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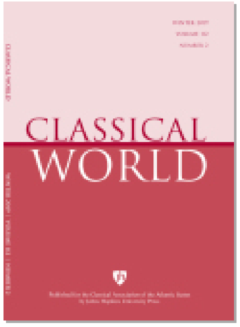

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Orator-politician *vs.* Philosopher: Plutarch's *Demosthenes* 1–3 and Plato's *Theaetetus*

CHRYSANTHOS S. CHRYSANTHOU

ABSTRACT: The present article argues for both a lexical and a larger conceptual connection between the prologue to Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* book (*Dem.* 1–3) and the so-called digression on the lives of the orator-politicians and the philosophers in Plato's *Theaetetus* (172c–177c). It first proposes a connection between the two passages through the appearance of forms of the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι, a verb which takes arts in general as its subject in Plutarch and rhetoric in particular in Plato. It then shows that Plato's views of rhetorical-political and philosophical lives as articulated in the *Theaetetus* digression have influenced Plutarch's prologue, especially in regard to the way that Plutarch describes the persistence of virtue and presents himself as both a philosopher and a politician. Finally, it concludes with the suggestion that Plutarch sets out in the prologue, through his self-presentation, the standards by which Demosthenes and Cicero are characterized and judged in the rest of the book.

Plutarch's prologue to the *Lives of Demosthenes and Cicero* (*Dem.* 1–3) starts with a general reflection on real happiness, arts and virtue (*Dem.* 1), and continues with an unusual autobiographical section that offers valuable information about his own life and career (*Dem.* 2–3). Over the

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last two decades, a growing number of scholars have examined this prologue in terms of its function within the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book as a whole as well as Plutarch's policies of self-representation and interaction with his readers.[1] The present article aims to contribute to this scholarly discussion by drawing attention to a connection, hitherto unnoticed by modern scholarship, between Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue and Socrates' digression in Plato's *Theaetetus* (172c–177c)—a work with which Plutarch was certainly familiar (see e.g. Helmbold and O'Neil 1959: 61–62). It argues that Socrates' reflections on the philosophical and rhetorical-political lives in the *Theaetetus* digression influenced Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue, especially in regard to the way that Plutarch describes the persistence of virtue and presents himself as both a philosopher and a politician.[2] Plutarch's prefatory self-portrayal, as shall be shown, is important in setting out the criteria by which the two orator-politicians, Demosthenes and Cicero, are characterized and judged in the rest of the book.

Plutarch begins the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue by opposing the encomiast of Alcibiades, who thinks that the happiness of a man depends on the happiness of his city. "But I think," Plutarch states, "it makes no difference to the one who is going to enjoy the true happiness, which for the most part lies in character (ἤθει) and disposition (διαθέσει), to be born in a humble and undistinguished fatherland or to have a small and plain mother" (*Dem.* 1.1).[3] In Plutarch's view, it is ridiculous for one to think that small cities like Iulis and Aegina, "can breed good actors and poets but not a man who is just, independent, intelligent, and magnanimous" (*Dem.* 1.2). Plutarch draws a contrast (thoroughly Platonic in tone)[4] between virtue and arts, which he explains in the following lines:

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[1] See Mossman 1999; Burlando 2000; Pelling 2002b: 271–72; Titchener 2002; Zadorojnyi 2005 and 2006; Beneker 2016.

[2] More generally, on Plutarch's self-fashioning in the *Moralia* and the *Lives*, see Beck 2000; Pelling 2002b: 267–82; Klotz 2007; Van Hoof 2010: 73–80; Klotz 2011; Pelling 2011; Chrysanthou 2017 and 2018.

[3] For the translation of the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book I follow (only with minor alterations at some points) Lintott 2013, unless otherwise notified. The translations of the rest of Plutarch's texts are based on or adopted from those of the Loeb Classical Library editions by various scholars (Cambridge, MA, 1927–69). For the text of Plutarch's *Lives* I have consulted the Teubner editions of K. Ziegler (Leipzig, 1957–73; revised edition by H. Gärtner, 1994–2002), while for that of Plutarch's *Moralia* I follow the Loeb Classical Library editions. For the translation of Plato's *Theaetetus*, I use that of the Loeb by H. N. Fowler (Cambridge, MA/London 1921), slightly adapted.

[4] See Mossman 1999: 80, Zadorojnyi 2006: 104.

> τὰς μὲν γὰρ ἄλλας τέχνας εἰκός ἐστι, πρὸς ἐργασίαν καὶ δόξαν συνισταμένας, ἐν ταῖς ἀδόξοις καὶ ταπειναῖς πόλεσιν ἀπομαραίνεσθαι, τὴν δ' ἀρετὴν ὥσπερ ἰσχυρὸν καὶ διαρκὲς φυτὸν ἐν ἅπαντι ῥιζοῦσθαι τόπῳ, φύσεώς γε χρηστῆς καὶ φιλοπόνου ψυχῆς ἐπιλαμβανομένην.
>
> (*Dem.* 1.3)

> For the other arts which are developed for practical purposes and to secure good repute are likely to waste away in inglorious and humble cities but virtue, like a sturdy and self-sufficient plant, takes root in any location when it fastens onto a good nature and hardworking spirit.

In Plutarch's essay *On Exile*, there is a similar emphasis on the universality of virtue, happiness and wisdom, although there Plutarch mentions that the plant, unlike a man's soul and individual qualities, is spatially confined. "For a plant," as Plutarch says, "one place is more suitable than another for better flourishing and growth, but from a man no place can take away happiness, as none can take away virtue or wisdom" (607e). In the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue, on the contrary, Plutarch parallels virtue with a strong and self-sufficient plant: it can root everywhere when it takes hold of a noble nature and a laborious spirit.[5] One can notice that the plant imagery is already present in the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι, referring to the rest of the arts, which, unlike virtue,[6] have a practical purpose, aim at glory, and thus "die away" (ἀπομαραίνεσθαι) in humble and inglorious places.

Plutarch has an unusual predilection for the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι. He uses it to designate the decay of vigor (*Phil.* 18.2; *De Alex. fort.* 337a); of power and glory (*Mar.* 31.3; cf. *Phoc.* 29.5); of spirit or soul (*De cohib. ira* 453b; *Quaest. conv.* 696f; *De exil.* 607e; *De fac.* 945a); of eagerness (*De prof. virt.* 76f.) and thinking (*Luc.* 43.1); of "vision" and sight (*Tim.* 63 [φαντασία]; 37.8); of anger (*Cor.* 19.1) and life (*Num.* 21.7; *De sera* 560c.); and of the power of the *logos* of philosophy (ὁ τῆς φιλοσοφίας λόγος).[7] Elsewhere in the *Corpus Plutarcheum*, the verb is linked with the extinction of qualities (*Quaest. conv.* 663b [ποιότητας]) and virtues (cf. *An seni* 792e), of love or viciousness (*Comm. not.* 1073a; *Non posse* 1101d). It is also connected with the death of heat and fire (*Quaest. conv.* 694e; 702f.), and the decline of passions or pleasure (*De virt. moral.* 450f; *Quomodo adul.* 20b).[8]

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[5] Plutarch normally links the "soul/soil" imagery with the significance of "paideutic cultivation": Zadorojnyi 2006: 108–109. Cf. *Cor.* 1.3; *Alc.* 4.1; *Nic.* 9.1; *Dion* 58.2. The image is Platonic: *Euthphr.* 2d; *Ti.* 87b; *Phdr.* 276e–277a; *Resp.* 492a; cf. *Thg.* 121b–c. On Plutarch's use of plant imagery, see Fuhrmann 1964: 77–84; Duff 1999a: 207–208, 226, 421–22 (Index of themes, s.v. Plant metaphors); 1999b: 315–21.

[6] Plutarch follows here the Platonic conception of virtue as an art, see Duff 1999a: 36 with n67; Zadorojnyi 2006: 104.

[7] *Max. cum Princ.* 777a. The verb here refers to the *logos* of the philosopher who converses with a private individual, thus having a positive influence only on this individual.

In works by earlier authors the verb ἀπομαραίνεσθαι covers a wide range of contexts as well.[9] In Xenophon it is used in connection with the extinction of friendship (*Symp.* 8.14) and life (*Ap.* 7). In Anaximenes of Lampsacus it refers to the weakening of sensual pleasures (Stob. *Flor.* 4.50.91 = *FGrHist* 72 F38),[10] while in Aristotle it is used in relation to the loss of strength of animals (*Hist. an.* 552b) and the explanation of several meteorological phenomena.[11] In Theophrastus' *On the Causes of Plants* the verb is found in its literal sense connoting the death of plants (5.11.1; 6.11.13),[12] while in his work *On Stones* it occurs within the discussion of friable stones (12). A closer look at uses of the term ἀπομαραίνεσθαι by authors prior to Plutarch reveals that it is only in Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue and a passage from Plato's *Theaetetus* that the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι refers to "the withering" of arts.[13] This unique usage in Plato's *Theaetetus* and Plutarch's prologue to the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book, though hinted at by only a single phrase,

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On the contrary, Plutarch corroborates the ideal of the philosopher whose associations with men in power benefit many through one (*Max. cum Princ.* 776a–777b). Plutarch's use of the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι in this context might remind us of its usage in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue, especially if one thinks of Plutarch's similar concerns about the ideal public-spirited philosopher (more on this below). In the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue, nevertheless, Plutarch does not distinguish two different "sorts of philosophy" (one directed at private citizens and the other at public men—for Plutarch, in fact, it is only the latter that is accepted in the *Max. cum Princ.* as true philosophical teaching)—but two different sorts of τέχναι (arts directed at business and fame vs. ἀρετή). On Plutarch's "definition" of philosophy and the "true philosopher" in *Max. cum princ.* 776a–777b, see Roskam 2009: 71–96.

[8] Holden 1893: 41 also lists some of the uses of the word ἀπομαραίνεσθαι in Plutarch.

[9] See *LSJ*, sv. ἀπομαραίνω.

[10] A similar meaning of the verb appears in Pl. *Resp.* 328d.

[11] e.g. phenomena associated with the weakness of the wind and the warmth of the sun (*Mete.* 367b; cf. Theophr. fr. 5.36.2–3, Wimmer), the disappearance of comets (*Mete.* 343b), and the fading of the rainbow (*Mete.* 375a).

[12] Cf. Antip. *Stoic.* fr. 63. l.34, von Arnim = Stob. *Flor.* 4.22.25.18, Hense.

[13] A search through the *TLG* suffices to show that the verb μαραίνω (including all its simple and compound forms) is not used anywhere else in the entire corpus of Plutarch's work in connection with arts (τέχναι).

is in fact the manifestation of a significant conceptual connection between the two works.[14] In what follows I demonstrate the influence of the *Theaetetus* digression on the argument of Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue.

In Plato's *Theaetetus* the verb ἀπομαραίνεσθαι appears in Socrates' comment about the dissatisfaction that unrighteous men, especially orators, feel with themselves and their words when they need to give a personal account (λόγον) and get one back about the things they oppose, namely when they need to debate philosophy: "their rhetoric (ῥητορική) withers away (ἀπομαραίνεται)," Socrates says (177b). In Plutarch's *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue, as we saw, it refers to the practical arts in general, certainly poetry and acting—Plutarch refers to poets and actors in the preceding lines (*Dem.* 1.2)—and possibly writing (cf. *Dem.* 2.1 calling attention to historiographers) and rhetoric (the biographies that follow are those of the greatest orators). These sorts of art, Plutarch mentions, whose object is to bring employment and glory, "wither away" in a humble and inglorious city but by implication do well in a large one (*Dem.* 1.3).

There is much that separates Plato's and Plutarch's texts—the two authors draw different sorts of point about the place and the reasons for such "withering"—but a closer examination of the wider contexts within which the two passages occur reveals some commonalities that can reinforce the suggestion that Plato's *Theaetetus* might well have influenced Plutarch's discussion in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue.

In Plato's *Theaetetus* Socrates' words occur in the digressional part of the dialogue where Socrates in his inquiry into the question of knowledge and good juxtaposes the way of life of the philosophers with that of the orator-politicians (172c–177b).[15] Unlike the philosophers, Socrates says, who speak at leisure and peacefully only in search of truth, the orator-politicians are always in a hurry, slavish participants in actual contests in courts. They often turn to flattery, deceit and wrong and argue out of self-interest rather than truth (172d–173a). “Consequently,” Socrates stresses, “they pass from youth to manhood with no soundness of mind in them, although they themselves think that they have become clever and wise” (173b; cf. 176c–d). By contrast, the men of philosophy, and more precisely the “leaders” in philosophy (cf. περὶ τῶν κορυφαίων), completely neglect the worldly affairs of the city. According to Socrates, they are not aware of politics; nor do they care about the birth, ancestry, status, or wealth of their fellow men, considering such earthly things of little account. Most importantly, they are ignorant, as Socrates suggests, of their own ignorance of all these things, for it is only their bodies that dwell in the city, while their otherworldly minds seek the universal nature and definition of everything (such as what is human being, or happiness and suffering, or justice). Thus, the philosophers, Socrates recounts, appear laughable when they are engaged in practical affairs, just as the orator-politicians do when they are dragged upwards to test universal truths and philosophical questions (173d–175e).

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[14] Zadorojnyi 2014: 313 interestingly observes: "There are [sc. in Plutarch] special words suited to energize and channel inter- and intratextual apprehension . . . In the *Life* of Dion, the word "dust" (*koniortos*) contributes to a contrast between dramatic battle narrative (46.4) and an earlier, peaceful scene of study (13.2), and creates as well an additional link between the *Life* and Plato's *Republic* (496d–e: Zadorojnyi (2011) 151)."

[15] On the comparison between the philosophical and rhetorical-political lives in the *Theaetetus* digression, see e.g. Barker 1976; Niehues-Pröbsting 1982; Waymack 1985; Polansky 1992: 135–45; Bradshaw 1998: 63–65; Chappell 2004: 121–28; Stern 2008: 162–82; Bartels 2015: 29–62.

Socrates’ contrast between the political and the (otherworldly) philosophic ways of life, both of which prove to be insufficient as they stand, is so sharp as to seem caricaturist.[16] Several scholars have (reasonably) stated that the underlying suggestion in Socrates’ discussion is the harmonious combination of the two types of life[17]—an ideal personified by the philosopher in action *par excellence* Socrates.[18] This Platonic ideal, I suggest, ties in with the situation envisaged through Plutarch’s characterization of himself in the prologue to the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book.

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[16] Cf. Waymack 1985: 483–84; Rue 1993: 72.

[17] Waymack 1985: 485: “I want to suggest that Plato meant for us to reject both of these extreme positions . . . Instead, the life we live should be a mixture of the active *and* contemplative and the knowledge we seek as human philosophers should be a mixture of flux and stasis, unity and plurality.” Cf. Rue 1993. See also Stern 2002 and 2008: 162–82, who focuses especially on the central role of politics in philosophical inquiry. Cf. Plato’s portrait of the philosopher-king in the ideal city of the *Republic* (e.g. 473c–d; 487e; 520a–c). For a concise overview of Plato’s ideas about the combination of political power and philosophical insight see Roskam 2009: 39–43. On Socrates’ mixture of an active life with a contemplative life, see Roskam 2009: 38–39.

[18] Scholars have stressed the inferiority of the philosopher’s (otherworldly) way of life to Socrates’ own: Berger 1982; Waymack 1985; Rue 1993; Lane 2005: 343; Stern 2008: 163–64n2. Critics have been especially sensitive to the differences between Socrates and the fleeing philosopher: Cornford 1935: 88–89; Benitez and Guimaraes 1993: 300–301; Bradshaw 1998: 65; Sedley 2004: 66–68; Lännström 2011: 112, 126–30.

Just like the orator-politician of the *Theaetetus* digression, Plutarch appears to be involved in political affairs (even if he does not make his career in the law courts) and attentive to earthly concerns. He lives in his small native city Chaeronea, as he says, and he enjoys staying there "so that his city may not become even smaller" (*Dem.* 2.2). This statement might be explained at first glance by Plutarch's worry that Chaeronea might lose even one citizen,[19] but can equally reflect Plutarch's service to his homeland—a point upon which Plutarch elaborates elsewhere in his work, in the *Political Precepts* (811b–c; 816d–e), for example, or the *Whether Old men Should Engage in Public Affairs* (792f).[20] Plutarch explicitly refers in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue to his dealings with politics as well as his philosophical teaching, both of which had (as he admits) a great effect on his knowledge of Latin: "When in Rome and on visits around Italy (ἐν δὲ Ῥώμῃ καὶ ταῖς περὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν διατριβαῖς), I do not have time (cf. οὐ σχολῆς οὔσης) to practice the Latin language because of my political preoccupations (ὑπὸ χρειῶν πολιτικῶν) and those who study philosophy with me (τῶν διὰ φιλοσοφίαν πλησιαζόντων)" (*Dem.* 2.2).[21] "Hence it is late," Plutarch continues to say, "and at an advanced age that I have begun to deal with Latin literature, and have had an experience which is remarkable but true" (*Dem.* 2.2). Plutarch explains that he could understand the meaning of Latin words because he already had some sort of experience (ἐμπειρίαν) of the events they were describing (*Dem.* 2.3)—an experience most likely gained either from his active political involvement (mentioned a few lines before) or from his reading. Plutarch makes clear that he does not discard the study and practice of Latin language and style but emphasizes that these fit people who are younger than him and have more time (cf. οἷστισι πλείων τε σχολή) for such ambitions (*Dem.* 2.4)—an implicit reminder of his active public role and philosophical teaching or (more precisely) his engagement with writing the *Parallel Lives* (cf. Zadorojnyi 2006: 107). For this reason, Plutarch states, he will explore the natures (τὰς φύσεις) and dispositions (τὰς διαθέσεις)[22] of Demosthenes and Cicero on the basis of their actions (ἀπὸ τῶν πράξεων) and policies (καὶ τῶν πολιτειῶν), leaving aside any stylistic comparison of the two men as orators (*Dem.* 3.1–2)—though in the two biographies that follow and the final *Synkrisis* Plutarch also comments on the oratory of Demosthenes and Cicero and includes rhetorical analysis to the extent that this can enlighten character and morality.[23] Just like the orator-politician of the *Theaetetus* digression, then, Plutarch presents himself as an active participant in public affairs who is busily concerned with earthly things. Unlike the orator-politician of the *Theaetetus*, however, he appears to deal with philosophical teaching as well and pay attention to particulars for the sake of ethics.

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[19] Burlando 2000: 63. Titchener 2002: 137–38 reads Plutarch's statement as a (graceful) expression of his antipathy towards Roman and/or urban life.

[20] See Russell 1993; Lamberton 2001: 2–12; Van Hoof 2010: 75n27; Xenophontos 2016: 146–49. In general, Plutarch pays due attention to his city's role in history and makes sure that Chaeronea is properly recognized: e.g. *Dem.* 19–21; *Alex.* 9; *Sull.* 16–20 with Pelling 2010: xvi. On Plutarch's references to Chaeronea, see Fuscagni 1994: 158n3.

[21] It is worthy of note that the words σχολή (172d; 175e) and διατριβή (172c; 173c) occur in the *Theaetetus* digression in connection with the otherworldly philosopher who (unlike Plutarch and the orator-politician of the digression [172d: οἱ δὲ ἐν ἀσχολίᾳ τε ἀεὶ λέγουσι, cf. 174d]) do not bother about earthly concerns and thus engage in a leisurely pursuit of "theoretical" philosophy.

Plutarch's inquiry into the lives of Demosthenes and Cicero, in fact, entails a universal and timeless ethical dimension—present more or less in all of Plutarch's biographies (Pelling 1995 = repr. 2002a: 237–51)—which is absent from the life of the orator-politician of the *Theaetetus* digression. As we saw earlier, in the first chapter of the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue Plutarch, just like the philosopher of the digression, is concerned with universal moral definitions, such as "what the nature of true happiness is and in what way a man is naturally fitted to gain it"—to use the language of Plato's dialogue (175c). He is left unmoved by the glorious origins of an individual, namely whether one comes from a famous or humble city or has a mother of high or low status, in order to define one's true happiness. Plutarch, instead, looks at the universal character of happiness and virtue, which (as he implies) can be a possession of all men alike, for it depends on an individual's personal qualities rather than on one's origin or stature (*Dem.* 1; see Beneker 2016: 147–51). Plutarch draws his readers, through the use of first-person plurals, to reflect precisely on this: "If we have been falling short of thinking and living as we should, we will not ascribe this to the inadequacy of our fatherland but to ourselves, as is just" (*Dem.* 1.4).[24] Plutarch, moreover, appropriates in the prologue self-awareness (τὸ γνῶθι σαυτόν) for himself. Unlike the rhetorician Caecilius of Caleacte, who "rashly ventured to publish" (tr. Scott-Kilvert and Duff 2012: 197) a stylistic comparison of Demosthenes and Cicero, Plutarch asserts that he will not try to write about things for which he is not qualified (*Dem.* 3.2). In the *Theaetetus*, as we already noted, Socrates judges both the orator-politician and the depoliticized philosopher as deficient in self-knowledge. Both of these introductory themes—that virtue does not depend on the environment and that self-awareness is critical to success—are further developed in the two *Lives* that follow, and constitute two basic lessons of the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book as a whole.[25]

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[22] It is important to remember that in *Dem.* 1 (esp. 1.1 and 1.3) Plutarch stressed that this is where one's real happiness and virtue lie.

[23] See e.g. *Dem.* 4–11; *Cic.* 5.6; 7.6–8; 13; 24; 26–27; 39.7; *Dem.-Cic.* 1–2. Cf. Mossman 1999: 81–82 with n14; Billault 2001; Zadorojnyi 2006: 105; 2014: 306 with 314n13: "The Plutarchan refusal to compare Demosthenes and Cicero as orators (*Dem.* 3.1) is something of a red herring"; Beneker 2016: 153–55.

So reading the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue in the light of the *Theaetetus* digression, where Socrates distinguishes between the political and philosophical lives, shows that Plutarch projects himself in a way that suggests that he comes close to both the orator-politician and the philosopher of the digression, without being identified with either of them. In a sense Plutarch appears to be an embodiment of the Socratic combination of theoretical intellectualism and practical activity. Just like the midwife Socrates of the Theaetetus (at least),[26] Plutarch does not depict himself as an apolitical, otherworldly thinker who is ignorant or neglectful of political things and human affairs. Rather, he appears to be a living teacher of philosophy and an active participant in political affairs who engages in and employs the study of the particulars (here the lives of Demosthenes and Cicero as orator-politicians) as a way to the philosophical enlightenment and moral betterment of his audience.[27] Plutarch, I argue, advocates in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue the ideal combination of politics (and the study of it) and philosophical insight,[28] thus presenting himself as an exemplar to stimulate imitation and emulation, or at least self-reflection and further discussion, in his readers.

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[24] On Plutarch's use of first-person plurals here, see Pelling 2002b: 271–72; Zadorojnyi 2006: 107; Duff 2014: 341; Beneker 2016: 148.

[25] Beneker 2016 offers an excellent analysis of this.

[26] On Plato's portrayal of Socrates in the *Theaetetus*, see above, n. 18. See also Peterson 2011: 62; Labriola 2015.

[27] Cf. Plutarch's self-presentation as a philosopher who is active in politics in *Prae. ger. reip.* 798b–c with Van Hoof 2010: 74–76. See Stadter 2002: 6 who points out: "There is every reason to think that Plutarch saw his political essays and especially his *Parallel Lives* as his attempt as philosopher to enter the cave of politics."

[28] Cf. *De prof. virt.* 78a–c; *Max. cum princ.* 776f–777b; *Dem.-Cic.* 3.2–4; *Num.* 20.7–12; *Phil.* 1; *Dion* 1–2; *Brut.* 1.3–4. Cf. [Plut.] *De lib. educ.* 7f–8a. On the complex theme of the "philosopher-king" in Plutarch's work, see De Blois and Bons 1992; Roskam

It is worth noting that Plutarch explicitly addresses the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book to Sosius Senecio, a man who was politically active himself and had "broad interests and an especial taste for poetry and philosophy."[29] This explicit address does not only add to Plutarch's self-portrayal as a philosopher who participates in public affairs, one who associates with and addresses his political and ethical biographies to a man of power (cf. the true philosopher of the *Max. cum princ.* which was commented on earlier),[30] but also helps to understand how Plutarch's self-portrayal might be designed to work.

Plutarch's self-paradigm might incite Sosius Senecio as well as those other public-spirited and cultural real-life readers of the *Demosthenes–Cicero* book to see, or at least reflect on, the value of the unity or cooperation of politics and philosophy.[31] Besides, Plutarch's self-presentation is well tied to the pair of *Lives* it introduces and sets a standard by which to judge the two men of the book. Just like Plutarch (and Senecio), Demosthenes and Cicero "combine culture and a life of action" (Pelling 2002b: 270), and there is a constant concern in the two *Lives* as to whether and to what extent oratory and action are informed by, reflect, or result from ethical and philosophical virtues. The *Life of Demosthenes*, for example, illustrates, how "the power of speech without accompanying political or philosophical qualities involves a serious risk. Demosthenes is brave insofar as he openly pleads for war, but his conduct during . . . the

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2002; Holland 2005; Boulet 2005; Van Raalte 2005; Dillon 2008 (= repr. 2010: 87–102); Roskam 2009: 41–43 with further bibliography cited on 42n86; Boulet 2014.

[29] Jones 1971: 55, based on the portrait of Sosius, which Plutarch gives in his work. On Sosius Senecio, in general, see Jones 1971: 54–57; Puech 1992: 4883; Swain 1996: 144–45 (145: "a highly educated man"), 426–27; Duff 1999a: 66, 288–89; Stadter 2002: 5–6, 8; Pelling 2002b: 270–73; Zadorojnyi 2006: 107 with n26; Klotz 2007: 651–52. Cf. Stadter 1988: 293: "Plutarch envisions an audience so much like himself, not only interested in but sharing his feelings on moral improvement, duty, and the importance of philosophy in guiding one's life."

[30] The idea that a philosopher should advise a man of power or engage himself in public life is widespread in Plutarch's times: e.g. Philo *Fug.* 33; *Migr.* 89–90; *Deus* 16–19; *Decal.* 101; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 2.26; 49.3–14; Max. Tyr. 15.7. See Roskam 2009: 64–65n270.

[31] On Plutarch's readers of the *Parallel Lives*, see Stadter 1988: 292–93: "Though involved in government, Plutarch's audience were also intellectuals, well-read and familiar with the science of their day" (293); Pelling 2002b: 270–71: "Sosius . . . is hardly the typical narratee . . . Real-life readers doubtless extended over a wide range, from the most distinguished of Plutarch's Roman friends to impressionable young pupils at Chaeronea."

battle is inconsistent with his words."[32] Judith Mossman has persuasively shown that in Plutarch's narrative Demosthenes' and Cicero's actions do not always match their words (although as Mossman correctly observes, Cicero is much better at reconciling the two).[33] This sort of (mis) match between rhetoric and praxis in the two *Lives* serves (as Mossman demonstrates) to keep readers wondering about whether or not oratory and politics are worthwhile pursuits; in other words, whether and how far the two men employ rhetoric and practice in the pursuit of moral principle, themselves adopting a philosophical attitude and resolute course of action,[34] and guiding others on their road to moral virtue.[35] In the *Life of Cicero*, in addition, Plutarch takes a deep interest in the status of Cicero as a philosopher, his philosophical background and the way in which he tries to reconcile the philosophic life and the life of an orator-politician. How far Cicero is a successful orator, statesman and philosopher is very much at issue throughout the *Cicero*[36] and culminates in the closing chapters of the *Life*.

Most significantly, at the end of both the *Demosthenes* and the *Cicero*, Plutarch has the two men die not simply as orators or statesmen but as philosopher-like figures too.[37] Plutarch, I suggest, describes the death of Demosthenes and Cicero in terms reminiscent of that of Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo*.[38] Demosthenes dies, like Socrates, from poisoning (*Dem.* 29.4; cf. Pl. *Phd.* 116c–118). Demosthenes "looks up at" Archias (cf. *Dem.* 29.3, ἀναβλέψας πρὸς αὐτόν), as Socrates "looks up at" the servant of the Eleven (Pl. *Phd.* 116d, ἀναβλέψας πρὸς αὐτόν), although in the first case Demosthenes denies Archias' promises and uncovers his hypocrisy, while in the latter case Socrates kindly obeys the requests of the servant who acknowledges Socrates' nobility.[39] Moreover, as soon as Demosthenes took the poison, he "covered his head," as Plutarch tells us, "and let it droop" (cf. *Dem.* 29.4, συγκαλυψάμενος ἀπέκλινε τὴν κεφαλήν); and when he understood that the poison was already killing him "he uncovered his face (ἐξεκαλύψατο) and, looking straight at Archias (καὶ ἀποβλέψας πρὸς τὸν Ἀρχίαν)," proclaimed his victory over him and expressed his piety for Poseidon (*Dem.* 29.5–6). Socrates' last words in the *Phaedo* are marked in a similar manner: Socrates "uncovered his face which was covered" (cf. ἐκκαλυψάμενος—ἐνεκεκάλυπτο γάρ—), Phaedo says, and gave instructions to Crito to offer a cock to Asclepius (Pl. *Phd.* 118). Finally, not only Demosthenes but Cicero as well appears, like Socrates, to be steadfast at his death. In Plutarch's words, "Cicero himself with his usual gesture held his chin in his left hand and looked fixedly at his assassins; he was dirty and unshaven and his face was worn with anxiety, with the result that the majority covered their eyes (cf. ἐγκαλύψασθαι) as Herennius slaughtered him. He was killed after extending his neck from the litter. . . ." (*Cic.* 48.4–5). Cicero, like Socrates, shows philosophic calm at the end.[40] The reaction of the bystanders also recalls Phaedo's reaction to Socrates' drinking the poison: "I covered my face (ἐγκαλυψάμενος) and cried for myself" (Pl. *Phd.* 117c).

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[32] Van Raalte 2005: 107. This could be related, I think, to the fact that Demosthenes was not a student of philosophy. Plutarch clearly states that Demosthenes abandoned all his other studies and devoted himself wholly to the rhetorical art (*Dem.* 5.5–6; cf. *Dem.-Cic.* 1.2–3 which contrasts Demosthenes' one-sided dealing with rhetoric with Cicero's polymathy and interest in philosophy). There is only a tradition (Plutarch says) attested by Hermippus that Demosthenes studied with Plato and benefitted much from him in his rhetorical studies (*Dem.* 5.7).

[33] Mossman 1999. See also Pecorella Longo 2015: 134–37, 141 on Demosthenes. On Plutarch's emphasis on the importance of consistency between words and deeds, see *Prof. in Virt.* 84b; *De Stoic. Repugn.* 1033a–c.

[34] See esp. Roskam 2002 and Van Raalte 2005 on the intertwinement of philosophical and political qualities in Plutarch.

[35] Cf. Beneker 2016. Interestingly, Mossman 1999: 90n29 has noticed some parallels between Plutarch's Demosthenes and the Platonic orator in the *Theaetetus* digression: "there are elements of it [i.e. the Platonic orator] in Plutarch's portrait of Demosthenes [the moroseness, the single-mindedness], but they are confined to the earlier chapters and the account of his exile: elsewhere, Plutarch takes a less Platonist line and treats Demosthenes as a statesman, especially in his refusal to flatter the people, and in the end even as a hero."; cf. Mossman 1999: 94n42 commenting on Demosthenes' reflection during his exile that he would prefer death to politics (*Dem.* 26.7): "The trials and tribulations of the political life listed perhaps should remind us of the *Theaetetus* passage partially quoted in n. 29 above, which mentions both ἀγῶνες and φόβοι as deforming forces which twist the orator."

[36] See Moles 1988: 10–11, 150–51 (on *Cic.* 3.1; 3.3), 179–81 (on *Cic.* 32.5–7), 189–90 (on *Cic.* 40.1–5), 192 (on *Cic.* 41.8); Swain 1990: 196–97; Mossman 1999: 83, 94; Roskam 2009: 49–50; Cooper 2014: 396–97.

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[37] On death scenes in Plutarch's *Lives*, see Pelling 1997 (= repr. 2002a: 365–86); Cooper 2014. See also Moles 1988: 199–200; Mossman 1999: 96–101; Senzasono 2001; Várzeas 2009: 336–38 on Plutarch's depiction of the deaths of Demosthenes and Cicero. On ancient biographers' use of Plato's narrative of Socrates' death in the *Phaedo*, see Kechagia 2016: 181 with n1 for further bibliography. See also the presentation of the deaths of Seneca the Younger (Tac. *Ann.* 15.60–64) and Thrasea Paetus (Tac. *Ann.* 16.34–35), both of which bear a resemblance to Socrates' death scene from Plato's *Phaedo*. On this point, see Geiger 1979: 61–66; Griffin 1986: 66. Cf. Hägg 2012: 63–64 on Xenophon's use of the Socratic paradigm in his narrative of Cyrus' death in the *Cyropaedia*.

[38] On Plutarch's familiarity with Plato's *Phaedo*, see Helmbold and O'Neil 1959: 58–59.

[39] See *Dem.* 29.3: ὦ Ἀρχία . . . οὔθ' ὑποκρινόμενός με πώποτ' ἔπεισας, οὔτε νῦν πείσεις vs. Pl. *Phd.* 116d: ἀλλ' ἄγε δή, ὦ Κρίτων, πειθώμεθα αὐτῷ.

[40] Cf. Mossman 1999: 100. On other links between Cicero and Socrates, see Moles 1988: 157 (on *Cic.* 7.1, "craftsmen"); Lintott 2013: 195 (on *Cic.* 40.1).

These implicit connections with Socrates' death at the end of both *Lives* have the effect of enhancing the moral stature of the two men and stressing the nobility of their death.[41] They also suggest that Demosthenes and Cicero should be judged as orator-politicians in philosophical terms, and more precisely against the Socratic model of the ideal combination of practical life and philosophy (cf. *An seni* 796d–f).[42] In the final comparison between the two men, Plutarch blames Demosthenes for not having obtained power and high office (*Dem.-Cic.* 3.2). On the contrary, he praises Cicero for his virtuous statesmanship (*Dem.-Cic.* 3.3) and explicitly measures him against the Platonic ideal philosopher-statesman: "At Rome itself when in name he was created consul but in fact received the power of a sole commander and dictator against Catilina's men, he [i.e. Cicero] confirmed the truth of Plato's forecast that cities would have a respite from misfortunes, whenever by some lucky chance great power and intelligence should meet in the same place in company with justice" (*Dem.-Cic.* 3.4). Plutarch alludes here to the *Republic* 473d and Plato's suggestion that political power and philosophical insight should be combined in one and the same person.

To conclude, in this paper I argued that in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* prologue Plutarch was heavily influenced by Socrates' reflections on the lives of the orator-politicians and the philosophers in Plato's *Theaetetus*, especially in regard to the way that Plutarch describes the persistence of virtue and his self-depiction as both a philosopher and a politician.

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[41] On Plutarch' presentation of the deaths of Demosthenes and Cicero in a dignified manner, which rehabilitates their character, see Mossman 1999: 96–101, who stresses in particular Demosthenes' growth in wisdom and moral stature.

[42] Cf. Plutarch's portrayal of the deaths of Phocion and Cato Minor and the numerous parallels with Socrates, which Plutarch draws there (*Phoc.* 36–37; *Cato Min.* 64–70). On the Socratic features of Plutarch's Phocion and Cato Minor, see Duff 1999a: 141–45; Trapp 1999. On the *Phocion*, see also Alcalde Martín 1999; on the *Cato Minor*, see Geiger 1999; Zadorojnyi 2007, 216–30. In fact, if Plutarch's readers are already familiar with the connection between Socrates and Phocion either in Plutarch's biography or elsewhere—Duff 1999a: 142 suggests that the Socratic parallels in the *Phocion* were possibly already found in Plutarch's sources and are present in Nepos' *Life of Phocion* as well—then they may recognize that, in Plutarch's presentation, Demosthenes manages at the end of his life to live up to the standard of Phocion, despite his earlier inferiority to him (stressed esp. in *Dem.* 10.3–5; 14.1–3). On Plutarch's Socrates, in general, see Hershbell 1988; Pelling 2005; Beck 2014b.

It emerged from our analysis that for Plutarch the ideal man of action should fulfil a philosophical role as well, combining politics (and rhetoric) with philosophy and acknowledging a philosophical and ethical value in his dealings with political and human affairs. This is the standard, as we saw, which Plutarch sets up in the prologue through his own paradigm and uses throughout the book to evaluate the two men.

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