SECTION ONE:

PLUTARCH

THE PHILOSOPHER
INTRODUCTION ONE: WHAT IS PLATONISM?

What is Platonism? A process of inquiry, a body of doctrine, dialectic as a method of praxis, a quest for wisdom and likeness to God, or all this and yet more? And what is Plutarch's place in this? Was he merely a scholar of Platonism or a philosopher?

Bussell (1896, p. 242) suggested last century that Platonic thought should be described as not being an "art of Sophistic Dialectics," but rather a "conception of Unity," towards which

"the longing inspiration of the awakened soul ever tends, rising through images and figures and types of the sensible world to the perfect vision of Beauty beyond."

There is more to Platonism than mysticism though. It may quite possibly be an ancestor and precursor of mystica theology but it is philosophy first. Melling more recently (1987, p. 14) has reminded us that reading Plato's works as if they were

"a single, immutable, cohesive body of teachings ... is a gross oversimplification."

There was no fixed doctrine. When reading Plato we should be mindful that (p. 14)

"His writings are an essential part of his activity as a philosopher: they reflect and embody the progress and development of his ideas."

The Theory of Ideas is an excellent example of this. Described by Grube (1980, p. ix) as the "fundamental hypothesis" of Platonic thought, it also illustrates the difficulties of distinguishing Plato's theories from Socrates' questions. Reading through Plato's dialogues carefully one can watch this primary hypothesis grow from Socratic discussion of definitions into a theory involving and linking concepts of transcendence, recollection, ἀναμνήσις, reincarnation, the nature of knowledge
and the human soul and the role of eros in the ascent to the ONE - ἕν. Eros' part in the return of the human soul to the one was discussed by Plato in the Phaedrus and Symposium and was the primary theme of Plutarch's Amatorius.

Penner (in Kraut 1992, pp. 125 ff. see table over page) drafted a useful outline of differences between Plato and Socrates based on stylometric and stylistic considerations. They may both be "Platonic" but there is considerable variation between them. Plato never called himself or his school Platonic. Rather he referred to his writings as being "Socratic".  

"There is not and there never will be a written treatise of Plato's. Those that are called his are really the teachings of Socrates restored to youth and beauty."

"διὰ ταύτα οὐδὲν πόσοτ' ἐγὼ περὶ τούτων γέγραφα, οὐδ' ἔστιν σύγγραμμα Πλάτωνος οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἔστι τὰ δὲ νῦν λεγόμενα Σωκράτους ἔστιν καλόν καὶ νέον γεγονότος."

Just as differences existed between Socrates' teachings and Plato's echoes thereof, there are likewise differences between the theories expressed in Plato's writings and the interpretations by Middle Platonists of what had come to be regarded as Plato's doctrine, to be observed in the writings of Middle Platonism and of Plutarch. Philosophy evolved. Speculation became doctrine and Plato's speculations about reality and eternity became the source of a major cultural movement.

<table>
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<th>SOCRATES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Dialogues generally short</td>
<td>Dialogues usually long</td>
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<td>2. Lacking positive results</td>
<td>Expresses results and doctrine</td>
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<td>3. Comic and ironic</td>
<td>More serious and intense</td>
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<td>4. Focus on ethical issues</td>
<td>Diversity of topics</td>
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<td>5. Limited interest in Immortality of the Soul</td>
<td>Very interested</td>
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<td>6. Virtue a skill (able) to be learned</td>
<td>Virtue developed by &quot;right&quot; conditions - education, nurture, dialectics, etc.</td>
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<td>7. Rhetoric/dialectics a Tool for understanding</td>
<td>Rhetoric and dialectics learnt after basics</td>
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<td>8. No special status for maths</td>
<td>Special focus on maths</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Unity of virtues</td>
<td>Some virtues peculiar to philosophers</td>
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<td>10. Desire for good freely chosen</td>
<td>Some desires bad</td>
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<td>11. Ignorance produces error</td>
<td>Error from multiple causes</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Knowledge - insight obtained via understanding</td>
<td>Knowledge strengthened by training - sower process</td>
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Plutarch's role in the development of Platonism has to be looked at within its historical context in Middle Platonism, as well as through its relationship to Plato's writings. Plutarch's impact as a Middle Platonist and his teachings in the Amatorius were linked. Hence the review in the next chapter of the origins of Middle Platonism and a description of this movement and Plutarch's role with it.
CHAPTER ONE
A BRIEF LOOK AT MIDDLE PLATONISM

What we now call Platonism the Greeks and Romans usually referred to as the School of the Academy, and what is currently called Middle Platonism has not been always clearly distinguished from later Neoplatonism, by either the Neoplatonists themselves or later commentators. The term Middle Platonism, applied to various Platonists of this period whether they were teachers or scholars, was first promoted by Prechter (see Reale, p. 493 note 14). It was certainly not used by Plutarch or his contemporaries.

The Hellenistic Platonic philosophers of the "New" Academy were referred to by Roman writers, such as Cicero and Seneca, as Academicici (from the Latin Academicus, the equivalent of the Greek word Ἀκαδημοῖοικός). The term Academicici seems to have been continuously applied to Platonists influenced by Scepticism, since Aulus Gellius writing in the second century A.D. made a point of using this term to distinguish the heirs of the New Academy from the Pyrrhonic Sceptics (Vol. 2 Loeb ed., Bk. 11, Ch. 5 1 - 8), describing the Academicici as those who assert "nihil posse comprehendi" and the true sceptics or Pyrrhonics (Pyrrhonisi) as those who believed "nihil esse verum videtur". Seneca used this term in Ep. 71.18, and Cicero also frequently in his works. In Off. 1.1.2, Cicero may also be referring to the different branches of Platonism as the "Socratici et Platonici" but generally he preferred Academicus as an adjective, as did Plutarch himself, who used this term nine times 4 to describe philosophers of the Hellenistic Platonic schools.

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4 Glucker 1978, p. 212 - 3 Note 134.  
In the second century A. D. and onwards, though, terms such as Platonici and Πλατωνικοί start appearing with increasing frequency (Glucker 1978, pp. 134 - 46, p. 206) suggesting a change in attitude. For some reason certain writers and commentators, whom we now call Middle Platonists, wanted to stress they were followers of Plato. Perhaps this was because the word Academic to many would have implied an association with the so-called Middle Academy of Arcesilaus, and the New Academy of Carneades (213 - 129 B. C.) and Cleitomachos, which both taught a doctrine of argument heavily influenced by Scepticism (see Ioppolo 1993, pp. 185 - 6). Lucian in his Piscator (43) depicted these Platonists as being a separate group from the Academics in the second century A. D., so it appears the school of Plato had become divided into at least two groups - the supporters and heirs of the teachings of the "New" Academy and others who had a more general approach.

While Ioppolo (1993, p. 186) has commented on the difficulties of making "any clear distinction between Platonists and Academics", both these groups of Platonists wished to distinguish themselves from the Sceptics proper. Both Diogenes Laertius (Bk. 1. 16) and Sextus Empiricus (Book One. Ch. 1 - 3 refer to dogmatics and sceptics, and Sextus, like Aulus Gellius, distinguishes the Academics from the "true" sceptics (1. 1. 4), with the term "dogmatics" apparently being used to describe those Platonists who were not of the "academic" persuasion and any other non-sceptic school.

Scepticism itself or Pyrrhonian makes a re-appearance in the person and teachings of Aenesidemus (first century B. C. Alexandria), who was said by Sextus (Book 1. Ch. 29, 210) to have had an interest in Heraclitean metaphysics. His teachings seem to have started a school (or revived an existing one - Diogenes Laertius traces his "lineage" of teachers back to Timon, student of Pyrrho - 9. 116) thence active until the time of Sextus Empiricus in the late second
century A.D., for although the only Sceptics we know by both name and extant writings are Aenesidemus and Sextus (D.L. 9. 116), Sextus, Diogenes Laertius and Galen (Isag. 4) all refer to an active school of Scepticism.  

Plutarch's view of the academic sceptics seems to have been one of cautious respect for fellow Platonist s. De Lacey (1953, p. 79) has commented that Plutarch as a Platonist borrowed ideas from other schools or developed his own freely as long as they were in Plutarch's view "consistent with the teachings of Plato." Plutarch refrained from attacking those earlier sceptics and indeed sometimes cited their ideas (De Lacey p. 79 and 81) if they were critical (see Mor. 1120 for a citation of Arcesilaus) of the Stoics or Epicureans. As a confirmed moderate, who regarded atheism and superstition as equal errors, Plutarch was certainly no sceptic himself.

Plutarch's interest in Scepticism was sufficient for both him and his friend and student Favorinus to write works on the differences between the Academy and the Sceptics. Favorinus wrote a work in ten books called Πυρρώνειοι τρόποι whose title has led some scholars to regard him as a sceptic (Ioppolo 1993, p. 183 - 4), and Plutarch wrote on the differences between the Pyrrhonians and Academics (Lamprias catalogue 61 Περὶ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν Πυρρωνείων καὶ Ἀκαδημιακῶν) and on the Unity of the Academy (63. Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος). Unfortunately these works are no longer extant but their titles show the close if uneasy relationship between the groups.

Another reason for this separation of Sceptics from Academics may have been a renewed influence of Pythagoreanism on Platonism from the first century

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5 The most recent discussion and translation of Sextus Empiricus' Outlines of Scepticism is Annas and Barnes 1994. Readers with a deeper interest in Scepticism might also want to consult Bury's Loeb edition of this author in addition to reading Diogenes Laertius.
A. D. onwards. The Platonists may have wished to distinguish themselves from both the Neopythagoreans proper, such as Moderatus of Gades, and the Academics. With some Middle Platonists the Pythagorean influence is so strong that one could make an argument for there being three "currents" within the flow of Middle Platonism, the pythagorizer; the dogmatists and the academics. However, because of the shared doctrines common to all three groups it is difficult sometimes to define what the differences are.

An excellent example of such a "pythagorizer" is Eudorus of Alexandria. Dillon (1977 p. 115 ff.) discusses him as an early Middle Platonist with an active interest in Pythagoreanism. Eudorus is credited by Dillon (1993 p. 55, p. 171) with the introduction of (Theaet. 176 B) likeness to god, as the aim or telos of human life, on the model of the Pythagorean precept "Follow God", to Platonism. Tarrant however (1985a, p. 3, p. 138; 1994, p. 163) describes him as a mystery figure probably prominent in Academic Platonism in Alexandria in the later part of the first century B. C., and furthermore has presented an excellent case (1983 passim) for the probability of Eudorus being "K" the author of the Anon. Commentary on the Theaetetus (p. 167, p. 172) which other authors have attributed to a Middle Platonist of the second century A. D. Tarrant based his arguments on the ideas and terminology shared by this author and the sceptical academy.

Middle Platonism, as a descriptive term, has also been used, as a convenient general label, for the period of transition within Platonism as a movement, lasting approximately three centuries. It has been variously described as a "strong current of popular Platonism" by Taylor (1924, p. 8), and by Bigg as a revival of Platonism in the second century (1895, p. 64) linked to the Hellenic Renaissance of that period. More recently Reale (1990, p. 214) has labelled this movement a transitional philosophy, and Dillon
(1977, p. 414 - 5) concluded his study of Middle Platonism with a statement that it was a period whose formulations and research "Plotinus used as starting-points for his speculations."

This era covers the decline of the sceptic-influenced New Academy of Arcesilaus and Carneades, founded in the Hellenistic era, the response by other Platonists and philosophers to Antiochus of Ascalon's (c.130 - 68 B. C.) break with the New Academy, in the first century B. C., and continues up to the advent of Plotinus and the Neoplatonists of the late Empire, in the third century A. D. Some of Antiochus' pupils appear to have moved to Alexandria, where Potamon set up his short-lived school of eclecticism, for Diogenes Laertius Prologue 1. 9. 21 described Potamon's teachings as a selection from the tenets of all existing sects-

"ἐπὶ δὲ πρὸ ὀλίγου καὶ ἐκλεκτικῆ τις αἵρεσις εἰσῆχθη ὑπὸ Ποτάμωνος τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρείως ἐκλεξαμέν ὕπα τὰ ὀρέσκοντα ἐκ ἐκάστης τῶν ἁίρεσεων"

from which the epithet 'eclectic' has been derived. Antiochus himself was regarded as teaching a mixed doctrine which Sextus Empiricus described as bringing Stoic dogmas into the Academy (Book 1. 33. 235 ff.)

"ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ Ἀντίοχος τὴν στοάν μετήγαγεν εἰς τὴν Ἀκαδημίαν. ὡς καὶ εἰρήναθαι ἐπὶ αὐτῷ ὦτι ἐν Ἀκαδημίᾳ φιλοσοφεῖ τὰ στοϊκά. ἐπεδείκνυε γὰρ ὅτι παρὰ Πλάτωνι κεῖται τὰ τῶν στοϊκῶν δόγματα."

Antiochus is the earliest Middle Platonist, active in the first century B. C., earlier than Eudorus, but he is not the founder of the school, for there is no clear link between his activities and the Platonists of Plutarch's time (c.40 A. D. - 120 A. D.), nearly a century later. Dillon (1977, p. 105) and Glucker (1978 p. 90, p. 378) agree that Antiochus does not seem to be a likely candidate for the position of
founder of Middle Platonism or a major force or influence on later Middle Platonism. He was however associated with a change in focus within Platonism as a movement, from Scepticism to a more eclectic doctrine. Tarrant (1985 p. 3) has commented on the continuance of academic activity between Philo's time and Plutarch's era but has also concluded (1985 p. 128) that any outline of Platonic activity in the first centuries, A.D. or B.C., would be tentative due to lack of documentation. Tarrant however has also suggested the possibility of an indirect link (1993 p. 209) between earlier Platonists like Eudorus (who certainly had a mixed "eclectic" doctrine), and perhaps Antiochus, and their pupils, via the figure of Plutarch's teacher, Ammonius who came (or perhaps returned after studying at Alexandria) to Athens from Egypt. Dillon (1977 p. 115) has also drawn attention to the possibility that Eudorus learnt his Platonism from Dion, a student of Antiochus, known to have been active in Alexandria.

Plutarch's scholarship also seems to have contributed to the change and revival of the school, for in the generation after Plutarch Aulus Gellius depicts Athens as a renewed centre of study for several schools of philosophy, whereas before Plutarch's time the schools seem to have dispersed. Cicero, who had attended lectures by Antiochus, mentions in the Academica (1. 12) that the Academy was flourishing in his lifetime but in recent years had become almost bereft of adherents

"quam nunc propter modum orbam esse in ipsa Graecia intellego".

Another reason for the change in the Academy was a consequence of the wars that put an end to Republican Rome. Recent scholarship supports the theory that the Academy proper (gardens associated with a gymnasium near the cult-shrine of Academus, a Bronze Age hero) ceased to exist with the destruction of its buildings by Sulla (88 B.C.; see Plutarch Life of Sulla 12 1-3). Antiochus was

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6 See Dillon 1977, Glucker 1978, Lynch 1972 and Long 1974 and also the later chapter "The Peripatetic Shadow" in Section Two of this work.
said by Cicero to have given his lectures in the Ptolemaion, a city gymnasium (Cic. Fin. 5.1 ff.). With no central physical focus for the activities of Platonists the Academy would have easily diverged into separate groupings of Academics with an interest in sceptical methodology, "new" Academy members like Aenesidemus who became Sceptics, and another group with an interest in Pythagorean mysticism and numerological theories.

Our view of Antiochus has been filtered through Cicero's perceptions of him, as recorded in the Academica Priora and Posteriora and the De Finibus since none of Antiochus' writings are extant. The portrait therein depicted Antiochus as a philosopher whose primary interest (Dillon 1977, p. 69, Long 1974, p. 224) was ethics but not necessarily Platonic ethics. Rather his ethics were predominantly Stoic, to the extent that one speaker in Cicero's Academica Posteriora criticises him for being unoriginal and too Stoic (Bk 2. 69).

"Ex cogitavit aliquid? Eadem uidit quae Stoici."

It seems unlikely that Antiochus would have greatly influenced the development of Plutarch's ethical thought, for Plutarch's critical response to the ethical theories of the Stoics is negative overall, although Antiochus' methodology of using other philosophies as a resource may have influenced Plutarch.

Although a proponent of the sceptical New Academy originally and a pupil of Philo of Larisa (Cic. Acad. 2.69 ff.). Antiochus broke away from sceptical Academicism and established his own revived "Old Academy" which taught a fusion of several doctrines. Apparently (see Cic. Fin. 5. 7) Antiochus believed that all the following figures of fourth and third century B. C. philosophy were Platonists - Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemo and Crantor of the Platonic Old Academy, together with the earliest Stoics and Aristotle and the first Peripatetics. Long (p. 224) interprets Cic. De Natura Deorum 1.16 as stating that Antiochus saw the differences between the Stoics and Peripatetics as being one of terminology not
doctrines. Perhaps Antiochus would have agreed with Seneca (Epistle 12. 11.) that "Quod verum est, meum est" and "tuae optima sunt, esse communia." The best (philosophical) ideas are common property. Given the mixture of doctrines from several schools within Antiochus' teachings perhaps it is Antiochus who should be called eclectic, not Plutarch.

What are the characteristics of this Platonism in transition, which involved both Antiochus and Plutarch, however founded it? It has frequently been described as Eclectic. Zeller (1931, p. 28) called the post-Antiochean Academy (if there was one) "... the chief seat of Eclecticism". Barnard when discussing the influence of Middle Platonism on Justin Martyr, stated, (1967, p. 29)

"Eclecticism was one of the leading characteristics of Middle Platonism". Daniélou (1973, p. 107) referred to Middle Platonists as reviving Platonic studies but what they seem to have done was more a change of focus onto different areas from the Old Academy but with a more speculative and less mystical approach than that of some Neoplatonists in their metaphysics. Dillon and Long (1988, pp. 1-2) have recently criticised the negative connotations of Zeller's view of eclecticism and its influence on later critical histories of philosophy and now have a far more positive view of the cultural synthesis underlying Middle Platonism (see Dillon and Long 1988 and Dillon 1990).

The following summary of the doctrines and themes of Middle Platonism is based largely on the observations of Dillon (1977, p. 43 ff.) and Reale (1990, p. 29 ff.) with additional observations of my own added here and there.

In the area of Ethics the purpose of Life or τέλος ἀγαθών becomes identified with the seeking of Likeness to God, ὄμοιοι τὰ θεῖα (see Theaetetus 176 B), from the time of Eudorus onwards (see Dillon 1993, p. 55, p. 171-2 and 1977, ch. 3) and there is a quest for transcendence via the mode of a moral life. There is also a
greater focus on questions such as whether virtue is sufficient to happiness and a continuing discussion on the theme of Platonic freewill and providence (πρόνοια) versus Stoic Fate or Destiny (εἰμαχία μένη).

Plutarch’s ethical interests though seem to have been broader than this, with a far greater variety of issues than these covered in the Moralia as a whole. His stance on ethics may be best summarised as supporting Hellenic moderation and μετριοπάθεια over Stoic ἀπάθεια. Plutarch’s extant works are far greater in number than the other surviving Middle Platonist works whether complete or fragmented which appear to have largely been commentaries or compendia.

Plutarch discussed the subject of the Telos in the essays On the divine vengeance (De sera numina vindicia 550 Ὠ ff.) in which Plutarch draws from Plato’s Theaetetus (176 E) and Timaeus (47 A - C) (see Dillon, p. 192) and On moral virtue (De virtute morali), an essay showing the issue of the Peripatetic doctrine of the Mean.

On the subject of Fate and Freewill, although we know he wrote on this area of debate, the surviving De Fato (Γ εἰμαχία μενίν) appears to be a later Neoplatonist work (Dillon 1977, p. 208); however there is a short passage in the Quaest Conv, (IX 5 740 C) with some exposition on the subject and also some discussion of this theme in the Fac simile on the Moon (De Facie 927 A ff.) and the De Defectu Oraculorum (435 F). Then atically in the area of ethics Plutarch is a Platonist, sympathetic to the ethics of Peripatetics, and according to Dillon (p. 211) like other Middle Platonists, he failed to fully resolve the issue of freedom of choice versus determinism.

Physics, along with theology and metaphysics, was regarded as a theoretical science or study and took on an antimaterialistic tone in reaction to Stoic
materialism, drawing on Pythagorean influences. Attention became focused on three major areas.

Firstly, Theology rose to the fore with many debates about the nature of the Supreme Principle or God. Plutarch's theology is thoroughly Platonic and has been expressed in several dialogues - *De E apud Delphos*, *De Iside et Osiride*, *De Facie*, *De Def. Or.*, the *Amatorius* itself, and the *Platonicæ Quæstiones* amongst others.

Secondly, Daemonology or Parapsychology became a separate "science" before it mutated or degenerated into the ritualistic Theurgy of the later Neoplatonists. The discussion of "daemon" and their activities in Plutarch's work, which older writers like Oakesmith (1912) have referred to as his daemonology, shows an interest on Plutarch's part in what is currently known as the "paranormal". Plutarch's attitude to the question of daemons and other intermediary powers was "scientific", in that it was one of questioning how they functioned and what were their roles, functions and purpose as intermediaries between God and Humanity. Plutarch investigated and described paranormal activities which he ascribed to the activities of daemons, whereas the theurgists strove to learn how to make use of daemons, not to understand or prove how or why such beings were in existence or not.

In the *De Def. Or.* 415 A Plutarch uses the existence of daemons to explain the functioning or lack thereof of various oracles and other supernatural activities. He defines them and describes them (417 A) as if they were spiritual civil servants, clerks or overseers. These daemonic powers were also mentioned in other dialogues, the *Amatorius*, the *De Is.*, *De Genio Socratis*, and the *De Facie* primarily.
There is thirdly a renewed but uneven interest in the Theory of Ideas with attempts being made by various Platonists to reconcile Aristotle's Metaphysics to Plato's and join his model of immaterence with Plato's of transcendence. The term ἐιδός is identified with immanent ideas and the word ἐδέα with transcendent ideas. Also speculations appear about where the Ideas dwell. Did they exist within the Mind of God?

Lastly, in the area of logic there seems to have been no new developments. The most noteworthy occurrence is the borrowing by many Platonists of Aristotelian logic as a tool, described by the use of Aristotle's syllogisms and categories in arguments. The best account of Middle Platonic Logic is in Albinus' (also called Alcinos by some scholars) Διδασκαλικός. It does however not seem to have held any special interest as a subject for Plutarch.

As Albinus or Alcinos 7 wrote, a major reference source for the study of Middle Platonism, the Διδασκαλικός, which will be referred to again, a brief digression on his identity seems necessary. The majority opinion seems to be that Alcinos created this handbook (Dillon 1993, pp. ix -xiii, Section one of the introduction and Note 4 p. xi). Tarrant (1985b, pp. 87 - 92) has suggested as a solution that Albinus and Alcinos were one and the same person, a philosopher who changed the directions of his studies in mid-life from being a Platonic scholar interpreting classical texts to being a teacher of more general dogma and that this change of direction was one of the motivations for Lucian's character sketch of a famous philosopher in the Nigrinus. Nigrinus was depicted as a lover of Homer and if Tarrant is correct in his speculation then Albinus changed his name in middle life to the Homeric Alcinos - steady-minded. I will accept the majority view and henceforth refer to the writer of this handbook as Alcinos.

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7 There are several transliterations and versions of this name: Alkinoos, Alkinous, Alcinous, etc.
Plutarch appears to have been a major figure of first century A. D. Platonism. We know little about his immediate predecessors. Plutarch has told us of his teacher Ammonius (Quom. Adul. 70 E) calling him καθηγητής, a word which can mean professor but in Plutarch’s time (see Glucker p. 127) more likely meant private tutor or personal teacher, almost "guru" to use a modernism. Ammonius therefore was probably not the scholarch of the Academy but rather someone teaching privately and the only other Platonic teachers mentioned in contemporary sources (Glucker, pp. 256 - 80) are either friends of Plutarch or minor figures. There is however considerable difference of opinion on this issue of Ammonius’ formal status and Dillon (1977, pp. 189 - 92) and others have disputed Glucker’s ideas. C. P. Jones (1966, p. 207 and p. 209) has reminded us that Ammonius was, if not a scholarch (p. 213 note 35), a prominent figure in the Athenian community of the first century A. D., for he not only became a hoplite general but evidence from an inscription in Eleusis suggests he married into an eminent priestly family.

Plutarch appears to be a prominent figure in first century Platonism and the course of its development but our picture of his status is incomplete due to other writers’ works surviving in far lesser quantity than Plutarch’s body of work - which also survived incompletely. Lists such as the so-called Lamprias catalogue which have survived indicate we have available for study only about a third of his writings.

Still it seems significant that in the next generation after Plutarch, during the Hellenic renaissance of the second century A. D., we see a sudden increase in the numbers of known Platonists working and writing. There appear the names Calvenus or Calvisius Taurus, Maximus cf Tyre, Theon of Smyrna, Apuleius of Madaura, Severus, Albinus, Atticus, Numenius of Apamea, Harpocrate of Argos, Galen, Gaius and whoever the actual author of the Didaskalikos was, be it Albinus
or Alcinous. All of these men were commentators on, or creators of compendia of, Platonic doctrines or creators of writings showing a knowledge or influence of Platonic doctrine but who was their model?

R. M. Jones (1980, p. 107) has observed that

"Plutarch's references to the dialogues of Plato far outnumber those to the works of any other prose author."

Could Plutarch have been their model for research and scholarship? He did have a small σχολή in his home town of Chaeronea (De E 385 A) and we know Taurus at least was one of his pupils and in the Amatorius he assumed a didactic role within the group.

Opinions are also divided on whether Plutarch did any original writing as a philosopher or whether he was just another commentator. Betz (1978, p. 4) stated that Plutarch has been repeatedly described as eclectic in his philosophy by many authorities and cited Ziegler as calling Plutarch "kein originaler Denker"; however he did concede (p. 55) that in the developments between Plato and Neoplatonism Plutarch was a key figure. O'Neil (writing in Betz 1978, p. 291) also supports the description of Plutarch as an eclectic Platonist. Zeller however (1931, p. 285) named Plutarch as "definitely a Platonist," and Flacelière simply applauded Plutarch (1987, p. 55) as a man in love with knowledge and "un philosophos" while another French writer Bréhier (1963 trans. Baskin 1965, p. 173) described Plutarch as "theologian, priest, anc philosopher all in one."

Dillon (1990, Ch. 13 pp. 214 - 229, reprint of an article first published 1986) described Plutarch (p. 214) as being both a Platonic philosopher and a scholar and emphasised some of the major features of Plutarch's Platonism as being a devotion to Apollo, based (p. 215) on an identification of Apollo with the Platonic Good (= Demiurge of Timaeus) and the Cne (De E apud Delphos 393 BC), a
symbol of the sun but not the sun (ὁ93 E). He also noted Plutarch's dualist
tendencies (pp. 217 - 18) and the basis of his ethics being metriopatheia rather
than apatheia. (Plutarch in the essay On Moral Virtue 451 F argues that virtue in
the soul ἐν ψυχῇ τὸ ἡθικὸν is produced by moderation - μετριότης). On the
subject of Plutarch's belief in daemons he noted that (p. 220) "Everyone in
Plutarch's world, not least the Christians, believed in daemons," as intermediaries
between God and humans and a bridge between divinity and reality as we know it.
He also stressed the unique aspect of Plutarch's ideas concerning body and soul
and intellect in relationship to the doctrines of immortality and most importantly the
overall optimism (p. 223) that marks Plutarch's Platonism in contrast to other
Platonists like Numenius (p. 228).

Brenk (1977, p. 17) has described the Amatorius as being
"One of the finest and most interesting of Plutarch's treatises, and one
which gives an excellent glimpse of the humanity of his nature and the
classical character of his ethical principles."

The following analysis of the Amatorius will hopefully persuade readers that
Plutarch was not only an "interesting" writer and scholar but also a creative
philosopher who made major contributions to Platonic erotics.
CHAPTER TWO
PLUTARCH AS A PLATONIST IN THE AMATORIUS

Plutarch makes use of Platonic doctrines and dialogues in three different but significant ways in the Amatorius. Firstly, there are patterns of phrasing which are near-verbatim quotes of various passages from major philosophical texts with which his readership was apparently presumed to be familiar since, when Plutarch does name authors and sources he rarely mentions the book though most authors of this period unfortunately for modern scholars followed the same practice of rarely citing full details about sources. Secondly, there are some references which may not be from Plato but a case of Plato's use of a reference to a legend or historical action reminding Plutarch of it, so that he expands it and represents a new view of the original illustration. Finally, there are passages which use Platonic doctrines, expressed in several of Plato's dialogues as starting points for Plutarch's own ideas about Eros and the ascent to the one.

The discussion of Platonic material in the Amatorius in this study has been presented in two sections. In addition to the overview of Middle Platonism and Plutarch's role in this movement, further discussion has been split into two areas - Plutarch's citations and indirect references to Platonic dialogues and his usage of them, and Plutarch's extrapolations from Plato's ideas about Eros into his own doctrine of Eros.

The apparent references to Platonic texts as given by Hubert, Flacelière and Helmbold in their notes are given in numerical order (see also table over page)

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REFERENCES TO PLATONIC DIALOGUES IN THE AMATORIUS

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A. - THE PHAEDRUS

From the Phaedrus is drawn the use of the rural setting which will also be discussed in the third section. Plutarch used certain of Plato's arguments from the Phaedrus for support of his own criticism of paederasty, and further argued for Eros as a cause of recollection of the divine, and discussed madness including erotic madness as possession.

Unlike the Phaedrus, though, the Amatorius has the following features: no palinode section just a continuous defence of Eros, several speakers in the cast not just two, and a pattern of short speeches and replies, attacking and defending certain topics.

In the context of a parody speech or the merits of lovers vs non-lovers, Socrates (Phaed. 240 A) describes lovers who should long for their beloved to the point that they try to deny their beloveds any attachments to other people or things, be they family, friends, wives, children or property. Socrates was creating a deliberate parody of rhetoric that a 'gued for a negative case, allegedly a parody of an essay written by Lysias, the fifth century BC Attic orator, or of his general style. Arieti (1991, Chapter One passim and pp. 185, 188, 198 note 3) is one of a continuous minority of scholars who have drawn attention to a certain playfulness in Plato's writings and the possibility of parody playing a role in the Phaedrus. The best summary of the arguments in support of this can be found in Hackforth (1972 p. 17 - 18) who feels the Lysias speech is fiction, a clever pastiche attacking the Athenian love of rhetoric.

Plutarch in the persona of Anthemion criticised Pisias by alleging or rather implying he was behaving like this "negative" lover, as described by Socrates.
Pisias wants to keep Bacchon a boy, available for courtship, within the confines of the palaistra, and in doing so Pisias was falling short of his own personal standards, for he was usually a model of excellence (Amat. 749 F), someone to be copied, but his current behaviour has become "φαντάζομαι", base and ignoble. Plutarch has taken Plato's observations and given them a new use for social criticism based on philosophical ethics.

Plutarch did this again (751 D - E) by making use of statements by Plato in the Phaedrus (250 E) and the Laws (839 B) in which paederasty was criticised as being anti-nature "παράφύσιν." Plutarch adds that this behaviour is also "οὐ μετρητά ζων", immoderate or unbalanced. Plutarch constructs a model of "moderate" behaviour, or what consists of such in his viewpoint, in opposition to paederastic relationships, which he saw as lacking grace, and depicts heterosexual activity which is based on love as a type of φιλία which has grace (χάρις).

Note that it is not homosexuality Plutarch was opposed to but rather what he saw as irresponsible promiscuity, for later in the Amatorius (766 B) Plutarch directly condemned sexual activity for mere pleasure or lust, regardless of the lovers' sex, citing Plato (Phaedo 81 D) in support of a statement that men and women in love only with the pleasures of the flesh should not be called lovers in the Platonic sense,

"...φιληδόνων καὶ φιλοσωμάτων ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν οὐ δικαίως ἔρωτικῶν προσαγορευομένων."

He is not being homophobic but rather condemning an attitude that depersonalizes lovers into sex objects, lesser beings, used and cast aside instead of becoming friends.
The actual quote is given as follows in the *Amatorius* (751 D).

"βαίνεσθαι κατὰ Πλάτωνα νόμω τετράποδος καὶ παιδοσπορείσθαι παρὰ φύσιν ἐνδιδόντων, ἀχαίς χάρις παντάπασι καὶ ἀσχήμων καὶ ἀναφρόδιτος."

"But those who, according to Plato's words, surrender to pleasure, contrary to (human) nature, and 'allow themselves to be mounted like animals'...well this is completely graceless shameful behaviour, insulting to Aphrodite."

In Plato's *Phaedrus* (250 E 4 - 5) this is expressed as

"ἄλλα ἡδονή παραδοῦς τετράποδος νόμων βαίνειν ἑπιχειρεῖ καὶ ὑβρεὶ προσομιλῶν οὐ δέδοικεν οὐδ’ αἰσχύνει παρὰ φύσιν ἡδονήν διώκων."

"but those who surrender themselves to being mounted in the fourfooted manner have violence and wantonness as companions and are neither ashamed or afrait to pursue pleasure in an unnatural (for humans) manner."

In the *Laws* (839 B) a cause is suggested by Plato for this behaviour:

"τάχα δ’ ἂν ἡμῖν τις παραστατικήν ἀνήρ οφθαλμὸς καὶ νέος πολλοῦ σπέρματος μεστοῖς"

that some young men chase other youths because of an excess of seed disturbing the humours of the body and hence the soul. This is referred to by Plutarch in *Amatorius* (751 E) so it would appear he had both passages in mind and saw them as linked in subject.
"καί σπέρματος πολλοῦ μεστίς, ως ὁ Πλάτων φησιν."

His view of physiology, not knowing of the existence of hormones, was that the body could affect the soul.

The world-view that Plutarch is criticising is further expressed by Pisias (752 C) in addition to Protogenes’ description (751 A) and seems one in which the masculine and feminine realms are perceived as being in opposition. (See Cohen 1991, Ch. 4 and 6)

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<th>Masculine</th>
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<td>Outdoors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Enclosed</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
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<td>Orderly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophical</td>
<td>Hedonistic</td>
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Since friendship and Eros were masculine values in the dualistic view of society held by Pisias and Protogenes they believed no real relationship of emotional depth was possible with a woman.

These oppositions appear to be based on Plato’s depiction in the Phaedrus (239 C) of pleasure lovers preferring an effeminate lifestyle of living in the shade and having soft skin like some cloistered upper class Athenian woman of Plato’s time. Plutarch transformed this into an opportunity to criticise misanthropes with negative attitudes to women. He revealed this model’s flaws by slowly shifting the focus of discussion from pederasty and homosexuality towards conjugality and strove to demonstrate through the depiction of successful marriages that φίλας and ἐρωτικός were not exclusively masculine.
After the defence of Ismenodora and wives in general which is also a critique of Stoic ethics and its limitations, the Defence of Eros begins with Plutarch presenting various proofs of Eros’ divinity including his role in promoting friendships. Then Plutarch suddenly inserts a digression whose aim is not immediately obvious though Plutarch does advise us it may be helpful (Amatorius 758 D)

"’ Ἀλλὰ μὴν, ’ ο πατήρ ἔφη, ’ ἔγε τού Πλάτωνος ἐπιλάβοιτ’ ἀν τοῦ λόγου καὶ παρεξίόντος ‘"

The doctrine of "Plato’s" he was using was Socrates’ Second Speech in the Phaedrus (244 A) in which the concept is discussed that neither Eros nor Madness was necessarily evil. Madness μανία was defined by Plutarch as having two types. The first was an insanity with what we would call a biochemical origin but which Plutarch and Plato attributed to an imbalance in the "humours". The second kind was a divine "enthusiasm" inspired by the gods, which in the dialogue Socrates describes as having three categories, being first "mantic", prophecy for the future, inspired by Zeus or Apollo, secondly a "kathartic" madness in which madness caused by a hereditary curse leads to prophecy cured by healing rituals of purification or initiation, and thirdly the third kind of madness, poetic, inspired by the Muses.

Plutarch changes Plato’s models of the three kinds of divine madness. Whereas Plato lists prophetic, hereditary, and poetic manias, and the gods he associates with them, such as Apollo and the Muses, Plutarch substitutes ἀρετήμανίος, madness caused by war or Ares, for the hereditary madness caused by curses, mentioned by Plato. Plutarch’s list of enthsiasms is fourfold. First on his list, as on Plato’s, is mantic prophecy inspired by Apollo, second bacchic from Dionysos to which he links the orgastic rites of Cybele and Pan, thirdly the poetic
madness inspired by the Muses and then Ares-inspired courage. This becomes part of an overall comparison of Ares and Eros. Just as the four types of friendship have patron gods and war has a patron god so should Love too and that God is Eros. Plutarch illustrates this by adding to the list erotic madness and going on to define it as a form of ἐνθουσιασμός or possession by a higher power (758 E).

"ἐκ κρείττονος δυνάμεως ἀριστείν ἔχουσα καὶ κίνησιν, ἢς τὸ μὲν κοινὸν ἐνθουσιαστικὸν καλέ τοι πάθος."

Plutarch may also have been drawing on a passage in Plato’s Phaedrus (265 C) in which Socrates and Phaedrus refer back to this earlier discussion and blend their earlier list with later discussion, creating a new list of four kinds of madness. Their revised list attributed prophetic inspiration to Apollo, the mystic to Dionysos, poetic to the Muses and a fourth kind to both Aphrodite and Eros together, as the best kind, and describes as protector of the young and beautiful. This omits madness caused by a hereditary curse but does not, like Plutarch’s list, substitute Ares in its place.

Plutarch also distinguishes between two types of madness drawing again on Plato’s theories (Republic 503 A, Timaeus 86 E - 87 A as well as from the Phaedrus) that there are two types of madness. One was a sickness which we might call biochemical in origin but Plutarch described as an imbalance in the humours (Amatorius 758 D), and the other of the soul - folly (ἀτυχία) caused by ignorance (ἀμαθία) (Timaeus 86 C).

Eros’ power is continually contrasted to that of Ares in the Amatorius. It is described as being opposite to Eros (757 A)

"τὴν ἀντικειμένην ἐκ διαμέτρου τῷ Ἐρωτι"
and both are described as "μέγα" ("57 C - D, 759 A - B, 759 E) and effecting and inspiring courage as well as madness. Eros however is the positive force bringing victory not destruction like Ares, as an invincible general (761 B)

"μόνον ἁγίτητον οντα τὸν Ἠσωτα τῶν στρατηγῶν."

This is tied to a series of examples of hercism caused by Eros-inspired courage such as that of Alcestis (761 E) which demonstrates how even women, if possessed by Love, may become heroic.

"Εὖ δὲ ποι ἐπὶ μνήμην ἡλθεν ἡμῖν Ἀλκηνίστης, Ἀρεος γὰρ οὐ πάνυ μέτεστι γυναικό, ἣ δὲ ἔξ Ἐρως ὡς κατοχὴ προάγεται τι τολμάν παρὰ φύσιν κἀ ἀποθνήσκειν."

The doctrine of ἀνάμνησις is discussed in Phaedrus (249 C - E) in which it is stated by Plato that the beauty of the beloved can remind us of divine beauty. In the Amatorius (764 E) Plutarch claimed that Love is a cure for amnesia - our forgetfulness of higher realities, "μᾶλλον δὲ λήθην ὅν ὁ Ἐρως ἀνάμνησις ἐστιν."

Plutarch extended this to depict Eros as a guide (ἄγωγός) back to true beauty (765 A) via first beholding it in bodily for us. However, although Love excites memory (765 B "κινεῖ τὴν μνήμην"), it is not only through seeing beautiful young men but beauty in general.

Beautiful mortal bodies, within the realms of human sense (here ἀισθητός, the perceptible, rather than ὀρατός, the visible) and perception, are reflections of beautiful divine realities in the intelligible realm (765 B), beyond the normal range of human perceptions. Recollection of the divine can also be triggered (766 E) by females. Plutarch asks us to consider that it is the true character of the soul shining through regardless of the gender of the body.

"τί ἄν κωλῦοι γίνεσθαι μὲν ἀπὸ παιδῶν καὶ ἀπὸ νεανίσκων. γίνεσθαι
δ` ἀπὸ παρθένων καὶ γυναικῶν, ὅταν ἦθος ἁγνὸν καὶ κόσμιον ἐν ὁρᾷ καὶ χάριτι μορφής διαφανὲς γίνηται,"

The true noble lover loves excellence despite biology (767 A).

"ὁ δὲ φιλόκαλος καὶ γενναῖος οὐ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν οὐδὲ τὴν εὐφύιαν ἀλλὰ μορίων διαφορὰς ποιεῖται τοὶ ἔρωτας."

**AN EGYPTIAN DIGRESSION**

Both the Phaedrus and Amatoryus draw on material allegedly from Egyptian mythology or perhaps the version of it told by the interpreter caste to Greek visitors. The purpose of Plutarch doing this seems to be more than simple imitation of Plato. Some of the discussion may be missing in a lacuna which has obscured the purpose of Plutarch’s references. An additional problem is that the Greek versions of Egyptian beliefs do not all agree with each other or with that of the Egyptians themselves. It may be that what the Greeks were hearing were folktales and myths though Plutarch seems to have had some knowledge of the actual religion and visited Alexandria (Tatjle Talk 5. 5. 1). He made distinctions in De Iside et Osiride between myths and folk beliefs and the actual doctrines underlying the symbolism of Egyptian religion. Heyob notes (1975, p. 40) that

"There is every indication that the rites and doctrines that Plutarch described in De Iside et Osiris are those which characterised the cult as it was practised in Egypt.

... evidence ... is the prominence of Osiris in Plutarch’s account ... in opposition to the complete dominance of Sarapis in Greek cult centers."

Plutarch seems to have identified Isis with both Aphrodite and the Moon (Amat. 764 D, De Is. et Os. 374 C and Eros with Horus and Apollo (De Is et Os.
375 F) as Harpocrates. Hathor was identified not only with Isis but both also with Aphrodite in the Hellenistic era. All three were described as being a Lady of the Sky and Heaven. Hathor’s son Ihy also seems to have been possibly identified with Eros as a love god and Horus, son of Isis, had a winged falcon as a symbol which is another reason Plutarch could have associated him with Eros.

Hani (1976, p. 247) thought that the Hellenic Eros was seen as identical to the younger Horus, son of Isis, in his aspect as the holy child and that Apollo was seen as the older Horus, the solar hawk-hero. It should be noted there are variants of the legend of Isis and Osiris in which instead of one Horus their warrior son, there are two, including an older god, associated with the sun god Ra.

Heyob (1975, pp. 20 - 21) has observed that various Ptolemaic queens were also equated with the Egyptian goddess Isis, Selene the Moongoddess and Aphrodite (= Hathor). Perhaps like Hinduism there were several cults and branches of the popular religion of the Egyptians and these stories came from different sources just as in Hinduism we have Tantric beliefs, followers of Vishnu and Shiva, and modern reformers plus the followers of the devotional (Bhakti) sects. A belief in Reincarnation and the identification of foreign gods with Egyptian divinities may well have been a feature of popular religion in Egypt during the Imperial era for native Egyptians as well as Hellenic settlers. Furthermore Heyob (p. 49) points out that there was physical evidence for a cult of Isis-Aphrodite at Alexandria, Delos, and outside urban centers in villages in both Egypt and Greece, including signs of the Isis cult’s presence in Thespiae (p. 90) and Plutarch’s hometown Chaeronea (p. 122).

Griffiths (1970, p. 43 - 4) notes a fusion of the cult of Harpocrates with that of Min, a fertility figure, (also De Is. et Os. 374 B) so there may well have been an identification in Imperial times of Min = Eros = Horus = Sun in popular cult for
Platonic philosophy to draw upon as Plutarch has in the De Iside et Osiride and in the Amatorius in two places. Hani also supported this view, commenting (1976, pp. 54 and 99) "l'identification de Min à Horus était complète." Cultural fusion within the Roman empire could have allowed believers to perceive Horus, Min, Ihy and Eros, older fertility figure and younger god, as one. A more modern cultural parallel that has occurred in the last few centuries would be the (con)fusion of Kuanyin and the Virgin Mary in some parts of Asia where Catholicism and Buddhism have existed side by side. This has led to Kuanyin and the Virgin Mary alike being depicted as jewelled queens in flowing robes and veils accompanied by children, rather like some Egypt an art from the Roman era which depicted Isis in a similar manner.

After the mentioning of the benefits of being an initiate in Eros' mysteries (see Phaedo section) in the afterlife and the statement that lovers can return even from Hades (762 A), Plutarch claims that what Plato discerned through philosophy was also hinted at in Egyptian mythology.

"هنِّيِرُوتوس أνυρραπον διά βιοσοφίας Πλάτων κατείδε. Καί τοι λεπταί πινες ἁπορροα καὶ ἀμυδραὶ ἡς ἀληθείας ἐνεισι ταῖς Αίγυπτῖων ἐνδεσπαρμέναι μυθολογίαις"

The subject is returned to later (764 B) where Soclarus claims that Plutarch was hinting at a resemblance between Egyptian myths and the Platonic doctrine of love. In De Iside et Osiride 354 E - F Plutarch listed both Plato and Pythagoras as philosophers who are said to have visited Egypt and consulted the priests there. Both Platonists and Pythagoreans prompted the concept that their founders visited Egypt (D. L. 3. 6 - 7. See also Riginos 1976, pp. 64 - 69 ) and learned ancient doctrines there to increase the authority and status of their doctrines. Unfortunately there seems to be a sizable lacuna here, so we do know not actually
what kind of connection or comparison Plutarch was making, but we do have the statement that the sun is considered a third love by the Egyptians

"τρίτον δὲ νομίζουσιν "Ερωτό τὸν Ἑλίων".

Since Plutarch goes on to discuss the similarities and differences between Eros and the Sun, and Horus had a solar aspect this may explain the identification of Horus with Eros as sons of Isis - Aphrodite.

Plutarch's references to Egyptian beliefs in the Amatorius, judging from parallel material in the De Iside et Osiride, served a twofold purpose. First he strove to add additional support to Platonic doctrines by showing they reflected what Plato and Plutarch viewed as a pre-existing system of belief of great authority and antiquity. Secondly these references were made to strengthen Plutarch's own arguments for Eros divinity by demonstrating the universality of worship of this god.

**B. THE SYMPOSIUM**

The Symposium is another strong influence on the content and form of the Amatorius. In the Symposium we also have multiple speakers in the early part of the dialogue with one long speech at the end. In the Amatorius there are several speakers but their speeches are shorter than those in the Symposium and during the long defence of Eros there are several breaks and interjections and possibly short monologues in the lacuna. Questions seem more like natural responses than formal speeches. One finds oneself wondering if Plutarch's original intention was to merge the best features of the Symposium and the Phaedrus into one work but found when he attempted the fusion that his major theme changed the entire work in a different direction.
As Plato did in the Symposion; Plutarch in the Amatorius (178 B) likewise made use of quotes from the poets of his past to support and illustrate his arguments. (See Carson 1986 p.391 for an interesting discussion of Eros, poets and Plato's Phaedrus.) The first literary quote in Plato's Symposium (178 B) is from Hesiod's Theogony I.120, about Eros being firstborn of the gods. This is cited by Plutarch in the Amatorius (756 F) as proof of Eros' divinity and power. To further support this argument Plutarch quotes from Parmenides' Cosmogony (Fr. 132) that Eros was firstborn of all the gods.

"πρότιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεόν ὑπίσχοντο πάντων."

Like the second century sophists for whom he may have been a role model, he refers back to his "classics". For Plutarch as for many other Greeks the more "archaic" a poem, lyric or epic was, the more likely it was to be regarded as having "biblical" authority in its views of the gods. There were no set "scriptures" in Greek religion.

As Plato progressed into a discussion of Love and Courage (Symposium 178 C - 180 B) so does Plutarch but later in the Amatorius (Ch. 17, 760 D - 761 F), repeating various legends about lovers in battle inspired to courage by their beloved, and lovers defending thei· beloved from tyrants, until he reaches the tale of Alcestis which Plato also used (179 B) and shifts focus yet again. Unlike a sophist (see comparison with Maximus of Tyre in Section Three), though, he uses his historical and literary examples as proof rather than adornment.

There is also the reference to the cicadas (767 D) which may be from Aristophanes' speech in the Symposium (191 B) but may simply be a "scientific" reference, an image drawn from nature as an example. It is possible that this is not a citation of Aristophanes because Aristophanes' or rather Plato's usage is comic - a parody perhaps of philosophic myths with humans compared to cicadas. Plutarch's use of the image though is not so much parodic as satiric for it is part of
an attack on misanthropic males who use women for breeding only. In the Symposium the action of the protohumans was said to be just like cicadas "ὡς περὶ τέττινες" but in the Amatorius the point is not that humans are like cicadas but that humans degrade themselves if they behave like mindless insects. There is also the image of lovers being split apart as easily as an egg is split by a hair (Amatorius 770 B) which may be from Aristophanes' story of Zeus splitting humans apart (Symposium 190 D - E), but the story of Aristophanes is not mentioned in the Amatorius. Rather, it is an example here of how easily certain relationships can be split apart.

Another literary reference is one used to prove Eros' power to inspire poetry. Euripides (Fr. 663 of the Stheboreia) is quoted by Plato in Symposium (196 E) and by Plutarch in the Amatorius (762 B) as saying that Eros teaches art. For Agathon this was an example of Eros inspiring poetry and beauty and goodness, but for Plutarch it served as an example of how Eros not only inspired people but also changed them for the better by improving their characters. The subject of Eros' power to change personalities is given far greater attention in the Amatorius than it was in either the Phaedrus or Symposium.

C. THE REPUBLIC AND THE TWO REALMS

Plutarch drew on the Republic to support his discussion of Eros as a power and source of social bonding and also uses the discussion of the Sun as a starting point for his own identification of Eros = Sun = Good. There are also many general references to Plato's two realms of intelligible and sensible and towards the end of the dialogue the difficulties of marriage are compared to the difficulties of studying dialectics. Both are painful for beginners but there is benefit in the long run. This is yet another example of Plutarch's use of ironic reversal for humour which along
with his penchant for parody will be discussed in the third literature section of this study.

Plutarch seems to have thought that certain aspects of the Republic had been misunderstood, like Plato’s use of the proverb (423 E) "οἱ τι μάλιστα κοινὰ τὰ φίλων ποιεῖσθαι", friends have all in common. He makes a point of emphasising that this true sharing is for friends and lovers who have joined souls (Amatorius 767 E) in Plato’s ideal city,

τὰς ψυχὰς βία συνάγουσι κοι συντήκουσι".

Eros is also a bonding force for social harmony on a scale larger than individual relationships but Plato’s polis is a hypothetical situation and Plutarch prefers to stress the actual benefits for individuals, illustrating the political by the personal, such as an increase in mutual loyalty created by companionship (Amatorius 767 D)

"εὐθὺς ἐμφαίνειν τὴν ὑπὸ χρόνου καὶ συννθείας ἀνάγκη μεμιμένην εὖνοιαν."

and (Amat. 767 E) temperance as mutual self-restraint

"Ὁ Επείτα σωφροσύνη πρὸς ὀλυμπιονικῆς.

There is also an identification of the Sun = Eros = God drawn from the theories expressed by Plato in the Republic (509 B) where it is suggested that the actions of the sun are a metaphor for the effects of the intelligible world on our realm of being. Plutarch observed (764 B · E)

"Ερωτος ὁμοιότητα πρὸς τὸν ἡλιον ὀρῶμεν οὐσαν." yet this similarity also emphasizes a difference for the Sun can divert our attention from the intelligible world to ours (734 D).

"ὅσπερ ἡλιον μὲν ὀρατὸν ἔρωτα δὲ νοητόν"

Eros however illumines in a different way, focusing our attention onto beauty (764 E).
**D. THE LAWS**

Plutarch took from the *Laws* (in *Aristot.:* 751 D) a direct quote on the subject of physical, homosexual intercourse being against nature (discussed p. 30) and also draws on Plato’s suggestion that young men chasing other youths is due to a kind of hyper-virility or excess seed. Plutarch seemed to regard paederasty at its best as a ennobling but never long-lasting friendship and at its worst as an abuse of the young by older men (paedophilia in the modern sense of the word). He described homosexual intercourse as involving weakness and violence and states via the persona of Daphnaeus that it was against both nature and Aphrodite (751 E) whether with or without consent.

It is however not so much the relationship of male with male Plutarch objects to but rather to desire being disguised and excused as friendship and the impropriety of males taking over the feminine (θηρεύουσα) place in physical union. But perhaps Plutarch is trying too hard to be polite. He does not state whether his objection is simply to anal intercourse or to any kind of physical touching apart from affectionate kissing and the like.

There is also a reference to hunting (*Amatorius*: 757 E) which Plutarch expanded and took in far different dimensions and directions than Plato did (*Laws* 823 B) by using it for criticism of the Stoics’ hunting for virtue, a theme which will be discussed further in section Two. The discussion and description of types of hunting in the *Laws* mentioned hunting after friendship as a pursuit which has been both praised and condemned:

"πολλὴ δὲ καὶ ἡ κατὰφιλίαν θηρεύουσα ἡ μὲν ἔπαινον, ἡ δὲ ψόγον ἔχει."
Further in the *Laws* (824 A) Plato banned several types of hunting, including by night which creates a suspicion that Plutarch's earlier descriptions of a false Eros as a predator hunting at night may be word play based on this passage. As well as criticism of the Stoics' position regarding the gods, the fact that hunting has a patroness is used to draw the parallel that if various human activities have divine guardians and guides then so likewise should Love have one - Eros.

There is another section of the *Laws* which may also have affected Plutarch's views. Plato in *Laws* 836 A - 837 D, when discussing love, mentions a third kind of mixed love, describing a honourable lover who is neither a chaste philosopher nor a mere pleasure seeker (837 A).

"δύο γὰρ ὄντα αὐτὸ καὶ ἓξ ἁμφοῖν τρίτον ἄλλο εἴδος ἐν ὅνομα περιλαβῶν πᾶσαν ἀπορίαν καὶ σκότων ἀπεργάζεται".

This third kind of loving mixes both and appears, apart from its influence on Plutarch, to be a possible origin of the three kinds of love model found in the Middle Platonic writings of Alcinous: (*Didask* Ch. 33 passim) and Apuleius (*De Platone et eius dogmate* Ch. 14. 2-10). Alcinous (Ch. 33) described a model of love which had three kinds of lovers, the noble soul in whom Eros inspired a striving for virtue, the vulgar bestial who sought for physical pleasures only, and a third kind of mixed loving in which love-directed towards physical beauty became transferred to the beauty of a soul. Apuleius' model (*De Platone et eius dogmate* Ch. 14) is almost identical to Alcinous' and both show a Peripatetic influence, apparently drawing on Aristotle's three kinds of *philia* (see Dillon 1990, p. 198 - 9). However Plutarch, Alcinous and Albinus appear to "Platonize" this Peripatetic model by using Eros as the focus of their model.
In the *Amatorius*, Plutarch condemns those who are mere pleasure seekers, approves of those who truly practisè a noble spiritual love, and criticises those who claim to be loving beautiful bodies for their souls while merely lusting after them. Plutarch could well have regarded conjugal *philia* as being of the third kind of mixed love, combining philosophical chastity of mind with the pleasures of physical union, and possessing the potential to become a truly reciprocal relationship of adult who can become equal partners.

**E. THE PHAEDO AND LOVERS**

Plutarch also takes two references from the *Phaedo* (69 C - E) on linked subjects and shifts their focus from philosophers to lovers. Just as initiates into the mysteries of traditional religion, and philosophers, as initiates into wisdom, have been purified in different ways and gain benefit in their afterlives or next incarnations, so likewise lovers benefit from initiation into Love's mysteries but by channeling their passions and desires, not by purging themselves free of all passions (*Amatorius* 761 F - 762 A).

Plato's statement about initiation was that it was a good thing (69 C)

"όθεν ἄγαθον μέν, ὥ ἐτάρε. τῇς ἐν Ἔλευσιν τελετῆς μετασχεῖν."

Philosophers as lovers of wisdom having been purified would come to dwell with the gods (69 C 2)

"καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ φρόνησις μὴ καθαρμὸς τῆς ἡ"

like initiates in the traditional religious mysteries (69 C 7)

"ο δὲ κεκαθαρμένος τε καὶ τε ἐλευσινὸς ἐκεῖσε ἀφικόμενος μετὰ θεῶν οἰκήσει."
There is also a reference to the doctrine of rebirth in the Amatorius (766 B) where the wanderings of the soul once freed from its body are described. True lovers ascend on wings (ἐπτέρωται), joining the gods' dance briefly until it is time for their rebirth,

"καὶ καταδραθὼν ἐπέρας ἄρχειτα γενέσεως"

but foolish spirits wander as ghosts (see Phaedo 81 C 4 - 82 D).

Plutarch has here depicted love's mysteries as being equal to those of philosophy and religion and possibly more powerful, for philosophers only ascend from earth to heaven whereas lovers may have the power to rise up from the lower realm of Hades to soar to Heaven! (Amatorius 762 A)

"εὐω δ' ὅρῳ τοῖς Ἐρωτός ὀργισσαται καὶ μῦσταις ἐν Ὁ Αἰδοῦ βελτίωνα μοῖραν οὐσιαν;"

even perhaps returning to the light (762 A)

"καὶ Ὁ Αἰδοῦ τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς ἀνοδον εἰς φῶς ὑπάρχειν;"

Lovers have their rites and mysteries as valid as those of religion and philosophy.

**A SHORT NOTE ON THE TIMAEUS**

Although Plutarch wrote frequently on the Timaeus, (see De animae procreatione in Timaeo) a favourite reference source of Middle Platonism, and made use of its doctrines elsewhere in his Moralia, in the Amatorius he only draws on it briefly to combine a discussion therein on the causes of madness with material from the Phaedrus. This single reference (758 D) seems to be a summary of Timaeus 86 D - 87A and is also similar to Republic 503 A and has already been dealt with in the discussion of the Phaedrus.
CHAPTER THREE
PLUTARCH AND EROS

Overall the predominant Platonic theme dealt with in the Amatorius is Eros - his divinity, roles, functions and effects. The Platonic method of discussing and discovering definitions was used by Plutarch to discuss the role of sexuality within society with criticism of paederasty and certain other types of sexual activity as anti-nature and unproductive of protracted relationships. Plutarch favoured stable permanent relationships over short term ones. He linked Eros and sex into discussions whose real theme seems to be how to have better ethical relationships.

WHAT IS EROS?

Defining Eros or rather redefining Eros appears to be one of Plutarch's major purposes for writing the Amatorius. Other philosophies such as Stoicism, as represented apparently by Protogenês (See Section Two), seem to have defined Eros as desire (ἐπιθυμία) and both Aristotle and the Epicureans (Zeuxippus, 767 C) preferred the term ὀρεξίς or πάθος in addition to using ἐπιθυμία. However for Platonists Eros is always more than just desire or a impulse (ὀρμή), biological or psychological, towards pleasure and reproduction. Some more recent (within this century) definitions of Eros follow.

Carson (1986 p. 17) pointed out that in Greek poetry "Desire moves" and "Eros is a verb". Eros is active not passive yet it is a movement whose aim is to provide what the lover lacks (p. 10).

"The Greek word eros denotes 'want', 'lack', 'desire for that which is missing.' The lover wants what he does not have."
Eros, although being (p. 63) "properly a noun, ... acts everywhere like a verb."
Yet is this "verb" personal or impersonal?

D'Arcy (1954, p. 419) noted that "Eros is the Greek ideal," and Sovatsky (1993, p. 73), from a viewpoint of humanistic psychology, has proposed a return to "Eros as mystery." Harding (1991, p. 23) defined Eros, from a Jungian viewpoint, as "the principle or spirit of psychic relatedness".

Plutarch lists well over a dozen definitions or descriptions of Eros and his status and functions in the Amatorius and most of these fall within three major categories - Eros as a God, Eros as being like the Sun, and Eros' role as a force for bonding friends of the same sex and married couples who become true friends and lovers.

**EROS THE GOD**

One of the most striking features of the Amatorius is that, as Dillon (1977, p. 200) puts it, "Eros ... is unequivocally a God." Although previous Platonists had described Eros as a daimon, following Plato's and Socrates' teachings, for Plutarch Eros is always a god, as he was for the poets from whom Plutarch so frequently quotes, and in the popular Hellenic religion of that period. Yet other Middle Platonists described him as a daimon. Alcinous ⁸ (Chapter 33, Greek text from Whittaker 1990, pp. 67 - 68) defined him as "'Ερωτα δαίμονα τινα μάλλον φατέον ήπερ θεόν ..." and stated, regarding erotic love (ἐρωτική) as an emotion, that there were three kinds, that of the noble soul (ἡ ἀστεία, ἡ ἀγαθή) in which Eros motivated a striving for virtue ἱπέρ θετήν), the vulgar (φαύλη, κακή) bestial (βοσκηματωδής) desire for physical pleasures "μόνων τοῦ σώματος", for the body alone, and a third mixed kind (μέση) in which the beauty of bodies directs

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⁸ For a translation of Alcinous including a commentary, see Dillon 1993. Another recent translation is that of Reedy 1991 who prefers "Albinus".
the soul to the beauty of souls, "τοὶ καλλονάς τῆς ψυχῆς", and upwards to true beauty.

Apuleius also regarded Eros as a daimon (De deo Socratis 155, Ch. 26) "Quorum e numero Somnus atque Amor" and like Alcinous, in De Platone et eius dogmate (ch.14 p. 92), thought that there were three kinds of love. These he called divinus, corruptissimus and permixtus. The first kind of love seems to be a combination of Platonic "heavenly" love and Stoic striving for virtue, the second definition, a criticism of the Epicureans perhaps, since love is described as seeking corrupt pleasure, and the third seems Platonic yet with a twist.

Plato's original model in the early dialogues had two kinds of love. Why did these two Middle Platonists describe a third path? Is this one of the first signs of the Neoplatonic love of triads or something else? Could they have been influenced by Plutarch's description of various types of lovers, false lovers who wanted only physical pleasure, "pure" philosophical friends, and lovers attracted by physical or spiritual beauty who become true partners and friends, not merely lover and beloved? The description by Plutarch in the Laws (836 A - 837 D) of a third kind of mixed loving is probably the origin of this idea for Plutarch, Alcinous and Apuleius alike, but perhaps it was Plutarch's description of mixed love as conjugal philia which revived interest in this particular Platonic concept.

Given Plutarch's interest in daemonology it is surprising how persistently he insists on Eros' divinity. He could have compromised and used his own doctrines, expressed elsewhere in the Moralia, to argue that Eros was a daemon who had evolved into a god to resolve the issue but does not. He rejected the doctrine of the Symposium (201 D - 204 C), allegedly taught by Diotima to Socrates, that Eros is a daimon, in favour of that of the Phaedrus, in which, in his palinode (242 D - E), Socrates asserted that Eros is a god or something divine, "θεὸς ἂ τι θείον".
Plutarch seems to have taken this hypothesis of Socrates and changed it into this proposition - *if Eros is something divine then he is a god*. This argument is a continuous thread binding the *Amatorius*.

The *Amatorius* opens with the statement that Autobulus is going to describe what happened at the Erotidea (743 F), the festival of Eros at Thespiae. This celebration of Eros and the Muses had brought together all the participants in the drama to follow and the debate opened with both sides claiming Eros for their own faction as patron (750 C). Although the first part of the debate was largely given over to the defence of Ismenodora and marriage, descriptions of Eros' functions as a god are included in the discussion.

Pemptides' reminder that *Lógos* was claimed by both sides as a divine blessing (755 F), "*θείον ἄγαθόν*", leads into his request for more information on why some unidentified persons have declared Eros to be a god. Plutarch's reply started by emphasising the importance of faith, though not faith in our sense of the word, as a synonym of religion, rather trust in traditional beliefs and teachings (756 B)

"*ἀρκεί γὰρ ἢ πάτριος καὶ παλαιός πίστις,*

and also in the antiquity of Eros' worship. In support of this he cited (756 E - F) lines from Hesiod (*Theogony* l. 12(l)) and Parmenides (fr. 15) and also (758 C) described Eros' relationship with Aphrodite and the Muses and Graces, as a companionship of a god with goddesses.

He then pointed out that if the other classes of friendship have patron gods like Zeus or Apollo than surely erotic love should also. For just as there are four kinds of friendship, each with its own patron god, also there are various kinds of divine possession (758 F) leading to madness of four types, prophetic, bacchic,
poetic and "areomania". Plutarch adds to this model arguing that if love is a form of enthusiasm (759 A ἐνθουσιασμὸς), leading to erotic madness (759 B), "τὴν δὲ ἐρωτικὴν μανίαν", then like the other forms of enthusiasm it has a god associated with it, which is Eros.

Plutarch also argued that Eros not only possesses humans, he also directs and guides their activities as a god (759 D).

"ὡς οὖν ἀθέτατον ὁ τῶν ἐρωτῶν ἐνθουσιασμὸς ἐστὶν οὖν ἄλλον ἔχει θεὸν ἐπιστάτην καὶ ἡνίοχον ἡ τοῦτον,"

and is equal in power to other deities, such as Ares (759 E) or possibly even stronger than the god of war (760 Ε)

"'Σκόπει τοῖς νομίσεις.' ἔφη, 'τοῖς ἄριστοις ἔργοις ὅσον ἔρως περιέστιν,' "

for not only does Eros possess men and women alike with capacities of heroic courage, but his power is also respected by the Lord of the Underworld as demonstrated by myths (761 Φ)

"ὅτι μόνῳ θεῷ ὁ Ἀιδής ἐστιν ποιεῖ τὸ προστατεύμενον." Eros plays a role in human activities even after life ends.

Plutarch next supported his references to history and ancient myth by citing the evidence of the mysteries of traditional religion and Plato's Phaedo (69 C) for Eros' power over souls to free them from lower realms, this world and the Underworld for the ascent to higher realms. He did not go into details, however, perhaps fearing that non-initiates might have been reading or listening, but simply referred to the mysteries as implying and supporting his case (762 Α).

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9 760 D - 761 F, as a section, consists of a series of historical illustrations of courageous lovers followed by references to legendary heroes such as Heracles and Alcestis.
"εῦ γὰρ δὴ λέγουσιν, καὶ θεία τ.νι τύχη παύουσι τάληθοις οἱ λέγοντες καὶ Ἀιδοὶ τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς ἀνδρῶν εἰς φῶς ὑπάρχοιν."

Plutarch also stated that he felt: myth, law (or perhaps custom) and reason agreed in his view (763 C), and also their human agents, poets, legislators and philosophers, Hesiod, Solon, and Plato, all agreed on Eros' divinity and place amongst the gods (763 E),

"περὶ ἐνὸς βεβαιῶς ὀμογνωμονοῦσι καὶ κοινὴ τὸν Ἐρωτα συνεγγράφουσιν εἰς θεοὺς ποιητῶν οἱ κράτιστοι καὶ νομοθετῶν καὶ φιλοσόφων".

Eros is again named a god by Plutarch at Amatorius 766 C, where Eros is described as avenging outraged lovers, but unfortunately the "Epicurean" lacuna interrupts the end of this passage which possibly went on to discuss Eros' darker side as a divinity. Finally Eros appears again at the end of the dialogue, unseen but powerful, causing change. In the closing lines of the Amatorius, Plutarch invites all to laugh at mortal folly, specifically Pisias', and join him in saluting the god.

"ἳωμεν, ὡς ἐπεγεγέλασομεν ἄνδρι καὶ τὸν θεὸν προσκυνήσωμεν. δὴ λος γὰρ ἐστὶ χαίρων καὶ παρὼν εὐμενῆς τοῖς πραττομένοις."

The god approves and has been graciously present throughout all these events, both the drama off stage in the narrative and the ideas of the dialogue, an ever present agent and active force rather like the sun.
**EROS AND THE SUN**

Eros, in Plutarch's view, was not just one of the Gods. He seems to suggest that Eros is an aspect of the One itself using the analogy of the Sun from the Republic. Grube (1980, pp. 102 - 3) described Plato as having sought something to bridge the gap between the noetic and physical realms to bind the whole together by providing a way for man to apprehend the Ideas and hence the One. For Plutarch this something is someone - Eros, for a god can be both energy and personality and as we shall see a little later on, Eros is a unifying force.

Brenk (1977, p. 18) called the analogy between Eros and the sun "one of the most important ideas" in Plutarch's dialogues. Again we have a lacuna problem as an unknown portion of the Egyptian digression is missing but just before the break we have the statement (764 B)

"τρίτον δὲ νομίζουσιν ἰΕρωτικὸν ἢλιον", that the sun is a third love, and as we have argued in the Egyptian digression, by this it seems a strong possibility that Horus was meant. Plutarch was trying to establish Eros as a universal power with solar aspects.

Plutarch drew on various images from the Republic as part of his analogy of Eros and the Sun. He invoked his reader's memories of the Republic in the Amatorius (764 B) with the statement that Eros and the Sun have ὀμοιότητα, neither are fire but both as forms of energy are analogous, being like fire (πῦρ) and radiant (θερμότης). The sun however functions in the physical, seen world, and Eros in the unseen world of thought, both providing power for growth. Eros does for the soul what the sun did for living bodies (764 B).

"καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀπ’ ἐκείνου φερομένη σύμματι παρέχει τροφῆν καὶ φῶς καὶ αὔξησιν, ἢ δ’ ἀπὸ τοῦτον ψυχαίς."
Eros is also like the sun in that both cause growth, for just as the sun provides nourishment, light and power for growth to a body, so Eros causes the soul to flourish (764 B - C).

In the Republic (509 A - C) the Sun is treated as being analogous also to the One and the Form of the Good (503 B 13 ἀνάλογον ἔκαστῳ). Although Plutarch did not directly mention the analogy of the prisoner emerging from the Cave derived from the Republic (514 A - 517 A) he must have had this in mind, for he states (764 C) that bodies and souls alike have to adjust gradually to the forces of light and love, before they are fully exposed, so that they will not be hurt, just as in the Republic the prisoner must be slowly led into the light.

"καὶ μὴν οὕτε σώματος ἀγάμηστος ἐξίς ἥλιον, οὔτε Ἐρωτα δύναται φέρειν ἀλήπος τρόπος ἀπαίδευτον ψυχής."

However there is an essential difference between Eros and the Sun, for while the sun displays the ugly and the beautiful alike "ἐπίσιτος τὰ καλὰ καὶ τὰ αἰσχρὰ" and the sun’s energies have a downwards movement, or rather are part of a downwards movement of Good = One > Demiurge > sun > visible world, Eros’ motion is upwards, back to the One via bodies and beauty. He does not just display (δείκνυον) like the sun but he is φέγγος, revealing the beautiful and overpowering lovers’ other senses, so that their attentions are focused on the beautiful.

Another aspect of this difference is that Eros can cause and is recollection - ἀνάμνησις. The light or rather the glare of the sun, however, dazzles the eyes and confuses memory (764 E - F).

"ἐκπλήττειν ἐσικε τὴν μνήμην καὶ φαρμάττειν τὴν διάνοιαν ὁ ἥλιος."
Eros is light, but for the soul, while being like fire in the flesh, and a guide (764 F) for the soul's return from the sensible realm back up to the intelligible, from the lower to the higher, the sun distracts our attention to this world by shining down upon us (764 F), but Eros is an upward movement (765 A).

"ἐξαναφέρων καὶ ἀναπέμπων ἐυμενής οἶον ἐν τελετῇ παρέστη μυσταγωγός."

towards the Plain of Truth where Beauty dwells, which seems to be one with Plato's Realm of the Forms and the One, a unity both above our world and our limited perceptions. Furthermore Eros does this not by shining on us but by working through our bodies (765 A).

"Ἐνταῦθα δὲ πάλιν περιπομένων αὐτῇ μὲν οὐ πλησίαζει ψυχῇ καθ' ἐαυτῆν, ἀλλὰ διὰ σώματος."

If Eros is like the sun but not the Sun, perhaps like Apollo, both are solar but not the sun, and as Dillon suggests; (1990, p. 215 = 393 D - E) both are aspects of the supreme one, the Good of the Republic or the Demiurge of the Timaeus.

"Such a god may be symbolized in this world by the sun (as in the Republic), but he is by no means to be identified with the sun (399 D-E) but perhaps the One for Eros creates unity and also as Plutarch states in De defectu oraculorum (433 E) this relationship Apollo - Sun - Eros is ἀναλογία - but a very important one."

The likeness yet difference is that of body to soul, vision to intellect, light to truth, linked yet separate parallels, De def. or. (433 E Ch. 42),

"... τοῦτο τὴν ἡλίου δύναμιν εἰκάζου εἶναι πρὸς τὴν Ἀπόλλωνος φύσιν,"

reflections and images that hint at the unity above. But what are Eros' other aspects than solar? He is also depicted by Plutarch as being a force for social bonding which will be explored in the next section. Souls do not ascend in isolation but through interaction.
ERS AS A FORCE FOR SOCIAL BONDING

Eros as a divinity has solar aspects but he is also a positive force for social interaction and unifying humans with other humans as well as with the Form of the Good and the gods. He does this through creating positive feelings for both sexes. In the *Phaedrus* Plato depicted Diotima as a teacher of Socrates and in the *Amatorius*, Ismenodora’s actions have become the initial focus of action and criticism by those who believed Eros was exclusively for males. Plutarch rebukes this with various historical and legendary examples, that illustrate Eros’ abilities as a bonding force for the betterment of both sexes, throughout both the Defence of Ismenodora against the (false) Stoccs in the first part of the *Amatorius* and the Defence of Eros in the second part. Ismenodora indirectly serves a didactic role like Diotima. For Plutarch one heroic female is not sufficient proof. He presents us with a variety of examples of heroic behaviour by virtuous wives to prove his arguments from both history and legend.

Protogenes and Pisias used Ἐρός’ name to create dissension but Daphnaeus and Plutarch used it to try and resolve the feud that had arisen. Marriage to them was a σύνοδος, a sacred κατάζευγις (750 C) to which Protogenes responds that Eros had never had any part or role in female areas of living, and that "true" love was masculine (751 A) ὁ παράδοξος, Daphnaeus, however, in response argues that love will lead to friendship in both sexes (751 C)

"εἰ γὰρ ὡς παρὰ φύσιν ὀμιλίαι ... οὐκ ἁναρεῖται τὴν ἐρωτικὴν ... εἰκός ...
ἐρωτεῖ τῇ φύσει χρώμενον εἰς φιλίαν διὰ χάριτος ἔξικνείσθαι."

for Eros creates - amongst other unions, (752 A) the conjugal love which renews the human race.

"τὸν γαμήλιον ἐκείνον καὶ συνεργὸν ἀθανασίας τῷ θυγητῷ γένει.
οἰκειομένην ἡμῶν τὴν φύσιν αὐθεὶς ἐξανάπτυξε διὰ τῶν γενέσεων."
Pisias still continued to insist (752 C) that women were unable to receive or give passionate love

"ἔπει ταῖς γε σώφροσιν οὔτ' ἐσὰν οὔτ' ἐράσθαι δήπον προσήκον ἔστιν."

and further that (752 E) woman had no part in love "γυναῖξιν ἀνεραστίαν," and Protogenes states that any declaration of love from a female would cause the disgusted recipient of such a declaration to take flight (753 B)

"ἔραν δὲ φασκουσαν γυναῖκα φυγεῖν τις ἂν ἔχοι καὶ βδελυγμαθείη".

Plutarch, after the narrative interlude and the departure of Protogenes and Pisias, returns to the theme of Eros' power for bonding as part of the divinity discussion, arguing that Eros is not just an emotion personified (757 C) but the god of the affectionate, sociable impulse for joining "τὸ δὲ φιλητικὸν καὶ κοινωνικὸν καὶ συνελευστικὸν", and he can also create, lead and direct marriage and concord (757 D)

"ποθοῦσι δὲ γάμου καὶ φιλητικοῦς εἰς ὁμοφροσύνην καὶ κοινωνίαν τελευτώσις οὐδεὶς θεῶν μάρτυς οὐδ' ἐπίσκοπος οὐδ' ἡγεμόν ὁ συνεργὸς ἡμῖν γέγονεν;"

So according to Plutarch it can be inferred that Eros also promotes virtuous friendship (758 C) "ὑφηγεῖται πρὸς ἁρέτην καὶ φιλίαν," being a guide, ἡγεμόνα, to mingling what's pleasant with what's best. "τὰ ἡδίστα μίγνυσι τοῖς καλλίστοις," for he is the patron god of erotic friendship, τὸ ἐρωτικὸν, (758 D) with powers to possess and cause madness, the process of enthusiasm, already discussed, but this possession (759 A) arouses affection for boys and women of virtue alike

"τὸν φιλητικὸν τούτον περὶ πίθας ὑγαθοῦς καὶ σώφρονας γυναῖκας".

Love as well as inspiring affection inspires courage as well in lovers of both sexes (760 D - 761 F), for Eros has the power to change human nature in many
other areas. If he can change the potentially virtuous into heroes, he can also infect lesser souls, driving them to heal and change. Eros (762 B - D) makes the slow-witted (ράθυμος) clever (συνετόν), the coward brave, and a miser (γλύσχροος) into a generous noble giver (δωρητίκος) and the ill-tempered (δυσκόλον) sociable because he is a divinity who can (767 E) fuse souls together (τοὺς ψυχὰς ... ψυντήκουσι) and turn someone who was ἀκολάστος (767 E) into a temperate lover. Eros makes physical union the beginning, not only of friendship or virtue (769 B - C) but of unity (ἐνότητα 769 F) for he is an essential part of nature (770 A - B) and mother earth herself might perish if not for the presence and power of (770 B) "ο δεινὸς "Ερώς".

The final proof of this presented by Plutarch (771 D) is the change in Pisias, who the messenger reports has changed from a misanthrope into a celebrant of Eros' mysteries, dancing at the wedding of Bacchon and Ismenodora. So the dialogue ends with a living current example of the actions of Eros and his divine power surprising us.

A NOTE ON PLUTARCH AND PROCLUS

Plutarch's views on Eros seem to have had minimal impact on most Neoplatonists. Porphyry, in his biography of Plotinus (Vita Plotini), does not mention Plutarch's name amidst a list of Middle Platonists and Neopythagoreans whose work Plotinus had studied and commented on in his teaching seminars (Ch. 14 ll. 12 - 14), though he does mention other second century A. D. figures, such as Numenius and Atticus, and one near contemporary of Plutarch's, the Pythagorean, Moderatus (Ch. 20. 75, Ch. 21. 5) but no other Platonists of the first

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10 See Table-talk Book One, Cuestion 5, 622 D - 623 A where the benefits of Love are also listed. While the Amatorius may have be written before Table-talk both of them have been dated from post 96 to 115 A. D. See Jones 1966 for a discussion of the dating of Plutarch's writings.
century A. D. Another Neoplatonist. Proclus, however, does acknowledge and mention the writings of Plutarch and several other Middle Platonists. This may have been due to Plutarch’s balance of theory and praxis, whereas the Neoplatonists tend to focus more on theory and metaphysics than ethics. Perhaps most of them viewed Plutarch as too “practical” an author to be of much use to them as a model.

Certainly Plutarch’s views on Ἕρως differ considerably from those of Plotinus. Plotinus saw Eros as part of a diviné triad (3. 5 and 6. 9 passim) and as having a major role in the linking of the soul to the divine (3. 5. 2, I. 39)

"τὸ εἶναι ἐν τούτῳ ἔχουσα μεταξὺ ὦσπερ ποθοῦντος καὶ ποθομένου;" and Eros performs this function regardless of whether he is a god, a daimon or an emotion (3. 5. 1), "πότερα θεός τις ἢ δαίμων ἢ πάθος." Plotinus’ hierarchical view of cosmic realities has Eros as an aspect of the universal Good, a kind of hypercosmic Love God and yet also a spiritual force of the daimonic realm and thirdly a host of individual lesser spirits, an uneven triad of the universal, the intermediary or unitary, and the particular and individual, all emanating from the Monad. His Eros is manifold and abstract.

Proclus holds differing views from both Plutarch and Plotinus and yet some ideas in common with Plutarch and possibly derived from Plutarch. Proclus’ Commentary on the First Alcibiades is the extant work which discusses his views on Eros to the greatest degree. Unlike Plutarch, Proclus cites a work called the Chaldaean Oracles (Chapter 26 p. 16 -17) but like Plutarch he uses another source to support his own theory and he also, like Plutarch, sees Eros as a force for union, for the passage he cites is about Eros as a cosmic force, emanating from the intelligible to sow a fiery bond throughout reality.

References are to O’ Neill 1965 for the English translation, chapter and page numbers, and to Wes erink 1954 for the Greek text
Proclus also views Eros as a guardian god of beautiful youths (Ch. 33, p. 21 and see Plato's *Phaedrus* 265 C) and as a god of friendship (Ch. 233, p. 153) who is both cause and guardian, who turns both lovers and beloveds towards true beauty and has power over several kinds of love. He also refers to Aphrodite as a guardian of marriage "who is the cause of all harmony, and of the union of the male with the female," 12 and (ibid. p. 38) expresses approval of the idea shared by Plato and Plutarch, that men and women had a common share of virtue.

Why Proclus shows more interest and knowledge of Middle Platonism and Plutarch than Plotinus is a mystery however his sharing of ideas with Plutarch is notable. It illustrates how an established doctrine can become incorporated into another philosopher's writings. Just as Plutarch used commentary on Platonic doctrines as a starting point for his own developments we see Proclus using earlier Platonists as a basis for his own teachings on Platonism.

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12 *Commentary on Timaeus* Taylor 1820 Vol. One, Bk. 1, p. 29
CHAPTER FOUR
PLUTARCH'S ORIGINALITY

Plutarch's god is not Plato's divine thing, though those concepts were the origin and basis of Plutarch's arguments. For Plutarch Eros was a universal being of cosmic power and many aspects, both immanent in his working through bodies and transcendent in his role in the ascent of human souls from the cycles of rebirth. Plutarch's union of ideas from various sources gave this god renewed wings and made an unseen power more perceptible to human minds so that true lovers of either sex could share those wings in flight.

Brenk (1988, p. 471) has stated his conclusion that the philosophical originality of the Amatorius lies not just in its treatment of conjugal love, since other Hellenistic and Imperial writers were discussing marriage as an ethical topos, but rather in its re-evaluation of marriage's role in the ascent upwards of the soul "and the identification of the Θύμος with a loving God." He called this revolutionary, a reasonable assessment if Plutarch's portrayal of contemporary opinions was accurate in depicting the majority of intellectuals, including many of his fellow Platonists, as excluding women from having any role in virtue, philosophy or love.

Thesleff (1994) in his discussion of Eros in Middle Platonism noted that the fragments available of Eudorus, Thrasyllus and other Middle Platonists had nothing to offer in the area of erotics (p. 119) and (passim) felt the Middle Platonists added little to Platonic doctrines of Eros unlike Plotinus. He also considers Plutarch's Amatorius to be more a literary than a philosophical work (p. 122) but he does note that Plutarch offered "a broad spectrum of ideas and
allusions" (p. 120) and comments on Plutarch's combining Egyptian mythology with Platonistic ideas.

The central factor in Plutarch's originality as a philosopher in the Amatorius is however, not just this re-evaluation of marriage and women to a higher status or the redefining of Eros into a loving God from being either a trickster godling or an abstract daimon. It is the linking of the two in Plutarch's arguments, for Plutarch seems to have realised that to exclude women from the realms of Eros might be a lessening of the God's power. Eros and Aphrodite are partners, and love and sex can work together in Plutarch's vision of Eros which resolves the ambiguities of Plato's doctrines into definite statements.

Eros would never be quite the same again.