

Symposion and Philanthropia in Plutarch

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(eds.)

IMPRESA DA UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA
COIMBRA UNIVERSITY PRESS

ANNABLUME

PHILANTHROPIA AS SOCIABILITY AND PLUTARCH'S UNSOCIABLE HEROES

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Abstract

Although the words φιλανθρωπία and φιλόανθρωπος are pivotal terms of his ethical vocabulary, Plutarch often attaches to these words meanings and nuances that appear to be ethically indifferent or neutral. One of these meanings is the sociability-nuance of *philanthropia*, which seems to describe all sorts of refined modes of behaviour such as courtesy, affability, tactfulness, friendliness, hospitality and the like. Plutarch appreciates and encourages these aspects of refined conduct (mainly in the *Moralia*), for he believes that they conduce to good human relations and promote social harmony. Yet, though some of his heroes (e.g., Phokion, Cato, Perikles) appear to be rather unsociable, Plutarch, far from finding any fault with them, explicitly or implicitly justifies and even approves of their sternness and austerity. Sometimes because he is aware that good manners and sociability, especially in the domain of politics, may be a deceptive façade that often conceals crude ambition or devious schemes and machinations; other times because he bows to the hero's moral excellence, which, under certain circumstances, seems to be somehow incompatible with the usual manifestations of sociability.

According to Diogenes Laertios, Plato distinguished three kinds of *philanthropia*: a) by way of salutations, i.e. by addressing everyone you meet on the street and shaking hands with them, b) by way of helping everyone in need, and c) by way of keeping an open house and offering dinner-parties. In other words, *philanthropia* is manifested through salutations, through conferring benefits, and through offering dinners and promoting social intercourse¹.

Nobody recognizes Plato in this description, of course, since the four occurrences of the words φιλανθρωπία and φιλόανθρωπος in the Platonic corpus convey only the literal meaning of the words (love and lover of mankind), which at most could be taken to underlie the second kind in Laertios' passage². Plutarch would also have difficulty, I think, in associating Plato with the three kinds of *philanthropia* above, but for him Laertios' description would have

¹ D. L. 3.98: Τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ἐστὶν εἶδη τρία· ἓν μὲν διὰ τῆς προσηγορίας γινόμενον, οἷον ἐν οἷς τινες τὸν ἐντυχόντα πάντα προσαγορεύουσι καὶ τὴν δεξιὰν ἐμβάλλοντες χαιρετίζουσιν. ἄλλο εἶδος, ὅταν τις βοηθητικὸς ἢ παντὶ τῷ ἀτυχούντι. ἕτερον εἶδος ἐστὶ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ἐν ᾧ τινες φιλοδειπνισταὶ εἰσι. τῆς ἄρα φιλανθρωπίας τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ διὰ τοῦ προσαγορεύειν, τὸ δὲ διὰ τοῦ εὐεργετεῖν, τὸ δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἐστιᾶν καὶ φιλοσυνουσιάζειν. The above categorization is part of the Διαίρέσεις (*Divisiones*), the last section of D. L., book 3 (§§ 80-109), sometime attributed to Aristotle (see V. ROSE, 1971, p. 677).

² *Euthphr.* 3D: Ἵσως γὰρ σὺ μὲν δοκεῖς σπάνιον σεαυτὸν παρέχειν καὶ διδάσκειν οὐκ ἐθέλειν τὴν σεαυτοῦ σοφίαν· ἐγὼ δὲ φοβοῦμαι μὴ ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας δοκῶ αὐτοῖς ὅτιπερ ἔχω ἐκκεχυμένως παντὶ ἀνδρὶ λέγειν, οὐ μόνον ἄνευ μισθοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ προστιθεὶς ἂν ἡδέως εἴ τις μου ἐθέλει ἀκούειν. *Symp.* 189C-D: ἔστι γὰρ θεῶν φιλανθρωπότητος (sc. Ἔρωτος), ἐπίκουρός τε ὢν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἰατρὸς τούτων ὢν ἰαθέντων μεγίστη εὐδαιμονία ἂν τῷ ἀνθρωπιῷ γένει εἴη. *Lg.* 713D: ...καὶ ὁ θεὸς φιλόανθρωπος ὢν, τότε γένος ἄμεινον ἡμῶν ἐφίστη τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων. *Def.* 412E: Φιλανθρωπία ἕξις εὐάγωγος ἤθους πρὸς ἀνθρώπου φιλίαν· ἕξις εὐεργετικῆ ἀνθρώπων· χάριτος σχέσις μνήμη μετ' εὐεργεσίας.

struck a familiar note. As a matter of fact, Plutarch's usage of *philanthropia* and cognate words, pivotal terms of his ethical vocabulary, covers, as is well-known, a much wider range of meanings and nuances than the three aforesaid kinds³; more importantly, the concept of *philanthropia* in Plutarch is not simply synonymous with sociability and its various ramifications, as the first and third kind of Laertios' passage suggest, but perhaps constitutes the very kernel of his moral outlook. One might aptly say that *philanthropia* for Plutarch is the lens through which he sees, examines, judges and evaluates individuals and human activities at large⁴.

Nevertheless, there are many instances in his writings, both in *Lives* and *Moralia*, where Plutarch employs the words φιλόανθρωπος and φιλοανθρωπία to describe nuances of sociability and all sorts of refined modes of behaviour, such as courtesy, politeness, affability, tactfulness, discretion, friendliness, hospitality, and so on. To put it otherwise, Plutarch uses these words in a way that corresponds to Laertios' first and third kind, thus endorsing and recommending a *philanthropia* that, unlike the one of the second kind, seems to be ethically indifferent or neutral.

The first kind (*philanthropia* through salutations) occurs mostly in the *Lives*, where sociability is often a political device for gaining the favour of the multitude. To this aspect I will return. The third kind (*philanthropia* through dinner-parties and hospitality) is the sociability featuring equally in the *Lives* and *Moralia*, and predominantly, perhaps, in the *Table Talks*. As for the second kind (*philanthropia* through helping and benefitting the needy), which carries more pronounced ethical overtones and illustrates *par excellence* the moral sense of *philanthropia*, it will not concern us here⁵.

Before going to the *Lives*, I would like to discuss a few passages from the *Moralia*, where the notion of sociability primarily occurs in the context of a *symposion*; and for this aspect of *philanthropia* Plutarch's *Table Talks* offer an excellent testimony. The man who, after a solitary meal, said: "today I ate; I did

³ See R. HIRZEL, 1912, p. 25: "Plutarch hat...den Begriff in den verschiedensten Schattierungen verfolgt"; cf. also F. FRAZIER, 1996, p. 234: "On ne peut qu'être frappé par l'ampleur impressionnante de son champ d'action [sc. of *philanthropia*] dans les *Vies*".

⁴ Cf. also J. DE ROMILLY, 1979, p. 280: "La douceur est donc devenue un critère essentiel pour juger un homme" (in Romilly's treatment 'douceur' mainly translates *praotes*, but also – almost to the same extent – *philanthropia*). For the importance of *philanthropia* in P. see R. HIRZEL, 1912, pp. 23-32 (esp. p. 26: "Ich wüßte nicht, was sich mehr eignete für das Prinzip Plutarchischer Moral in Leben und Lehre erklärt zu werden als eben die Philanthropie...die Summe aller Tugenden"); B. BUCHER-ISLER, 1972, p. 20 ("ein Zentralbegriff"); F. FRAZIER, 1996, pp. 233-36; H. M. MARTIN JR.; A. G. NIKOLAIDIS, 2008, pp. XV-XVI; C. PANAGOPOULOS, 1977, pp. 218 sqq., pp. 234-35; J. RIBEIRO FERREIRA, 2008; J. DE ROMILLY, 1979, pp. 275-305, esp. 275-92; K. ZIEGLER, 1964², pp. 306/943.

⁵ For some telling examples of this kind of *philanthropia* see *Publ.* 1.2, 4.5, *Sol.* 15.3, *Thes.* 36.4, *Pel.* 6.4-5, *Marc.* 20.1-2, *Cleom.* 32.5, *Phoc.* 10.7-8; see also *Mor.* 823A, 1051E, 1075E. According to [Arist.], *VV* 1251b31 beneficence belongs to virtue (ἔστι δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τὸ εὐεργετεῖν τοὺς ἀξίους), and so *philanthropia* as beneficence is one of the concomitants of virtue (1251b34f.: ἀκολουθεῖ δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ...εἶναι καὶ φιλόξενον καὶ φιλόανθρωπον...ἃ δὴ πάντα τῶν ἐπαινουμένων ἐστὶ).

not have a dinner”, is called *χαρίεις* and *φιλόανθρωπος*⁶, since, according to Plutarch, our witty and sociable man implied that a dinner always wants some friendly companionship for seasoning (697C: “βεβρωκέναι, μη δεδειπνηκέναι σήμερον”, ὡς τοῦ δείπνου κοινωνίαν καὶ φιλοφροσύνην ἐφηδύνουσαν αἰετοποθοῦντος). In another *Talk* we are urged to emulate the *philanthropia* of the old who, respecting companionship at large, held in honour not only those who shared their hearth and roof, but also those who shared their meals⁷. And in the *Banquet of the Seven Sages* the hearth–fire, the hearth itself, the wine bowls and all entertainment and hospitality are described as *φιλανθρωπότατα καὶ πρῶτα κοινωνήματα πρὸς ἀλλήλους* (158C), due to the belief that it was these things that first brought people closer to each other. Hence, in another essay, even outside the sympotic context, the dinner–table is called *philanthropos* (610A)⁸. And if the *symposion* is a sociable institution because it brings people together, Dionysos, one of the *symposion*’s presidents (the other one is Hunger), is even more sociable (*philanthropos*), because it is wine that stops the fellow–drinkers jostling one another like hungry dogs over the food, and establishes a cheerful and friendly atmosphere among them⁹. By the same token, speech (ὁ λόγος), through which men come close and communicate among themselves, is called ἥδιστον καὶ φιλανθρωπώτατον συμβόλαιον (*De garrul.* 504E)¹⁰.

The *Table Talks* throw light on the ramifications of sociability too. In one *Talk*, for example, *philanthropia* is synonymous with courtesy or tactfulness, since we hear of the Syrian prince Philopappos, the archon of Athens in Plutarch’s time, who, being among the guests of a banquet, joined in the after–dinner discussion out of courtesy and graciousness not less than because of his eagerness to learn (628B: τὰ μὲν λέγων τὰ δ’ ἀκούων διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν οὐχ ἦττον ἢ διὰ φιλομάθειαν). Similarly, the Persian king Artaxerxes was not only agreeable in intercourse (*Art.* 4.4: ἡδίω θ’ ἑαυτὸν παρεῖχεν ἐντυγχάνεσθαι), but also tactful and gracious in giving as well as in receiving gifts (ibidem: ... οὐχ ἦττον τοῖς διδοῦσιν ἢ τοῖς λαμβάνουσιν φαινόμενος εὐχαρις καὶ φιλόανθρωπος)¹¹. The above cases suggest that the courtesy–nuance of *philanthropia* manifests itself

⁶ According to the pseudoplatonic *Definitions*, *χάρις* is an aspect of *philanthropia* (see n. 2 s.f.). Hence the two concepts are often paired together. Cf. *Mor.* 517C, 660A, *Art.* 4.4 (below), *Cat. Mi.* 26.1 (p. 281), *Sol.* 2.1.

⁷ 643D: ...ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὴν τῶν παλαιῶν φιλανθρωπίαν ζηλοῦν, οὐ μόνον ὁμοσίου οὐδ’ ὁμοροφίου ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁμοχοϊνικας καὶ ὁμοσιπούς τῷ πᾶσαν σέβεσθαι κοινωνίαν ἐν τιμῇ τιθεμένων.

⁸ For the connection of the dinner–table with the notion of sociability/hospitality cf. also *GGr.* 19.2, where we hear of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, that she was πολύφιλος καὶ διὰ φιλοξενίαν εὐτράπεζος.

⁹ 680B: οὕτως ἡμᾶς ἐν ἀρχῇ συμπεφορημένους ὑπὸ τοῦ λιμοῦ κυνηδὸν ἄρτι παραλαμβάνων ὁ Λυαῖος θεὸς καὶ Χορεῖος εἰς τάξιν ἰλαρὰν καὶ φιλόανθρωπον καθίστησιν. For the pairing of *philanthropos* with *hilaros* see also 660C, *Caes.* 4.8 (p. 285), and *Cleom.* 13.3 (n. 38).

¹⁰ *φιλόανθρωπος* is again paired with *ἡδὺς* in *Mor.* 762D, *Ant.* 25.3, *Cat. Ma.* 3.7 (p. 286 below), *Art.* 4.4 (below).

¹¹ In *Reg. Apophth.* 172B Artaxerxes holds that accepting small gifts with graciousness and goodwill is equally βασιλικὸν καὶ φιλόανθρωπον as giving large gifts. For another instance of *philanthropos* being combined with *basilikos*, see *Ages.* 1.5 (n. 24).

particularly – and more meaningfully – in the behaviour of someone superior towards an inferior; something that occurs again in 617B, where Alkinoos, by asking his son to rise and seating Odysseus beside himself, wins our praise; for it is exquisitely polite and gracious (ἐπιδέξιον ἐμμελῶς καὶ φιλάνθρωπον) to seat a suppliant in the place of a loved one.

In another *Talk* we are warned that there should be limits even in hospitality. For if one holds a dinner-party and invites every possible guest to his house as though to some public show or recitation, his hospitality goes too far (678E: ἔστι γὰρ τις οἶμαι καὶ φιλάνθρωπίας ἀκρασία, μηδένα παρερχομένης τῶν συμποτῶν ἀλλὰ πάντας ἐλκούσης ὡς ἐπὶ θέαν ἢ ἀκρόασιν.)¹²; on the contrary, the younger Scipio was criticized in Rome because, when he entertained his friends at the dedication of the temple of Herakles, he did not invite Mummius, his colleague in office. Thus, although Scipio was otherwise an admirable man, the omission of so slight an act of courtesy brought upon him the reputation of haughtiness (*Praec. ger. reip.* 816C: μικρὸν οὕτω φιλάνθρώπευμα παραλειφθὲν ὑπεροψίας ἦνεγκε δόξαν).

See also 816D in the immediate sequel. For other instances of *philanthropia* in the sense of courtesy or politeness cf. 513A, 517C, 645F, 749D, 762C, *Alex.* 58.8, *Eum.* 13,4, *Oth.* 1.1. See also *Demetr.* 22.1, where *philanthropia* conveys – more precisely – the nuance of discretion or tactfulness. While Demetrios was besieging Rhodes, the Rhodians captured the ship that carried bedding, clothing and letters from his wife Phila and sent it to his enemy Ptolemy. Thus, Plutarch comments, they did not imitate τὴν Ἀθηναίων φιλάνθρωπίαν, who, having captured Philip's letter-carriers during their war with him, read all the letters except the one from Olympias, which, sealed as it was, they sent it back to him. Occasionally, the various nuances mingle, as, for example, in 546E, where *philanthropia* seems to denote all three kinds of Laertios' passage at the same time. Some people, Plutarch shrewdly observes, are wrong to believe that their self-glorification goes unnoticed when they report praises received from others (...ὅταν βασιλέων καὶ αὐτοκρατόρων δεξιώσεις καὶ προσαγορεύσεις καὶ φιλοφροσύνας ἀπαγγέλλωσιν, ὡς οὐχ αὐτῶν ἐπαίνους, ἀποδείξεις δὲ τῆς ἐκείνων ἐπικεικίας καὶ φιλάνθρωπίας διεξιόντες). For a similar combination of Laertios' three kinds of *philanthropia*, cf. n. 23 below.

It is clear, therefore, that Plutarch attaches some importance to sociability, and perhaps this is why he employs such a weighty ethical term as *philanthropia* to express its various ramifications. Especially in the context of a *symposion* Plutarch appears to particularly favour and recommend sociability, believing that these social gatherings did not simply bring people together in a relaxed and cheerful atmosphere that might give

¹² In *De garrulitate* P. transfers an example of excessive *philanthropia* found in Epicharmos (οὐ φιλάνθρωπος τυ γ' ἔσθ', ἔχει νόσον χαίρεις διδούς – fr. 212 Kassel-Austin, *PCG*, v. I; and for the liberality-nuance of *philanthropia* in P. see n. 25 below) to the idle talker (510C: ...ἔχει νόσον χαίρεις λαλῶν καὶ φλαυρῶν). More for this ἀκρασία λόγου see H.-G. INGENKAMP, 1971, pp. 135-6.

rise to new or confirm and strengthen older friendships¹³ but, owing to the sympotic etiquette, they could also effect that the guests (or at least some of them) acquire desirable habits and practices, such as self-discipline and self-restraint, polite manners, consideration for others and so forth¹⁴. In other words, sociability could be regarded as belonging to those so-called minor virtues, on which Plutarch would often discourse, convinced that, through ensuring “die Heilung der Seele”, they also conducted to social harmony and individual fulfilment¹⁵.

Plutarch, agreeing with Aristotle (*EN* 1103a17: ἡ δ' ἠθικὴ [sc. ἀρετὴ] ἐξ ἔθους περιγίνεται, ὅθεν καὶ τοῦνομα ἔσχηκε μικρὸν παρεγκλίνον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθους. Cf. also Plato, *Lg.* 792E), does not overlook the importance and power of habituation in acquiring and practising virtue, as several of his moral essays testify (cf. *De virt. mor.* 443C-D, *De coh. ira* 459B ff., *De garrul.* 510D, 511E-F, 512D-F, 514E, *De curios.* 520D ff., 521A-E, 522B, *De vit. pud.* 532C, *De sera* 551E, *De esu carn.* 996A-B). See also Ingenkamps's pertinent remarks on pp. 99-102 and 105-115). Cf. further *Cat. Ma.* 5.5:...ἀλλ' εἰ διὰ μηδὲν ἄλλο, μελέτης οὐνεκα τοῦ φιλανθρώπου προεθιστέον ἑαυτὸν ἐν τούτοις [sc. ζώοις] πρᾶον εἶναι καὶ μείλιχον. But the same relationship between habituation and virtue seems to go back to Pythagoras and it is also highlighted by Zeno of Elea. In *De sollert. an.* 959F we read that the Pythagoreans τὴν εἰς τὰ θηρία πραότητα μελέτην ἐποίησαντο πρὸς τὸ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ φιλοίκτηριμον. For habituation (συνήθεια), by gradually familiarizing men with certain feelings, is apt to lead them onward (δεινὴ τοῖς κατὰ μικρὸν ἐνοικειουμένοις πάθεισι πόρρω προαγαγεῖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον. Cf. also *Mor.* 91C, 729E, 996A-B). And at *Per.* 5.3 we see that Zeno would urge those who called Perikles' gravity (σεμνότης) thirst for reputation and arrogance to have a similar thirst for reputation themselves, believing that even the mere assumption of a noble demeanour might unconsciously produce some zeal for and habitual practice of noble things (...ὡς τῆς προσποιήσεως αὐτῆς τῶν καλῶν ὑποποιούσης τινὰ λεληθότως ζῆλον καὶ συνήθειαν).

This is the impression one gets from observing the sociability-nuance of *philanthropia* in Plutarch's *Quaestiones Convivales* and the other passages we have discussed¹⁶. But when one examines sociability and its manifestations

¹³ Cf. 660A, C, 697D-E. Friendship, after all, is “le but du banquet”, as Billault rightly remarks (2008, p. 582). Cf. also J. SIRINELLI, 1993, pp. 170-1.

¹⁴ Cf. J. SIRINELLI, 1993, pp. 375-6, esp. 376, where it is maintained that the ancient *symposia* cultivated not simply the *savoir-vivre*, but “cet art de communiquer” and “l'art de vivre ensemble”. Cf. also p. 378.

¹⁵ The foibles which those minor virtues cure are masterly discussed by H.-G. INGENKAMP. The same virtues was also the topic of an international symposium organized by Luc Van der Stockt at Delphi in September 2004: “Virtues for the People: Plutarch and his Era on Desirable Ethics”. Its proceedings are to be published next year.

¹⁶ In some cases the sociability-nuance of *philanthropia*, especially in the form of a kind gesture or behaviour, overlaps with the notion of friendliness, as, e.g., when Phokion thinks that the Athenians should accept Philip's friendly policy and kindly overtures to them (*Phoc.* 16.5: τὴν μὲν ἄλλην τοῦ Φιλίππου πολιτείαν καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν ᾤετο δεῖν προσδέχεσθαι). Cf.

in connection with the moral status of several Plutarchean heroes, one acquires a very different impression. Take Phokion and the younger Cato, for example, perhaps the best paradigms of pure virtue, since Plutarch does not simply admire the moral excellence of these men throughout their respective *Lives*, but also avoids – almost completely – making the slightest negative comment or remark concerning their character, especially as regards the former. Phokion and Cato, however, were not at all sociable. For example, although Phokion's nature was most gentle and most kind, his countenance was so sullen that, with the exception of his intimates, it discouraged everyone else from approaching and talking to him (*Phoc.* 5.1: Τῷ δ' ἦθει προσηνέστατος ὢν καὶ φιλανθρωπότατος, ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου δυσξύμβολος ἐφαίνετο καὶ σκυθρωπός, ὥστε μὴ ῥαδίως ἄν τινα μόνον ἐντυχεῖν αὐτῷ τῶν ἀσυνήθων). Accordingly, we never see Phokion as a guest at a dinner-party; in fact, there is not even one mention of a dinner-party in the entire *Life of Phokion*¹⁷.

Cato's countenance was similarly sullen and his manners stern¹⁸. But unlike Phokion, the Roman did participate in banquets and would drink heavily to boot¹⁹. However, as Plutarch is quick to clarify, this was not a proof of his sociability (Plutarch employs neither φιλανθρωπία nor any of the usual words describing the sympotic activity, atmosphere and attitudes, e.g., φιλοφροσύνη, ἡδύτης, κοινωνία etc.), but it only showed Cato's desire to converse with philosophers, something that he could not do during the day, because of his pressing public activities (*Cat. Mi.* 6.3: ...καὶ κωλυόμενον φιλολογεῖν, νύκτωρ καὶ παρὰ πότον συγγίνεσθαι τοῖς φιλοσόφοις)²⁰. Otherwise, Cato was not at all sociable, whether in connection with drinking – parties or politics. This is why Cicero openly blames Caesar's prevalence in Rome on Cato, because at a critical moment for the city, the latter, although he had decided to stand for the consulship, he did not try to win the favour of the people by kindly intercourse with them (*Cat. Mi.* 50.2: ...οὐδὲ ὑπῆλθεν ὀμιλίᾳ φιλανθρώπῳ τὸν δῆμον); on the contrary, desiring to preserve the dignity of his manners rather than to acquire the office by making the usual salutations, he forbade even his friends

also *Cam.* 17.2, *Crass.* 18.2, *Demetr.* 37.1, *Dio* 16.1, *Sull.* 43.5, *Pomp.* 79.1, *Ant.* 18.2, *De Herod. malign.* 866F.

¹⁷ See also 4.3: Φωκίωνα γὰρ οὔτε γελάσαντά τις οὔτε κλαύσαντα ῥαδίως Ἀθηναίων εἶδεν, οὐδ' ἐν βαλανείῳ δημοσιεύοντι λουσάμενον.

¹⁸ *Cat. Mi.* 1.3-6: Λέγεται δὲ Κάτων εὐθύς ἐκ παιδίου τῆ τε φωνῆ καὶ τῷ προσώπῳ καὶ ταῖς περὶ τὰς παιδιὰς διατριβαῖς ἦθος ὑποφαίνειν ἄτρεπτον καὶ ἀπαθές καὶ βέβαιον ἐν πάσιν...καὶ τοῖς κολακεύουσι τραχὺς ὢν καὶ προσάντης...ἦν δὲ καὶ πρὸς γέλωτα κοιμηθῆ δυσκίνητος, ἄκρι μειδιάματος σπανίως τῷ προσώπῳ διαχεόμενος... (cf. previous note about Phokion). Contrary to the sullen look of Phokion and Cato, that of Flaminius was a winsome one (*Flam.* 5.7: τὴν ὄψιν φιλανθρώπῳ).

¹⁹ This is confirmed by Martial 2.89 and Pliny, *Epist.* 3.12.2-3.

²⁰ The philosophers with whom Cato would converse were the Stoics (Cato was in the circle of the Stoic Antipatros of Tyros – cf. *Cat. Mi.* 4.2), to whose doctrines and general influence he especially owed his adherence to rigid justice (ibidem: τὸ περὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἀτενές καὶ ἄκαμπτον εἰς ἐπιείκειαν ἢ χάριν). For Cato's relationship with Stoicism see D. BABUT, 1969, 170-6) and cf. T. DUFF, 1999, pp. 155-8.

to do the things by which the populace is courted and captivated; thus, he failed to obtain the consulship²¹.

Cat. Mi. 49.6:...ἀλλ' ἐν ἤθει, τὸ τοῦ βίου μᾶλλον ἀξίωμα βουλόμενος φυλάσσειν ἢ προσλαβεῖν τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς, ποιούμενος τὰς δεξιώσεις, μήτε τοὺς φίλους ἐάσας οἷς ὄχλος ἀλίσκεται καὶ θεραπεύεται ποιεῖν, ἀπέτυχε τῆς ἀρχῆς. Cato, however, was not always so rigid and inflexible. As Romilly notes (p. 283 n.1), his proposal that the senate distribute grain to the populace as a means to lure them away from Caesar who had taken refuge with them, was an act of “douceur calculée” (*Cat. Mi.* 26.1: φοβηθεῖς ἔπεισε τὴν βουλὴν ἀναλαβεῖν τὸν ἄπορον καὶ ἀνέμητον ὄχλον εἰς τὸ σιτηρέσιον...περιφανῶς δὲ τῇ φιλανθρωπίᾳ ταύτῃ καὶ χάριτι τῆς ἀπειλῆς ἐκείνης διαλυθείσης). Similarly, as Goar points out (p. 68), to avoid anarchy and civil bloodshed, Cato tempers his rigidity and supports, contrary to his political principles, Pompey's sole consulship in 52 B.C. (*Cat. Mi.* 47.2-4: τῷ μετριωτάτῳ τῶν παρανομημάτων χρησάμενος ἰάματι τῆς τῶν μεγίστων καταστάσεως...συνεβούλευσεν πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν ὡς ἀναρχίας κρείττονα). The special treatment of his brother-in-law Silanus (Cato prosecuted only Murena for having become consul through bribery, but let alone his accomplice Silanus δι' οἰκειότητά) is in fact a case of mitigated severity and favouritism (*Cat. Mi.* 21.3-4). All this seems to tell somewhat against Duff's opinion that Cato lacked Phokion's “ability to mix sternness and gentleness” and was, therefore, “a failure” (p. 150). Goar rightly maintains that, all things considered, Plutarch “does not seem to regard Cato as a failure” (p. 69). Indeed, how can we regard Cato as a failure, even in political terms, knowing that it was him and his virtues that delayed the collapse of the Roman republic (ib. in connection with *Phoc.* 3.5)? True, by comparing the ideal government with the curved course of the sun, Plutarch says that the right statesman should be neither totally inflexible and constantly opposed to the people's desires nor yielding perforce to their whims and mistakes (*Phoc.* 2.6), but he nowhere says directly that Cato represented the inflexible way of government, though, admittedly, his political manners and methods resembled it (but see above). True again, Cato is characterized ἄτρεπτος at *Cat. Mi.* 1.3, but certainly not in a political context (see n. 18). Plutarch is not at all blind to Cato's political blunders (see, e.g., *Cat. Mi.* 30-31), and indeed believes that the ideal statesman should combine sternness with gentleness, a combination, however, which he does find in both Phokion and Cato. In the prologue to this pair he tells us that the very similar virtues of these men demonstrate the great similarity of their characters, ὥσπερ ἴσῳ μέτρῳ μεμιγμένου [sc. ἤθους] πρὸς τὸ αὐστηρὸν τοῦ φιλανθρώπου... (*Phoc.* 3.8).

Somewhat similar was the case of Pompey and Crassus a few years earlier. Owing to his dignified manners, Pompey would shun the crowds of the forum, giving his assistance, if reluctantly, only to a few. Crassus, by contrast, by being always at hand to offer his services and invariably easy to access, managed, through his affability and kindness, to overpower Pompey's gravity.

²¹ Cato himself, however, had another explanation for his failure; see *Cat. Mi.* 50.3 and cf. ch. 42 and 44.1.

Crass. 7.3-4: ...πολλάκις ἤλαττοῦτο [sc. Pompey] τοῦ Κράσσου, διὰ τὸν ὄγκον καὶ τὸ πρόσχημα τοῦ βίου φεύγων τὰ πλήθη, καὶ ἀναδυόμενος ἐξ ἀγορᾶς, καὶ τῶν δεομένων ὀλίγοις καὶ μὴ πάνυ προθύμως βοηθῶν...ὁ δὲ Κράσσος ἐνδεδεχέστερον τὸ χρήσιμον ἔχων, καὶ σπάνιος οὐκ ὦν οὐδὲ δυσπρόσοδος, ἀλλ' ἐν μέσταις αἰεὶ ταῖς σπουδαῖς ἀναστρεφόμενος, τῷ κοινῷ καὶ φιλανθρώπῳ περιεγίνετο τῆς ἐκείνου σεμνότητος. Cf. also earlier 3.4, where we again see that Crassus was not at all overbearing or disdainful, but very condescending and willing to plead for everyone who could not find another advocate or had been turned down by the advocate of his choice. Thus, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μᾶλλον ἤρεσκεν ὡς ἐπιμελῆς καὶ βοηθητικός. By means of a similar conduct, Otho managed to avoid envy too (*Galb.* 20.5: τῷ δ' ἀνεπιφθόνῳ περιῆν, προῖκα συμπράττων πάντα τοῖς δεομένοις καὶ παρέχων ἑαυτὸν εὐπροσήγορον καὶ φιλάνθρωπον ἅπασιν). As for the pairing of *philanthropos* with *koinos* (above *Crass.* 7.4), cf. also *Publ.* 4.5 below and *Phoc.* 10.7. Nevertheless, Crassus' affability and helpfulness above is not to be matched, *pace* H. M. Martin Jr. (p. 170), with Publicola's *philanthropia*, despite the apparent similarity (*Publ.* 4.5: ...ὤρμησε πρὸς τὸν Οὐαλέριον, μάλιστα πῶς τοῖς κοινοῖς καὶ φιλανθρώποις ἐπαχθεῖς τοῦ ἀνδρός, ὅτι πᾶσιν εὐπρόσοδος ἦν τοῖς δεομένοις, καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν ἀνεωγμένην αἰεὶ παρείχε, καὶ λόγον οὐδενὸς οὐδὲ χρεῖαν ἀπερρίπτει τῶν ταπεινῶν); for, unlike Publicola, an affluent aristocrat, who used his eloquence ὀρθῶς καὶ μετὰ παρρησίας αἰεὶ...ὑπὲρ τῶν δικαίων, and his riches τοῖς δεομένοις ἐλευθερίως καὶ φιλανθρώπως ἐπαρκῶν (*Publ.* 1.2; and cf. 25.7), Crassus did not come from a noble and wealthy family (see *Crass.* 1.1) and, once in the political arena, he acted like a true demagogue (see n. 22).

Crassus was particularly popular with the Romans, because he would indiscriminately and unaffectedly clasp hands with the people on the street and return everyone's greeting, however obscure or lowly, calling him by name at that²². Such conduct, which Plutarch characterizes as *to... philanthropon autou kai demotikon*, clearly illustrates *philanthropia* through salutations, but a bit earlier we see that Crassus was *philanthropos* also by means of his hospitality (*Crass.* 3.1-2: Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ξένους ἦν φιλότιμος ὁ Κράσσος· ἀνέωκτο γὰρ ἡ οἰκία πᾶσι...ἐν δὲ τοῖς δεῖπνοις ἡ μὲν κλῆσις ἦν ὡς τὰ πολλὰ δημοτικὴ καὶ λαώδης)²³. On the contrary, Nikias was, on the one hand, object of envy because of his huge wealth and, on the other, unpopular because his own way of life was neither *philanthropon* nor *demotikon*, but unsociable and aristocratic

²² *Crass.* 3.5: ἤρεσκε δὲ καὶ τὸ περὶ τὰς δεξιώσεις καὶ προσαγορεύσεις φιλάνθρωπον αὐτοῦ καὶ δημοτικόν. οὐδενὶ γὰρ οὕτως ἀπήντησε Ῥωμαίων ἀδόξῳ καὶ ταπεινῷ Κράσσος, ὃν ἀσπασάμενον οὐκ ἀντιπροσηγόρευσεν ἐξ ὀνόματος. For the close relationship of *philanthropos* with *demotikos* see also *Nic.* 11.2 and *Agas.* 1.5 (n. 24), *Cim-Luc. Comp.* 1.5 (*dēmokratikos*), and *Cat. Mi.* 23,1 (p. 286 below).

²³ Somewhat similar (but perhaps less calculated) was the *philanthropia* of Kimon and Lucullus (cf. *Cim.* 3.3: ἡ περὶ τὰς ὑποδοχὰς καὶ τὰς φιλανθρωπίας [ταύτας] ὑγρότης καὶ δαψίλεια). And, as in the case of Crassus above, Kimon's table was also *dēmokratikḗ* and *philanthropos* (*Cim-Luc. Comp.* 1.5). On the other hand, if we take into account that Crassus was a diligent as well as a powerful speaker, who promptly offered his advocacy to those who needed it (see *Crass.* 3.4 above), one might say that his conduct combined, seemingly at least, all 3 kinds of Laertios' *philanthropia* (cf also 546E on p. 278).

instead²⁴. As has been said, Plutarch highly esteemed *philanthropia*, but he admired neither the *philanthropos*/sociable Crassus nor Nikias who was unsociable and, therefore, not *philanthropos* in this sense²⁵. However, between the two, and from the moral point of view, he regarded Nikias as far superior to Crassus (see *Crass.* 2.1-5, 6.8-9, 14.5). This is evident in the concluding *Synkrisis* of this pair, where Crassus' character is described as abnormal and incongruous, while his ways of amassing and squandering his money are looked upon as emblematic of vice itself (*Nic.-Crass. Comp.* chs 1-2 and esp. 1.4...ὥστε θαυμάζειν εἴ τινα λέληθε τὸ τὴν κακίαν ἀνωμαλίαν εἶναι τινα τρόπου καὶ ἀνομολογίαν, ὀρῶντα τοὺς αἰσχροῦς συλλέγοντας εἶτ' ἀχρήστως ἐκχέοντας).

Perikles is another exemplary *Life*; and of him we also hear that, once he entered public life, he consistently declined all invitations to dinner or similar social occasions. So, during his long political career he participated in not one dinner-party as a guest (*Per.* 7.5: ...κλήσεις τε δείπνων καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ἅπασαν φιλοφροσύνην καὶ συνήθειαν ἐξέλιπε), except in his nephew's wedding feast, which he did attend, but only until the libations were made; for immediately afterwards he rose up and departed. In recognizing that conviviality is apt to overpower any kind of pretentiousness, and that it is very difficult for one to maintain an assumed gravity in the midst of familiar intercourse (*Per.* 7.6: δειναὶ γὰρ αἰ φιλοφροσύναι παντὸς ὄγκου περιγενέσθαι, καὶ δυσφύλακτον ἐν συνηθείᾳ τὸ πρὸς δόξαν σεμνὸν ἐστὶ), Plutarch seems to endorse Perikles' decision to keep away from dinner-parties.

In the immediate sequel, however, Plutarch contrasts Perikles' conduct with that of truly virtuous men, whose goodness "fairest appears when most appears" (Perrin's Loeb translation), and in whom nothing is so admirable in the eyes of strangers as their daily life is in the eyes of their intimates²⁶. From this one may gather that Plutarch denies the genuineness of Perikles' gravity (and ultimately his virtue), which seems to be invigorated somehow by his earlier observation that Perikles had decided to champion the poor

²⁴ *Nic.* 11.2: τῆς διαίτης τὸ μὴ φιλόφρων μὴ δὲ δημοτικόν, ἀλλ' ἄμικτον καὶ ὀλιγαρχικὸν ἀλλόκοτον ἐδόκει. See also 5.1-2 where we hear of Nikias that, due to his fear of slanderers, οὔτε συνεδείπνει τινὶ τῶν πολιτῶν...οὐδ' ἄλλως ἐσχόλαζε ταῖς τοιαύταις διατριβαῖς. And when free from public duties, δυσπρόσοδος ἦν καὶ δυσέντευκτος. Agesilaus, by contrast, thanks to his public training as a common Spartan, acquired τῷ φύσει βασιλικῷ καὶ ἡγεμονικῷ...τὸ δημοτικὸν καὶ φιλόφρων (*Ages.* 1.5).

²⁵ Although Nikias, owing to his huge wealth, gave money to a lot of people: to the base (who could discredit him; see *Nic.* 5.1 previous note) out of cowardice; to the good (and those deserving to receive) out of liberality (διὰ φιλοφροσύνην – *Nic.* 4.3). For the liberality-nuance of *philanthropia* see also *Ant.* 1.1, *Arat.* 12.1, *Di.* 52.1, *Cim.* 10.6-7; and for the association of *philanthropia* with liberality see also H. M. MARTIN JR., 1961, pp. 173-4. Further, the two words are paired together in *Pel.* 3.3 and *Publ.* 1.2. See moreover *Mor.* 333E-F, 510C (n. 12 above) and 527A. Note, finally, that, according to [Arist.], *IV* 1250b33-34, *philanthropia* is one of the concomitants of liberality (ἐλευθεριότης), whereas, according to logic, it rather should be the other way round.

²⁶ *Per.* 7.6: τῆς ἀληθινῆς δ' ἀρετῆς κάλλιστα φαίνεται τὰ μάλιστα φαινόμενα, καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν οὐδὲν οὕτω θαυμάσιον τοῖς ἐκτὸς ὡς ὁ καθ' ἡμέραν βίος τοῖς συνοῦσιν.

and the many instead of the few and the rich, contrary to his own nature which was anything but popular (*Per.* 7.3: ...παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν ἥκιστα δημοτικὴν οὖσαν). But when he mentions Ion's criticism of Perikles next to his eulogy of Kimon²⁷, he clearly disagrees with him (*Per.* 5.3: Ἄλλ' Ἴωνα μὲν ὡσπερ τραγικὴν διδασκαλίαν ἀξιοῦντα τὴν ἀρετὴν ἔχειν τι πάντως καὶ σατυρικὸν μέρος ἔωμεν). And by subsequently appealing to what Zeno used to say to Perikles' critics (p. 279 above), Plutarch appears to understand and justify Perikles' conduct, regardless of his personal predilections (as a wealthy aristocrat he was in favour of dinner-parties and similar social gatherings) and, perhaps, his belief that Perikles betrayed an ἔλλειμμα ἀρετῆς here; a shortcoming, however, that Plutarch would ascribe to political necessity (ἐκ... πολιτικῆς ἀνάγκης), as he tells us in the prologue to the *Life of Kimon* (2.5). Further, one could even argue that the supposed arrogance and haughtiness of Perikles might have been an influence of Anaxagoras, who was ὁ...μάλιστα περιθεις ὄγκον αὐτῷ...ὄλως τε μετεωρίσας καὶ συνεξάρας τὸ ἀξίωμα τοῦ ἥθους (*Per.* 4.6; cf. also 5.1). For a somewhat similar influence of the Stoic Antipatros upon the younger Cato, see n. 20.

Half a century before Perikles, we find the young Themistokles declining similar invitations to drinking-parties (*Them.* 3.4: ...καὶ τοὺς πότους παραιτεῖσθαι τοὺς συνήθεις). In his case, the reason for this change of life was Miltiades' trophy, which so monopolized his thoughts and interests that he could pay attention to nothing else; Themistokles could not even sleep on account of his eagerness and constant thinking of how he would surpass Miltiades' success²⁸. Perikles' motive was not essentially different, since both men aimed at the same target: to govern Athens²⁹. Thus, the conclusion drawn from both cases is the same too: drinking-parties apparently impair rather than advance the image of a public figure. No wonder, therefore, that we eventually come to realize that, with the exception of Aemilius Paulus (cf. *Aem.* 28.7-9, 38.6) and Scipio Africanus (p. 286 below), sociable *par excellence* are those heroes who are regarded, whether by Plutarch himself or by several modern critics, as negative paradigms, as examples to be avoided rather than to be imitated; such heroes that is, as Antony, Crassus, Demetrios and, to some extent, also Alkibiades, Lucullus and Sulla³⁰.

²⁷ *Per.* 5.3: μοθωνικὴν φησὶ [sc. Ion] τὴν ὁμιλίαν καὶ ὑπότυπον εἶναι τοῦ Περικλέους, καὶ ταῖς μεγαλαυχίαις αὐτοῦ πολλὴν ὑπεροψίαν ἀναμεμείχθαι καὶ περιφρόνησιν τῶν ἄλλων, ἐπαινεῖ δὲ τὸ Κίμωνος ἐμμελὲς καὶ ὕγρον καὶ μεμουσωμένον ἐν ταῖς περιφοραῖς.

²⁸ For a close examination of the Miltiades' trophy motif (literary function, didactic force, political/ethical stimulus), see A. PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ, 2008.

²⁹ Unlike all others, Themistokles believed that the Persian defeat at Marathon was not the end of the war, but the beginning of even bigger struggles, ἐφ' οὗς ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς ὅλης Ἑλλάδος ἤλειφε... πόρρωθεν ἤδη προσδοκῶν τὸ μέλλον (*Them.* 3.5). For Perikles' similar foresight see *Per.* 8.7; and for his plan to govern Athens see chs 7 and 9.

³⁰ Cf. *Ant.* 4.4-7, 9.5, 28; *Demetr.* 1.8, 2.3, 5.2.2-3; *Alc.* 16; *Luc.* 39-41, *Sull.* 2.5, 36.1-2, 41.5.

Time to conclude. There is little doubt that Plutarch, as a wealthy Greek aristocrat, was fond of dinner-parties. The *symposion*, after all, was traditionally an aristocratic institution and as such also a tradition within Plutarch's own family, as *Quaestiones Convivales* amply testify³¹. At the same time, Plutarch's moral outlook, fashioned partly on his own *philanthropia* in the literal sense of the word³², and partly on his peculiar practical spirit³³, also inclined him to be favourably disposed toward and endorse those social gatherings; for he saw them not as occasions for a drinking-bout – this is very clear in his *Table Talks*³⁴ – but as splendid opportunities for sharing erudition³⁵, practising self-discipline, manifesting finesse, and, above all, tightening human relations with the help of a relaxed and cheerful sympotic atmosphere. In the context of a dinner-party, one should not only be on his guard against becoming drunk or losing his temper and misbehaving, but should also reveal and exercise his sociability at large. In other words, one ought to come out somehow of his narrow self and prove his consideration for his fellows by showing, depending on the particular circumstances, politeness, courtesy, tactfulness, affability, friendliness and so on. For Plutarch, sociability and its ramifications are not negligible character-traits, but in fact aspects of a unified morality, if sociability and its manifestations are genuine, or steps towards morality, if the sociability is assumed (see p. 279 above).

On the other hand, Plutarch is also perfectly aware that these aspects of refined conduct can be affected and artificial. Especially in the context of politics, sociability is usually a façade behind which may lurk crude political ambition and a carefully studied design for winning popularity and establishing one's influence and power³⁶. We saw this kind of sociability in the case of Crassus, and we see it again in the case of Caesar who was too ingratiating for his age (*Caes.* 4.4: πολλή δὲ τῆς περὶ τὰς δεξιώσεις καὶ ὀμιλίας φιλοφροσύνης εὐνοία παρὰ τῶν δημοτῶν ἀπῆντα, θεραπευτικοῦ παρ' ἡλικίαν ὄντος). His enemies believed, Plutarch tells us, that his increasing influence would soon vanish together with his resources, and so let it thrive without trying to check it. Cicero, however, managed to see beneath the surface of Caesar's popular policy and was the first to discern and comprehend the powerful character and the tyrannical purpose hidden under his kindly and cheerful exterior (*Caes.* 4.8: τὴν ἐν τῷ φιλανθρωπῷ καὶ ἰλαρῷ κεκρυμμένην δεινότητα τοῦ ἥθους καταμαθῶν...ἔλεγε [sc. Cicero] τοῖς...ἐπιβουλεύμασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ

³¹ Cf. also R. H. BARROW, 1967, pp. 13-7.

³² Barrow aptly remarks that, though P.'s mind was not a first-rate one, "it was a mind essentially kindly, unwilling to think ill of anyone, tolerant, though shrewd in the judgement of character" (p. 147). Cf. also R. HIRZEL, 1912, A. G. NIKOLAIDIS, 2008, and K. ZIEGLER, 1964² (all in n. 4 above).

³³ Cf. A. G. NIKOLAIDIS, 1991, pp. 175-86.

³⁴ Cf. *Talks* 1.4, 3.9, 4 proem, 8 proem. Occasionally, however, some fellow-drinkers did get drunk (see 620A, 645A-C, 715D).

³⁵ Cf. S.-T. TEODORSSON, 1989, p. 14. Cf. also J. SIRINELLI, 1993, pp. 389-90.

³⁶ Cf. J. DE ROMILLY, 1979, pp. 281-3. This sham *philanthropia* (φιλανθρωπία προσποίησης) is a feature of injustice (*adikia*), according to [Arist.], *VV* 1251b3.

πολιτεύμασι τυραννικὴν ἐνορᾶν διάνοιαν). Similarly, on the basis of Caesar's lenient speech in the senate with regard to the Catilinarian conspiracy, the younger Cato openly had accused him of trying to subvert the state σχήματι δημοτικῷ καὶ λόγῳ φιλανθρώπῳ (*Cat. Mi.* 23.1)³⁷. In the case of Kleomenes, by contrast, who would meet the various petitioners without mediators but in person, conversing at length with those who needed his services and devoting time cheerfully and kindly to them, we have no reason to question the genuineness of the Spartan king's kindness and sociability³⁸. Nor do we need to suspect Scipio's *philanthropia*, who was agreeable in socializing with friends at his leisure, without neglecting in the least matters of import related to the preparation of his war with Hannibal.

Despite Cato's denunciations that in Sicily Scipio acted as a feast organizer rather than as an army commander, the latter ἐν τῇ παρασκευῇ τοῦ πολέμου τὴν νίκην ἐπιδειξάμενος [to the tribunes who came from Rome to find out what was happening], καὶ φανεῖς ἡδὺς μὲν ἐπὶ σχολῆς συνεῖναι φίλοις, οὐδαμῇ δὲ τῷ φιλανθρώπῳ τῆς διαίτης εἰς τὰ σπουδαῖα καὶ μεγάλα ῥάθυμος, ἐξέπλευσεν ἐπὶ τὸν πόλεμον (*Cat. Ma.* 3.6-7). Demetrios also was, on the one hand, ἡδιστος...συγγενέσθαι, σχολάζων τε περὶ πότους καὶ τρυφᾶς and, on the other, most energetic, impetuous, persevering and efficient in action (*Demetr.* 2.3). Gaius Gracchus was another man who, πᾶσιν ἐντυγχάνων μετὰ εὐκολίας, at the same time preserved τὸ σεμνὸν ἐν τῷ φιλανθρώπῳ (*GGr.* 6.4).

It follows then that, unlike Nicias and to some extent Pompey, Crassus, Kleomenes and Scipio enjoyed popularity thanks to their *philanthropia*, namely, by being affable and agreeable in their intercourse with people and by meeting their needs³⁹.

Finally, reservations and warnings concern sociability even outside the domain of politics. Earlier (p. 278), we saw a case of hospitality going too far; and in *De vitioso pudore* we find an example of courtesy going similarly too far, since Plutarch admonishes us that social courtesy should not be carried to the extent of destroying one's individuality. When, for instance, a citharode sings badly at a friend's banquet, we must set aside the flattering equation "compliance equals politeness" (529D: κολακεύουσα τὸν εὐδυσώπητον ὡς

³⁷ Another example of pretended *philanthropia* (if momentarily in this case) can be seen in the deceitful trick which Alkibiades played on the Spartan delegation in Athens during the years of Nicias' peace. In front of the popular assembly Alkibiades asked the delegates πάνου φιλανθρώπως with what powers they had come, and when the Spartans answered exactly as they had been instructed by Alkibiades himself, the latter assailed them μετὰ κραυγῆς καὶ ὀργῆς, ὡσπερ οὐκ ἀδικῶν, ἀλλ' ἀδικούμενος, calling them faithless and unreliable (*Alc.* 14-7-12).

³⁸ *Cleom.* 13.3: ... οὐδ' ὑπ' ἀγγέλων ὄχλου καὶ θυρωρῶν ἢ διὰ γραμματέων χρηματίζοντα χαλεπῶς καὶ μόλις, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐν ἱματίῳ τῷ τυχόντι πρὸς τὰς δεξιώσεις ἀπαντῶντα καὶ διαλεγόμενον καὶ σχολάζοντα τοῖς χρήζουσιν ἰλαρῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως...

³⁹ Note that P. employs the word ἀφιλάνθρωπος (an *hapax* in his works) to describe the Epicureans, who led a life ἀνέξοδον (secluded) καὶ ἀπολίτευτον καὶ ἀφιλάνθρωπον καὶ ἀνευθουσίαστον (with no enthusiasm, i.e. "untouched by any spark of the divine", according to the brilliant translation of B. EINARSON & PH. DE LACY in Loeb – *Non posse* 1098D).

φιλόανθρωπον) and, consequently, not feel compelled to join in the others' applause and admiration, contrary to our own judgement (531B-C). These examples demonstrate that *philanthropia* for Plutarch is not a passive quality, but always presupposes initiative and action on the part of the *philanthropos*. A meek and submissive person, for instance, who is unable to do harm to anyone, but at the same time apt to tolerate everything and, therefore, cannot fight or simply resist baseness, is not *philanthropos*, because for Plutarch *philanthropos* is only one who could also be not simply unkindly, but outright harsh on his fellows when the latter act wrongfully; in other words, a *philanthropos* ought to be also a *misoponēros*, a hater of vice. This is why he puts us on our guard against flattery that calls prodigality "liberality", cowardice "caution", stinginess "frugality", the irascible and overbearing "brave", the worthless and meek "kindly"⁴⁰ (cf. also 529D above).

It seems that *philanthropia* as a positive virtue must include the hatred of wickedness, which is among the things we praise (*De inv. et od.* 537D: καὶ γὰρ ἡ μισοπονηρία τῶν ἐπαινουμένων ἐστὶ). Plutarch, therefore, approves of Timoleon's gentleness, however excessive, because it did not prevent him from hating the base (*Tim.* 3.4: πρᾶος διαφερόντως ὅσα μὴ σφόδρα...μισοπόνηρος). On the contrary, he is not impressed by the gentleness of the Spartan King Charilaos, but agrees with his royal colleague's remark: Πῶς δ' ἂν [οὐκ] εἶη Χαρίλαος ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς ὃς οὐδὲ τοῖς πονηροῖς χαλεπὸς ἐστὶ; (*Lyc.* 5.9; cf. also *Mor.* 55E, 218B, 223E). According to the Peripatetic tradition, after all, justice involves this hatred of wickedness (cf. [Arist.], *IV* 1250b 24: ἀκολουθεῖ δὲ τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ...καὶ ἡ μισοπονηρία), which is also one of the characteristics of virtue itself (1251b 31: ἔστι δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς...καὶ τὸ φιλεῖν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς καὶ τὸ μισεῖν τοὺς φαύλους).

As in so many other things, Plutarch strikes again the middle course. Despite his indisputable loyalty to Plato, in matters of practical ethics, the practical Plutarch espouses the Aristotelian principle of the golden mean.

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⁴⁰ *De adul. et am.* 56C: ἐν δὲ ταῖς κολακείαις ὄραν χρῆ καὶ παραφυλάττειν ἀσωτίαν μὲν ἐλευθεριότητα καλουμένην καὶ δειλίαν ἀσφάλειαν...μικρολογίαν δὲ σωφροσύνην... ἀνδρεῖον δὲ τὸν ὀργίλον καὶ ὑπερήφανον, φιλόανθρωπον δὲ τὸν εὐτελεῖ καὶ ταπεινόν.

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