fearlessness is also revealed in another, earlier episode. A certain Silo asked the young (age 4!) Cato to put in a good word with his uncle to obtain the citizenship for the allies. When the boy, unlike his half brother, is unwilling and rather ostentatiously shows it, Silo feigns to throw him out the window, swinging him to and fro outside the frame. Cato, however, did not flinch, and Silo finally put him back down with the words: "What luck for Italy that he is still a child"([172]).

In his immediate surroundings too Cato would tolerate no injustice. We have already mentioned the role-game he played with his friends. On that occasion one rather good-looking boy was convicted and locked in a small room by an older lad. The young Cato immediately understood what was happening and freed the victim([173]).

([172]) *Cato mi.* 2.1. The same story in Val. Max. III 1.2. The little Cato was then four years old.

([173]) *Cato mi.* 2.5-6. Cf. p. 100.

EPAMEINONDAS AND THE SOCRATIC PARADIGM IN THE *DE GENIO SOCRATIS*

Aristoula GEORGIADOU

The *De genio Socratis* (Περὶ τοῦ Σωκράτους δαιμονίου) represents, unlike any other work by Plutarch, the meeting point and amalgamation of his varied skills as historian, philosopher, storyteller and dramatist. The report of the Spartan seizure of the Kadmeia in 382 BC, briefly sketched by a Theban sympathiser, the Athenian Archedamus, is followed by a lengthy account of the events that led to the liberation of Thebes from Spartan domination in 379 BC; the account is given in a dialogue form by Caphisias, Epameinondas' brother.

Athens and Thebes are the two geographical poles of Theban activities: Athens, a city currently sympathetic to the Theban cause, is the refuge and point of departure of the Theban exiles([1]), and at the same time the place where Caphisias updates his Athenian audience on the recent Theban exploits; Thebes, on the other hand, is the actual theater of the operations organised secretly by the Theban exiles during their

([1]) Plutarch explains the Athenian aid to the Theban exiles partly as a gesture exemplifying their traditional and natural instinct of humanity (πάτριον αὐτοῖς καὶ σύμφυτον εἶναι τὸ φιλάνθρωπον), and partly as a return for the Theban aid to Thrasybulus in 403 BC against the Thirty tyrants (*Pel.* 6.5; *Lys.* 27.6-7). The Athenians are not represented, however, by Plutarch as permanent and unconditional supporters of the Theban cause. Shortly after the liberation of the Kadmeia the Athenians — Plutarch mentions — not only renounced their alliance with the Thebans, fearing apparently the increase of their power, but also prosecuted those in their city who favored the Boeotian cause (*Pel.* 14.1); the reference to the prosecurion of the Theban sympathisers in Athens (τῶν βοιωτιαζόντων, *Pel.* 14.1) echoes Archedamus' fear of being accused as pro-Boeotian by his Athenian compatriots (βοιωτιάζειν, *De gen. Socr.* 575D); consequently, Archedamus' concern for being labelled as pro-Boeotian may actually point to the timing of Caphisias' account to his Athenian audience, i.e. soon after the liberation of Thebes (*Pel.* 14).

stay in Athens(2). Plutarch has dealt at least twice(3) with this crucial chapter of Theban history; once in the *Life of Pelopidas*, where he is primarily interested in the hero's contribution to the liberation of the Kadmeia, an exploit which the biographer acknowledges as Pelopidas' personal achievement despite his young age (7.1)(4); the same event is recounted in an entirely different context in the *De genio*, in which it constitutes the framework of this treatise, and provides a point d'appui for discussion of a number of intriguing philosophical questions(5). What is striking about the *De genio* is its constant narrative movement between the historical and the philosophical, its mixture of real and invented characters, and its seemingly unnecessary concentration upon a crucial moment in Theban history already recorded in the *Pelopidas*; above all, the work imposes unobtrusively, yet urgently, upon the reader the special task of resolving the connexion between the historical facts narrated and the philosophical debates(6).

(2) Plutarch compares Thrasybulus' exploit with that of Pelopidas elsewhere, too; cf. *Pel.* 7.2; *Arat.* 16.4; *Non posse* 1098A; Thrasybulus is also evoked to the reader through his nephew, Lysitheides, a member of Caphisias' Athenian audience (*De gen. Socr.* 575F).

(3) Plutarch may have also referred in passing to the liberation of the Kadmeia in the lost *Life of Epameinondas*. An extensive account of this event seems, however, unlikely, owing to Epameinondas' minor role in it; his career as a political and military leader of Thebes started in the last phase of the liberation, after the murder of the pro-Spartan tyrants by the Theban conspirators (*Pel.* 5.4, 12.2-6; *De gen. Socr.* 598D); note also Plutarch's remark on Epameinondas' late involvement with politics in the *De lat. viv.* 1129C: Ἐπαμεινώνδας γοῦν εἰς τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος ἀγνοηθεὶς οὐδὲν ὤνησε Θηβαίους· ὕστερον δὲ πιστευθεὶς καὶ ἄρξας τὴν μὲν πόλιν ἀπολλυμένην ἔσωσε, τὴν δ' Ἑλλάδα δουλεύουσαν ἠλευθέρωσε ...

(4) For historical discrepancies between Plutarch's briefer account of the liberation of the Kadmeia in the *Pelopidas* (5-13) and his fuller account in the *De genio*, see A. GEORGIADOU, *A Philological and Historical Commentary on the Life of Pelopidas by Plutarch*, diss. University of Illinois at U-C 1990, pp. 49-88; see also A. MASTROCINQUE, *La liberazione di Tebe (379 a.C.) e le origini della storiografia tragica*, in *Ommagio a Piero Treves*, Padova 1983, pp. 237-247; P. DESIDERI, *Il 'De genio Socratis' di Plutarco: un esempio di 'storiografia tragica'?*, *Athenaeum* 12 (1984), pp. 569-585.

(5) For a discussion of the types of narrative and their purpose in the *De genio*, as well as the possible sources of inspiration and the type of audience Plutarch addressed in this work, see A. GEORGIADOU, *Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa: Plutarch's 'De genio' and Euripides' 'Antiope'*, in *Teoria e prassi nelle opere di Plutarco*, ed. I. Gallo – B. Scardigli, Naples 1995, pp. 187-200.

(6) Not all aspects of the relation between historical facts and philosophical issues can be discussed here; it should be noted, for example, that the *De genio* owes also its complex structure with its mixed narrative form and the Platonic style of its discussions to Plutarch's desire to rival with Athenian sophistication in all literaty genres and to refute the old reproach of the Boeotian μισολογία. Boeotians are as fully competent as the Athenians in becoming involved in setious philosophical discussions, even in time of war.

The factual discrepancies between the two accounts and their unequal level of complexity may be attributed to the different emphasis and purpose of each work and to the more or less sophisticated audience the author had in mind for each literary genre(7). The presence in the *De genio* of a few characters who are not historical(8) is apparently necessitated by the fictional nature of the philosophical discussions(9). Yet it would be rash to attribute Plutarch's dealing twice with the same historical event solely to his patriotic fervor(10). Nor should we regard the *De genio*, with its more generous description of the liberation of the Kadmeia, as a supplementary historical source from which to extract historical information not available in the briefer account in the *Pelopidas*(11).

(7) In the introduction to the *De genio* Plutarch, in the guise of Archedamus, makes some illuminating observations on the type of audience he envisages for his treatise, using a vivid metaphor from the sphere of painting (575B-C).

(8) Caphisias, Epameinondas' brother, has been regarded by W. CHRIST, *Plutarchs Dialog vom Daimonion des Sokrates*, München 1901, p. 23, as a fictional character. It is doubtful, however, that Plutarch has gone so far as to invent a brother for Epameinondas. Philolaos from Haliartus does not participate in the conspiracy, but serves to initiate the first discussion on the violation of Alcmene's tomb. Theanor, the stranger from Italy, is probably fictional, and also is Timarchus; for further information, see the introduction to the *De genio* by P.H. DE LACY – B. EINARSON, *LCL–M* VII, pp. 362-371, esp. 364-365.

(9) On the quasi-historical nature of the *De genio*, see J. BUCKLER, *Plutarch and Autopsy*, in *ANRW* II 33.6 (1992), pp. 4788-4830, esp. 4807.

(10) K. ZIEGLER, *Plutarchos von Chaironeia*, Stuttgart 1964(2), col. 204, attributes to Plutarch solely patriotic motives for the composition of the *De genio*.

(11) A considerable number of recent studies of the *De genio* have focused on its artistic form, daimonological ideas, possible sources of inspiration, and also on the links between the historical account and the philosophical sections of the treatise; see D.A. STOIKE, *De genio Socratis, Moralia 575A–598F*, in *Plutarch's Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature*, ed. H.D. Betz, Leiden 1975, pp. 236-285; M. RILEY, *The Purpose and Unity of Plutarch's 'De genio Socratis'*, *GRBS* 18 (1977), pp. 257-273; A. ALONI, *Ricerche sulla forma letteraria del 'De genio Socratis' di Plutarco*, *Acme* 33 (1980), pp. 41-122; D. BABUT, *Le dialogue de Plutarque 'Sur le démon de Socrate'. Essai d'interprétation*, *BAGB* 1984, pp. 51-76; K. DÖRING, *Plutarch und das Daimonion des Sokrates*, *Mnemosyne* 37 (1984), pp. 376-392; J.P. HERSHBELL, *Plutarch's Portrait of Socrates*, *ICS* 13 (1988), pp. 365-381 (see also n. 4, p. 365, for an extensive bibliography); A. BARIGAZZI, *Una nuova interpretazione del 'De genio Socratis'*, *ibid.*, pp. 409-425; S. DUSANIC, *The Theages and the Liberation of Thebes in 379 B.C.*, in *Teiresias* Sup. 3, ed.

A systematic study of the varied issues debated in the *De genio* seems to yield some useful insights into the Boeotian polymath's mode of perceiving and rationalising history in the context of his philosophical training. The philosophical background in the *De genio* offered Plutarch an opportunity to deal extensively with a few loose ends left in the history of Thebes at the outset of its ascendancy as a major political power in Greece. It is Epameinondas' questionable role in the liberation of the Kadmeia that needed further explanation and prompted Plutarch to resolve any ambiguities left in people's minds with respect to his favorite([12]) hero's seemingly 'unpatriotic' stance during the period of the Spartan occupation of Thebes (382–379 BC)([13]). The philosophical issues tackled in the treatise are, in fact, closely connected with the Theban hero's puzzling attitude.

In the *Life of Pelopidas*, Epameinondas is shown to have remained in Thebes, while the other conspirators together with Pelopidas took to

A. Schachter, Montréal 1990, pp. 65-69; F. BRENK, *Tempo come struttura nel dialogo 'Sul daimonion di Socrate' di Plutarco*, in *Strutture formali dei 'Moralia' di Plutarco*, ed. G. d'Ippolito – I. Gallo (Atti del III Convegno plutarcheo), Napoli 1991, pp. 69-82 (with a rich bibliography in n. 2, p. 69).

([12]) For a discussion of Plutarch's portrayal of Epameinondas, see A. GEORGIADOU, *Bias and Character-Portrayal in Plutarch's Lives of Pelopidas and Marcellus*, in *ANRW* II 33.6 (1992), pp. 4222-4257, esp. 4226-4235.

([13]) Various efforts to determine the date of composition of the *De genio* relative to the *Pelopidas* have proven so far more speculative than illuminating: R. HIRZEL, *Der Dialog* II, Leipzig 1895, pp. 155 ff., and W. CHRIST, *Plutarchs Dialog vom Daimonion des Sokrates* (SBAW), München 1901, pp. 85 ff., argued for the antecedence of the *De genio*, while K. KAHLE, *De Plutarchi ratione dialogorum componendorum*, diss. Göttingen 1912, p. 85, G.M. LATTANZI, *Il 'De genio Socratis' di Plutarco*, Roma 1933, p. 117, and K. ZIEGLER, *op. cit.* (n. 10), col. 204-205, are opposed to this view. A. CORLU, *Plutarque. Le démon de Socrate*, Paris 1970, pp. 106-109, and J. HANI, *CUF–M* VIII, pp. 58-59, point to the lack of internal evidence in the *De genio* sufficient to establish its date. Furthermore, the loss of the *Epameinondas* makes it harder to discern any clear phases in the development of Plutarch's thoughts concerning the conspirators' acts and Epameinondas' attitude, and even more perplexing to perceive a development in his religious ideas; H. VON ARNIM, *Plutarch über Daemonen und Mantik*, in *Verhandelingen Kon. Akad. Wetenschappen Amsterdam*, afd. Letterkunde 22 (1921), pp. 21-27, 42-46, suggested the year 95 AD as an approximate date of composition of the *De genio*; see also A. ALONI, *Plutarco. Il demone di Socrate* (transl. & notes by A. Aloni) / *I ritardi della punizione divina* (transl. & notes by G. Guidorizzi), Milan 1982, pp. 54-55, who proposed the period 90-95 AD.

flight and were proclaimed outlaws (5.3). Plutarch also notes that Epameinondas remained in Thebes after the oligarchs came into power, "being looked down upon, as one whom philosophy had made inactive, and poverty powerless" (5.4). Both reasons, his φιλοσοφία and his πενία, are major themes in the *De genio*([14]), though the unsuspecting reader may not always see the connection between these two themes and the various philosophical discussions of the *De genio*; this is because Plutarch does nor discuss at length and directly Epameinondas' philosophical attitude, but alludes to it constantly in his discussions about Socrates; nor is it obvious that Epameinondas, and not Socrates, is the hero, or the anti-hero, of this work, since Epameinondas often remains silent during the discussions.

Plutarch amply attests to his admiration for his Theban compatriot. He particularly praises his philosophical education and often presented him as a model of leadership deserving emulation, especially when he embodied at a later stage of his life the perfect combination of political activity and philosophical education (πρᾶξις / λόγος)([15]). Epameinondas' reluctance, however, to perform his civic duties at a time when several of his countrymen were putting their lives at stake seems to have blemished the early stages of his career. It is Plutarch's duty therefore to intervene and explore Epameinondas' conduct in the course of the philosophical discussions and thus restore his reputation.

Epameinondas' defense is being conducted obliquely and unobtrusively through the exploration of the relationship between philosophy and politics, "one of Plutarch's persistent concerns"([16]), and by relating it

([14]) Epameinondas' πενία is used in the *Pelopidas* as an additional reason for incurring his countrymen's contempt (τῷ καταφρονηθῆναι ... διὰ δὲ πενίαν ὡς ἀδύνατος, *Pel.* 5.4); there is no parallel observation in the *De genio*; on the contrary, his poverty, an issue broadly treated in this work, acquires a dignified character, especially during his defensive speech to the Pythagorean stranger (583C–584D); furthermore, when Theocritus scolds Epameinondas for his reluctance to participate in the conspiracy, the issue of the latter's πενία does not seem to be a point of his negative criticism, as far as one can judge from the lacunose nature of the text (576D-E); Caphisias' response to Theocritus' accusations reveal no such indication either (576F–577A).

([15]) Cf. *Pel.* 3.6; *Ages.* 27.4; *De lib. educ.* 8B; *De gen. Socr.* 576D, 579E, 585D. See further A. GEORGIADOU, *art. cit.* (n. 5).

([16]) Plutarch's interest in the blending of the philosophical reason with the ruler's power can also be seen in the *Max. cum princ.* 779B; *Ad princ. inerud.* 779F–780D.

to the guidance of the *daimonion* in the lives of the truly exceptional. Thus the association of Epameinondas' and Socrates' guiding principle in their life, though not explicitly stated, is clearly understood, at least by the sophisticated audience of the *De genio.*

Connexions between Socrates and Epameinondas([17]) also appear elsewhere in the *Lives* and the *Moralia*([18]). Yet in the *De genio* Plutarch succeeds in collecting all these common traits of the two personalities and presenting an altogether favorable picture of the Theban's motives and intentions during the Theban conspiracy against the tyrants. This he does in a seemingly unconnected and unsystematic manner, by means of suggestions and allusions, the use of imagery and myth, and above all by suppressing any direct and explicit moral judgements, in order to maintain the overall objective and dispassionate tone of the mixed narrative([19]). So the historical framework of the *De genio* serves here as a pretext which will provide the necessary material for the philosophical discussions that follow; these in turn are used as a tool for the exploration of the two men's similar principles and practices in their lives.

Before considering the Socratic traits with which Plutarch invests Epameinondas' personality, we should draw attention to the writer's repeated interest in Socrates. At least three of his works, as Hershbell points out, testify to Plutarch's unremitting concern for the events — both political and psychological — that led inexorably to Socrates' death, events which seemed, in the writer's mind, not to have been adequately treated([20]). The loss of the Ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ Σωκράτους and the Περὶ τῆς Σωκράτους ψηφίσεως([21]) leaves us with the *De genio* as the sole representative of Plutarch's systematic writings dedicated to the philosopher. Socrates' condemnation, prompted by questionable motives, and the model he provided for future generations seem to have furnished

([17]) On various occasions Epameinondas and Plato are also associated: *Arist.* 1.3; *Quomodo adul.* 52F; *De prof. in virt.* 85A; *De lat. viv.* 1129B.

([18]) Cf. *Arist.* 1.3; *Comp. Arist. / Ca.* 4.4; *De lib. educ.* 2B; *Quomodo adul.* 52F; *De prof. in virt.* 85A; *De cup. div.* 527B; *Praec. ger.* 823E; *De lat. viv.* 1128E-F.

([19]) The varied narrative technique of the *De genio*, heightened by the disruptive effect of the philosophical debates on the account of the recent Theban exploits, can hardly allow the build-up of any dramatic tension.

([20]) J.P. HERSHBELL, *art. cit.* (n. 11), p. 365.

([21]) Nos. 189 and 190 respectively in the so-called Lamprias Catalogue of Plutarch's works.

Plutarch with a suitable parallel for Epameinondas' severely criticised conduct in his lack of support for the Theban conspirators.

It is now time to turn to the actual passages in the *De genio* which best reveal the affinity of the two personalities in question. In 596F Epameinondas is portrayed by his brother Caphisias as being unable to persuade "the many" (τοὺς πολλούς) not to participate in civil bloodshed, and as determined not to do so himself. In 594B he is confronted openly and is asked insistently by some of the conspirators, including his brother Caphisias, to join them actively in the attack. His decision not to take part remains unchangeable. Socrates is also portrayed (581C) as having inflexible impulses (αἱ δὲ ὁρμαὶ τόνον ἀμετάστρεπτον ἔχουσαι καὶ σφοδρότητα), which are thought to derive from a correct and powerful judgement and principle (ἐξ ὀρθῆς καὶ ἰσχυρᾶς ... κρίσεως καὶ ἀρχῆς).

There is also the story that Socrates took a safe route to Oropus after the defeat of the Athenians by the Thebans at Delion in 423([22]), and that some members of his company who disregarded his advice by the *daimonion* took a different route and were killed by the Theban cavalry (581D-E). In the case of Epameinondas his reluctance to participate in the conspiracy is not attributed to his *daimonion* — the one recognised in him by the Pythagorean stranger (586A) — but his apprehension for civil bloodshed and his warning against the conspiratorial coup are explained by Caphisias as going counter to his nature and his judgement (576F). Socrates' advice is proven correct, while Epameinondas' deep concern for the potential extremities of his countrymen is never brought up again by Plutarch. According to Xenophon, however, the Theban liberators did indeed resort to slaughter, despite their promises to the Spartan garrison (*Hell.* V 4.11-12).

Epameinondas' fear for eventual bloodshed owing to some conspirator's passionate temper brings also to mind Socrates' defence of the philosopher in Plato's *Republic* who is unwilling to share in the misdeeds and savagery of the populace and so, before he can in any way benefit his friends or the state, comes to an untimely death. This is the reason, Socrates says, that the philosopher remains quiet, minds his own affairs, and is content if he may keep himself free from iniquity and unholy deeds throughout his life (*Rep.* 496C-E).

([22]) See also Plut., *Alc.* 7.3; Plat., *Symp.* 221a; Cic., *De div.* I 54.123.

When Epameinondas is criticised by Theocritus, the soothsayer, for his reluctance to participate in the attack, he is accused of being sluggish and lacking in eagerness, and is juxtaposed with the conspirators who are putting their life in danger for their country([23]); cowardice is here implied (576D-E). Caphisias undertakes to present Epameinondas' reasons for his conduct (576F–577A). He explains that Epameinondas refuses to share in acts that are opposed to his nature and judgement. Epameinondas' own reply to the same accusation comes at a later stage of the discussions and is to some extent similar to his brother's, but now he emerges as less self-centered and absorbed by his own principles (594B-C). He adds to the previous argument that "men not chargeable with the guilt of having participated in civil bloodshed, like himself, would enjoy the confidence of the people, and their counsels would be less suspected of bias". The relationship between politics and philosophical training in Epameinondas' future career is here alluded to. Cowardice is no more a valid accusation motivating Epameinondas' acts. On the contrary, he emerges as almost more patriotic than his fellowmen!

Socrates is praised for his bravery and his unshaken reasoning at the approach of death (581C-D). His courageous attitude towards his imminent death has no other place in the *De genio* than to call to mind the unjust accusation of the Thebans for Epameinondas' demonstration of cowardice. There is a lengthy discussion about Epameinondas' poverty and the philosophical reasons for which he declines Theanor's generous offer of money in return for the care that he and his family took of Lysis, his Pythagorean teacher (582E–586A). The man who rejects wealth is driven by reason (λόγῳ), which can repress even inborn desires (584E); Epameinondas gives a lesson, à la Pythagoras, on how to train oneself to resist riches. His reasons for his refusal to accept money as his reward for his care of Lysis form a centerpiece to the essay. In 581C-D Polymnis, Epameinondas' father, talks about Socrates' poverty and his rejection of gifts of his own free will([24]). This noble conduct is attributed again to the guidance by a higher principle, his *daimonion*.

([23]) Charon's willingness to assume the gravest risks for his country's sake is mentioned as an example contrary to that of Epameinondas (576D-E); a similar example of bravery is given later on, in 595B-D, by Charon's young son, who is willing to take any risk for his country; an interesting example of cowardice attributed to superstitious beliefs is the one furnished by Hippostheneidas in 586B–588A.

([24]) Cf. also *De prof. in virt.* 84F.

Theanor, the Pythagorean stranger, recognizes from the type of burial offered to Lysis by Epameinondas the existence of a guiding *daimonion* in the latter's life (586A), the same as that of his teacher. This corresponds to the Socratic *daimonion*, which was the philosopher's divine guiding principle in life.

Socrates is praised for being pure and free of passion (ὁ νοῦς καθαρὸς ὢν καὶ ἀπαθής), for being involved with the body to the minimum extent and for being sensitive to the unuttered words of a *daimonion*. No constraint is exerted on his soul, as "no passion pulls the other way, and the movements of the soul respond easily and gently" (588E-F). It is a sort of voice that comes to him, as he explains in Plato's *Apology* (31d), that holds him back from what he is thinking of doing. With this as a gift he needed no teachers and attendants from a very early age (589E-F). Epameinondas' freedom from passionate and superfluous desires derives, as he explains, from training and education (ἔθει δὲ καὶ μελέτῃ, 584D-585D). Therefore his freedom from passion appears as the result of his philosophical training. Socrates' freedom from passion is inherent in his gifted nature, since he has been guided by the *daimonion* from the first stages of his life.

Some affinities between Epameinondas and Socrates have thus been outlined and established. The two figures are closely parallelled, and their traits appear to converge in many instances. A thin line, however, is drawn between the two: Epameinondas' *daimonion* has been formed by previous practice and inclination to good. These function as do the "pulls and blows" of the *daimones*; they serve to restrain and repress desires and passions. Epameinondas' whole course of training is to abate even natural (ἔμφυτοι), not only adventitious and superfluous desires (ἐπεισόδιοι καὶ περιτταί, 584E). We may suppose, then, as Riley argues, that when all inborn and accidental desires calm down, the soul may be as easily guided by the *daimon* as Socrates' soul was from birth([25]). Socrates' soul was born inspired and was obendient to this guidance and control. Socrates is shown also bridging the gap between theory and practice: we have seen how Polymnis recalls Socrates' civic activities at the battle of Delion and his prediction of Athenian failure in Sicily (581D-E). Riley rightly observes that "As the perfect philosopher [Socrates] ... is open to daimonic guidance at all times" and "as a good citizen ... [he]

([25]) See M. RILEY, *art. cit.* (n. 11), p. 267.

fights well for his city and advises on major civic issues"([26]). Epameinondas, on the other hand, following closely the Socratic model and his Pythagorean training, can only attain to the ideal fusion of philosophy and political activity when the right conditions allow it. He contributes to philosophical discussions and waits for a more appropriate moment to contribute to the good of his country. His damaged reputation is restored and almost entirely justified, and his future role as a philosopher and an active citizen, as is described in the *Pelopidas*, is now foreseen([27]).

([26]) *Art. cit.* (n. 11), p. 269.

([27]) I wish to thank Professor G.M. Browne for his valuable comments on this paper.

SIGN LANGUAGE IN *ON THE SIGN OF SOCRATES*[*]

Philip HARDIE

The *De genio Socratis* is a mixture of philosophical dialogue and political thriller that continues to intrigue and puzzle Plutarchans. There are good reasons for thinking that it was an important work for Plutarch: it tells of one of the most glorious episodes in the history of his native Boeotia, and is centred on the character of one of Plutarch's heroes, Epameinondas. The hagiographical quality of the work is in part the product of an extremely detailed, if oblique, imitation of the *Phaedo*([1]), itself a model that no Platonist would approach without reverence and deep seriousness of intent. Yet the general drift of Plutarch's intentions is anything but easy to understand; particularly vexed is the question of the relationship between the λόγοι, the philosophical discussions that take place in the house of Simmias, and the πράξεις, the exciting narrative of the plot to overthrow the pro-Spartan party in Thebes.

In a recent interpretative essay Daniel Babut has greatly furthered the discussion of the purpose and unity of the *De genio*([2]). Like a number of earlier interpreters([3]) he sees the central theme as being the relationship between the βίος θεωρητικός and βίος πρακτικός, but unlike others Babut discerns that relationship as one of antithesis rather than synthesis: Epameinondas, the Boeotian Socrates, is deliberately set apart from the conspirators, led by Charon, who are inevitably compromised by the shedding of the blood of their own citizens. Where others have seen the

[*] This is a lightly revised version of a paper delivered to the Second International Conference of the International Plutarch Society in Oxford in September 1989. I have not sought to eliminate all traces of the original lecture format.

([1]) The main parallels are set out by R. HIRZEL, *Der Dialog* II, Leipzig 1895, pp. 148-151.

([2]) *Le dialogue de Plutarque 'Sur le démon de Socrate'. Essai d'interprétation*, *BAGB* 1984, pp. 51-76.

([3]) Especially G. MÉAUTIS, *Le mythe de Timarque*, *REA* 52 (1950), pp. 201-211; M. RILEY, *The Purpose and Unity of Plutarch's 'De genio Socratis'*, *GRBS* 18 (1977), pp. 257-273.

STUDIA HELLENISTICA

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W. Clarysse, H. Heinen, L. Mooren,
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PLUTARCHEA LOVANIENSIA

A MISCELLANY OF ESSAYS ON PLUTARCH

edited by

Luc VAN DER STOCKT

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