

ANASTASIOS G. NIKOLAIDIS

PLUTARCH ON THE OLD, MIDDLE AND NEW ACADEMIES
AND THE ACADEMY IN PLUTARCH'S DAY

Plutarch's allegiance to the Academy, more precisely to the philosophy of Plato as expounded in the Academy, is more or less commonly agreed. Although there are cases where Plutarch appears to take distances from a particular Platonic doctrine or to disagree with certain Academic interpretations of Plato, he nevertheless regarded himself as a Platonic philosopher conscientiously adhering to the teachings of Plato and the Academy¹. I should like to stress this point, because not infrequently there seems to be a discrepancy between modern opinion about the philosophical position of an ancient author and what the author himself thinks of his own position.

But which Academy did Plutarch give his allegiance to? The one which he himself attended, or—for those who deny the existence of any Academy in his day—the brand of Platonism which Plutarch studied, had both underwent considerable changes in the course of time; the former mostly in material terms during Sulla's siege of Athens in 86 B.C.; the latter in terms of philosophical approach and content, owing to successive reinterpretations of Plato but also as a result of Academic interaction with the rival philosophical movements in the Hellenistic period.

How does Plutarch stand vis-a-vis these developments? Is he aware of any evolution of the Platonic doctrines? Does he discern stages or epochs of Academic thought? In other words, does he accept the distinction between Old, Middle² and

¹ Cf. D.A. RUSSELL, *Plutarch*, London, 1972, p. 63: "Plutarch was a declared and consistent Platonist, even if he was not in all respects in agreement with the orthodoxy of the school". P.'s Platonism has been conclusively established by R.M. JONES, *The Platonism of Plutarch*, Menasha, Wisc., 1916.

² The term was coined by Cicero, but he apparently used it only once (*Part. orat.* 139: *media illa nostra Academia*). GLUCKER, therefore, inaccurately affirms that Cicero "knows only of Old and New Academies" (p. 235n.26). On the other hand, FROIDEFOND (p. 188) connects even Carneades and Philon with the Middle Academy. For the same term, cf. also Sext., *PH.* 1.220, 232, *Diog. Laert.*, I19, IV28, and *Plut.*, *Br.* 2.2 (below, p. 407).

New Academy, and which does he attach himself to? Was there any Academy in his time and, if yes, how did it compare with the Academy of the three last centuries B.C.? It is questions like these that the present paper will attempt to tackle.

But first one or two things with regard to terminology. Without additional qualifications, the traditional distinction between Old, Middle and New Academy might give a wrong impression: namely, either that the last development and expression of Platonism before Plotinus was virtually a form of scepticism or that Academy ceased to exist altogether, even as a distinct philosophical movement, after Philon of Larisa. In either case, Antiochos of Askalon and his successors as well as all the other philosophers from the middle of the first century B.C. through to the first quarter of the third century A.D., designated and recognized as Academics or Platonists in our sources, cannot be accommodated in the traditional scheme³. They are subsumed, of course, under what we call "Middle Platonism", but this term, however convenient, leaves the word Academy out, to say nothing of a recent view that Middle Platonism starts with Arkesilaos (*cf.* Froidefond, p. 230). Yet, regardless of what exactly Academy was or represented during this period, the references to it and to Academic or Platonic philosophers of the same period are too many in our sources to be lightly dismissed or ingeniously, but not convincingly, explained away. Perhaps, it would be more accurate and to the point, if we spoke about Old or Early Academy, Sceptical Academy and Eclectic Academy; after all, one of the basic characteristics of the Middle Platonists is, *pace* Dillon, an eclectic amalgamation⁴.

As for Plutarch, we know that he regarded himself as a Platonist, and he was one indeed, but was he also an Academic? Here we are faced with a handsome variety of conflicting views. Glucker, for instance, who as a rule opposes Platonism to Academicism (see pp. 134, 262-63, 270, 282), argues that the adjectives "Platonic" and "Academic" are mutually exclusive (p. 206ff., esp. 214), whereas Opsomer believes (and I would agree with him) that "Plutarch saw no contradiction between

³ For a recent comprehensive bibliography of Platonism regarding the above period, see L. DEITZ, "Bibliographie du platonisme impérial antérieur à Plotin", *ANRW* 36.1, 1987, pp. 124-182.

⁴ The term "eclectic" is not necessarily disparaging (DILLON-LONG, p. 1); see also P. L. DONINI, "The History of the Concept of Eclecticism" in DILLON-LONG (edd.), p. 23 ff. Sometimes, as in the case of Cicero, for example, eclecticism may indeed imply mere assembling of doctrines from various schools according to personal preferences (DILLON, 1977, p. xiv). Somewhat similarly, P. is eclectic in the sense that he would borrow from any doctrine, if the loan suited his immediate purpose (*cf.* R.H. BARROW, *Plutarch and his Times*, London, 1967, p. 72). However, in the eclectic systems of Antiochos of Askalon or Posidonios the case is totally different. The most synthetic eclectics were, of course, the Neoplatonists. For the positive sense (albeit too positive) of eclecticism, see DONINI, (above), p. 18 ff., and *cf.* DILLON, "'Orthodoxy' and 'Eclecticism'", in DILLON-LONG (edd.), p. 125.

his adherence to the Academy and his being a Platonist" and, probably, "he was proud of being called an Academic Platonist" (p. 26). This, however, is not tantamount to Babut's [1994] postulation that "Plutarque ne s'est pas contenté...de se ranger parmi les 'platoniciens', mais a revendiqué avec insistance le titre d'Académicien" (p. 555). By contrast, Tarrant holds that, because this title "had too often been adopted by destructive thinkers", Plutarch showed no eagerness at all to claim it (p.134)⁵, while Froidefond goes so far as to affirm that Plutarch resorted always to Plato and had no relation whatever to the Academy⁶. Similarly, Gucker again observes that, wherever Plutarch employs the term "Academic", he has the pre-Antiochean age in mind (pp. 213, 220)⁷, whereas Opsomer maintains that the Academic scepticism survived Antiochos and was still alive in the first two centuries of our era as a distinct tendency within Middle Platonism (pp. 14, 16, 20, 266 ff.). In my view, as far as the fortunes of scepticism are concerned, one can argue either way, depending on one's own perspective and on how strictly one employs this philosophical term; for Plutarch however, I am inclined to believe that not only did he regard the epithets "Platonic" and "Academic" as indistinguishable and inter-

⁵ Yet TARRANT believes that P. "clearly considered himself 'Academic'" (p. 42); but see also n. 28 below.

⁶ Cf. p. 230: "Plutarque n' appartenait pas à l' Académie". Earlier *ib.* we read that P. "ne doit rien aux [Arcésilas et Carnéade]". Somewhere in the middle H.DÖRRIE ("Le platonisme de Plutarque, Actes du VIIIe Congrès de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris, 1969, p.520) holds that P. received his philosophical education "dans le cadre de l'Académie, qu'il aurait quittée ensuite". From all this (see also n. 5) it appears that the relationship between the terms "Platonic" and "Academic" was disputable. For the same problem in the anonymous commentary on *Theaetetus* (early 2nd century A.D.), cf. OPSOMER, pp. 58 f..

⁷ Cicero seems to confirm this; for in 76 B.C., the dramatic date of his *De nat. deor.*, Cicero remarks that Academic scepticism had no adherents in Greece (1.11: *quam [sc. philosophiam] nunc prope modum orbam esse in ipsa Graecia intellego*. Cf. also *Acad.* 2.17. GLUCKER is convinced that the school of Academy died together with Philon (pp. 263, 342). Yet Seneca's testimony, on which he mainly relies (*NQ* 7.32.2: *Academici et veteres et minores nullum antistitem reliquerunt. Quis est qui tradat praecepta Pyrrhonis?*), if seen through the unmistakably pessimistic tenor of that passage (32.1: *Quis dignam [sc. sapientiam] iudicat...Quis philosophum aut ullum liberale respicit studium...?* 32.4: *philosophiae nulla cura est*), may be interpreted less literally. By saying that *itaque tot familiae philosophorum sine successore deficiunt*, Seneca seems to deplore the general anti-intellectual climate of his age rather than to ascertain a total eclipse especially of the Platonic/Academic persuasion. Almost one and a half century earlier, Cicero ascertained the same (*De nat. deor.* 1.11 above) and similarly attributed the fact to the dullness of the mankind (*ibid.*: *tarditate hominum arbitror contigisse*). But the dullness of the mankind is not, of course, selective. On Seneca's pessimistic (and somewhat inaccurate) observations, cf. J.-M. ANDRÉ, "Les écoles philosophiques aux deux premiers siècles de l'Empire", *ANRW* 36.1, 1987, pp. 17f. and 35.

changeable⁸, but he also held that in essence the teachings of the Academy as a whole, despite partial differentiations and diverse opinions on certain issues, had been mostly the same since the time of the foundation of the school. This does not mean that Plutarch was unaware of the Platonic versions propounded by the Middle and New Academy, but, for him (albeit not for us), these versions did not contradict the Old from the doctrinal point of view⁹. For Plutarch, there was only one Academy, and so his references to it, whether he had Plato, Carneades, Antiochos in mind or his own studies in Athens, invariably indicate either the same body of philosophical doctrines or the place where these doctrines were expounded¹⁰.

Plutarch's conviction that the Academy had a continuous and unitarian tradition is confirmed by the treatises 63 and 64 in the *Lamprias-catalogue*, respectively entitled *Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος Ἀκαδημείαν*, and *Περὶ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν Πυρρωνείων καὶ Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν*. As neither of these treatises is extant, we cannot tell how Plutarch argued his position. But, judging from Sextus' chapter on the difference between Pyrrhonians and Academics¹¹, we may assume that in his second essay Plutarch must have argued on similar lines but from the Platonist point of view; namely, whereas Sextus observed that the sceptical Academics were not pure sceptics, on account of their assenting to some truths and accepting probabili-

⁸ GLUCKER, p. 209, notes that the term *πλατωνικός* occurs only in the spurious *De mus.* 1131F, and the phrase *οἱ ἀπὸ Πλάτωνος* only in *De fato* 572A-B, which is also of doubtful authenticity. As regards the adjective, he is right (one could also add 1030D), but for the phrase see also the genuine *Br.* 2.2 (below p. 407) and *De an. procr.* 1012B. At any rate, for P., the Academy of all epochs is associated with the philosophy of Plato: cf. *Mor.* 467E, 1122A, and esp. 717D and 1107E (*οἶσθα γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα τῶν ἐξ Ἀκαδημείας οὐ ναρθηκοφόρον ἀλλ' ἐμμανέστατον ὄργιαστὴν Πλάτωνος*). In maintaining that in later times *πλατωνικός* did not imply membership of the Academy, GLUCKER (p. 217) is most probably right; but nothing precludes the association of the term with philosophical ideas peculiar to the Academy.

⁹ Cicero, although an adherent of the New Academy, was of similar mind. Cf. *Acad.* 1.46: *Hanc Academiam novam appellant, quae mihi vetus videtur*. See also *De offic.* 1.2, where, speaking on behalf of the Academics and the Peripatetics, Cicero states that *Socratici et Platonici volumus esse*. For the philosophical affinity between the two schools cf. Cic., *Acad.* 1.17-18, 2.15 and *De orat.* 3.67.

¹⁰ The place is not always the locality of the ancient Academy. Antiochos, e.g., taught in the Ptolemaeum (Cic., *De fin.* 5.1) and so did Charmadas (*Acad. Index Herc.* XXXI, 32ff.). Kleitomachos lectured for some time in the Palladium (*Acad. Ind.* XXIV, 35ff.), and Ammonios may have lectured at the Diogeneion (*Quaest. conv.*, 736D). Cf. also GLUCKER, p. 236, n. 29. LYNCH has observed (p. 158) that, because of their age and their exposure to damages in war, the old gymnasia of Athens (Lycaeam, Academy, Cynosarges) had become, perhaps, somewhat outmoded by the 2nd century B.C.

¹¹ *P.H.* 1.220-235. Cf. also Aul. Gell., 11.5.

ty as a guide in a similar fashion, the Academy had been the same since the time of Socrates. This does not mean that Plutarch was unaware of the Platonic versions propounded by the Middle and New Academy, but, for him (albeit not for us), these versions did not contradict the Old from the doctrinal point of view⁹. For Plutarch, there was only one Academy, and so his references to it, whether he had Plato, Carneades, Antiochos in mind or his own studies in Athens, invariably indicate either the same body of philosophical doctrines or the place where these doctrines were expounded¹⁰.

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¹² Cf. Cic., *De off. pro. 1.1*, *arripuit*, *quae mihi vetus videtur*. Perhaps, indeed his position is the same as in one *Tabl. Acad. 1.1*.

¹³ See respectively *De fin.* 492A, 1030D, 3, 22.1-6 and *De orat.* 3.67. The similarity to Cicero's *De divinity* is striking. 'Scepticism' is the political organization of the Academy. Cf. G. C. FIELD, *Plutarch's teaching*. P. JONES, *Plutarch's stance towards the political*

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ty as a guide of life, or because they upheld suspension of judgement in a dogmatic fashion, Plutarch would have perhaps argued that the tenets of the sceptical Academy had not emanated from Pyrrho, but could have ultimately been traced back to Socrates and Plato¹²; a thesis which was probably reiterated more forcefully in the former essay on the unity of the Academy. One might also assume that in that essay Plutarch would have not confined himself solely to terminological niceties or to rounding off the fine epistemological distinctions of the various Academics, but would also have drawn attention to other common features of them concerning their characters and conduct: *e.g.* their frugality and moral integrity, their tendency to teach by personal example, their occupation with politics and their promoting political ideas and reforms in theory as well as in practice, their hate for tyrannical regimes¹³. These features were more or less common to several Academic philosophers, and it is not unlikely that it was also partly in this spirit that Plutarch regarded Academy as one and the same from the time of Plato to his own day.

Within the intellectual context of the first century A.D., as emerges from our sources (*cf.* n. 7), the vexed question of what kind of Academy, if any at all, was in operation in Plutarch's day has little bearing on the matter under discussion. As a matter of fact, it is wrong, I think, for one to look for the Academy in the Imperial age wearing the glasses of the second century B.C. It is indeed almost certain that the organized educational institution which Plato had founded ceased to exist after 86, on account of the extensive damage it suffered during Sulla's siege of Athens;

¹² *Cf.* Cic., *De orat.* 3.67: *Arcesilas...ex variis Platonis libris sermonibusque Socraticis hoc maxime arripuit, nihil esse certi quod aut sensibus aut animo percipi possit.* *Cf.* also *De offic.* 1.2 (n. 9). Perhaps, it is worth noting here that P. rarely refers to Pyrrho in the *Moralia* (82F, 331F), and indeed his only reference that could be taken to allude, albeit indirectly, to Pyrrho's scepticism is one *Table-Talk* (652B) where Pyrrho is connected with Protagoras. For Socrates as a proto-Academic *cf.* OPSOMER, pp. 83 ff. and 101.

¹³ See respectively: 181E, 331E, 333B, 686B, fr. 152 SANDBACH, *Kim.-Luc.* 1.3, *Di.* 52.3-4; 71E, 492A, 1070A; *Demetr.* 46.3, *Phok.* 14.7, 27.2-4, *Cic.* 4.4, 1126C-D; *Phil.* 1.3-5, *Br.* 24.3, *Di.* 1.2-3, 22.1-6. We may as well add their adherence to moderation and justice (70A, 431A), their ability to control their passions (*Di.* 47.4, 452D, fr. 85), their cautiousness in matters pertaining the Divinity (420F, 549E, *Cam.* 6, etc.). On this last item *cf.* OPSOMER, "Divination and Academic 'Scepticism' According to Plutarch" in VAN DER STOCKT (ed.), pp. 182 ff., while especially for the political activity of the Academy see mainly A. H. CHROUST, "Plato's Academy: The first Organized School of Political Science in Antiquity", *Review of Politics*, 29 (1967) 25-40. *Cf.* also G. C. FIELD, *Plato and his Contemporaries*, London, 1967³ (1930), pp. 43-45. Note moreover that P.'s teacher Ammonios, like P. himself, was also a man of action (for his career in general see C. P. JONES). We might further assume that one of the things P. liked in the Stoics was their positive stance towards engagement in politics. *Cf.* G.J.D. AALDERS H. WZN. - L. DE BLOIS, "Plutarch und die politische Philosophie der Griechen", *ANRW* 36.5, 1992, pp. 3399 f.

but there is no evidence that it was utterly destroyed¹⁴. True, Philon of Larisa had already fled to Rome in 88 (Cic., *Brut.* 306), and Antiochos of Askalon, his pupil, who abandoned scepticism to set up a rival and, supposedly, more orthodox Academy (cf. nn. 17 and 36 below), also left Athens around 73 to join Lucullus campaigning against Mithridates. The Academy, however, or some school of thought recognized as such¹⁵, more precisely as heir to the teachings of Antiochos and the Old Academy, continued to operate in Athens, although the evidence for its material aspects (buildings, property, library, number of pupils, etc.) seems to be lacking¹⁶. This Academy is now headed or represented by Antiochos' brother Aristos¹⁷, a rather poor thinker¹⁸, and subsequently by a certain Theomnestos, whose lectures Brutus is said to have attended (Plut., *Br.* 24.1). We do not know who succeeded Theomnestos, and most probably nobody did, since by that time the heart of Platonism was mainly throbbing in Alexandria through Antiochos' more successful disciples there¹⁹. I am inclined, therefore, to believe that the scarcity or

¹⁴ Cf. Plut., *Sulla* 12.1-4 and Appian, 12.30. In 79 B.C. Cicero finds the area deserted (*De fin.* 5. 1).

¹⁵ Cf. DILLON [1988], p. 358: "Individual philosophers knew whether they were Platonists or not. So did their pupils, and so did the general public." Cf. also OPSOMER [n.13], p. 178n.52.

¹⁶ But this kind of evidence is scarce even for the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C., when the existence of a physical Academy is not disputed. Cf. GLUCKER, pp. 226ff.

¹⁷ Cf. Cic., *Brut.* 332: *Nam quid te exercuit...illa vetus Academia atque eius heres Aristus...?* Cf. also *Acad.* 2.70. On the other hand, LYNCH, p. 182, speaks of Antiochos' own school and, strictly speaking, he is right, since Antiochos did not succeed Philon but revolted from him (cf. also Euseb., *P.E.* 14.9: ἐτέρας ἄξας Ἀκαδημίας. Μνησάρχῳ γοῦν τῷ Στωικῷ σχολάσας, ἐναντία Φίλωνι τῷ καθηγητῆι ἐφρόνησε). But his school, despite its Stoic borrowings, professed Academic doctrines (of the Old Academy) all the same, and was recognized as Academy (see n. 15). Cf. also Cic., *Ad Att.* 13.25.3: *Est enim is [sc. Brutus] quoque Antiochius. O Academiam volaticam et sui similem.* Antiochos himself, after all, "*appellabatur Academicus*" (*Acad.* 2.132). Cf. also GLUCKER, p. 27n.49.

¹⁸ See Cic., *Ad Att.* 5.1 and cf. Plut., *Br.* 2.3 (below p. 407).

¹⁹ See DILLON [1977], pp. 61-2, 115ff., TARRANT, p. 4, and FROIDEFOND, p. 188. In Plut., *Ant.* 80. 3 we hear of some Philostratos, a most competent sophist, who improperly represented himself as a member of the Academy (εἰσποῶν δὲ μὴ προσηκόντως ἑαυτὸν τῆι Ἀκαδημείῳ). Having entered Alexandria, Octavian was about to do away with him (presumably because Philostratos would hold forth against him), but the man was saved thanks to the mediation of the Stoic Areios, Octavian's teacher. But why should Philostratos try to pass for an Academic? Because, we may assume, adherence to the Academy was a good recommendation. Be that as it may, the passage shows that Academy, as metonymy of a philosophical persuasion (if the reference is not to the Academy of Athens), was alive in 30 B.C., and so GLUCKER'S assertion (who mistakenly dates this episode "in Caesar's time"—p. 247n.83) that no reference of P. to the Academy goes beyond the age of Cicero (p. 246) is somewhat inaccurate.

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lack of evidence regarding the Academy and the Academic philosophers in Athens during this period, instead of being taken as a proof that the Academy had been extinct, it should rather be ascribed to the poor philosophical quality of the Academics who succeeded Philon and Antiochos²⁰. And it is exactly this poor quality of the philosophers who represented Academy, I would suggest, that occasioned the desertions to Peripatos during the very same period²¹.

However, almost one century later, we find Plutarch's teacher Ammonios, who came from Egypt, expounding Platonism in Athens. Whether or not Ammonios was a scholarch of the Academy in the same sense as Xenocrates or Arkesilaos, is again of minor significance²². The important thing is that Ammonios, on the evidence of Plutarch, headed some kind of philosophical school or circle in Athens²³, that Plutarch received his higher education there under Ammonios²⁴, and that this school or circle is referred to time and again by Plutarch (who is an avowed Platonist) as Academy²⁵. In view of the above, I find it somewhat difficult to admit, as Gluckler postulates, that there was no Academy in Plutarch's day (pp. 252, 342, 356), that Plutarch studied privately under an isolated teacher (pp. 134, 342), and that this teacher was completely unrelated not only to the Academy (p. 263) but also to proper Platonism (p. 225). In other words, from the two premisses: "Plutarch studied at the Academy" and "Plutarch had Ammonios, who taught philosophy in Athens, as his teacher"²⁶, it is maintained that we are not legitimised to deduce that "Plutarch studied

²⁰ For Antiochos' successors see above and n. 17. As for Philon, he apparently died in Rome without returning to Athens to re-establish his sceptical Academy. Hence the demise of this Platonic variety (cf. Cic., *Acad.* 2.11,17 and *De nat. deor.* 1.11 in n.7 above). Cf. also GLUCKER, p. 280. FROIDEFOND's suggestion (p. 188) that "Philon enseigna probablement à Alexandrie la doctrine de son prédécesseur" and that Eudoros was his pupil is totally unfounded.

²¹ Cf. GLUCKER, p. 113 ff., and DILLON [1977], pp. 61-2, 115.

²² In any case, there is no explicit evidence that Ammonios ever became scholarch of the Academy (JONES, p. 213 n. 35). But cf. also FLACELIÈRE, pp. XXI and CXXI and BABUT [1994], pp. 561-2.

²³ Cf. JONES, p. 209: "Ammonius is presented by Plutarch [...] as the head of a philosophic group". Cf. also DILLON [1977], p. 184.

²⁴ See *De adul. et am.* 70E (ὁ δ' ἡμέτερος καθηγητής) and cf. *Them.* 32.6. Cf. also FLACELIÈRE, pp. XIX and CXXI.

²⁵ Cf. BABUT [1994], p. 562: "Cette école [sc. Ammonios'], quelle que fût son origin et son statut, était couramment désignée sous le nom d' Académie".

²⁶ This is also confirmed by Eunap., 454 (twice). That Ammonios was mainly a Platonist, see DILLON [1977], pp. 190-91, and cf. BABUT [1994], p. 560 with n. 66. According to FROIDEFOND, Ammonios was "un Platonicien de stricte obédience" (p. 189n.17). On the other hand, GLUCKER, who doubts if we can call Ammonios a proper Platonist (p. 225), regards him as an eclectic (p. 125). But see, e.g., *De def. orac.* 430F: Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν τῆ Πλάτωνος ἀνακείσθω χάριτι δι' Ἀμμώνιον. If Ammonios was an eclectic, he was an eclectic in the same sense as Cicero and Plutarch (see n. 4).

at the Academy under Ammonios." And why not? Among other things, because whenever Plutarch or Lamprias allude to the Academy in Ammonios' presence, the latter does not react (pp. 134, 259-60); a rather strange argument, in my opinion²⁷.

Yet, the unquestionable fact remains that Plutarch, who regards himself as a Platonist, keeps alluding to the Academy as both the place of his studies and the province of his wider philosophical stigma. And I cannot see why, accepting, as we normally do, all Plutarch's statements concerning himself and circumstances of his life as true, we suddenly need to make an exception and cast doubt on this one. As a matter of fact, Plutarch and Lamprias appear to take pride in having studied at the Academy²⁸. Would they have been as proud, if their sole relationship with the Academy had been, as Glucker suggests (p. 271ff.), only in the context of their hypothetical ephobic training in the celebrated gymnasium, and independently of Ammonios, their Platonic teacher, at that?²⁹

Glucker's denial of the existence of any Academy in Plutarch's day and much of what he says about Plutarch's relationship with Ammonios are based, among other considerations, on some rather forced interpretations of passages which, in my opinion, manifest the exact opposite of his assertions. I shall discuss here only a couple of them, starting with the well-known *De E Delphico* 387F, which Glucker regards as the only passage "in which the Academy is unmistakably placed within Plutarch's biography" (p. 259):

Ταῦτα δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἔλεγεν οὐ παίζων ὁ Εὐστροφος, ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τηρικαῦτα προσεκέειμην τοῖς μαθήμασιν ἐμπαθῶς, τάχα δὴ μέλλων εἰς πάντα τιμήσειν τὸ "μηδὲν ἄγαν" ἐν Ἀκαδημείᾳ γενόμενος.

The above passage does not state "quite clearly", as Glucker asserts (p. 260), that at the dramatic date of this dialogue, namely in 67 A.D., Plutarch was not as yet at the Academy but only about to enter it; nor that he had been already a pupil of Ammonios for some time (p. 263) or long before he entered the Academy (p. 270)³⁰.

²⁷ Similarly, although P.'s only teacher in philosophy was apparently Ammonios, GLUCKER (p. 126) refuses to admit that Ammonios was also a Platonist or an Academic, on the grounds that P. never calls him so.

²⁸ Cf. also OPSOMER, p. 25 with n. 58. Further, OPSOMER rightly notes that TARRANT'S suggestion (p. 134) that P. did not like to be called Academic, owing to some negative ring of the term in his times, is not supported by the evidence (cf. p. 399 with n. 5 above).

²⁹ According to DILLON [1988], p. 359: a "desperate suggestion".

³⁰ So also OPSOMER, p. 21. To support his opinion, GLUCKER (p. 260) takes P. to be "in his middle or late twenties" in 67 A. D. But P. must have been born c. 46 (see K. ZIEGLER, *Plutarchos von Chaironeia*, Stuttgart, 1964 [1949], p. 4 f. [= REXXI 1, 1951, co. 640] and cf. FLACELIÈRE, pp. XIV and CXXI). In any case, these two successive stages of P.'s education (first near Ammonios and then at the Academy --under whom?) are supported by no evidence.

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Our passage says what all standard translations give, namely that now that he had-joined the Academy (*γενόμενος*), Plutarch was about to honour its maxim "nothing too much" by tempering his great enthusiasm for Mathematics to which Eustrophos had previously alluded³¹; and nothing obliges us to accept that this enthusiasm was necessarily prior to Plutarch's joining the Academy, that is to say, Ammonios' school in Athens. On the contrary, knowing the paramount importance which not only Plato but also Ammonios attached to Mathematics as preparatory to philosophy proper, it is more likely for one to presume that Plutarch's particular zeal for the subject was shown inside the 'Academy' of Ammonios³². Besides, if Academy were only a gymnasium those days, and if Plutarch had no relation whatever to the Academy as a student of a philosophical school (Glucker, p. 271 ff.), its connection with Plutarch's enthusiasm for Mathematics and his appeal to its maxim *μηδὲν ἄγαν* become rather meaningless; why should Plutarch have remembered his membership in the Athenian *ephebeia* in the context of a philosophical discussion?³³

But there is more evidence pointing to a contemporary Academy in Plutarch's time. In *De aud. poet.* 33C Plutarch says that, if the poet Archilochus thought that, by giving himself over to pleasures in order to fight his mourning and grief, he did not make matters any worse, all the more so if one resorts to philosophy instead or occupies himself with politics or takes up farming.

Πῶς ἡμῖν τὰ παρόντα χεῖρον ἔξει φιλοσοφοῦσι καὶ πολιτευομένοις καὶ προϊούσιν εἰς ἀγορὰν καὶ καταβαίνουσιν εἰς Ἀκαδημείαν καὶ γεωργίαν ἐφέπουσιν;

In this passage occupation with philosophy is illustrated by going down to the Academy, and engagement in politics by appearing to the agora. Glucker, however, refuses to admit what naturally follows from these conspicuous connections and maintains that Plutarch's reference to the Academy here "need not imply anything more than participating in some of the numerous gymnastic, religious and civic activities which took place in the Academy complex in Hellenistic-Roman times" (p. 259). This is not only an unwarranted inference; in

³¹ Cf also DILLON [1988], pp. 358-9, BABUT [1994], pp. 557 ff., OPSOMER, p. 24. The tense of the participle (*γενόμενος*) militates against DONINI'S, suggestion that P. was not as yet a member of the Academy in 67, when he first met his future teacher ("Plutarco, Ammonio, e l' Academia" in BRENK-GALLO [edd.], pp. 108 ff.). Besides, how could P. have referred to Plato the way he does in 391A (τὸν Πλάτωνα ἡμῶν), had he not already begun his higher education by Ammonios?

³² Cf. *De E* 391E: ἄτε δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς οὐ τὸ φαυλότατον ἐν μαθηματικῇ φιλοσοφίας τιθέμενος.

³³ Cf. also BABUT [1994], p. 558: "si l' 'entrée' de Plutarque à l' Académie ne coïncide pas avec sa fréquentation d' Ammonios, et s' il est vrai que l' Académie de Platon n' existait plus depuis longtemps, il est difficile de comprendre ce qu' a pu vouloir dire l' auteur du *De E*."

my opinion, it is virtually an impossible one, unless we accept that in the above essay Plutarch addresses himself exclusively to the Athenians³⁴.

In Plutarch's time Academy may indeed have been reduced to a rather small group of pupils receiving higher education under a master, who, on the whole, expounded some kind of eclectic Platonism or, to put it differently, the philosophy of Plato as it had hitherto been developed and interpreted by way of its interaction with the rival philosophical persuasions, including of course scepticism. Nothing precludes that Ammonios was such a master and such a Platonist (*cf.* nn. 23-26); with a distinct religious and mystic predilection moreover on account of his origin³⁵.

To close, then, our eyes before the frequent and unequivocal references of Plutarch to the Academy as the intellectual milieu of his philosophical training or to explain them away by describing Plutarch as a member of the Athenian *ephebeia*, simply taking his stroll in the locality or merely exercising himself in the gymnasium of the Academy (suggestions for which there is not even a scrap of evidence), is not acceptable; unless we also accept Glucker's arguments (pp. 271-74), which expect confirmation from inscriptions awaiting excavation (p. 274: "evidence for this may be forthcoming") or from "some new ingenious interpretation of extant evidence", so that the theory may be confirmed. And one more point: given the fact that Plutarch "was not averse to 'collecting honours' and 'adding letters to his

³⁴ In discussing the 9 *testimonia* which apparently refer to a contemporary Academy, GLUCKER (pp. 257-80) tries to show that all these references actually concern the Old Academy, but he is only partly right. For a sensible counter-argumentation see BABUT (1994), pp. 562 ff., who discusses more passages (disregarded by GLUCKER) that bring a contemporary Academy to the fore (pp. 562n.75 and 564 ff.).

³⁵ *Cf.* BABUT [1994], p. 562: "Cette école [sc. Ammonios'] ne se réclamait pas exclusivement de Platon, mais conjointement du courant de pensée critique et sceptique inauguré par les représentants de la Nouvelle Académie". *Cf.* also TARRANT, p. 133 f. So, when GLUCKER (who dissociates, as we have seen Ammonios from Academic scepticism) asks, "Where, then, did Plutarch learn his Academic --or indeed, his Pythian- scepticism?" (p. 275), the answer is here: at the school of Ammonios, of course, where he must also have learned his Aristotle, his Pythagoras, the Stoic and the Epicurean doctrines (understandably, other sources of all this knowledge were P.'s own reading and his friends [*cf.* BABUT, 1969, pp. 239-70]). *Cf.* also R. FLACELIÈRE, *Plutarque. Vie, I* (Budé), Paris, 1957, p. XII: "Aupres lui" [*sc.* Ammonios], "Plutarque s' intruisit dans tous les systèmes philosophiques de la Grèce, mais surtout dans celui du 'divin' Platon". See also DILLON [1977], pp. 184, 189 ff., and FROIDEFOND, p. 189n.17. (Strangely enough, although FROIDEFOND describes Ammonios as scholar of the Academy and teacher of P. [p. 185], he subsequently maintains that "Plutarque n' appartenait pas à l' Académie"; *cf.* above, n.6). If the Stoic Themistokles in *Quaest. conv.* 626E is the same person with P.'s fellow pupil Themistokles in *Them.* 32.6, this could be another indication of the somewhat eclectic philosophical education offered by Ammonios.

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Lucullus

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Brutus 2.

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name', as Glucker shrewdly observes (*ibid.*), why should he have remained silent in connection with the honour of his membership in the Athenian *ephebeia*?

In all of Plutarch's writings there are only 3 passages (all in the *Lives*), where Old, Middle and New Academy are mentioned in the same breath. More precisely, the Old Academy, represented by Antiochos of Askalon in these passages (*cf.* also n. 17 above) is distinguished from its subsequent developments, the Middle and the New, represented by Arkesilaos, Karneades and Philon of Larisa. Plutarch does not explicitly state in these passages which Academic version he favours, but the context and some other considerations allow us, I think, to surmise his position. Here are the passages concerned:

Cicero 4.1-3:

'Αφικόμενος δ' εἰς Ἀθήνας Ἀντίοχου τοῦ Ἀσκαλωνίτου διήκουσε, τῇ μὲν εὐροία τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ καὶ τῇ χάριτι κηλούμενος, ἃ δ' ἐν τοῖς δόγμασιν ἐνεωτέριζεν, οὐκ ἐπαινῶν. ἤδη γὰρ ἐξίστατο τῆς νέας λεγομένης Ἀκαδημείας ὃ Ἀντίοχος καὶ τὴν Καρνεάδου στάσιν ἐγκατέλειπεν, εἴτε καμπτόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς ἐναργείας καὶ τῶν αἰσθήσεων, εἴθ', ὡς φασιν ἔνιοι, φιλοτιμία τι καὶ διαφορὰ πρὸς τοὺς Κλειτομάχου καὶ Φίλωνος συνήθεις τὸν Στωικὸν ἐκ μεταβολῆς θεραπέων λόγον ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις. ὃ δὲ Κικέρων ἐκεῖν' ἠγάπα κάκεινοις προσεῖχε μᾶλλον, διανοούμενος, εἰ παντάπασιν ἐκπέσοι τοῦ τὰ κοινὰ πράσσειν, δεῦρο μετενεγκάμενος.

Lucullus 42.3-4:

Φιλοσοφίαν δὲ πᾶσαν μὲν ἠσπάζετο καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν εὐμενῆς ἦν καὶ οἰκεῖος, ἴδιον δὲ τῆς Ἀκαδημείας ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔρωτα καὶ ζῆλον ἔσχευε, οὐ τῆς νέας λεγομένης, καίπερ ἀνθούσης τότε τοῖς Καρνεάδου λόγοις διὰ Φίλωνος, ἀλλὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς, πιθανὸν ἄνδρα καὶ δεινὸν εἰπεῖν τότε προστάτην ἐχούσης τὸν Ἀσκαλωνίτην Ἀντίοχον, ὃν πάσῃ σπουδῇ ποιησάμενος φίλον ὃ Λεύκολλος καὶ συμβιωτὴν ἀντετάττετο τοῖς Φίλωνος ἀκροαταῖς, ὧν καὶ Κικέρων ἦν καὶ σύγγραμμά γε πάγκαλον ἐποίησεν εἰς τὴν αἵρεσιν, ἐν ᾧ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς καταλήψεως λόγον Λευκόλλῳ περιτέθεικεν, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸν ἐναντίον Λεύκολλος δ' ἀναγέγραπται τὸ βιβλίον.

Brutus 2.2-3:

Τῶν δ' Ἑλληνικῶν φιλοσόφων οὐδενὸς μὲν ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν ἀνήκοος ἦν οὐδ' ἀλλότριος, διαφερόντως δ' ἐσπουδάκει πρὸς τοὺς ἀπὸ Πλάτωνος· καὶ τὴν νέαν καὶ μέσην λεγομένην Ἀκαδημείαν οὐ πάνυ προσιέμενος, ἐξήρητο τῆς παλαιᾶς, καὶ διετέλει θαυμάζων μὲν Ἀντίοχον τὸν Ἀσκαλωνίτην, φίλον δὲ καὶ συμβιωτὴν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ πεποιημένον Ἄριστον, ἄνδρα τῇ μὲν ἐν λόγοις ἔξει πολλῶν φιλοσόφων λειπόμενον, εὐταξία δὲ καὶ πραότητι τοῖς πρώτοις ἐνάμιλλον.

However, in interpreting the above passages scholars do not concur. Babut (1969, p. 199), and Opsomer (p. 172), for example, maintain that it is the passage from the *life* of Cicero that discloses Plutarch's opinion about Antiochos and his school, and that this opinion is negative, as far as the philosopher's innovations are concerned; for Antiochos had seceded from the New Academy of Karneades and Philon to embrace the Stoics under the mask of a more authentic, supposedly, Platonist³⁶. This interpretation entails, of course, that between Antiochos' return to the dogmatism of the Old Academy (regardless of its Stoic undertones) and Karneades' sceptical New Academy Plutarch favoured the latter. To support this view, Babut observes that in his *Adversus Colotem* Plutarch is not hostile to Academic scepticism, and that Colotes' simultaneous attack on Arkesilaos and Plato (for Arkesilaos had sought the verification of his views by appealing, among others, also to Socrates and Plato) in fact proves the unity and continuity of the Academic doctrine³⁷. Moreover, Babut reminds us that it was the sceptic Philon who had first denied that there were two Academies³⁸, and that Plutarch also wrote an essay to the same effect (*cf.* p. 400 above).

Babut's argumentation is not, I think, compelling. Plutarch's preference of Karneades to Antiochos in the *Cicero* passage is not at all certain, and in any case, it should not escape us that the comparison there is not principally between Old and New Academy — in fact the term "Old Academy" is absent from our passage—but,

³⁶ The teachings of the Old Academy were thought to be identical in many respects with those of the Stoa. *Cf.* Cic., *Acad.* 2.15, 69 (*eadem dicit* [sc. Antiochos] *quae Stoici*), *De fin.* 4.3. This being so, in appropriating Stoic doctrines Antiochos probably believed that he was not borrowing ideas alien to the Academy, but that he was claiming on behalf of the Academy teachings that had always belonged to it. And in *Acad.* 1. 43 we are told that Antiochos regarded Stoicism as *correctionem veteris Academiae potius quam novam aliquam disciplinam*. *Cf.* also Sext., *P.H.* 1.235: Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ Ἀντίοχος τὴν στοᾶν μετήγαγεν εἰς τὴν Ἀκαδημίαν, ὡς καὶ εἰρήσθαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ ὅτι ἐν Ἀκαδημίᾳ φιλοσοφεῖ τὰ στωικά· ἐπεδείκνυε γὰρ ὅτι παρὰ Πλάτωνι κείται τὰ τῶν στωικῶν δόγματα. According to DILLON [1990] also, Antiochos "felt justified in taking the great bulk of Stoic theory and terminology as a kind of updated version of Platonism" (III, "The Academy in the Middle Platonic Period", p. 66). See also Cic., *Acad.* 2. 132 (n. 17) and *cf.* LYNCH, pp. 179 ff..

³⁷ *Cf.* 1122A: Κωλύτη χάρις καὶ παντὶ τῷ τὸν Ἀκαδημαϊκὸν λόγον ἄνωθεν ἤκειν εἰς Ἀρκεσίλαον ἀποφαίνοντι.

³⁸ *Cf.* Cic., *Acad.* 1.13 (*Philo...negat...duas Academias esse, erroremque eorum qui ita putarunt coarguit*) and 46. But perhaps Philon started to uphold this view after Antiochos' secession on the pretext that he was reverting to the tenets of the Old Academy (*cf.* OPSOMER, p. 59). For the clash between Philon and Antiochos in more detail, see GLUCKER's excellent treatment (pp. 80ff., also 27n. 49) and *cf.* LYNCH, p. 179.

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apparently, between the sceptical Carneades and the stoicizing Antiochos³⁹. It is also true that in *Adv. Col.* Plutarch is not particularly hostile to scepticism, but this is only to be expected in an essay defending the philosophers (the Academic sceptics among them), whom Colotes had assailed; for in the same essay Plutarch also pleads for the Cyrenaics (1120C-D), but no one would infer from this that he was sympathetic to their teachings⁴⁰. The *Adv. Col.* is a polemical work taking aim at the Epicurean dogma. In this war of words Carneades and the Sceptical Academy fought vehemently the Garden, and in this context the anti-Epicurean Plutarch naturally sided with Carneades. Besides, the unity of the Academic thought went beyond Arkesilaos, as Philon's testimony also demonstrates, while, as far as Plutarch is concerned, it is almost certain that he perceived this unity as extending and being valid through to his own time, which means that it included Antiochos too⁴¹.

My own approach to the passages under discussion is somewhat different. To begin with, it is important, I think, to note that in all three the New Academy, being distinguished from the Old, is invariably described as "so-called New Academy" (τῆς νέας λεγομένης Ἀκαδημείας)⁴². Plutarch's insistence on this characterization, which, to the best of my knowledge, does not occur in any other source, whether Greek or Latin, lends authenticity to treatise 63 of the *Lamprias-catalogue* and confirms that Plutarch accepted only one Academy, apparently the Old, as we shall presently see, and, like Philon of Larisa, rejected that the so-called New Academy was, in terms of doctrine, something essentially different⁴³.

The actual contents of the *Cicero* and *Lucullus* passages above give no clear indication as to which Academy Plutarch preferred, although the tenor of the latter suggests, I think, that he agreed with Lucullus⁴⁴; something that is clearly brought out, after all, in the *Synkrisis*, where Lucullus' attachment to the Academy is linked

³⁹ Yet there can be little doubt that Antiochos was now the head of the restored Old Academy, as *Luc.* 42.3 and *Br.* 2.3 manifest.

⁴⁰ As is known, the Cyrenaic school mainly comprised Aristippos, the philosopher of pleasure *par excellence*, Theodoros the atheist, Hegesias, the advocate of suicide, and Anniceris. On the other hand, according to DE LACY (p. 81), P.'s references to the Academic sceptics "suggest that while from motives of loyalty to the Academy he refrained from attacking them, he found little in them to praise".

⁴¹ That Antiochos was regarded as Academic, see *Cic., Acad.* 2. 132 (n. 17).

⁴² Or "so-called Middle Academy" in the *Brutus*-passage.

⁴³ But Philon's one-Academy thesis differs from that of P. in that the former speaks as an Academic sceptic, whereas the latter as a Platonist. Cf. BABUT [1994], p. 550n.9.

⁴⁴ See also R. FLACELIÈRE, *Plutarque Vies VII* (Budé), Paris, 1972, p. 281.

with his admiration for Xenocrates⁴⁵. However, Babut (1969, p. 199) and Opsomer (p. 172) believe that the *Cicero* passage shows Plutarch's preference for the New Academy. On the evidence of *Cic.*, 4.1-2, Opsomer suggests that "Antiochos was also probably the only Academic philosopher whom Plutarch did not regard as such"⁴⁶; but to maintain this, he is forced to dismiss the evidence of the other two passages (where Antiochos is not merely associated with the Old Academy, but is also presented as its head), as being the views of Lucullus and Brutus, although the text makes absolutely clear that it is Plutarch who expresses these opinions⁴⁷. On the contrary, in the *Cicero* passage Plutarch does not say that Antiochos was not an Academic philosopher; he only says that he abandoned the so-called New Academy and espoused many Stoic doctrines. In other words, instead of undermining the Platonic dogma through the sceptical ἐποχή, as Arkesilaos and Karneades had done, Antiochos opted for reviving and invigorating Platonism with dogmatic injections of Stoic substance.

The case of Brutus in our third passage is more indicative: Here we are explicitly told that Brutus disapproved (οὐ πάνυ προσιέμενος) the so-called Middle and New Academy and clung to the Old. Hence, he was a constant admirer of Antiochos and a close friend of his brother Aristos, who subsequently succeeded him in the head of the Academy (cf. above p. 402). From the *Brutus* and *Lucullus* passages, then, it follows that, contrary to Opsomer's view above, Plutarch did not regard Antiochos simply as an Academic philosopher, but as the chief representative, if not the actual scholarch, of the reinstated Old Academy⁴⁸. In Plutarch's mind, that is, Antiochos' return to the teachings of the Old Academy, which was in all respects closer to Plato than the sceptical New Academy, was more significant a move than his Stoic borrowings, some of which Plutarch, after all, might also have approved⁴⁹. The *Cicero* passage neither contradicts this evidence nor is it necessarily meant against Antiochos, as has been assumed (above p. 408). In *Cic.* 4 there is

⁴⁵ In *Kim.-Luc.* 1.3 we read that Lucullus' way of living after he had retired from politics was not worthy of τῆς καλῆς Ἀκαδημείας οὐδὲ τὸν Ξενοκράτη ζηλοῦντος.

⁴⁶ Cf. also OPSOMER [n. 13], p. 180. Similarly BABUT [1969] maintains that, for P., Antiochos "était beaucoup plus proche du Portique que de l'Académie" (p. 199). This view, however, appears to run counter to our evidence; see above, nn. 17 and 36, and cf. DILLON [1977], pp. 57ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. also BABUT [1969], p. 199; especially the headship of Antiochos cannot be Lucullus' view, of course.

⁴⁸ And so did Cicero. Cf. *Brutus* 315:...*Antiocho veteris Academiae nobilissimo et prudentissimo philosopho.*

⁴⁹ DILLON [1977] reminds us that, since Stoic elements were not excluded from P.'s philosophical synthesis, "the true extent of P.'s opposition to the Stoics needs careful evaluation" (p. 189).

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no clear distinction or contrast between Old and New Academy; in *Cic.* 4 Plutarch simply observes that Antiochos broke with the so-called New Academy and, changing somehow his views, adopted several Stoic doctrines. But it was clearly Cicero, not Plutarch, who disapproved Antiochos' innovations (ἀ δ' ἐν τοῖς δόγμασιν ἐνεωτέριζεν, οὐκ ἐπαινῶν), and it was Cicero again, not Plutarch, who preferred the teachings of Kleitomachos and Philon to those of Antiochos (ὁ δὲ Κικέρων ἐκεῖν' ἡγάπα κάκεινοῖς προσεῖχε μᾶλλον, διανοούμενος...κτλ.). We know for sure, after all, that Cicero was an adherent of Philon and the New Academy⁵⁰. By contrast, the attitude of Lucullus and Brutus toward the Old and New Academy tallies better with Plutarch's predilections, insofar as the Old Academy is nearer to Plato⁵¹; thus Brutus, who clings to the Old Academy, is praised by Plutarch all the way in this *Life*, and his achievements are attributed precisely to his Academic—the Old Academic (because of Antiochos), that is—background⁵².

On the whole, Plutarch's preference for the Old Academy is, I think, too obvious to be disputed. It is not only that his references and allusions to it and the immediate successors of Plato clearly outnumber those to the Middle-New Academy and its scholars⁵³; it is also the nature of his respective comments and the place where he makes them that establish this preference. Most of his scattered references to Arkesilaos and Karneades, for example, are of anecdotal or biographical nature, regarding, that is, the character of these men or their behaviour on particular occasions⁵⁴. On the other hand, his philosophical, as it were, references to the same are almost exclusively confined to his polemical

⁵⁰ Cf. *Cic.*, *Acad.* 1.13, 46, 2. 69, *De offic.* 3.20, *De nat. deor.* 1.1, 10-11, *De divin.* 2.150, *Ad fam.* 9.8.1, *Plut.*, *Luc.* 42.3. Cf. also DILLON [1977], p. 61 *ad init.*

⁵¹ Cf. J. J. HARTMAN, *De Plutarcho scriptore et philosopho*, Leiden, 1916, p. 683 (*hanc Antiochi Academiam eam esse quae ipsi Plutarcho maxime probetur*); M. CODIGNOLA, "La formazione spirituale di Plutarco e la sua personalità filosofico-religiosa", *Civiltà Moderna*, 6 (1934) 471-490, pp. 478 ff. with nn. 52 and 62; FROIDEFOND, p. 186n.10.

⁵² Cf. *Di.* 1.2: ὁ δὲ [sc. Brutus] τοῖς λόγοις ἐντραφεῖς τοῖς Πλάτωνος...4: οὕτω τὸν λόγον ἐστὶν εἰκὸς τῶν πεπαιδευμένων ὁμοίως [sc. Dion and Brutus] ἔπεσθαι ταῖς πράξεσιν. See further *Br.* 24.1, where Brutus is said to have attended the lectures of Theomnestos, also an Academic, and Kratippos the Peripatetic. Perhaps it is worth remembering here that the eclectic synthesis of Antiochos, whom Brutus admired, was based on Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. See *Cic.*, *De fin.*, 5.7, *Acad.* 2.15, and cf. DONINI [n. 4], p. 32. For Peripatetic and Stoic influences on P.'s political outlook (which was basically Platonic), see AALDERS H. WZN- DE BLOIS [n.13], pp. 3389 ff.

⁵³ See, for instance, GLUCKER, pp. 213, 220, etc.

⁵⁴ For Arkesilaos see *Mor.* 55C, 63D, 461D, 634A, fr. 152; for Karneades: 58F, 474F, 477B, 513C, *CMA.* 22; for Polemon: 462D, 780D.

treatises against the Stoics and the Epicureans. But even there Plutarch can hardly be viewed as an exponent of sceptical Academic teaching, however creatively he may have used his models⁵⁵. As has already been observed, in those treatises he simply employs Academic techniques (mostly Carneadean ones) to refute and confound the Stoics and the Epicureans⁵⁶.

In Plutarch's writings there are indeed passages that have allowed some scholars to diagnose sceptical tendencies in his thought, others to discover a crypto-sceptic Plutarch and others to classify him outright among the Academic sceptics⁵⁷. A detailed discussion of these passages goes beyond the scope of this article. But apart from the specific evidence questioning the validity of the above views⁵⁸, there are certain general considerations which also militate against the picture of a sceptic Plutarch. I cannot see, for instance, why, if Plutarch had indeed been a sceptic, he should not have declared his conviction openly; all the more so, since scepticism was the core of the New Academy to which, according to some scholars, Plutarch belonged (*cf.* n. 57). Yet, as things stand in his extant works, Plutarch unequivocally expresses his loyalty only to Plato and the Old Academy⁵⁹, whereas he almost ignores Pyrrho, the founder of scepticism (*cf.* n. 12), and does not have even one single reference to Aenesidemus, the man who revived Pyrrhonism in the first century B.C. This being so, I deem it rather unlikely that the Platonist Plutarch could have written five whole books on the subject of arguing both sides of a given question (*Lampr.-cat.* 45: Περὶ τῆς εἰς ἑκάτερον ἐπιχειρήσεως βιβλία ε΄) or a spe-

⁵⁵ Yet, he can be viewed as promoter of his own Platonism. *Cf.* G. BOYS-STONES in OPSOMER, p. 186n.281. For P.'s creativity and 'originality' in his polemical works, see BABUT [1969], pp. 45-46, 60-61, 124-25.

⁵⁶ As TARRANT has put it, P. "retained Academic 'scepticism' as a tool rather than as a means of expressing significant uncertainty" (p. 42). *Cf.* OPSOMER, pp. 186 ff., id. [n. 13], p. 177, and GLUCKER, p. 261. See also DILLON [1988], who, discussing 922F (τὸ περιᾶκτον ἐκ τῆς Ἀκαδημείας...—incidentally, another evidence for a living Academic tradition in P.'s day), regards the passage "as a good indication that P. recognises New Academic methods of argument as a proper part of a Platonist's armoury" and "as a weapon in inter-school controversy" (p. 360).

⁵⁷ Notably J. SCHROETER, *Plutarchs Stellung zur Skepsis*, Greifswald, 1911, pp. 6ff. More recently, *cf.* M. CUVIGNY, "Plutarque et Épictète", in *Actes du VIIIe Congrès de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, Paris, 1969, p. 563; DONINI, "Lo scetticismo academico, Aristotele e l'unità della tradizione platonica secondo Plutarco", in G. CAMBIANO (ed.), *Storiografia e dossografia nella filosofia antica*, Torino, 1986, esp. p. 212 ff., DILLON [1988], p. 360; BABUT [1994], pp. 553, 555, 562 ff.; TARRANT, p. 133 f.; OPSOMER, pp. 192, 268-69.

⁵⁸ *Cf.* R. M. JONES, [n. 1], pp. 18-19, DE LACY, pp. 83 ff.; GLUCKER, pp. 268 ff.

⁵⁹ *Cf.* *Moralia* 90C (θεῖον Πλάτωνα), 391A (n. 31), 700B (πρὸς φιλόσοφον δόξη τε καὶ δυνάμει πρῶτον), 717D-E, 964D etc.

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cial essay upholding the thesis that understanding is impossible (*Lampr.-cat.* 146: "Ὅτι οὐδὲν ἔστι συνιέναι)⁶⁰; for these treatises are invoked as further proofs of Plutarch's scepticism. Sceptic influences and, occasionally, sceptic propensities are undoubtedly present in Plutarch's work; but so are also Pythagorean, Peripatetic and Stoic ones, without anyone so far having felt the need to depict Plutarch, for this reason, as Pythagorean or Peripatetic or Stoic. Plutarch is first and foremost a Platonist, while all other philosophical doctrines that can be identified in his work are not actually incompatible with his own interpretation of Plato⁶¹. Scepticism, for Plutarch, apart from being a useful tool for belabouring his philosophical opponents, primarily meant caution and reservation in expressing oneself categorically on issues beyond man's mental grasp or inadmissible of a definite explanation: certain physical phenomena, for example, or whatever is connected with the god-head⁶². As De Lacy characteristically put it, "Plutarch suspends judgement not from a conviction that truth is unattainable, but from a kind of intellectual humility which warns him that he has not yet attained it" (p. 83)⁶³.

Finally, as regards the existence of any Academy in Plutarch's day, the matter is perhaps one of terminology. That Academy as an institution was not after 86 B.C. what it was before that date, it is fairly certain. But it is as certain, I think, that some kind of school, some kind of a philosophical circle or group advocating, promulgating, enriching, updating and modifying Plato's philosophical legacy, and therefore designated—self-designated perhaps—and recognized as Academy (*cf.* n. 15) continued to exist, no matter how mediocre those Academics were. Epictetus, after all, writes towards the turn of the first century A.D. against those who call them-

⁶⁰ Neither can we be sure that *Lampr.-cat.* 158 (Περὶ τῶν Πύρρωνος δέκα τρόπων) is a genuine work of P., although GLUCKER, adducing no evidence whatever, affirms that P. "did compose this work" (p. 276). On the other hand, OPSOMER (p. 186 ff.) makes too much, I think, of the fact that P. was "a supporter of the method of *in contrarias partes disserere*". That he used this method in his polemical essays — and only in those — does not necessarily make him a theoretical exponent of it.

⁶¹ *Cf.* R.M. JONES [n. 1], pp. 9, 17-19; RUSSELL [n.1], p. 63; FLACELIÈRE, p. CXXIII.

⁶² See, e.g., *De Iside* 351C-D. "Academic caution", notes OPSOMER, "warned against the assumption that man could obtain knowledge reserved for the gods" (p. 230); and earlier on he aptly remarks that "ἐποχή, being cognate to εὐλάβεια, promotes reverence towards the divine" (p. 80). *Cf.* also BABUT [1969], pp. 283 ff. For the domains of Academic scepticism in general, see DONINI [n. 57], esp. p. 212 ff.

⁶³ There are several passages in P. that confirm DE LACY'S observation: see, e.g., 17D-E, 430F-431A, 549E-F, 558D, 700B, *Cam.* 6.6, *Cr.* 38.3 etc. In 955C also τὸ ἐπέχειν ἐν τοῖς ἀδήλοις does not necessarily mean scepticism, but rather εὐλάβεια, namely caution in committing oneself to definite answers in matters where the truth is obscure. *Cf.* also OPSOMER, pp. 184 and 230 (above, n. 62).

selves Academics (Arrian, *Epict.* 2.20.5: οἱ Ἀκαδημαϊκοὺς αὐτοὺς λέγοντες), and Glucker himself (p. 294) as well as Opsomer (pp. 230 ff, esp. 234-35) identify these Academics with the circle of Plutarch (p. 294)⁶⁴. The Academy as an organized institution with regular succession of scholarchs may have indeed come to an end after Philon's death, but the Platonic philosophy continued to be studied and disseminated by means of those loose threads of isolated philosophical groups in Athens, in Alexandria, later in Asia Minor⁶⁵, which did somehow represent, albeit not so strictly and officially, the illustrious school⁶⁶. Plutarch's testimony concerning his own studies at the Academy leaves no doubt, in my opinion, that his teacher Ammonios was the person who headed such a philosophical school or circle in Athens round 67 A.D. (cf. above nn. 22-25). Thus, the links of the famous Golden Chain from Plato to Proclus may have become loose and dangerously weakened in the period we are discussing, but there is no indisputable evidence that they had completely broken off.

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⁶⁴ However, this identification was first suggested by CUVIGNY [n. 57], 563 f. See also BABUT [1994], where Epictetus and P. are said to represent "à leur époque, les chefs de file des écoles rivales du Portique et de l'Académie" (p. 569). For another evidence of active Academics in the same period see Pliny, *Epist.* 7.27.16.

⁶⁵ Philostr., *Vit. Apoll.* 1. 7 and *Epist.* 42 clearly suggest that Apollonios, who lived in the first century A.D., was associated with the Platonists of his time. GLUCKER, however, dismisses Philostratos' testimony as unreliable. (p. 208).

⁶⁶ TARRANT also believes that "the evidence for a continued Academic activity between the death of Philo and the time of P. is quite conclusive" (p. 3), and does not regard "the survival of the institution as a precondition for the survival of a New Academic style of philosophy" (p. 136 n.2). Cf. also LYNCH, p. 177 and ANDRÉ [n. 7], pp. 5-77, esp. pp. 74f.

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University of Crete

AURELIO PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ, JOSÉ GARCÍA LÓPEZ & ROSA M^a AGUILAR
EDITORES

PLUTARCO, PLATÓN Y ARISTÓTELES

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