[Recensão a] Ricardo Rovira (ed.), La educación política en la Antigüedad clásica. El enfoque sapiencial de Plutarco

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general o hilo conductor tanto de su lectura de las fuentes como de su recreación de los acontecimientos y los personajes históricos. Así, Plutarco usó su modelo ético de razón-pasión, según Beneker, “as a conceptual framework for the construction of larger themes in some *Lives* and for explaining the human motivations behind the events that he found in his historical sources” (p. 58). Un repaso en este sentido del par *Pelópidas-Marcelo* y de la vida de *Dión* le sirve a Beneker para demostrar cómo el método de trabajo de Plutarco, a diferencia del de otros autores anteriores, combina la lectura de las fuentes históricas, de las que a veces se aparta para tomar datos ajenos a la tradición, con su propia invención creativa, al objeto de insertar su versión en un contexto ético más amplio.

Los “case studies” que conforman los tres capítulos siguientes aplican este enfoque a sendos pares de vidas mediante el análisis general de su estructura temática y narrativa y el estudio atento de numerosos pasajes concretos, profundizando en el tratamiento plutarqueo del *ēpos* como piedra de toque de un sistema ético que, aplicado a su interpretación de la historia, produce reconstrucciones históricas de los acontecimientos pasados y de las carreras de sus principales protagonistas con una notable y muy determinada carga moral. Así, en el capítulo 3 (“*Erōs* and Ambition in the Alexander–Caesar”, pp. 103-152) se pone de relieve el hecho de que Plutarco presenta a Alejandro como un rey que sabe controlar sus apetitos básicos, especialmente el deseo erótico, y sin embargo aplica el mismo modelo a César, a pesar de la mala reputación que en ese sentido le adjudicaba buena parte de la tradición biográfica. En el capítulo 4 (“*Erōs* and the Fall of Mark Antony”, pp. 153-194) se nos ofrece la perspectiva opuesta a través del par Demetrio-Antonio, utilizados por Plutarco como paradigmas del antihéroe y representados, por tanto, como hombres incapaces de ejercer el debido autocontrol

sobre sus pasiones y abocados así, por su intemperancia, al fracaso en sus carreras respectivas y finalmente a una muerte ignominiosa y desastrosa. Por último, el capítulo 5 (“*Erōs* and the Statesman”, pp. 195-225”), cuyas páginas finales sirven de breve conclusión al libro, presenta el término medio entre el absoluto autocontrol y la licenciosidad en los apetitos carnales, entre la abstinencia total de Alejandro o César y la prodigalidad sexual de Demetrio o Antonio, poniendo como ejemplo para ello las vidas de Agesilao-Pompeyo, sobre todo la de este último, que supo resistir en general sus deseos eróticos en beneficio de sus objetivos políticos y militares, por más que en alguna ocasión lo llevaran a mostrar cierta debilidad de carácter.

En definitiva, Beneker, en un trabajo sólido y con lecturas estimulantes y argumentos bien desarrollados, consigue sin duda su objetivo de explorar las diferentes perspectivas de la manera en que Plutarco representa el *ēpos* para poner de relieve la importancia crucial de estudiar las interacciones entre la pulsión erótica y la actividad política de sus personajes y así comprender mejor “the historical-ethical reconstructions that form the basis of the *Parallel Lives*” (p. 225).

El libro incluye amplias referencias bibliográficas (pp. 226-241) y unos útiles índices (pp. 243-258) de pasajes citados, de términos griegos, de nombres propios y de temas.

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RICARDO ROVIRA (ed.), *La educación política en la Antigüedad clásica. El enfoque sapiencial de Plutarco*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Madrid, 2012, 529 pp. ISBN 10: 8422015897 / ISBN 13: 9788422015895.

Edited by Ricardo Rovira, a specialist in Political Sciences and Philosophy, this book tries to demonstrate that our social reality

has much to learn from ancient wisdom and from the citizens' participation in the *polis* or in the *res publica*.

Concerning *politeia*, Rovira tries mainly to define the science of a good government. That is why he asserts in the introductory chapter that Plutarch is the best author from whom to approach ancient wisdom, having been an expert in philosophy, history, moral pedagogy, and, above all, due to his own outstanding political experience.

The Editor's project for the book is, notwithstanding, most ambitious, as he ends up approaching the main political ideas of many classical authors, although neglecting others like Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybios, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Sallust or Suetonius. The book's structure is, therefore, threefold: in Part One, it describes the strategies to be upheld by a good governor, before Plutarch's times (chapter I: Athens as seen by Pericles, Plato, Xenophon, Isocrates, Aristotle, Demosthenes; chapter II: the Roman humanism, Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus); in Part Two, there is an analysis of the more important political ideas assumed by the first Greco-Roman governors of Plutarch's *Vitae* (Theseus, Romulus, Licurgus and Numa); in Part Three, the Editor explores the governor's instruction/education and the art of good government as established in the *Moralia*, especially in *Maxime cum principibus philosopho esse disserendum*, *Ad principem ineruditum*, *An seni res publica gerenda sit* and *Praecepta gerendae reipublicae*. At the back of the book, there are two useful appendices: a list with the *Vitae* that have been translated into Spanish, and another with the treatises of the *Moralia* and their Spanish translation. Both are extremely valuable assets and in accordance with the didactic purpose of the book, aimed at a reader who lacks a consistent knowledge of Plutarch.

As can be understood from reading Rovira's book, politics is a transversal and complex topic in classical culture, that

cannot be conveniently studied without a confluence with other areas of thought, such as philosophy, rhetoric, education, ethics or morals. For that reason, what Rovira asserts about Plato can be said about other ancient authors: "Continuamente estamos volviendo a ellas al enfrentarnos con los problemas que nos va deparando la historia de las sociedades, y con las respuestas que han ensayado los pensadores de cada época" (p. 17). In approaching the ancient authors, it is possible to recognize a concern about synthesizing both their work and their main political ideas, in an effort that must be noticed and welcomed. That is especially conspicuous in the first part, when, for instance, the Editor explains the educational system or the importance of rhetoric and oratory. Possibly, as we have said, because the book is aimed at a heterogeneous public, the biography of the authors studied is too long and detailed. This diverts the reader from the central issues. The same can be said about Part Two and Part three, with the exploration of topics like the biographical genre or the function of the *synkrisis* in Plutarch's *Vitae*, causing the loss of the guiding line that is the study of *politeia*.

Rovira is undoubtedly a specialist in Greco-Roman literature, but he could have explored more the connection between the topics studied, having thus avoided some monotonous repetition. Hence the question posed before exploring the political ideas in Roman culture makes complete sense: political philosophy or political theory? The answer lies in the previous sixty pages, but the purpose was never to analyze the multi-dimensional nature of *politeia*, but, instead, to make a more traditional approach based on a history of political thought.

In Part Two, the option for exploring the topic of political wisdom in Plutarch's *Vitae* in four texts (Theseus, Romulus, Licurgus and Numa) is explained by chronological criteria, that is, so that it is possible to start

by the more ancient and to inquire into the *sapientia* of those who ruled in the past. These are acceptable criteria, but they cause the neglect of ideas that other biographies, such as Coriolanus, Aristides, Marcellus, Flamininus, Demetrius or Antonius could provide. We cannot forget that Theseus, Romulus or Licurgus are characters more enshrined in myth than in reality. For these reasons, an option based more on contents and less on the characters would have permitted a more complete approach to the great variety of *aretai* and *kakiai* in political activities that the *Vitae* discuss. The reader will know the structure and the topics presented in the four texts, but will remain having a limited, partial knowledge of the *Vitae* as a whole. From the perspective of an ordinary reader, we consider quite positive to complete the analysis of each of the biographies with a review of the main features of the character. Alternatively, to avoid repetition, a general summary of the Part could have been considered a possibility.

In Part Three, the selection of political treatises is the most appropriate and complies to what is usual in Plutarch's studies. The careful and structured analysis allows us to easily identify the main political ideas of Plutarch and realize that, apart from considerations linked to the socio-political context of the time, political ideas - especially Platonic and Aristotelian - are very important in Rovira's book. Defining the city or the perfect society, identifying the qualities of the good ruler, discussing about the best political constitution, along with some more practical advices, are crucial issues in Plutarch's political treatises and in *La educación política en la Antigüedad clásica*.

We believe, however, that a chapter devoted to 'The *politeia* in Plutarch's treatises', could have been included in this part, in order to demonstrate that it is a cross-cutting theme in the treatises, as indeed is shown by

the multiple annotations the Editor adds to the text. Furthermore, it seems that a summary of the analysis of treatises would also have been important. To meet the near absence of interconnection lines, Rovira could have added another chapter to identify and explain the main influences of the authors presented in Part One.

Rovira's concern must be noticed, though not always systematically, about relating some classical precepts about politics with other authors, essential in the history of political ideas, such as Machiavelli or Thomas More, or even with historical events. This is undoubtedly a very positive aspect of the book as a way of supporting the analysis and argumentation. I would dare to suggest that in the final part of the book there might have been some paragraphs dedicated to the 'Legacy of Classical Political Thought'.

In general, the text has valuable notes and Rovira reveals a good knowledge about the ancient culture. He confronts, in many cases, the sources and shows the different perspectives of analysis. The bibliography is updated, although we note the absence of some relevant studies, such as F. Frazier (1996), *Histoire et Morale dans les Vies parallèles of Plutarque*, Ph. Stadter & L. Van der Stock (eds., 2002), *Sage and Emperor: Plutarch, Greek Intellectuals, and Roman Power in the Time of Trajan (98-117 AD)* or T. Whitmarsh (2001), *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: the Politics of Imitation*. This last book could have helped Rovira framing Plutarch's political thought from a literary and historical point of view.

We consider this book a very useful endeavour, because it makes a major contribution to the appreciation of the classical roots of Western thought. Perhaps in bringing together a summary of *politeia* in Classical Antiquity in one volume, Rovira felt obliged to include content rather too dispersed and found himself not able to use a

consistent methodology. As he explores several key concepts (e.g., *politeia*, *polites*, *logos*, *paideia*, *res publica*, *ciuis*, *humanitas*), it would have made sense to include in an initial chapter, in summary form, the social value and even the operating function of each. Despite our considerations, reading this book enriches the reader and raises several questions about a perennial discussion which remains invaluable in our society.

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ANA MARIA GUEDES FERREIRA, *O homem de Estado ateniense em Plutarco. O caso dos Alcmeónidas*, Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos da Universidade de Coimbra, *Humanitas-Supplementum*, Coimbra, 2012, p. ISBN 978-989-721-025-9.

La Colección *Humanitas-Supplementum*, auspiciada por el Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos da Universidade de Coimbra, viene mostrando una actividad editorial cuantitativa y cualitativamente sobresaliente en el seno de los estudios clásicos. En realidad, dentro del ámbito lusófono y en el entorno más inmediato, esta Colección de monografías desempeña un papel de notoriedad relevante, una labor encomiable que demuestra con nitidez el impulso creciente de la escuela portuguesa, señalado por la comunidad científica, al cuidado de los estudios clásicos. Por añadidura, el esmero de pulcritud ecdótica es divisa acostumbrada de la Colección que alberga la monografía presente.

Corresponde ahora reseñar el volumen que, relativo a la actividad biográfica de Plutarco, ha redactado Ana Maria Guedes Ferreira. La autora, mediante un estilo incisivo y capaz, defiende a grandes rasgos una tesis que (independientemente de la adscripción doctrinal que el crítico pueda adoptar) resulta, de entrada, poderosamente

sugestiva: en síntesis de concisión, la *Vida de Teseo* plutarquea se juzga preámbulo formal, compositivo, del auge y declive que experimenta la historia de Atenas a lo largo del siglo V, un proceso que se vería simbolizado *grosso modo*, respectivamente, en la *Vida de Pericles* y en la *Vida de Alcibiades* que redactó Plutarco. Dicho de otro modo, las virtudes de Teseo como estadista y los defectos (particularmente notables en su madurez tardía) vendrían a encarnar, alegóricamente, las virtudes (con especial hincapié en la figura de Pericles) y los defectos (en buena medida propios de Alcibiades) inherentes al proceso histórico de la Atenas Clásica finisecular. Por indicarlo con la expresión de Ana Maria Guedes Ferreira (en lo sucesivo G.F.), si Teseo se erigió en el A y en el Ω, al prefigurar el principio y el fin de la democracia y el imperio atenienses, los Alcmeónidas participaron de esta dicotomía simbólica que hizo recaer la gloria en Pericles y el declive en Alcibiades (p. 307).

En esencia, el libro consta de cinco secciones a las que siguen, tras las notas de conclusión, la bibliografía pertinente con los índices de conveniencia (índice de nombres, índice de autores antiguos y de citas, índice de autores modernos).

La sección primera (pp. 11-27) está dedicada al triunfo de la *ιστορία* sobre el *μῦθος*. Se trata de un capítulo con reflexiones de introducción a una cuestión por lo demás evidente, la crítica a las tradiciones míticas con que se opera desde el siglo VI, y especialmente en Atenas durante el curso del siglo V, por parte de autores, literatos e intelectuales de talla: las versiones que circulan sobre el mito de Helena, la censura a la condición antropomórfica de los dioses y otros factores de importancia son expuestos en la obra de G.F. Los propios *logógrafos*, precedentes de la *Historia* herodotea, someten la realidad mítica a un examen de censura. No obstante, es cierto, como refiere