Fleischer, K.,
- "Der Akademiker Charmadas in Apollodors *Chronik* (*PHERC*. 1021, KOL. 31–32)," *CErc*, 44 (2014) 65-75.

Frazier, F.,
- "La fortune des Romain, La Gloire des Athéniens," in F. Frazier & C. Froidefond (eds.), *Plutarque. Œuvres morales*, volume V.1: traités 20–22, Paris, Les Belles Lettres 2003[2] [1990]: 9-66, 157-214, 237-248.

Frede, M.,
- "Epilogue", in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld & M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP 1999: 771-797.

Froidefond, C.,
- "La fortune ou la vertu d'Alexandre," in F. Frazier & C. Froidefond (eds.), *Plutarque. Œuvres morales*, volume V.1: *traités 20–22*, Paris 2003[2] [1990]: 67-156, 215-237.

Gallo, I.,
- "Forma letteraria nei 'Moralia' di Plutarco: Aspetti e problemi," in *ANRW* II.34.4 (1998): 3511–3540.

Glucker, J.,
- *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (Hypomnemata 56), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1978.

Giangrande, G.,
- "Sul testo de Il *progresso nella virtù* di Plutarco", *Siculorum Gymnasium*, 44 (1991) 265–274.

Ginestí Rosell, A.,
- *Dialogpoetik der* Quaestiones Convivales *von Plutarch* (Plutarch-Studien 1), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2023.

Goeken, J.
- "Plutarque et la tradition rhétorique du banquet", in A. Georgiadou & K. Oikonomopoulou (eds.), *Space, Time and Language in Plutarch* (Millennium-Studien/Millennium Studies 67), Berlin-Boston, W. de Gruyter 2017, 279-288.

Gonzáles Julià, L.,
- "Plutarch's *Techné Rhetoriké* for the Symposium in *Quaestiones Convivales*: the

importance of speaking well to cultivate friendship", in J. RIBEIRO FERREIRA, D.F. LEÃO, M. TRÖSTER & P. BARATA DIAS (eds.), *Symposion and philanthropia in Plutarch* (Humanitas Suppl. 6), Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra 2009, 63-74.

GRESE, W. C.,
- "*De profectibus in virtute* (*Moralia* 75A-86A)", in H. D. BETZ (ed.), *Plutarch's Ethical Writings and Early Christian Literature* (Studia ad Corpus Hellenisticum Novi Testamenti 4), Leiden, E. J. Brill 1978: 11-31.

HABINEK, T. N.,
- "Was there a Latin Second Sophistic?", in W.A. JOHNSON & D.S. RICHTER (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Second Sophistic*, Oxford, Oxford UP 2017: 25-37.

HARRISON, G. W. M.,
- "Rhetoric, Writing and Plutarch," *AncSoc*, 18 (1987) 271-279.

HARTMANN, L.,
- *Die grosse Rede des* Timaios - *ein Beispiel wahrer Rhetorik? Zu Theorie und Praxis philosophischer Rhetorik in Platons Dialogen* Gorgias*,* Phaidros *und* Timaios (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 43), Basel, Schwabe 2017.
- "Die große Rede des *Timaios* – ein Beispiel wahrer Rhetorik?", in C. JORGENSON, F. KARFÍK & Š. ŠPINKA (eds.), *Plato's* Timaeus*: Proceedings oft he Tenth Symposium Platonicum Pragense*, Leiden-Boston, E. J. Brill 2021: 22-48.

HIRZEL, R.,
- *Der Dialog. Ein literarhistorischer Versuch*, 2 vols., Leipzig, S. Hirzel 1895.

HUTCHINSON, G. O.,
- *Plutarch's Rhythmic Prose*, Oxford, Oxford UP 2018.

JAŻDŻEWSKA, K.,
- "Plutarch and Atticism: Herodian, Phrynichus, Philostratus", in S. XENOPHONTOS & K. OIKONOMOPOULOU (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Plutarch* (Brill's Companions to Classical Reception 20), Leiden-Boston, E. J. Brill 2019: 66-78.

JEUCKENS, R.,
- *Plutarch von Chaeronea und die Rhetorik*, Strasbourg, Karl J. Trübner 1907.

JONES, C. P.,
- "Towards a Chronology of Plutarch's Works," *JRS*, 56 (1966) 61-74.

JONES, R. M.,
- *The Platonism of Plutarch*, Menasha, Wi., Collegiate Press 1916 (Rpt. in *id*., *The Platonism of Plutarch and Selected Papers*, New York-London, Garland 1980).

KARADIMAS, D.,
- *Sextus Empiricus against Aelius Aristides: the Conflict between Philosophy and Rhetoric in the Second Century A.D.* (Studia Graeca et Latina Lundensia 5), Lund, Lund UP 1996.

KRAUSS, F.,
- *Die rhetorischen Schriften Plutarchs und ihre Stellung im Plutarchischen Schriftenkorpus*, Nuremberg, J. L. Stich 1912.

LARMOUR D. H. J.,
- "Making Parallels: ›Synkrisis‹ and Plutarch's *Themistocles* and *Camillus*", in *ANRW* II.33.6 (1992): 4154-4200.
- "Statesman and Self in the *Parallel Lives*", in L. DE BLOIS, J. BONS, T. KESSELS & D. M. SCHENKEVELD (eds.), *The Statesman in Plutarch's Works: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of the International Plutarch Society, Nijmegen/ Castle Hernen, May 1-5, 2002,* volume II: *The Statesman in Plutarch's Greek and Roman* Lives (Mnemosyne Suppl. 250/2), Leiden-Boston, E. J. Brill 2005: 43-51.

LAUWERS, J.,
- *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Sophistry in the High Roman Empire: Maximus of Tyre and Twelve Other Intellectuals* (Mnemosyne Suppl. 385), Leiden-Boston, E. J. Brill 2015.

Liebersohn, Y. Z.,
- *The Dispute concerning Rhetoric in Hellenistic Thought* (Hypomnemata 185), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2010.

Männlein-Robert, I.,
- *Longin, Philologe und Philosoph* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 143), Munich-Leipzig: K. G. Saur 2001.
- "Philosophie als Philologie? Der Platoniker Longin und seine Kritiker", in C. Riedweg (ed.), *PHILOSOPHIA in der Konkurrenz von Schulen, Wissenschaften und Religionen: Zur Pluralisierung des Philosophiebegriffs in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike,* in co-operation with R. Füchslin, C. Semenzato, C. Horn & D. Wyrwa (Philosophie der Antike 34), Berlin-Boston, W. de Gruyter 2017: 161-178.

Martin Jr., H.,
- "Plutarch", in S. E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period (330BC-AD 400)*, Leiden-New York-Cologne, E. J. Brill 1997: 715-736.

Moles, J. L.,
- "The Career and Conversion of Dio Chrysostom," *JHS*, 98 (1978) 79-100.

Morrow, G. R.,
- "Plato's Conception of Persuasion," *PhR*, 62 (1953) 234-250.

Nikolaidis, A. G.,
- "Plutarch on the Old, Middle and New Academies and the Academy in Plutarch's Day", in A. Pérez Jiménez, J. García López & R. M. Aguilar (eds.), *Plutarco, Platón y Aristoteles. Actas del V congreso internacional de la I.P.S. (Madrid-Cuenca, 4–7 de mayo de 1999)*, Madrid, Ediciones Clásicas 1999, 397-415.

Ober, J.,
- *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*, Princeton, Princeton UP 1989.

Pelling, C.
- "Synkrisis in Putarch's Lives", in F.E. Brenk & I. Gallo (eds.), *Miscellanea Plutarchea. Atti del convegno di studi su Plutarco (Roma, 23 novembre 1985)* (Quaderni del giornale filologio ferrarese 8), Ferrara, Bologna 1986: 83-96.
- *Life of Antony*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP 1988.
- "The Moralism of Plutarch's *Lives*", in D. Innes, H. Hine & C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*. Oxford, Oxford UP 1995: 205-220 [Italian edition: "Il Moralismo delle *Vite* di Plutarco", in I. Gallo & B. Scardigli (eds.), *Teoria e prassi politica nelle opere di Plutarco: Atti del V Convegno plutarcheo, Certosa di Pontignano, 7-9 giugno 1993*, Naples, M. D'Auria 1995: 343-361. New, revised edition in Pelling 2002: 237-251].
- *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies*, London, Classical Press of Wales 2002.

Pernot, L.,
- *La rhétorique dans l'antiquité*, Paris, Le Livre de Poche 2000.
- *Confluences de la philosophie et de la rhétorique grecques* (Textes et Traditions 34), Paris, J. Vrin 2022.

Pinnoy, M.,
- "Plutarch's Comment on Sophocles' Style", *QUCC*, 16 (1984) 159-164.

Remer, G. A.,
- *Ethics and the Orator: The Ciceronian Tradition of Political Morality*, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press 2017.

Robbins, V. K.,
- "Classifying Pronouncement Stories in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*", *Semeia*, 20 (1981) 29-52.

Rosenmeyer, T. G.,
- "Beginnings in Plutarch's *Lives*," *YClS*, 29 (1992) 205-230.

ROSKAM, G.,
- *On the Path to Virtue. The Stoic Doctrine of Moral Progress and its Reception in (Middle-)Platonism* (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy 1.33), Leuven, Leuven UP 2005.

RUSSELL, D.A.,
- Rev. "C.P. Jones, Plutarch and Rome," *JRS*, 62 (1972) 226-227.
- *Plutarch*, Bristol, Bristol Classical Press 2001[2] [1973].
- "Plutarch (L.(?) Maestrius Plutarchus", in *OCD*[4] (2012): 1165-1166.

SCHMID, W.,
- *Der Atticismus in seinen Hauptvertretern von Dionysius von Halikarnass bis auf den zweiten Philostratus*, volume I, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer 1887 [Rpt. Hildesheim 1964].
- *Der Atticismus in seinen Hauptvertretern von Dionysius von Halikarnass bis auf den zweiten Philostratus*, volume IV, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer 1896 [Rpt. Hildesheim 1964].

SCHMITZ, T. A.,
- *Bildung und Macht: Zur sozialen und politischen Funktion der zweiten Sophistik in der griechischen Welt der Kaiserzeit* (Zetemata 97), Munich, C. H. Beck 1997.
- "Plutarch and the Second Sophistic", in M. BECK (ed.), *A Companion to Plutarch* (Blackwell Companions of the Ancient World 98), Malden-Oxford-Chichester, Blackwell 2014: 32-42.

SIRINELLI, J.,
- *Plutarque*, Paris, Fayard 2000.

STADTER, P. A.,
- "The Proems of Plutarch's *Lives*", *ICS*, 13 (1988) 275-295.
- "Plutarch's *Lives*: The Statesman as Moral Actor", in C. SCHRADER, R. PALERM & J. VELA TEJADA (eds.), *Plutarco y La Historia: Actas del V Simposio Español Sobre Plutarco, Zaragosa, 20-22 de Junio de 1996* (Monografías de Filología Griega 8), Zaragosa, Universidad de Zaragoza 1997: 65-81.
- "The Rhetoric of Virtue in Plutarch's *Lives*", in L. VAN DER STOCKT (ed.), *Rhetorical Theory and Praxis in Plutarch: Acta of the IVth International Congress of the International Plutarch Society, Leuven, July 3-6, 1996*. Namur, Peeters 2000: 493-510.
- "Mirroring Virtue in Plutarch's *Lives*," *Ploutarchos* n.s., 1 (2003/2004) 89-96
- *Plutarch and His Roman Readers*, Oxford-New York, Oxford UP 2015.

STANTON, G.R.,
- "Sophists and Philosophers: Problems of Classification," *AJPh*, 94 (1973) 350-364.

VAN DER STOCKT, L.,
- "Education and Public Speech: Plutarch on Aesthetics and Ethics," in E. CALDERÓN DORDA, A. MORALES ORTIZ & M. VALVERDE SÁNCHEZ (eds.), *Koinòs lógos: Homenaje al profesor José García López*, Murcia: Editum – Ediciones de la Universidad de Murcia 2006, 1037-1046.

SWAIN, S.,
- *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 50-250*, Oxford-New York, Oxford UP 1996.

TORRACA, L.,
- "Problemi di lingua e stile nei 'Moralia' di Plutarco", in *ANRW* II.34.4 (1998): 3487-3510.

TSIAMPOKALOS, T.
- "Defining Rhetoric While Playing with Pre-Texts: Some Aspects of Intertextuality in Plutarch's *Praecepta gerendae reipublicae*", in T. S SCHMIDT, M. VAMVOURI & R. HIRSCH-LUIPOLD (eds.), *The Dynamics of Intertextuality in Plutarch* (Brill's Plutarch Studies 5), Leiden-Boston, E. J. Brill 2020: 495-510.
- "Lasst und über Rhetorik sprechen! Plutarchs Stellung innerhalb einer langen, ideologisch belasteten bildungsgeschichtlichen Tradition", *PhCl*, 16 (2021) 207-221.

- *Plutarch and Rhetoric. The Relationship of Rhetoric to Ethics, Politics and Education in the First and Second Centuries AD (Plutarchea Hypomnemata),* Leuven, Leuven UP 2024.

Ueding. G. & Steinbrink, B.,
- *Grundriß der Rhetorik. Geschichte – Technik – Methode*, Stuttgart-Weimar, J. B. Metzler 2011[5].

Yunis, H.,
- *Taming Democracy. Modes of Political Rhetoric in Classical Athens* (Rhetoric & Society), Ithaca-London, Cornell UP 1996.

Weissenberger, B.,
- *Die Sprache Plutarchs von Chaeronea und die pseudoplutarchischen Schriften*, Straubing, Cl. Attenkofersche Buchdruckerei 1895.

Whitmarsh, T.,
- *The Second Sophistic* (G&R New Surveys in the Classics 38), Oxford-New York, Oxford UP 2005.

von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U.,
- "Lesefrüchte," *Hermes*, 40 (1905) 116-153 (= KS IV: 170-207).

Wright, R.A.,
- "Plutarch on Moral Progress", in J. T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Passions and Moral Progress in Greco-Roman Thought*, Abington-New York, Routledge 2008: 136–150.

Wyttenbach, D.,
- *Animadversiones in Plutarchi opera* Moralia, volume I.1, Leipzig, G. Kühn 1820.

Ziegler, K.,
- "Plutarchos von Chaeronea", in *RE* XXI.1 (1951): cols. 636-962.