

passages. The almost specular organisation of these biographies fosters their dramatic power and ethical relevance, thus displaying Plutarch as a skilful “technician” (p. 254). L. Van der Stockt’s “Plutarch and the Art of Drama” is an informed study on how Plutarch dealt with ancient Attic theatre and on his effective participation to the dramatic performances of his days – while placing emphasis on his moral engagement as a spectator and author. P. Volpe Cacciatore in “Quale sia la tua sorte, meglio il lavoro: Plutarco, fr. 44 Sandbach” follows the Plutarchan fragment to compose an encomium of work, expressed in activities like agriculture and craftsmanship, and stresses the importance of *technai* as *erga* (p. 282). The short section “Plutarco y el mito” collects three captivating papers by I. Campos Mendez, G. D’Ippolito and R. González Delgado, which focus respectively on: Mithra and mystery cults; various references to myth found in Plutarch’s works, and in particular to Philoctetes; the presence of the myth of Orpheo and Euridice in Plutarch and its diverse functions. The section “Plutarco y el humanismo” includes contributions devoted to interesting aspects of the various forms of the reception of Plutarch’s writings, and his heritage during the Renaissance: the readers will find there some unexpected and challenging correspondences between Plutarch’s texts and dramatic, ethical, political, juridical works of Spanish humanists. The section “Plutarco y la tradición clásica” contains a very original study by A. M. Martín Rodríguez entitled “Ecos plutarquianos en una tragedia canaria sobre el tema de Espartaco”, which displays interesting correspondences between Plutarch’s *Crassus* and the drama *Spartacus* (1900) by A. Rodríguez López, and reflects on modern techniques of re-elaboration of ancient sources. C. Sánchez Mañas proposes an “Estudio sobre las reminiscencias herodoteas en los *Diálogos píticos* de Plutarco”, where she highlights and examines the implicit references to Herodotus in the Delphic dialogues. Finally, in the section collecting “*Variá*”, Jolanda Capriglione’s exam of the different functions of *phantasia* in Plutarch is especially worthy of note. The volume as a whole is nicely edited, and contains some very valuable contributions as well as useful bibliographical references listed at the end of each article. A strong point of this miscellany is that it embraces a wide number of topics through different methodological approaches, which makes it suitable for a large, and variously specialised, audience. This is also due to the overall successful exploitation of the great potential of the theme investigated, *i.e.*, the complex interactions between the writings of the Chaeronean and the multiple aspects of ancient *technê*. The book also attests to the wide effort of modern scholarship to engage not only with the ethical concerns of Plutarch the “moralist”, but also with the original and stimulating challenges presented by Plutarch the “thinker” – who is mostly in need of reevaluation.

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Sophia XENOPHONTOS, *Ethical Education in Plutarch. Moralising Agents and Contexts*. Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 2016. 1 vol., IX-266 p. (BEITRÄGE ZUR ALTERTUMSKUNDE, 349). Prix : 99,95 €. ISBN 978-3-11-035036-4.

This study, which is a revision of an Oxford dissertation, results from a happy encounter between an ancient Greek *pepaideumenos* from the first and second centuries AD and a modern Greek *pepaedeumenē* from our own day. By focusing on

the topic of ethical education, Xenophontos gets right to the heart of Plutarch's philosophical thinking. As Gréard already observed in his groundbreaking study of Plutarch's ethical thinking, "la morale n'est pas seulement une des applications de son génie : c'est son génie même" (*De la morale de Plutarque*, Paris 1866, p. XIX). In that respect, this is an ambitious study, the results of which are of direct relevance for various domains of Plutarch's thinking and writing. The first chapter provides a brief but very useful survey of the general conceptual framework of Plutarch's philosophical thinking about education, and as such lays a solid foundation for the subsequent chapters. On the basis of treatises such as *On moral virtue* and *On progress in virtue*, but also relying on key passages from the *Parallel Lives*, Xenophontos sketches Plutarch's view of the complicated relation between nature and nurture and of character change (*metabolē*) and character development (*epanorthōsis*). This opening chapter reveals the important role which environmental factors play in Plutarch's conception of the educational process: as a rule, a person's nature can and should indeed be developed in different social contexts. The next chapters then deal with several of these moralizing environments: the household, the school, marriage, politics, generalship and banqueting. Interestingly enough, this general structure of the book is well in line with Plutarch's own position, for as a matter of fact, most of these domains can be found in several passages from the short work *Can virtue be taught* (439D and 440C). Chapter two deals with the household and analyses Plutarch's thinking about moral education between parents and children. Plutarch has relatively little to say about children and usually refers to their conduct as a (negative or positive) model for adult behaviour. The educative role of the mother is far less important than that of the father, although the *Parallel Lives* contain a few interesting examples of strong women who act as a kind surrogates of the paternal model. As a rule, however, it is the father who is responsible for the moral education of his child and for his socio-political development. With chapter three, we turn from the household to the classroom. The chapter opens with an excellent comparative reading of *On reading the poets* and *On listening to lectures*. Xenophontos argues (convincingly to my mind) that the two treatises should be read as companion pieces that, while focusing on successive stages of the educational process, recommend basically the same educative approach. That this approach also returns in *On progress in virtue* shows that it remains no less valid for more mature, adult readers. The discussion of Plutarch's view of school education is finished by a quick look at the presence of teachers and counsellors in the *Parallel Lives* (esp. Socrates in the *Life of Alcibiades* and Plato in the *Life of Dion*). The fourth chapter returns to the household, but now focuses on the marital relations between husband and wife. We thus enter the field of the education of adults. The obvious starting point is Plutarch's *Advice on marriage*, a short work that is explicitly presented as a gift for the married couple (a *koinon dōron*; 138C) but which underscores the dominant role of the husband as the (moral) educator of his wife. This general picture is further corroborated by Plutarch's *Consolation to my wife* and even by what we read in his *Virtues of women* and by his characterization of women in the *Parallel Lives*. The latter two works contain a few examples of more dominant wives, to be sure, but their firm conduct frequently roots in the weakness of their husbands and should not be regarded as an uncomplicated, straightforward ideal. Chapter five shifts the perspective from the *oikos* to the *polis*.

The political environment proves another field for ethical education, as appears from a careful interpretation of the first chapters of Plutarch's *Political precepts*. The politician should enter politics on the basis of a well-considered, deliberate choice (*prohairesis*) and first take care of his own character, before he can attempt to educate his fellow citizens. Older politicians, who can rely on their long experience, should assume the task of educating their younger colleagues. Xenophonos here points to a very important aspect of Plutarch's political thinking that is unduly neglected in scholarly literature. Whereas most studies are especially concerned with Plutarch's attitude towards Rome and his pragmatic management of municipal politics, Xenophonos correctly places these topics (including the famous autobiographical anecdotes of Plutarch's own political conduct) in their broader perspective. In chapter six, we move from the *polis* to the battlefield. The theme of the general-educator is absent from the *Moralia* but occurs in several *Lives*. Aemilius, for instance, is depicted as a kind of philosopher-commander who adopts ethical leadership in his dealing with soldiers and enemies, as opposed to his Greek counterpart Timoleon. A somewhat similar contrast can be found between the Roman Sertorius, who tries to educate barbarian subordinates, and Eumenes, who is more concerned with military practices than with ethical issues. The chapter ends with some stimulating reflections about the implications which these oppositions have for the distinction between Plutarch's Greek and Roman readers and for Plutarch's role as an amalgamator of Greek and Roman culture. In the last chapter, Xenophonos examines the educational environment of the symposium. The programmatic proems to the different books of Plutarch's *Table Talk* illustrate the didactic intentions of their author, and similar interests also appear from the first two problems of book 1. Furthermore, Plutarch's predominance in the different conversations – which becomes evident both in tactful interventions and in aggressive replies – often rests on educational strategies that, although they sometimes have a sophistic flavour, are in the end fundamentally different from the self-promotion of contemporary sophists. The rich philosophical discussions in Plutarch's *Table Talk*, then, show that the banquet should be regarded as another important platform for moral education (and, we may add, no less for intellectual teaching and/or exchange). The book ends with a summarizing conclusion in which the main results are briefly recapitulated, a rich bibliography, and three indices (of names and topics, of Plutarchan passages, and of passages in other authors). In general, this is an excellent discussion of Plutarch's views on ethical education, based on a thorough familiarity with both the *Corpus Plutarcheum* and with existing scholarly literature. The different chapters contain many innovative insights and rest on a varied methodology that does justice to the particular character of the source texts. Furthermore, Xenophonos correctly presents her study as “the first sustained attempt to show that both the *Parallel Lives* and the *Moralia* offer comprehensive and intriguingly sophisticated ways of reading and gauging Plutarch's mental mapping on ethical pedagogy” (p. 195). This is definitely one of the greatest merits of the book. It is only fairly recently that the unity of Plutarch's works and the many interconnections between *Moralia* and *Parallel Lives* have received more attention, and by adopting this line of approach, Xenophonos sets the standard for further studies in this field.

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