The Passionate Statesman

Eros and Politics in Plutarch's *Lives*

JEFFREY BENEKER

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For Lisa,
and to the memory of
Effrosini 'Florence' Zieckas and Christos Capetanos

There is, therefore, a great irony in the Lives of these men, who were able to exercise exceptional self-restraint with respect to sexual and other appetites, but who could not moderate their *erōs* for glory or their ambition. Indeed, their sexual self-restraint allowed them to be free from distraction, and therefore even more zealous, in the pursuit of their self-rivalry. We may contrast them to Plutarch's Pericles, whose control over *erōs* was a component of his overall rational approach to politics, no less than to his private life.[99] For Alexander and Caesar, however, there is a sharp contrast between the private sphere, where they exhibit exemplary self-restraint, and the public sphere, where their desire for power and glory is unchecked. This allows their private lives to remain in the background, and to have very little effect on their public careers. In the next chapter I explore Lives that demonstrate the opposite example. In the *Demetrius–Antony*, Plutarch presents pointedly negative examples of statesmen whose lack of personal self-restraint had a much more profound impact on the trajectory of their public careers.

[99] See above, pp. 43–54.

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Erōs and the Fall of Mark Antony

In the previous chapter, I studied the Lives of men whose degree of control over erotic desire was closely connected to their ambition and seriousness of purpose, so that their self-restraint in erotic relationships corresponded to their success as civic or military leaders. In the *Antony*, Plutarch takes this pattern to an extreme and applies it in the opposite direction, describing a man who is so dominated by *erōs* that it causes him to abandon political alliances, to make tactical blunders, and ultimately to lose his life. In composing the Life, Plutarch creates a role for *erōs* that is central to his historical-ethical reconstruction of Antony's career, not simply making it an important element in his characterization of the Roman general, but depicting its influence as pervasive and even largely responsible for the outcome of the civil war with Octavian. A study of *erōs* in the *Antony* will elucidate important themes in the Life and will also demonstrate the extent to which moral virtue informed Plutarch's interpretation of history.

Plutarch's emphasis on the detrimental impact of *erōs* is in keeping with the spirit of the Life, for the *Antony* is intended to be a cautionary tale. Plutarch has paired this Life with the biography of Demetrius, son of Antigonus I, and he claims that both men, in fact, will serve the reader as negative examples. In the prologue to the book, he contrasts innocence that depends on an ignorance of vice (*τὴν ἀπειρίᾳ τῶν κακῶν καλλωπιζομένην ἀκακίαν*) with a wilful choice to live well (*ὀρθῶς*), in full knowledge of what is bad. The latter way is best, but a fully informed ethical choice requires both good and bad examples. These biographies, therefore, have earned a place in the *Parallel Lives* because they supply examples that ought *not* to be followed.[1] In

[1] See Duff (1999*b*), 313–14, for discussion of the scholarly debate about which other Lives should be considered 'good' or 'bad' examples; on the prologue in general, see Duff (2004).

justifying their inclusion, however, Plutarch draws attention to the nature of Demetrius and Antony rather than to their behaviour:

> *οὕτως μοι δοκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς προθυμότεροι τῶν βελτιόνων ἔσεσθαι καὶ θεαταὶ καὶ μιμηταὶ βίων, εἰ μηδὲ τῶν φαύλων καὶ ψεγομένων ἀνιστορήτως ἔχοιμεν. περιέξει δὴ τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον τὸν Δημητρίου τοῦ Πολιορκητοῦ βίον καὶ τὸν Ἀντωνίου τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, ἀνδρῶν μάλιστα δὴ τῷ Πλάτωνι μαρτυρησάντων, ὅτι καὶ κακίας μεγάλας ὥσπερ ἀρετὰς αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις ἐκφέρουσι. γενόμενοι δ᾽ ὁμοίως ἐρωτικοὶ ποτικοὶ στρατιωτικοὶ μεγαλόδωροι πολυτελεῖς ὑβρισταί, καὶ τὰς κατὰ τύχην ὁμοιότητας ἀκολούθους ἔσχον.*
>
> Thus I believe that we shall be more enthusiastic observers and imitators of the better lives if we do not leave the faulty and blameworthy lives unexamined. This book, then, will contain the life of Demetrius 'the Besieger' and Antony the *imperator*, men who bore strong witness to Plato, who said that great natures produce great vices as well as great virtues. Both of these men were erotic, fond of drinking, soldierly, generous, extravagant, and hubristic, and both endured the similar fortunes that followed on these qualities (*Demetr.* 1.6–8).

Nature, of course, cannot be imitated, and men with natures that had no potential for virtue would be of little use in an ethical biography. Thus, although Plutarch does not say it explicitly, the examples to be presented in these Lives must involve the reactions of these men to their innate qualities. These qualities, moreover, suggest moral complexity: some (extravagant, hubristic) are easy to condemn, but others (soldierly, generous) are not inherently faulty. Therefore, while identifying these men as negative examples, Plutarch also acknowledges that the course of their lives was not inevitable, pointedly stating that Platonic 'great natures' may be the cause of both great virtue and great vice. According to this idea, which Plato sets forth in the *Republic*, taking Alcibiades as his primary exemplar, a man is unlikely to become wholly virtuous or wholly depraved, but either virtue or vice will come to dominate, depending on his environment and education.[2] The reader is prepared, then, for the biographies of men with superior potential, but who failed spectacularly when they might instead have experienced brilliant success. This theme reinforces Plutarch's rationale for these Lives, since living rightly by choice requires some level of interaction with or knowledge of vice and,

[2] See Duff (1999*a*), 45–71, and (1999*b*).

therefore, the risk of seduction. In this chapter, then, I wish to explore how Plutarch has narrated the personal weaknesses and the missed opportunities for education and guidance that allowed Demetrius and Antony to react poorly to their natures, and (especially for Antony) to have practically no resistance to erotic desire.[3]

In fashioning these Lives, Plutarch was working within a well-known tradition. Demetrius is a relatively obscure historical figure, but Antony is an ancient celebrity, due in no small part to authors like Cicero, who exaggerated and then attacked his vices, and Plutarch, who rehearsed them with literary flourish.[4] The particular importance of erotic desire in Plutarch's *Antony* is well known and especially evident in Shakespeare's powerful adaptation of the Life.[5] In *Antony and Cleopatra* the relationship between the *imperator* and the queen is passionate, tragic, and exhilarating; however, it contains little trace of the philosophical treatment of *erōs* promised by Plutarch's reference to Plato in the proem to the *Demetrius–Antony*. That is not to say that romantic elements are completely absent from the Life, but they augment the narrative rather than define it.[6] And they have very little to do with Plutarch's focus on moral virtue and the dangers of an immoderate *erōs*. Plutarch is not interested in the love affair *per se*, but rather in the underlying desire that precipitated it, and in turn, the consequences of the affair for Antony's military struggle with Octavian.[7] In the words of Stadter, the Life is an examination of how a 'great leader could lose an empire'; that is, how a man with a great nature failed on a grand scale. Stadter, therefore, rejects a superficial interpretation of Antony's love affair:

[3] Perhaps because he sees an ethical connection between nature and vice, Plutarch goes on to treat the deaths of his subjects with sympathy rather than condemnation, even though they both die in wretched circumstances of their own making. Cf. Pelling (1988*b*), 16–17, and *Demtr.* 1.5, where sympathy for human suffering seems to lie behind Plutarch's disapproval of the ancient Spartan practice of forcing helots to drink large quantities of unmixed wine, and then showing them off in order to teach the Spartan youth about the dangers of drunkenness. Plutarch employs negative examples in the form of historical figures, but he deplores the deliberate abuse of human beings even for educational purposes. See further Duff (2004), 276–7.

[4] See Pelling (1988*b*), 118–20, on Cicero's *Second Philippic* as a source for Plutarch's account of Antony's youth; cf. McJannet (1993), 2–3.

[5] On Plutarch's *Antony* as Shakespeare's primary source, see Pelling (1988*b*), 37–45; Wilders (1995), 56–61.

[6] Cf. Brenk (1992), 4419, and nn. 141, 147; Swain (1992), 76.

[7] Conversely, modern studies or discussions of the affair tend to be more interested in Cleopatra than in Antony; cf. Preston (2008); Schiff (2009).

> The most obvious cause [of his failure] was his infatuation, growing to an obsession, with Cleopatra: a story which might easily become a standard tale of a man ruined by a bad woman. But Plutarch does not see it so simply. Looking below the surface, he uncovers earlier indications of features of Antony's character which at first appear as virtues, and bring him his success with the troops and his Roman peers, yet gradually reveal themselves as serious flaws, which make him susceptible to flattery, misjudgement, and fatal self-indulgence. Moreover, the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra reveals unexpected depths, and what begins as a dalliance, and the effort of a queen to win privileges for herself and her kingdom, becomes an intimate bonding of souls.[8]

As we saw with the heroes of other Lives, Plutarch narrates Antony's career as a personal story rather than a history: his political failure is attributed almost exclusively to the weakness of his own character rather than to the strength of his political enemies. This approach is further defined by Pelling, who sees Plutarch as interested not in simple moralizing, but in the deeper significance that lies behind Antony's actions, particularly with respect to Cleopatra. For instance, Pelling suggests that Plutarch introduces Octavia into the narrative in order to clarify Antony's mental torment, which arises not because he is torn between love for two women, an 'everyday dilemma' which would have made for a rather shallow analysis, but because he is torn between Cleopatra and 'the world of Roman values and duty, which Octavia represents'.[9] There were, of course, many forces working against Antony, both internal and external.[10] Taking the observations by Stadter and Pelling as a starting point, however, I trace how Plutarch has shaped his narrative to demonstrate the failure of Antony to develop and exercise a moral virtue that would have allowed him to stave off the fatal influence of erotic desire.

In the first section of this chapter, I argue that, as far as *erōs* is concerned, the *Demetrius* serves mainly to set the stage for the eroticism of the *Antony*. Plutarch uses the first Life to establish a model for an erotically reckless but nonetheless relatively successful

[8] Stadter (1999*b*), 360.

[9] Pelling (1988*b*), 12–15. Pelling refers to this sort of narration as 'descriptive moralism', as opposed to 'protreptic moralism'.

[10] Brenk (1992), 4414, rightly points out that 'overtly Antonius is eventually overcome by passion—above all by his love for Kleopatra—but also by drink, and in more general terms, dissolution and neglect of duty'.

general; then he describes an Antony who at first conforms to but then completely breaks out of this model. Although interesting in his own right, in Plutarch's rendering of his eroticism, the Greek general serves mainly as a foil for his Roman counterpart. An in-depth treatment of *erōs* in the *Demetrius*, therefore, is necessary for understanding the trajectory of the *Antony*.[11] From there, I demonstrate how *erōs* is a fundamental element in Antony's contest with Octavian, arguing that Plutarch has essentially reduced this contest to a struggle between Antony's reason and passion, rather than depicting it as a conflict between politicians, factions, or armies. Even so, this struggle is played out on the world stage: the cause of Antony's great failure, personal weakness rather than insufficient manpower or poor generalship, is on display for all to observe.

ERŌS IN THE *DEMETRIUS*

The basis for comparison between the Lives of Demetrius and Antony is in general quite broad. For example, both Lives incorporate theatrical imagery, exemplified by (though not limited to) Plutarch's transition from the *Demetrius* to the *Antony*: 'Now that the Macedonian drama is complete, it is time to bring on that of Rome' (*Demetr.* 53.10).[12] In keeping with this theme, Plutarch often remarks on the clothing, or costume, of each hero: they are well dressed at times of good fortune, but poorly attired when experiencing setbacks or defeat.[13] Moreover, both were successors to powerful men and struggled to establish their own supremacy. Finally, the settings of the Lives often overlap geographically, most notably at Athens, but also at Patras, Gaza, and Ephesus.[14]

[11] See Pelling (1988*b*), 18–26, and Brenk (1992), 4375–402, where more general analyses of the *Demetrius* form an integral part of their larger analyses of the *Antony*. Pelling considers not only the evaluation of behaviour but also the interrelated structure and the themes and patterns that Plutarch develops in the two Lives. Brenk offers a wide-ranging survey of the interconnections between the Lives.

[12] Translation of Pelling (1988*b*), 21–2, who discusses the tragic imagery at length. See also de Lacy (1952); Pelling (1986), 89–96 (= (2002*a*), 353–9).

[13] Pelling (1986), 91 (= (2002*a*), 355), and (1988*b*), 21; Duff (1999*a*), 125.

[14] Swain (1990*a*), 156; Brenk (1992), 4384–7.

As regards *erōs* in the *Demetrius*, Plutarch explicitly describes Demetrius' erotic disposition in the passages that document his relationship with the courtesan Lamia. When the Life is considered as a whole, however, the role of *erōs* is limited, especially in comparison with the *Antony*. Plutarch's Demetrius, though described as ἐρωτικός like his Antony, is able for the most part to mitigate the negative effects of erotic excess, and of unrestrained behaviour in general, through continued and sober success on the battlefield. The Lamia episode, nonetheless, serves to illustrate how Demetrius' eroticism might have become something more than a simple desire for sexual relations. According to Plutarch, Demetrius cared little for his wives (like the Macedonian kings before him, he was polygamous) and he preferred instead to consort with *hetairai* and free-born women, earning the worst reputation for carousing among the kings of his day (14.4). Lamia enters the story when Demetrius defeats Ptolemy's navy in a battle off Cyprus, capturing many of his ships and all of his supplies:

> *ἐν δὲ τούτοις ἡ περιβόητος ἦν Λάμια, τὴν μὲν ἀρχὴν σπουδασθεῖσα διὰ τὴν τέχνην—ἐδόκει γὰρ αὐλεῖν οὐκ εὐκαταφρονήτως—, ὕστερον δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς λαμπρὰ γενομένη. τότε γοῦν ἤδη λήγουσα τῆς ὥρας καὶ πολὺ νεώτερον ἑαυτῆς λαβοῦσα τὸν Δημήτριον, ἐκράτησε τῇ χάριτι καὶ κατέσχεν, ὥστ' ἐκείνης εἶναι μόνης ἐραστήν, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἐρώμενον γυναικῶν.*
>
> Among this loot was the famous Lamia, who at first was sought after on account of her artistry, for she was considered to be quite a talented pipe player, but later she shone for her erotic skills. At that time, then, although already past her prime and taking on in Demetrius one much younger than herself, she captured him with her charm and kept control over him, so that he was the *erastēs* of Lamia alone, but the *erōmenos* of other women (16.5–6).

This passage reveals an important dimension to Demetrius' erotic nature. First, Lamia captures him by means of charm and not by her physical beauty. I have argued that this sort of characterization indicates that the erotic relationship has moved beyond a basic physical attraction, which is brought about simply by an appetite, and that the lovers have begun to appreciate each other's character.[15] The highest stage in the development of these relationships is *philia*,

[15] See Chapter 1 in general, and cf. Plutarch's characterization of Cleopatra's attractiveness to Caesar (above, p. 146) and to Antony (below).

which is notably not mentioned and presumably not present here. But even so, it must be the case that Demetrius' *erōs* for Lamia is not the lowest sort of attraction either, for a relationship based on physical appearance or sexual pleasure alone does not last once physical beauty fades or the sexual desire has been satisfied. This notion probably lies behind Plutarch's statement that Demetrius 'was the *erastēs* of Lamia alone, but the *erōmenos* of other women', the implication being that Demetrius was actively pursuing a relationship with Lamia while he simply took advantage of the attraction that other women felt for him. The 'charm' in this passage, then, explains how Demetrius was attracted to an older woman who was beyond her prime and is a credit to the character of both individuals. In light of the introduction, where Plutarch warned that men with great natures are capable both of great virtue and of great vice, it seems that Demetrius had the potential to rise above basic carnal desire and to experience a higher form of erotic attachment. That he was not inclined or not able to realize the full potential of this relationship is partly what makes his Life a negative example.[16]

Demetrius' willingness to look beyond Lamia's age (and presumably her physical appearance) allowed him to enter into a somewhat enlightened erotic relationship, but the vocabulary employed by Plutarch is ominous. Lamia, he writes, 'overpowered' (*ἐκράτησε*) Demetrius and 'held' (*κατέσχεν*) him.[17] In contrast to Plutarch's Alexander and Caesar, who are deliberate about erotic affairs and make them serve political ends, his Demetrius has no such aspiration.[18] Rather, Plutarch underscores the hostility toward Demetrius that Lamia creates among the Athenians. They grow weary of his presence in their city, partly because he is spending their money to please his mistress (27.3–4), and they eventually express their hostility by refusing to allow him to re-enter the city after the battle of Ipsus (30). Plutarch condemns Demetrius' sexual extravagance at length, writing that he fouled the sanctity of the Acropolis by living there immoderately with prostitutes (including Lamia);[19] and he relates

[16] In a later chapter Plutarch includes several anecdotes that further demonstrate Demetrius' unusual attraction to the older woman (27.4–10).

[17] See also the brief genitive absolute clause at 19.6: 'when Lamia was obviously controlling him' (*τῆς Λαμίας ἀναφανδὸν ἤδη κρατούσης*).

[18] See Chapter 3.

[19] Plutarch names four prostitutes altogether (24.1); the list of women emphasizes the extent of Demetrius' irreverence.

anecdotes about Democles 'the Beautiful', who escaped Demetrius' advances by leaping into a cauldron of boiling water, and Cleaenetus, who sexually disgraced himself in order to convince Demetrius to relieve his father of debt (24). These stories illustrate Demetrius' erotic excess in Athens, which contributes to the anger of the populace, and they further emphasize that despite his rather enlightened attraction to Lamia's charm, Demetrius was grappling with, and succumbing to, his appetites and could be indifferent to the consequences of his behaviour.

But Lamia's role in the narrative, like that of Demetrius' licentiousness in general, is limited. In addition to her extended treatment in chapters 16 and 27, she appears as the subject of several brief anecdotes, in chapters 19, 24, and 25. But at the end of chapter 27, she is summarily dismissed from the narrative: 'so much, then, concerning Lamia' (*ταῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ Λαμίας*, 27.14). No other woman takes her place, and following her dismissal, Plutarch refrains from additional explicit comment on Demetrius' erotic activity. Demetrius even becomes reconciled with the Athenians (34). Thus the injury caused by his immoderate behaviour is temporary.

In fact, one important feature of Demetrius' character is his ability to keep his licentiousness from interfering with his military career.[20] Rather than being a dissolute figure, Demetrius emerges as a 'work hard, play hard' general who is as effective on the battlefield as he is reckless in his personal life, a fact to which Plutarch draws the reader's attention at the very beginning of the biography:

> *οὕτω δέ πως καὶ τὸ ἦθος ἐπεφύκει πρὸς ἔκπληξιν ἀνθρώπων ἅμα καὶ χάριν. ἥδιστος γὰρ ὢν συγγενέσθαι, σχολάζων τε περὶ πότους καὶ τρυφὰς καὶ διαίτας ἁβροβιώτατος βασιλέων, ἐνεργότατον αὖ πάλιν καὶ σφοδρότατον τὸ περὶ τὰς πράξεις ἐνδελεχὲς εἶχε καὶ δραστήριον· ᾗ καὶ μάλιστα τῶν θεῶν ἐζήλου τὸν Διόνυσον, ὡς πολέμῳ τε χρῆσθαι δεινότατον, εἰρήνην τ' αὖθις ἐκ πολέμου τρέψαι πρὸς εὐφροσύνην καὶ χάριν ἐμμελέστατον.*
>
> And so in some sense his character was naturally a terror for men as well as a joy. For he was very pleasant to be with, and in devoting his time to a lifestyle of drink and luxury and banqueting, he was the softest of kings; but on the other hand, he continuously kept a very serious and vigorous attitude towards his duties. In this way he emulated Dionysus above the other gods, since that god was very terrible in waging war, but also outside of war, very eager to use peacetime for amusement and joy (2.3).

The careful distinction between work and play is essential to Plutarch's characterization of Demetrius, underlying more than one episode in the Life. In chapter 19, for instance, Demetrius' father, Antigonus, would like to wage war against Ptolemy, but due to his health, he must turn the matter over to his son. In recounting Demetrius' assignment, Plutarch takes the opportunity to reinforce the two sides of his life.[21] He goes on to relate three brief jokes told by Antigonus about his son's philandering and luxurious lifestyle (19.6–9), but he ends with an unambiguous statement about the trust that Antigonus had in Demetrius' ability to carry out his duties.[22] Plutarch concludes the chapter by comparing Demetrius to the Scythians, who pluck their bowstrings in the midst of their revelries in order to recall their courage (*θυμός*), which has been loosed by drink (19.10). Such a man was Demetrius, who 'giving himself sometimes completely to pleasure and at other times to duty, kept the one completely separate from the other, and he was no less mighty in his preparations for war'.[23] In an extended narration of Demetrius' immoderate lifestyle and his hubristic treatment of the Athenians (in chapters 23–7), Plutarch further describes his subject's abuses and his unflattering, excessive behaviour when away from war. But in order to emphasize the contrast and the complete separation of Demetrius' two worlds, Plutarch concludes the period in Athens and

[20] Cf. Pelling (1988*b*), 22: 'In *Dtr.* [Plutarch] emphasizes that Demetrius' excesses never compromised his military efficiency'. Plutarch makes this point explicitly in *Comp. Demetr.-Ant.* (3.1–3).

[21] 'He made use of his son, who through his good fortune and experience was already carrying out successfully the most difficult assignments, unhindered by his revelling, extravagance, and drinking. For in peacetime, he would pursue these things wildly, and in his leisure he gave himself without restraint and excessively to pleasures; but in time of war, he was sober-minded like those who were temperate by nature' (*ἐχρῆτο τῷ παιδί, καὶ δι' εὐτυχίαν καὶ δι' ἐμπειρίαν ἤδη τὰ μέγιστα καλῶς διοικοῦντι, τρυφὰς δὲ καὶ πολυτελείας καὶ πότους αὐτοῦ μὴ βαρυνόμενος. εἰρήνης γὰρ οὔσης ἀφύβριζεν εἰς ταῦτα, καὶ σχολάζων ἐχρῆτο πρὸς τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀνειμένως αὐτῷ. καὶ κατακόρως, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πολέμοις ὡς οἱ φύσει σώφρονες ἔνηφε*, 19.4–5).

[22] 'Thus [Antigonus] endured Demetrius' behaviour with patience, on account of his effectiveness in other [military] situations' (*ταῦτα δ' οὕτω πράως ἔφερε τοῦ Δημητρίου διὰ τὴν ἄλλην πρᾶξιν*, 19.10).

[23] *ἐκεῖνος δὲ τὰ μὲν ἡδονῇ διδοὺς ἁπλῶς ἑαυτόν, τὰ δὲ σπουδῇ, καὶ θάτερα τῶν ἑτέρων ἄκρατα μεταχειριζόμενος, οὐχ ἧττον ἦν δεινὸς ἐν ταῖς τοῦ πολέμου παρασκευαῖς* (19.10). Demetrius' *ἡδονή* included both drink and sex: in the proem, he is called *ποτικός* as well as *ἐρωτικός*.

moves on to the battle of Ipsus with the following statement: 'The fortunes and deeds of the man whom we are writing about transport the narrative, as it were, from the comic back to the tragic stage'.[24] Demetrius is a sober, capable general, and the reader cannot assume that irresponsibility in his private life will lead to poor performance on the battlefield.

Plutarch, however, is also eager to demonstrate from the early chapters of the Life just how precarious the balance between the public and private spheres can be. In chapter 9, having just taken control of Athens, Demetrius sails against Megara but then loses his focus before beginning his attack:

> *πυθόμενος δὲ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Πολυπέρχοντος γενομένην γυναῖκα Κρατησίπολιν ἐν Πάτραις διατρίβουσαν οὐκ ἂν ἀηδῶς γενέσθαι μετ' αὐτοῦ, περιβόητον οὖσαν ἐπὶ κάλλει, καταλιπὼν τὴν δύναμιν ἐν τῇ Μεγαρικῇ προῆλθεν εὐζώνους τινὰς ἔχων σὺν αὐτῷ, καὶ τούτους πάλιν ἀποστρέψας ἀπεσκήνωσε χωρὶς ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαθεῖν τὴν γυναῖκα συνελθοῦσαν αὐτῷ. τοῦτό τινες αἰσθόμενοι τῶν πολεμίων ἐξαίφνης κατέδραμον ἐπ' αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ φοβηθεὶς καὶ λαβὼν χλαμύδιον εὐτελὲς δρόμῳ φεύγων ἐξέφυγεν, ὀλίγου δεήσας αἰσχίστην ἅλωσιν ἐξ ἀκρασίας ἁλῶναι. τὴν δὲ σκηνὴν μετὰ τῶν χρημάτων ᾤχοντο λαβόντες οἱ πολέμιοι. τῶν δὲ Μεγάρων ἁλόντων. . . .*
>
> Having learned that Cratesipolis, the former wife of Alexander, son of Polyperchon, who was famous for her beauty, was staying in Patras and was eager to be with him, he left behind the force at Megara and went to meet her, taking some light-armed soldiers with him. He even turned these men back and pitched his tent away from everyone so that the woman might not be noticed as she came to him. However, some of his enemies perceived that he was there and made a sudden attack. And he, in fear, took a shabby cloak and fled at a run, making his escape and just barely avoiding a most shameful capture on account of his lack of self-control. His enemies came and took his tent along with all its contents. After the capture of Megara . . . (9.5–8).

This anecdote nearly contradicts Plutarch's premiss by criticizing Demetrius for allowing his desire for Cratesipolis to interfere with a

[24] *τὴν δὲ διήγησιν ὥσπερ ἐκ κωμικῆς σκηνῆς πάλιν εἰς τραγικὴν μετάγουσιν αἱ τύχαι καὶ αἱ πράξεις τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὃν διηγούμεθα* (28.1). Brenk (1992), 4394, in reference to the excesses in Athens, goes so far as to suggest that Plutarch 'treats the diversions with more whimsy than damnation' and quotes this passage in support. This conclusion might understate the seriousness of Plutarch's opinion, but Brenk is right in noticing that Plutarch has not condemned Demetrius completely.

military operation. Plutarch is indeed critical of Demetrius' lack of self-control, but equally important is the narrative's abrupt return to the siege at Megara, which is concluded swiftly and successfully. Once we read that Demetrius has barely escaped his enemies and lost his possessions, we immediately learn that he has taken the city, and the narrative continues with a description of how he manages the victory. What could have been a disaster for Demetrius' army has become simply an instance of self-indulgence on the part of its general.

Some have interpreted this anecdote as demonstrating that, contrary to Plutarch's statement in the opening of the Life (2.3, quoted above), Demetrius' excesses did, in fact, interfere with his military operations. Pelling sees a contradiction between that earlier statement and the narrative of the Life, citing this passage as well as a later one (44.8), where Demetrius' men refuse to continue supporting his luxurious lifestyle.[25] Duff refers to this episode to help make his point that Plutarch in general includes such anecdotes when they illustrate 'the devastating effect which [the heroes'] sexual passions have on their careers'.[26] However, as I read this passage, other than losing his tent, Demetrius suffers no harm at all as a result of his escapade: the general is indeed *ἐρωτικός* and reckless, but he does not fail to win the battle.[27]

The maintenance of a delicate balance between military discipline and erotic licence is hardly a heroic quality, however, and Plutarch has already warned his reader that Demetrius will be a negative example. The interpreter's problem is to decide how his behaviour contributed to his downfall. Phillip de Lacy links Demetrius to the tyrannical man of Plato's *Republic*: 'His appetite was for those pleasures which Plato found the most tyrannical: love and wine.'[28] He attributes Demetrius' 'final catastrophe' to his luxury and hubris, citing examples from his licentious behaviour at Athens (23–7) and his vice-ridden rule in Macedonia (42). De Lacy, therefore, reads the *Demetrius* as a 'Plutarchian tragedy' where the moral decline of the protagonist is accompanied by tragic imagery, leading to his downfall.

Plutarch, however, rather than portraying Demetrius' vices as increasing, describes them as constant throughout his life, or at

[25] Pelling (1988*b*), 22–3; on *Demetr.* 44.8, see below.

[26] Duff (1999*a*), 97.

[27] Thus Manni (1951), 24, writes: 'ma l'episodio, anche se va considerato reale, non ebbe conseguenze'; cf. Wheatley (2004).

[28] de Lacy (1952), 168–71, citing *Resp.* 573a–b.

least throughout his maturity, making it difficult for a reader to connect Demetrius' final defeat directly to his bad behaviour. The peak of licentious living, as far as the narrative goes, occurs at Athens, in chapters 23–7, and the end of chapter 27 marks the halfway point of the Life. Seventeen chapters, almost one-third of the biography, pass between the decadence of Athens and Demetrius' retreat from Macedonia in chapter 44. During this span, Plutarch devotes only a single chapter to Demetrius' behaviour (42), where he relates that the people were growing weary of his ostentatious displays, his luxury, and his neglect of duty as their king. Although Demetrius' vices continue, he has in Macedonia the same problem that he had in Athens, and therefore he appears to be consistently bad, not becoming worse.

Moreover, Plutarch avoids creating a direct correspondence between Demetrius' defeat and his lifestyle. His downfall begins in Macedonia (44) and ends with his surrender to Seleucus in Asia Minor (49). In describing Demetrius' flight from Macedonia, Plutarch does mention that his men have grown tired of his luxurious living (44.8). However, Plutarch raises this point *after* the men have become disheartened by the success of the opposing generals, Pyrrhus and Lysimachus, and desire to change sides. When they eventually join Pyrrhus, it is because of his mild treatment of their comrades who have already been captured. Only after the troops are deserting *en masse* do some of his associates encourage Demetrius to flee, using as their argument that the soldiers are refusing to fight any longer in support of his luxury. The refusal of his men to fight, then, is more the result of Demetrius' declining fortune than a rebellion against his licentious living. The reader is left with the impression that Demetrius' men were willing to endure his licentiousness in exchange for military success. In their desertion, we observe just how precariously Demetrius had been balancing his public and private lives. The delicate dance that he performs at Megara is not effective in Macedonia, since he is no longer delivering victory.

Plutarch, in fact, emphasizes the essential role of fortune as Demetrius loses Macedonia, at one point comparing the cyclical nature of military success to the phases of the moon. 'To this [waxing and waning of the moon],' he continues, 'one might better equate the affairs of Demetrius and the increases and witherings, the elevations and the humblings that accompanied him, whose rule, as it appeared to fade altogether and be snuffed out, shone forth again, and certain

of his powers, growing little by little, fulfilled his hope.'[29] Demetrius goes on to fight valiantly in Asia Minor and is nearly successful against Seleucus, but then another reversal of fortune, a severe illness, overtakes him, causing many more of his men to desert (48.5). He makes a final attempt to escape before surrendering to Seleucus, after 'recognizing that the last of many changes of fortune had come upon him' (49.5–9).[30]

Like de Lacy, Pelling also connects Demetrius' behaviour to his demise, although less fundamentally, arguing that the vicissitudes of fortune play a larger role, while still allowing that Demetrius' story has a tragic element:

> Fortune raises Demetrius and Fortune casts him down: there is little interest in his character as a causal force. He is a spectacular man *to whom things happen*. It is fundamentally military disaster which brings him down, and as we have seen [Plutarch] tries to bring out that his excesses did not affect his campaigns. Still, it is not coincidence that [Plutarch] juxtaposes his most elaborate description of Demetrius' outrages (23–7) with the disaster of Ipsus (28–9), even if the outrages do not cause such disaster. We know that a man with such flaws and 'tragic' ostentation will suffer catastrophe, rather as in tragedy we often know that a hybristic character will fall, whether or not the *hybris* causes his fate. Men with such vices do not prosper: the pattern is simple and familiar.[31]

An adverse fortune certainly contributed to Demetrius' defeat. Nonetheless, the consequences of Demetrius' licentious behaviour are not fully explained by the tragic notion that a hubristic man must somehow suffer defeat, even if that notion works quite well in the Life on a literary level. At the outset of the book, Plutarch promises his reader something more: the biography of two men with great natures and, therefore, great capacity for vice. He emphasizes that their natures, and thus their vices, will in large part determine the course of their

[29] *ταύτῃ μᾶλλον ἄν τις ἀπεικάσαι τὰ Δημητρίου πράγματα καὶ τὰς περὶ αὐτὸν αὐξήσεις καὶ φθίσεις καὶ ἀναπληρώσεις καὶ ταπεινότητας, οὗ γε καὶ τότε παντάπασιν ἀπολείπειν καὶ κατασβέννυσθαι δοκοῦντος ἀνέλαμπεν αὖθις ἡ ἀρχή, καὶ δυνάμεις τινὲς ἐπιρρέουσαι κατὰ μικρὸν ἀνεπλήρουν τὴν ἐλπίδα* (45.4).

[30] *Δημήτριος δὲ πολλῶν μεταβολῶν αἰσθόμενος ἐσχάτην ἐκείνην ἧκουσαν ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν* (49.5).

[31] Pelling (1988*b*), 24–5. Just before the quoted passage, Pelling observes that '*tyche*, *eutychia*, and *metabole* are key words'. See his n. 80 for a list of passages containing these terms.

careers, and he expects that the negative example they provide will, in turn, encourage his readers to be more enthusiastic imitators of better examples.[32] Therefore, in addition to the rather abstract idea that something bad will happen to a person who behaves badly, the ethical component of these Lives requires that the reader be able to identify a more direct cause and effect relationship between the character of these men, their actions, and the consequences.[33]

I suggest that there are two essential, practical lessons in the *Demetrius*, both related to Demetrius' inability to exercise self-control and both vital for the lessons that Plutarch will go on to draw in the *Antony*. First and most basic, as I have argued above, the reader discovers that despite Demetrius' attempt to separate private from public conduct, he cannot ensure that the two will remain distinct. Allegiance to a dissolute, abusive general is difficult when he is victorious; there is no reason to suffer him when he is losing. Fortune, in the form of military reversal rather than tragic nemesis, throws Demetrius off balance, forcing him to confront the consequences of his lack of self-control after depriving him of military success, the only thing that made his off-duty behaviour bearable to his men, and even to his father. Antony will briefly maintain a similar balance, but the personal and public will merge much sooner for him and will bring about a much more catastrophic demise.

The second and more profound lesson has to do with a lack of contentment, the ultimate cause of Demetrius' dissolute life. Plutarch turns to this point as he sums up his career. After narrating his capture by Seleucus and his forced confinement, Plutarch writes that Demetrius bore his captivity well, but that later he turned to

[32] Cf. the quotation of *Demetr.* 1.6–8 above, to which may be added Plutarch's statement about the utility of Demetrius and Antony as negative examples. He likens his method to that of Ismenias the flute teacher, who put good and bad musicians before his students and instructed them, 'Play like this one, not like that one' (1.6).

[33] Candau Morón (2000) discusses Plutarch's relationship to the Hellenistic historians, who tended to distance historical events from the experience of their readers. One comment in particular supports the contention that Plutarch's aims would not be completely satisfied by a purely tragic reading of the *Demetrius*: 'The explicit goal of the *Parallel Lives* is to offer models of conduct, paradigms designed to instil a desire to emulate and perform virtuous actions. This goal reflects a continuity between the arena in which the protagonists act and the space occupied by the reader(s). Plutarch's didacticism, his desire to offer a mirror in which readers of his biographies may measure themselves, prevents his work from becoming alien to the reality of life and excludes the distant, "dramatic" focus that seems to have influenced Hellenistic historiography' (461).

drinking and dice in order to pass the time. Plutarch offers two possible explanations for the change in his attitude. One is that Demetrius sought to escape the sober contemplation of his circumstances and hoped to hide his thoughts in drunkenness. The other explanation is as follows:

> ... *εἴτε συγγνοὺς ἑαυτῷ τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν βίον, ὃν ἔκπαλαι ποθῶν καὶ διώκων ἄλλως ὑπ' ἀνοίας καὶ κενῆς δόξης ἐπλάζετο καὶ πολλὰ μὲν ἑαυτῷ, πολλὰ δ' ἑτέροις πράγματα παρεῖχεν, ἐν ὅπλοις καὶ στόλοις καὶ στρατοπέδοις τὸ ἀγαθὸν ζητῶν, ὃ νῦν ἐν ἀπραγμοσύνῃ καὶ σχολῇ καὶ ἀναπαύσει μὴ προσδοκήσας ἀνεύρηκε. τί γὰρ ἄλλο τῶν πολέμων καὶ τῶν κινδύνων πέρας ἐστὶ τοῖς φαύλοις βασιλεῦσι, κακῶς καὶ ἀνοήτως διακειμένοις, οὐχ ὅτι μόνον τρυφὴν καὶ ἡδονὴν ἀντὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τοῦ καλοῦ διώκουσιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι μηδ' ἥδεσθαι μηδὲ τρυφᾶν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἴσασιν.*
>
> ... or he realized that this was the life which he had so long desired and pursued, but which he had foolishly missed through folly and empty glory. He had brought many troubles on himself and many troubles on others, as he sought the good in arms and fleets and camps, the good that he had now unexpectedly discovered in lack of action, leisure, and rest. For what other end to wars and dangers is there for worthless kings, whose characters are base and foolish?—not just because they pursue luxury and pleasure instead of virtue and the good, but also because they do not even know how to enjoy themselves and to luxuriate properly (52.3–4).[34]

Demetrius was unable to perceive what *τὸ ἀγαθόν* really was, and so he pursued military glory in a misguided attempt to find contentment and submerged himself in drink and sex when not at war. Duff quotes this passage and compares it to the dialogue between Cineas and Pyrrhus (*Pyrrh.* 14.1–4), where Cineas attempts to convince the general that he will not increase his happiness through additional conquests. Pyrrhus, however, is unable to refute Cineas, but also unable to refrain from returning to war.[35] This was, according to Plutarch, Demetrius' foolishness as well. Fortune indeed cast him

[34] Translation of Duff (1999*a*), 118. I prefer to read *τὸ ἀγαθόν* as 'contentment', interpreting 'the good' that Demetrius was seeking to be something that would bring him true happiness. Flacelière and Chambry (1977) and Scott-Kilvert (1973) have used 'happiness' itself, while Duff and Brenk (1992), 4394, have simply 'the good', and Perrin (1920) has 'the highest good'.

[35] Duff (1999*a*), 112–18.

down, perhaps, on a literary level, as retribution for his hubris.[36] But ultimately Demetrius' own choices were the catalyst for both his ambitious military career and his luxurious lifestyle, including his erotic excess. By using his free time to pursue ἡδονή and τρυφή rather than ἀρετή and τὸ καλόν, he denied himself the virtuous moderation that might have brought contentment earlier in his life. Once Seleucus confined him, moderation was in a sense imposed upon him externally, and he ironically turned to drinking, according to Plutarch's second explanation, when he realized that the constant alternation between his duties as general and his excesses in leisure had been a symptom of the aimlessness of his life.[37]

Demetrius, in the end, achieved nothing of lasting significance, and his faults were not great enough to be the sole cause of his ruin. In comparison with Plutarch's Antony, Demetrius is a lesser character: Antony will outpace him in both the magnitude of his accomplishments and the severity of his defeat. In this way, both men had great natures, but Antony had a *greater* nature. The role of the *Demetrius* in this pair of Lives, therefore, is to establish a baseline of behaviour, both in terms of military success and personal excess, so as to provide a starting point, rather than simply a *comparandum*, for the narration of Antony's life.

There are two additional aspects of the *Demetrius* that influence our reading of the *Antony*. One has to do with marriage. As I wrote above, when Lamia is dismissed from the Life in chapter 27, so are the rest of Demetrius' erotic affairs. The situation is different for his wives, who provide not an object for his *erōs* but a means for political alliance.[38] In chapter 14, Demetrius is united with two politically significant women. While in Athens, he marries Eurydice, a descendant of Miltiades. The Athenians are honoured by the alliance, but

[36] There is no denying that Plutarch intended the Life to have tragic overtones, given the theatrical imagery, as pointed out by de Lacy and Pelling.

[37] Cf. Brenk (1992), 4391–3, who documents in both the *Demetrius* and *Antony* an alternation of episodes containing 'drinking and merrymaking' (in enclosed spaces) with episodes containing battles (particularly sea battles in wide open spaces). More generally, Candau Morón (2000), following La Penna (1976), traces in Greek and Latin historiography a type of man who alternates between military prowess and licentiousness. In no place, however, does Demetrius struggle with his vices; cf. Pelling (1988*b*), 25; Candau Morón (1999), 144.

[38] On the political utility of marriage for a Macedonian king, see Carney (2000).

Demetrius is casual (εὐχερής) when it comes to marriage. He also marries Antipater's daughter Phila, rather against his will:

> *ταύτην ὡς ἔοικε κομιδῇ νέον ὄντα τὸν Δημήτριον ἔπειθεν ὁ πατήρ, οὐκ οὖσαν αὐτῷ καθ' ὥραν ἀλλὰ πρεσβυτέραν, λαβεῖν· ἀπροθύμως δ' ἔχοντι λέγεται πρὸς τὸ οὖς τὸ Εὐριπίδειον εἰπεῖν· «ὅπου τὸ κέρδος, παρὰ φύσιν γαμητέον», ὁμοιόπτωτόν τι τῷ «δουλευτέον» εὐθυρρημονήσας.*
>
> His father, as it seems, convinced Demetrius, while still a very young man, to marry this woman, although she was not the right age for him but older. Since Demetrius was disinclined, he is said to have spoken into his ear the line from Euripides: 'Where there is gain, one must marry against nature,' saying offhand 'one must marry' for the similarly inflected 'one must be a slave' (14.3).

The line from Euripides (*Phoen.* 395) neatly summarizes Demetrius' use of his marriages for political ends. Examples of their utility are plentiful. In the Peloponnesus, he marries Deidameia, sister of Pyrrhus (25.2); then, after being defeated by Antiochus, he believes he has a refuge in Athens, in part because Deidameia is there (30.3). Later he sends Phila to her brother Cassander to represent his interests (32.4). Phila also helps to secure the good feeling of the people, who remember her father Antipater's fairness, when Demetrius gains control of Macedonia (37.4). After Demetrius is attacked by an alliance of kings and forced out of Macedonia, he crosses to Asia and, before embarking on a campaign against Lydia and Caria, he marries Ptolemais, the daughter of Ptolemy and Phila's sister, Eurydice, thereby creating another political alliance (46.5). Each of Demetrius' wives serves a political purpose, but none of them exerts control over him or influences his policies.[39]

With respect to the management of his marriages, Plutarch's Demetrius is very similar to his Alexander. In Chapter 3, I argued that although some sources describe Alexander as erotically attracted to Roxane, Plutarch is careful to temper his description of the marriage with political advantage. He also has Alexander approach his concubine Barsine because of the quality of her education and family,

[39] Phila does indirectly influence Demetrius' actions in a war against Rhodes: Demetrius fights angrily against the tenacious Rhodians after they capture a shipment of supplies, including some letters *en route* to him from Phila, and forward it to Ptolemy (22.1–2). She commits suicide when Demetrius suffers his reversal in Macedonia (45.1). Demetrius also used his own daughter Stratonice to create a political alliance by marrying her to Seleucus (31.5–32.3); on this marriage, see below.

not only out of *erōs*, and his marriage to Darius' daughter is nothing but political. Missing from the *Alexander*, however, is any account of a purely erotic relationship. This of course is not the case for the *Demetrius*. The *Antony*, in contrast to both of those Lives, introduces the reader to a statesman who combines immoderate *erōs*, marriage, and politics, and reaps disaster.

A second important feature of the Life is the story of Antiochus and Stratonice (38). Even though it does not involve Demetrius directly, this anecdote prepares for the entrance of Antony by setting *erōs* and its psychological implications at centre stage after Demetrius' own affairs have ceased to play any role in the Life. Demetrius was ἐρωτικός, but he never struggles against *erōs* and so cannot demonstrate the contest between a guiding reason and an inflamed passion. An example of such a contest is necessary, however, since the *Demetrius* provides a basis for evaluating the *Antony*, where the potency of *erōs* and the inadequacy of Antony's rational response are crucial elements in the Life.

In the anecdote, Demetrius' daughter, Stratonice, is the wife of Seleucus, but Seleucus' son, Antiochus, develops an erotic desire for her (συνέβη . . . τὸν Ἀντίοχον ἐρασθέντα τῆς Στρατονίκης νέας οὔσης). He attempts to fight against his *erōs*, and the tale immediately becomes one of psychological struggle: Antiochus does fierce battle with his passion (πολλὰ ποιεῖν τῷ πάθει διαμαχόμενον) but in the end his reason is subdued (κεκρατῆσθαι τῷ λογισμῷ). As a result, he becomes physically ill. His doctor, Erasistratus, recognizes his *erōs*-induced sickness and observes him while visitors are present in order to discover who has inspired the malady. Whenever Stratonice comes, Erasistratus notices that Antiochus exhibits all the physical symptoms of desire as described by Sappho (31 Lobel–Page). The doctor then reports to Seleucus, who, before he learns of the object of Antiochus' desire, declares that he would even part with his own wife to secure his son's health. The exchange is made, Antiochus recovers and receives a governorship, and the story ends.[40]

This story prepares the way for the *Antony* by introducing into the *Demetrius* explicit descriptions of psychological struggle, but Alexei

[40] Other versions of this anecdote exist, including one that has Hippocrates healing Perdiccas, and some that feature doctors other than Erasistratus curing Antiochus; see Pinault (1992), 61–77. It appears that only Plutarch mentions Sappho when describing the symptoms of lovesickness.

Zadorojnyi has argued that it also makes an important Platonic allusion. Plutarch paraphrases the Sapphic symptoms in great detail, creating, Zadorojnyi argues, an allusion to the *Phaedrus*, which contains a paraphrase of the same poem. 'The Sapphic symptoms of passion are recognizable, but transferred from the body to the spiritual sphere. Plato is thus reinterpreting the poem in line with his metaphysical tenets.' When Plutarch adopts Sappho 31 as a paradigm, therefore, the result is that 'the erotic turmoil of Antiochus . . . reflects the Platonic psychological model'.[41] Moreover, Seleucus channels Antiochus' erotic impulses into a happy marriage, something that Antiochus was unable to do himself. In this way, again following Zadorojnyi, Seleucus acts according to Plutarch's own thinking as expressed in the essay *On Moral Virtue*, taking the part of the reason that must guide the passions to profitable expression.[42] The Platonic undertone of the anecdote helps to connect the later portion of the Life to the beginning, where Plutarch relied upon the Platonic notion of great natures to describe his subjects' character. But the more obvious overtones—the delicate balance between reason and passion, the physical weakness that results when reason is overwhelmed, and the usefulness of an external guide—emphasize or introduce important themes on which the second half of the book depends. Bearing this in mind, I turn to a reading of *erōs* in the *Antony*.[43]

ANTONY'S WOMEN

In the *Antony* we find the themes of the *Demetrius* not simply re-employed but elaborated. Whereas the Greek general maintains a separation between his professional and private lives for most of his career, the Roman struggles with obeying such a boundary even in his youth, and in the end his private life overwhelms his responsibilities as general and triumvir. As a result, although both figures have the

[41] Zadorojnyi (1999), 521–3.

[42] Zadorojnyi (1999), 528–9. The reference to *On Moral Virtue* is 443b–c.

[43] Cf. Swain (1992), 78–9, who says that the story of Stratonice 'is at least some indication of what is to come' in the *Antony*, though he is arguing that it introduces elements of the novel and pantomime, which Plutarch will use in depicting the relationship of Antony and Cleopatra.

same basic characteristics (cf. *Demetr.* 1.8), the *Antony* represents a progression in the character type that Plutarch is presenting in this book.

A critical difference between the two halves of the book is to be found in the method that Plutarch uses to present Antony's erotic excess. In the *Demetrius*, although the hero is both polygamous and philandering, no one woman plays a significant role. Lamia receives the most attention, but she, along with the briefly mentioned Cratesipolis, represents not only herself, but also Demetrius' paramours in general. Plutarch describes encounters with no other lovers besides these two, leaving the reader to infer the other liaisons that took place during the course of his life. Likewise Phila, Demetrius' most important wife, makes only a few appearances and influences her husband's actions in a relatively minor way. This is not the case in the *Antony*, where Plutarch has given important, and even leading, roles to two of Antony's Roman wives, Fulvia and Octavia, and to Cleopatra. The presence of these women in the biography is partly due to historical fact, but Plutarch has also shaped his narrative so as to demonstrate Antony's struggle with *erōs*.[44]

In order to organize the development of the *Antony* with regard to *erōs*, I have divided the Life into six periods, each being defined by the influence of one or more of Antony's wives, or, in the case of the first period, the absence of a wife altogether.[45] In suggesting this arrangement, I am not asserting that Plutarch intended to reduce Antony's career simply to a series of marriages, and I do not mean to imply that other logical divisions would not also be enlightening. I have chosen this particular division in order to demonstrate how Plutarch has

[44] I use the term 'Roman wives' for Fulvia and Octavia, and although I refer to Cleopatra as a wife as well, I avoid taking a stand on the question of Cleopatra's legal status or when a marriage might have taken place. The couple were most likely married in the eyes of the Alexandrians, but certainly were not husband and wife from a Roman point of view; see Huzar (1986), 107; Scuderi (1984), 79; Martin (1990), 152–3; Reinhold (1988), 220–2. Pelling (1988*b*), 219–20, reads Antony's statement about Cleopatra in his letter to Octavian as a question and, therefore, a denial: *uxor mea est?* (Suet. *Aug.* 69.2); on Suetonius' text, see Kraft (1967); Carter (1982), 191; Moles (1992). As Pelling also notes, Plutarch refers to Cleopatra both as Antony's *erōmenē* (53.10) and also his wife (*Comp. Demetr.-Ant.* 4.2, where he calls Antony polygamous). The legal standing of the marriage, however, is not vital to understanding Antony's struggle with *erōs*.

[45] Also, the concluding period (a single chapter) summarizes Antony's descendants and so does not feature the influence of a wife.

used Antony's various wives to represent the psychological struggle between reason and *erōs* in his soul. During each period, Antony's struggle with *erōs* advances, while the boundaries of the periods are marked by important changes in the status of Antony's women. The chart below represents my blueprint for examining the Life.

Chapters	Featured Wives
1–9	—
10–24	Fulvia
25–30	Fulvia and Cleopatra
31–57	Octavia and Cleopatra
58–86	Cleopatra
87	—

Except for the years of his youth, Plutarch's narrative of Antony's career consistently relies upon the presence of a wife or wives. Moreover, Plutarch has simplified the biography with respect to Antony's marriages: he avoids discussion of Antony's first wife, Fadia, and only briefly mentions the second, Antonia, identifying her simply as his cousin and the daughter of Cicero's co-consul, while recounting a dispute between Antony and Dolabella (9.3).[46] The chart also reveals the predominance of Cleopatra. From chapter 25 forward, she is an integral part of the biography.[47]

The Early Years

The first nine chapters of the Life, while they do not feature any of Antony's wives, do establish the relationship of the *Antony* to the *Demetrius* and lay the groundwork for the marital and erotic relationships that follow.[48] The very first chapter raises certain expectations when it describes how Antony's father desired to make a loan to his friend but could do so only without his wife's knowledge. Once

[46] On Fadia and Antonia, who are known mostly from sources hostile to Antony, see Huzar (1986); Myers (2003). Pelling (1988*b*), 137, is doubtful of the marriage to Fadia, suggesting that Cicero exaggerated an affair or invented the relationship altogether.

[47] Cleopatra is mentioned by name in 37 out of 87 chapters, or 43 per cent, and her involvement with Antony spans 63 chapters, or 72 per cent, of the Life. She is absent from chapters 38 to 49, Antony's campaign against the Parthians, but she is prominent in chapters 37 and 50, thus framing the episode.

[48] On Antony's youth, see the comments of Pelling (1988*b*), 118–20.

caught, he must beg forgiveness. With this anecdote, Plutarch introduces two important ideas: generosity towards one's friends and submission to one's wife. Both are themes in Antony's life, but the second appears to serve an additional purpose. While it is not uncommon for Plutarch to begin a Life with information about a hero's childhood or family, he does not describe similar behaviour in Demetrius. Having just made the transition from that Life, Plutarch is drawing his readers' attention to a new style of marital relationship, one where the wife takes a leading role. While nothing specific has been asserted about Antony, we still perceive that the ground has shifted.[49]

Antony's father submitted to his wife, and in the next chapter Plutarch introduces the young Antony himself, who unsuccessfully seeks guidance and training from several sources. He first attaches himself to Curio, who is unrefined (*ἀπαίδευτος*) with regard to his pleasures. Curio attempts to make Antony more manageable by exposing him to a life of unrestrained drinking, womanizing, and feasting, with the result that Antony incurs great debt and is expelled from his father's house (2.4–5).[50] Next he associates with the infamous Clodius, but finds him an unsuitable mentor. Having grown tired of Clodius' *mania* and fearful of his enemies, Antony goes to Greece to engage in military exercises and to practise rhetoric (2.6–7). However, even this attempt to find structure or guidance is cut short when Antony leaves to begin his military career (3.1). This is not simply an opportunity lost: rather than help to curb his lack of restraint, his brief encounter with formal education seems to have reinforced his youthful tendencies:

> *ἐχρῆτο δὲ τῷ καλουμένῳ μὲν Ἀσιανῷ ζήλῳ τῶν λόγων, ἀνθοῦντι μάλιστα κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον, ἔχοντι δὲ πολλὴν ὁμοιότητα πρὸς τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ, κομπώδη καὶ φρυαγματίαν ὄντα καὶ κενοῦ γαυριάματος καὶ φιλοτιμίας ἀνωμάλου μεστόν.*
>
> He employed the so-called Asiatic fervour in his speaking, which was particularly popular at that time, and which had a great similarity to his lifestyle: it was boastful and arrogant and loaded with empty exaltation and erratic ambition (2.8).

[49] On childhood and family in the proemial opening to a Life, see Stadter (1988); Duff (2008*c*).

[50] See Swain (1990*a*), 152–3, who observes Plutarch's inclusion of 'a different type of instruction Antony had to receive, his "schooling" in lubricity'. Swain briefly surveys the influence of Curio, Fulvia, and Cleopatra, then concludes: 'The teacher–pupil image is a nice one for Plutarch to use in presenting Antony as easily led by bad examples around him.' On Fulvia and Cleopatra, see below.

Pelling points out that *φρυαγματίας* and *γαυρίαμα* are terms usually applied to horses: the one is a name for a hot-tempered horse, used here as an adjective (*φρύαγμα* meaning 'snorting' or 'whinnying') and the other means 'prancing'.[51] These terms, in addition to his 'erratic ambition', colourfully illustrate Antony's lack of restraint.[52] Although Antony will become respected for his military accomplishments, the reader learns very early in the Life that his 'Asiatic' tendencies are not curbed in his youth, and he has not found anyone to teach him restraint when he is away from the battlefield.

Plutarch builds on the model of Demetrius, first demonstrating the contrast between Antony's admirable performance as a soldier and his decadent mode of living, then blurring the distinction between them. While serving as commander of the cavalry for Gabinius in Syria, Antony distinguishes himself first in Judaea, then at Pelusium in Egypt (3). Antony's riotous living appears vulgar to his peers, but that same lifestyle, along with his willingness to share the soldiers' mess, earns him the respect of his men. Erotic licence plays a critical role in creating a bond with the soldiers:

> *ἦν δέ που καὶ τὸ ἐρωτικὸν οὐκ ἀναφρόδιτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτῳ πολλοὺς ἐδημαγώγει, συμπράττων τε τοῖς ἐρῶσι καὶ σκωπτόμενος οὐκ ἀηδῶς εἰς τοὺς ἰδίους ἔρωτας.*
>
> Neither was his eroticism in the least without the favour of Aphrodite, but even in this he made himself popular among many of the men, assisting them in their erotic affairs and not unpleasantly taking abuse for his own (4.5).

In these early chapters, then, Plutarch is developing the image of Antony as a good solider, but also as untrained and unrestrained, with a special inclination toward erotic excess. His choice of the rather rare adjective *οὐκ ἀναφρόδιτον* to describe *τὸ ἐρωτικόν* only reinforces Antony's preoccupation with sex and erotic affairs.[53] In

[51] Pelling (1988*b*), 120; cf. above Chapter 1, n. 72.

[52] See Pelling (1989); Swain (1990*a*).

[53] Pelling (1988*b*), 125, writes that '*οὐκ ἀναφρόδιτον* is "not unbeloved of", "not inappropriate to" Aphrodite, i.e. showing charm and grace, not just lust: a rare usage, apparently confined to [Plutarch]'. But cf. Lucian, *Dial. D.* 17.2, *ἐγὼ μὲν καὶ ἄλλως ἀναφρόδιτός εἰμι εἰς τὰ ἐρωτικά*, which may be translated as 'and besides, I am unsuccessful in erotic matters'; see the entry in LSJ.

this he begins to move away from the model of Demetrius, whose strength as a commander lay in keeping his private life separate from his military life. It seems that Antony's success as a leader actually depends, at least in part, on erotic licence. Moreover, his vulgarity, attractive to regular soldiers but repellent to other officers, relegates him to a subordinate position and raises doubts about his ability to contend with his peers.[54] In the next section Plutarch narrates Antony's involvement in the civil wars and further blurs the line between leisure and duty (5–8). Antony performs well for Caesar in pursuit of his enemies and endears himself to the soldiers as he once again shares in their exercises and meals. However, when Caesar leaves him in Rome, he is unbearable to others on account of his behaviour. Antony exhibits laziness and anger in carrying out his duties, and he falls into disrepute for his affairs with other men's wives (6.6). Plutarch writes that Caesar's rule was ruined by his friends, of whom Antony, who had the most power, caused the most damage.[55] Even so, Antony is a complex figure, and Caesar follows the path of Demetrius' father Antigonus, overlooking Antony's crimes on account of his excellence in warfare. In Plutarch's view, he made the right choice (*οὐδαμῇ διήμαρτεν*, 7.1), a testament to the fact that despite his behaviour, a man of Antony's talents could not easily be dismissed.

Nonetheless, his carousing and drunkenness offend the people, and his military performance no longer impresses the better and more sensible Romans.[56] Examples of his offensive behaviour are plentiful. And in chapter 9, just before Fulvia enters the narrative, we meet Cytheris, Antony's favourite mistress (*γύναιον ἀγαπώμενον*) and counterpart to Demetrius' Lamia (9.7). Like Lamia, Cytheris is a type as well as an individual: in the absence of explicit documentation of Antony's other affairs, we may take his relationship with Cytheris,

[54] Cf. the opposite impression created by the young Alexander, whom Plutarch describes as exceeding expectations (*Alex.* 4.8, 5.1) and who himself refuses to race at Olympia unless he can have 'kings as competitors' (4.10); see above, pp. 106–8.

[55] Cf. Pelling (1997*a*).

[56] 'Therefore, he was hated by the people, and he did not endear himself to the good and prudent men because of his way of living, as Cicero says, but he was hated by them, too' (*τοῖς μὲν οὖν πολλοῖς ἐκ τούτων ἀπηχθάνετο, τοῖς δὲ χρηστοῖς καὶ σώφροσι διὰ τὸν ἄλλον βίον οὐκ ἦν ἀρεστός, ὡς Κικέρων φησίν, ἀλλ' ἐμισεῖτο*, 9.5). Duff (1999*a*), 120, notes that Plutarch often expects his readers to share the opinions of the 'best people'; see also Brenk (1992), 4450.

whose name bears a close connection to Aphrodite's common epithet Cytheria, as representative.[57] However, even though the introduction of Cytheris helps to cement the connection between Antony and Demetrius, it also marks an important point of departure for Antony's character. Demetrius never advanced beyond his split personality, and thus he never outgrew Lamia. That is, although Plutarch removes Lamia from the *Demetrius* at the halfway point of the Life, he never introduces any other sort of erotic affair or describes any modifications to Demetrius' behaviour. The portrait drawn in the first half of the Life holds true until the end. This is not the case with Antony. With the introduction of Fulvia, Plutarch is poised to take him into new territory in his relationships with women.[58]

Fulvia

In Plutarch's coverage of the early years of Antony's life, Antony was in need of guidance and restraint. He was unable to find it in the men with whom he associated, and he was never properly educated during his stay in Greece. But with the intervention of Caesar and the assertiveness of Fulvia, Antony makes a new beginning in chapter 10:

> *ἔοικε μέντοι τὸ πολὺ τῆς ἀβελτερίας αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀσωτίας ἀφελεῖν ὁ Καῖσαρ, οὐκ ἀναισθήτως τὰ πλημμελήματα δεξάμενος. ἀπαλλαγεὶς γὰρ ἐκείνου τοῦ βίου γάμῳ προσέσχε, Φουλβίαν ἀγαγόμενος τὴν Κλωδίῳ τῷ δημαγωγῷ συνοικήσασαν, οὐ ταλασίαν οὐδ' οἰκουρίαν φρονοῦν γύναιον οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου κρατεῖν ἀξιοῦν, ἀλλ' ἄρχοντος ἄρχειν καὶ στρατηγοῦντος στρατηγεῖν βουλόμενον, ὥστε Κλεοπάτραν διδασκάλια Φουλβίᾳ τῆς Ἀντωνίου γυναικοκρατίας*[59] *ὀφείλειν, πάνυ χειροήθη καὶ πεπαιδαγωγημένον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀκροᾶσθαι γυναικῶν παραλαβοῦσαν αὐτόν.*

However, Caesar appears to have removed the greater part of Antony's flaws and wantonness, since he was well aware of his transgressions. For

[57] Cytheris was the stage name of the actress Volumnia; see Pelling (1988*b*), 138–9.

[58] Chapter 9, the end of the first period, concludes with yet another description of the licence of Antony's private life. The Romans are outraged that while Caesar is enduring hardships outside of Italy, his men are living luxuriously in Rome and treating the citizens hubristically. Likewise, chapter 10 opens with a similar story: Antony has bought Pompey's house but refuses to pay. The house of Pompey will become the home base for Antony's dissolute living (21.2–4; see Pelling (1988*b*), 169), just as Demetrius carried on in the Parthenon (*Demetr.* 23.5).

[59] I have adopted Dindorf's emendation of *γυναικοκρασίας*, which is endorsed by Pelling (1988*b*), 141–2.

> having been released from that style of life, Antony turned to marriage. He married Fulvia, who had been the wife of Clodius, the demagogue. She was not a woman who cared about spinning wool or housekeeping, nor would she consent to control a merely private man; rather, she wished to rule a ruler and command a commander, so that Cleopatra owed a teacher's fee to Fulvia for her domination of Antony, since when she took him over he was fully manageable and trained from the beginning to obey women (10.4–6).

There is much in this short passage that links chapter 10 to the preceding chapters, completing the description of Antony's immoderate lifestyle but at the same time marking a change in course. It was Caesar's indulgence that allowed Antony to live licentiously in Rome in return for his assistance on the battlefield, just as Antigonus had indulged Demetrius. Now Caesar appears to have revoked the privilege, perhaps in response to Antony's refusal to accompany him on campaign (10.3). Moreover, in his youth, Antony had sought the guidance of Curio, who fostered his tendency toward excess, and Clodius, who drove him away with his madness. Now Antony has found an alternative to extravagance in none other than the widow of Clodius. Plutarch must have included the detail as much for its irony as for its accuracy. Lacking self-control, Antony accepts a wife who desires to govern him, something that the reader has expected since the opening anecdote about Antony's father. Nothing quite like this happens in the first Life: Demetrius' father never grows tired of his lifestyle or encourages more discipline in his son. Only Seleucus comes close to managing him, confining him to prison at the end of his career and forcing him to confront the aimlessness of his life. Thus Antony exhausts the model of Demetrius in the first nine chapters of the Life. His story will take a new direction, one that depends heavily on his interactions with his wives, as Plutarch foretells when he describes Fulvia's role in training Antony to be subservient to women. At this turning point in the Life, Plutarch is really introducing Cleopatra, foreshadowing the dominance that she will come to have over Antony's life and career.[60]

[60] On Fulvia's political career, see Babcock (1965); Bauman (1992), 83–9. Wyke (2002), 219–20, credits Plutarch's portrait of a domineering Fulvia to Augustan invective against her, and she argues that this portrait is also applied to Cleopatra: 'The potential for this form of invective to be transferred wholesale to the figure of Cleopatra is fully realized in Plutarch's biography of Antony, where his wife passes on to his whore a man already thoroughly trained in the habit of *gynaikokratia* (feminine

Chapter 10 has set a weighty expectation for the period of Fulvia's influence and should mark an important shift in Antony's behaviour. While Caesar is alive, Antony performs well as his lieutenant, although the fatherly Caesar must intervene to curb the personal rivalry between Antony and Dolabella (11–12). Following the dictator's assassination, Antony becomes the most influential man in Rome (14.4) by averting civil war and through his management of Caesar's records (13–15). Even in his initial struggle with Octavian, he displays his excellence and impresses his soldiers with his ability to endure the hardships of a difficult campaign after having led a soft life (17.3–5).

Antony, however, cannot continue to meet these new expectations. Following the bloody establishment of the Second Triumvirate (19–20), he returns to his old ways:

> *ἦν δὲ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ Ῥωμαίοις ἐπαχθὴς ἡ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχή, καὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ὁ Ἀντώνιος τῆς αἰτίας εἶχε, πρεσβύτερος μὲν ὢν Καίσαρος, Λεπίδου δὲ δυνατώτερος, εἰς δὲ τὸν βίον ἐκεῖνον αὖθις τὸν ἡδυπαθῆ καὶ ἀκόλαστον, ὡς πρῶτον ἀνεχαίτισε τῶν πραγμάτων, ἐκκεχυμένος.*
>
> In fact, the rule of the three was burdensome in many ways to the Romans, and Antony took most of the blame, since he was older than Caesar [i.e. Octavian] and more powerful than Lepidus, and since he had poured himself back into that luxurious and undisciplined life, once he had thrown off his public duties (21.1).[61]

rule).' Wyke is certainly correct that Plutarch's narrative is influenced by Augustan representations of women in general and Cleopatra in particular (see further her chapter entitled '*Meretrix regina*: Augustan Cleopatras'), but her characterization of Plutarch's Cleopatra as a whore goes beyond the evidence of the Life. The only title that Plutarch uses for her is *erōmenē* (53.10), which in Plutarch's time does not strictly designate a prostitute; see McClure (2003), 22–5. She dominates Antony, to be sure, but Plutarch is more interested in the weakness in Antony that allows him to be controlled than in claiming that Cleopatra had become a 'non-woman or a pseudo-man' (Wyke, 219). Pelling (1988*b*), 247, by contrast, notes that although Plutarch presents Cleopatra as a courtesan (the equivalent of the Roman *amica*, in opposition to Octavia, the *uxor*), his 'readiness to see her viewpoint is striking'. Moreover, at the end of the Life, Plutarch will describe her affection for Antony as genuine. As I wrote in Chapter 1, Plutarch was willing to depict women as intellectually, philosophically, or politically skilled without calling their femininity into question, even if this required argumentation, as in the case of Ismenodora. See also Pelling (2001), 299–300.

[61] Pelling (1988*b*), 169, has 'he reared up and threw off his troubles' for *ἀνεχαίτισε τῶν πραγμάτων*. This translation captures the essence of *ἀνεχαίτισε*, but it seems that 'public duties' (or 'business' or 'public affairs', LSJ III.4) is a more appropriate translation here for *τῶν πραγμάτων*, since Antony is being blamed by the Romans

Despite his seniority and influence, Antony prefers pleasure to governing. The rest of the chapter documents Antony's riotous living in Pompey's house, proof that the discipline he showed while on campaign and in leading the government during its most difficult period was short-lived (21.2–4). Finally, realizing that he was insatiable, Octavian divides control of the army and the money between Antony and himself, and they both set out against Brutus and Cassius, leaving Lepidus to manage affairs in Rome (21.5). Following their success at Philippi (22), the two triumvirs part ways: Octavian, who has been taken ill, is carried back to Rome, while Antony travels to Greece (23) and then Asia (24), where he engages in more licentious living.

Chapter 24 concludes the period of the influence of Fulvia alone. As we have seen, the marriage appears to signal the start of a more orderly and disciplined life for Antony, but it becomes a lost opportunity. He surrenders his leading role in Roman government, almost voluntarily, because of his lack of restraint. The period ends with an indictment of Antony's behaviour and a pointed indication of his vulnerability:

> *ἐπεὶ δὲ Λεύκιον Κηνσωρῖνον ἐπὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος καταλιπὼν εἰς Ἀσίαν διέβη καὶ τῶν ἐκεῖ πλούτων ἥψατο, καὶ βασιλεῖς ἐπὶ θύρας ἐφοίτων, καὶ βασιλέων γυναῖκες ἁμιλλώμεναι δωρεαῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλας καὶ κάλλεσιν ἐφθείροντο πρὸς αὐτόν, ἐν Ῥώμῃ δὲ Καίσαρος στάσεσι καὶ πολέμοις ἀποτρυχομένου, πολλὴν αὐτὸς ἄγων σχολὴν καὶ εἰρήνην ἀνεκυκλεῖτο τοῖς πάθεσιν εἰς τὸν συνήθη βίον.*
>
> Then he left Lucius Censorinus in command of Greece and crossed into Asia, and he seized hold of the wealth there. Kings were coming and going at his door, and the wives of kings, vying with each other in gifts and beauty, were corrupted by him. While in Rome Caesar was troubled with factions and wars, Antony himself passed his time in great leisure and peace, and was rolled by his passions back into his usual life (24.1–2).

The indictment comes in Plutarch's implicit comparison of Antony to Octavian, who was attending to duty in Rome. The contrast not only indicates the frivolity of Antony's living, but also the missed opportunities: Antony was doing nothing to solidify his position, other than

for the burden imposed by the rule of the triumvirate. Flacelière and Chambry (1977), who have 'affaires', seem to concur, while Perrin (1920), Waterfield (1999), and Scott-Kilvert (1965) all have 'troubles'. The verb ἀνεχαίτισε also continues the horse imagery; see Chapter 1, n. 72.

extracting heavy tax levies from the local population and so creating dissatisfaction (24.7–8).[62] Likewise, his vulnerability becomes apparent. In Rome, during the brief period of Julius Caesar's rule, Antony allowed himself to slip into an excessive lifestyle and required the guidance first of Caesar then of Fulvia to set him straight. Fulvia, however, although described by Plutarch as eager to manipulate Antony, apparently took no action to curb his luxury.[63] Thus, even though he maintained a political stature equal to Octavian's, Antony's private life in Rome was unchanged following their marriage. In Asia, left without guidance altogether, he is 'cycling back' into his old ways under the influence of his passions. When Curio leads Antony into drinking, womanizing, and feasting, Plutarch calls those activities 'intemperate' (ἀκόλαστος, 2.4), and the Romans find fault with Antony's life, which is 'luxurious and intemperate' (ἡδυπαθής, ἀκόλαστος, 21.1).[64] At the end of chapter 24, Antony is primed for the arrival of Cleopatra. When he meets her, he is completely unprepared to deal with a dominating woman and the erotic desire that she engenders within him.[65]

Fulvia and Cleopatra

Chapter 25 opens with the formal introduction of Cleopatra, and the first appearance of *erōs*.[66] The names of Cleopatra and *erōs* are

[62] Cf. Demetrius' behaviour at Athens and the resulting hostility.

[63] Fulvia did, however, promote his military and political interests, perhaps even setting her own agenda. While Antony was in Asia, she and Antony's brother, Lucius, were engaging Octavian militarily; see *Ant.* 28.1, 30.1–2, and also Pelling (1996), 14–17.

[64] *Akolasia*, in the Aristotelian hierarchy of dispositions adopted by Plutarch, is the opposite of *sōphrosynē* and the state of the soul wherein the passions dominate reason; see above, p. 16. The adjective ἡδυπαθής also suggests that Antony's passions were overpowering him.

[65] In addition to establishing Antony's susceptibility to passion in this chapter, Plutarch also demonstrates Antony's simplicity (24.9–12), a trait that Cleopatra will exploit as his chief flatterer. See Pelling (1988*b*), 181–2.

[66] Forms of *erōs* have already appeared in the Life, though not in direct reference to Antony's passions: in the passage quoted above (4.5), Plutarch uses τὸ ἐρωτικόν and the plural of ἔρως as names for Antony's and his soldiers' sexual adventures; at 6.3, Caesar, Alexander, and Cyrus the Great are said to have had 'an inexorable *erōs* for ruling' (ἔρως ἀπαρηγόρητος ἀρχῆς); see above, p. 103. Significantly, the *erōs* of Demetrius and Antony is focused elsewhere.

intertwined as if the reader were invited to think of them as one and the same:

> *τοιούτῳ δ' οὖν ὄντι τὴν φύσιν Ἀντωνίῳ τελευταῖον κακὸν ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρως ἐπιγενόμενος καὶ πολλὰ τῶν ἔτι κρυπτομένων ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀτρεμούντων παθῶν ἐγείρας καὶ ἀναβακχεύσας, εἴ τι χρηστὸν ἢ σωτήριον ὅμως ἀντεῖχεν, ἠφάνισε καὶ προσδιέφθειρεν.*
>
> The *erōs* for Cleopatra, Antony's final evil, came upon him, when his nature was in such a state. It roused up and stirred with frenzy many of the passions still hidden and quiet inside him, so that, even if anything beneficial or capable of saving him was still resisting, it eliminated and destroyed that, too (25.1).

In introducing *erōs* into the biography, Plutarch also signals the beginning of the end. Although less than a third of the way through the Life, Plutarch informs the reader that the *erōs* for Cleopatra, Antony's 'final evil', has come upon him.[67] There was certainly to be no suspense for the ancient reader, who knew well how Antony met his end; what remained was to see how the story played out. The next three periods of the Life represent three distinct stages in Antony's reaction to the *erōs* introduced with Cleopatra. In the first stage, when his reason is subdued and his passions are in command, he is captured. In the second stage, the period where both Octavia and Cleopatra have influence, he struggles with *erōs*. In the final stage, when Cleopatra alone has influence over him, he succumbs completely, the exit of Octavia from his life marking the submission of his reason. In the period under consideration, when he is under the influence of Fulvia and Cleopatra, Plutarch presents Antony's captivation.

The rest of chapter 25 reveals that Cleopatra's capture of Antony was deliberate. She took confidence from the fact that she had made favourable contracts with Caesar and Pompey's son while she was only a girl (*κόρη*). Now that she was at the peak of her beauty and wisdom, she hoped to bring Antony easily under her power (25.4–5).[68] Her line of attack is a direct assault on Antony's senses, just the right approach to someone who is at the mercy of his passions. First she sails up the River Cydnus on a barge so extravagant that the townspeople desert the marketplace to witness the spectacle, leaving

[67] *ἐπιγίγνομαι* can also be used for the onset of a disease (LSJ II.2).

[68] Cleopatra was 28 years old at this time, 41 BC; see Pelling (1988*b*), 186.

Antony sitting alone upon the rostrum. The language of this well-known scene, as Pelling writes, is 'extremely sensuous both in content—hearing and smell are engaged as well as vision, the flutes, pipes, and lyres, then the wondrous perfumes—and in sound'.[69] Next Antony invites her to dine with him, but she refuses, insisting that he come to her instead. He consents—as we would expect, given the precedent set by his father (1) and his relationship to Fulvia (10)—and encounters a display too powerful for words.[70]

But the attack on Antony is not only sensual. Cleopatra detects in his jokes the element of the soldier and the common man, and she uses this against him as well, speaking with him boldly (27.2). Here Plutarch explains that her attractiveness was more intellectual than physical:

> *καὶ γὰρ ἦν ὡς λέγουσιν αὐτὸ μὲν καθ' αὑτὸ τὸ κάλλος αὐτῆς οὐ πάνυ δυσπαράβλητον οὐδ' οἷον ἐκπλῆξαι τοὺς ἰδόντας, ἁφὴν δ' εἶχεν ἡ συνδιαίτησις ἄφυκτον, ἥ τε μορφὴ μετὰ τῆς ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι πιθανότητος καὶ τοῦ περιθέοντος ἅμα πως περὶ τὴν ὁμιλίαν ἤθους ἀνέφερέ τι κέντρον.*
>
> For her beauty was, as they say, in itself not altogether incomparable, not such as to be striking to one who saw her, but interaction with her had an inescapable hold, and her appearance, together with her persuasiveness in speaking and her character, which somehow enveloped her conversations, was in some way stimulating (27.3).

In the balance of the chapter, Plutarch describes how she could manipulate her tongue as if it were a many-stringed instrument and so easily speak many languages, in contrast to all the earlier Ptolemies, who had not even bothered to learn Egyptian. Plutarch's Cleopatra is thus more than just an object of desire, with sexuality as her weapon against men. Her intellect outshines her beauty, putting her on a par with Porcia and Aspasia. Her intent, however, is quite different. If she had been matched with a man who was temperate, they might have developed a relationship nourished by both reason and passion. This seems to be the sort of relationship that Plutarch has depicted between her and Julius Caesar.[71] But Antony is not that

[69] Pelling (1988*b*), 186.

[70] Antony is especially struck by the multitude of lights (*μάλιστα τῶν φώτων τὸ πλῆθος ἐξεπλάγη*, 26.6); cf. above, p. 44, on *Per.* 2 and the danger in turning one's eyes indiscriminately toward unprofitable sights.

[71] See above, p. 145.

type of man; just as his vulgarity brought him closer to his men but subordinated him to his fellow commanders when he served with Gabinius (3), so now his soldierly demeanour and his lack of self-control in general make him an easy target for Cleopatra. He is vulnerable in almost every way: to her beauty, to her lavish displays, and to her charm.[72]

Plutarch vividly reinforces this point by concluding his lengthy introduction of ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρως with Antony enslaved and, at the same time, neglecting his duty:

> *οὕτω δ' οὖν τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἥρπασεν, ὥστε πολεμούσης μὲν ἐν Ῥώμῃ Καίσαρι Φουλβίας τῆς γυναικὸς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκείνου πραγμάτων, αἰωρουμένης δὲ Παρθικῆς στρατιᾶς περὶ τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν, ἧς Λαβιηνὸν οἱ βασιλέως στρατηγοὶ Παρθικὸν ἀναγορεύσαντες αὐτοκράτορα Συρίας ἐπιβατεύσειν ἔμελλον, οἴχεσθαι φερόμενον ὑπ' αὐτῆς εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν, ἐκεῖ δὲ μειρακίου σχολὴν ἄγοντος διατριβαῖς καὶ παιδιαῖς χρώμενον, ἀναλίσκειν καὶ καθηδυπαθεῖν τὸ πολυτελέστατον ὡς Ἀντιφῶν εἶπεν ἀνάλωμα, τὸν χρόνον.*
>
> Thus she ravished Antony, so that, while his wife Fulvia was warring with Caesar on behalf of his interests in Rome, and a Parthian army was hovering near Mesopotamia (and the generals of the king, about to invade Syria, had named Labienus the Parthian *imperator* for the region), he was carried off by [Cleopatra] and went with her to Alexandria, where he engaged in the pastimes and play of a boy at leisure, squandering and wasting his time, which Antiphon called the most lavish expense (28.1).[73]

The remainder of this period is filled with examples of Antony and Cleopatra's extravagant and frivolous living in Alexandria, with one final reminder of the duties that Antony has put aside since being 'carried off' to Egypt: two reports arrive, one announcing that Fulvia is in flight from Italy after unsuccessfully challenging Octavian, the other alerting him to the westward advance of Labienus into Ionia and Lydia (30.1–3). There is no longer any real question of striking a balance between military excellence and licentious living. Fulvia has failed to govern Antony, and the period of her influence comes abruptly to an end when she dies in Sicyon en route to him. Before narrating her death, Plutarch gives dual explanations for her attack on Octavian: she was by nature meddlesome and bold (πολυπράγμων, θρασεῖα), but she had also hoped to draw Antony away from Cleopatra (30.4). Her attempt to rescue Antony from the queen, that is, from his passions, was cut short, but it introduces into the Life the notion of a struggle for Antony's soul. As Cleopatra stands for *erōs*, so a Roman wife, but not the ill-fated Fulvia, will represent reason, and Antony's psychological battle will be played out on the world stage.

[72] Cf. Brenk (1992), 4416: 'Still, Plutarch does not indulge morbidly in the heavy imagery of banqueting, passion, and death, that Vergil so brilliantly exploits. He even treats it lightly at times, playing on the more external aspects of Kleopatra's eroticism, such as the charm of her conversation, the magic of her presence, the persuasiveness of her discourse, the music of her voice, the deftness of her multilingualism (27).' In comparison with Demetrius, however, Antony has been more thoroughly dominated by erotic desire and luxury.

[73] Pelling (1988*b*), 193, suggests 'ravished' for ἥρπασεν, with the note: 'a strong word, almost always denoting real violence'. On φερόμενον ὑπ' αὐτῆς, he adds, '"carried off by her to Alexandria", as a slave or captive would be "carried off" in a real war' (194). Cf. above, p. 75, on Plutarch's use of the passive form of φέρω to represent a person's susceptibility to unrestrained passion.

Octavia and Cleopatra

When Antony returns to Italy, he and Octavian are reconciled, the source of their conflict having been the now-deceased Fulvia. Then they divide jurisdiction of the empire between the three triumvirs (30.5–6). In order to seal their agreement and guarantee future harmony, they decide that Antony will marry Octavian's older sister, Octavia (31.1). Plutarch introduces her as a 'wonder of a woman' (χρῆμα θαυμαστὸν γυναικός), much beloved by Octavian and recently a widow (31.2). In the very next sentence, however, Plutarch makes Antony clarify his standing with regard to Cleopatra. In doing so, he depicts a struggle within Antony against his *erōs*:

> *ἐδόκει δὲ καὶ Φουλβίας ἀποιχομένης χηρεύειν Ἀντώνιος, ἔχειν μὲν οὐκ ἀρνούμενος Κλεοπάτραν, γάμῳ δ' οὐχ ὁμολογῶν ἀλλ' ἔτι τῷ λόγῳ περί γε τούτου πρὸς τὸν ἔρωτα τῆς Αἰγυπτίας μαχόμενος. τοῦτον ἅπαντες εἰσηγοῦντο τὸν γάμον, ἐλπίζοντες τὴν Ὀκταουίαν, ἐπὶ κάλλει τοσούτῳ σεμνότητα καὶ νοῦν ἔχουσαν, εἰς ταὐτὸν τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ παραγενομένην καὶ στερχθεῖσαν ὡς εἰκὸς τοιαύτην γυναῖκα, πάντων πραγμάτων αὐτοῖς σωτηρίαν ἔσεσθαι καὶ σύγκρασιν.*
>
> In addition, since Fulvia had died, Antony was considered a widower. He did not deny that he was involved with Cleopatra, although he did not admit to having married her, but in this regard he was still doing battle with his reason against his *erōs* for the Egyptian woman. Everyone was encouraging this marriage, hoping that Octavia, who had

> dignity and sensibility in addition to beauty, once she was united with Antony and beloved by him, as was reasonable to expect for such a woman, would be their salvation and a source of concord in all their problems (31.3–4).

Antony's struggle, as presented here, is closely aligned with the appearance of Octavia. It is important to note that she is not merely a hostage held by one party to ensure the behaviour of the other. Nor will Octavia's presence be neutral. She will be united with Antony, her benefit residing in her dignity and sensibility, rather than only in her relationship to Octavian.[74]

Octavia's attributes, in fact, have important connotations. In the *Dialogue on Love*, Plutarch draws a contrast between *σεμνότης* and the intemperate actions of the passions. When Protogenes verbally attacks Ismenodora and is rebuked, he responds: 'Do I appear to you now to make war against *Erōs* rather than to battle on behalf of him against intemperance (*ἀκολασία*) and hubris, which assault the finest and most respected (*σεμνότατα*) names by means of the most disgraceful actions and passions (*πάθη*)?' (750b). Antony is certainly intemperate (*ἀκόλαστος*),[75] and thus the dignity (*σεμνότης*) of Octavia represents a force hostile to his present state. Later in the *Dialogue on Love*, Plutarch (as a participant in the dialogue) argues that an older woman may properly marry a younger man. After citing several ways in which young men are guided by others, he asks the following question: 'What's so bad if an older wife who is sensible (*νοῦν ἔχουσα*) steers the life of a young man, since she'll be beneficial to him because she is wiser, and she'll be sweet and gentle because she loves him?' (754d).[76] Though not older than Antony and perhaps younger than Ismenodora, Octavia is nonetheless qualified to govern Antony since she possesses the requisite intelligence.[77]

[74] Stadter (1989), 178, in his comments on *Per.* 13.15, notes that *εἰς ταὐτόν*, translated above as 'united', can imply sexual intercourse. The exact mode of union is slightly ambiguous, perhaps deliberately so. Likewise, Octavia as a source of concord (*σύγκρασις*) may indicate not only the concord between Antony and Octavian, but also the proper blending or balance of *erōs* and reason.

[75] See above, n. 64.

[76] See further above, p. 33.

[77] Ismenodora was about 30 years old when she attempted to marry Bacchon (see above, p. 32). Octavia may have been slightly younger or perhaps about the same age when she married Antony in 40 BC, as she was the older sister of Octavian, who was born in 63 BC (*PIR*² O66).

I intend to argue that the introduction of Octavia represents the resurgence of Antony's reason, but there is a question about the exact nature of Antony's struggle as presented here. Translators interpret the phrase *ἔτι τῷ λόγῳ περί γε τούτου πρὸς τὸν ἔρωτα τῆς Αἰγυπτίας μαχόμενος* as indicating that Antony's reason was doing battle against his passion.[78] Pelling, however, disagrees, preferring instead 'in this [matter of] description [*τῷ λόγῳ*], about this at least struggling against his love for the Egyptian woman'.[79] A case can be made for either translation. A contrast between *erōs* and *logos* is perfectly natural, but Antony has just been defending himself, and so the *logos* might also refer to his speech. However, the most important word in the phrase is not *τῷ λόγῳ* but *μαχόμενος*: if Antony is doing battle against the passion *erōs*, he must be fighting by means of his reason, whether *τῷ λόγῳ* names his reason or not. Furthermore, we have already seen that Octavia brings *σεμνότης* and *νοῦς* to her relationship with Antony. Given Plutarch's interest in the conflict between reason and passion in the soul, it is unlikely that *μαχόμενος* means anything less than a psychological battle.

Though there may be ambiguity in this first mention of *logos* and *erōs*, Plutarch makes the psychology of the struggle explicit a few chapters later. Antony and Octavian are at odds again, but the matter is settled by the intervention of Octavia (35.1–7). Following this, Antony and Octavia part. Octavia stays with her brother rather than follow her husband back to Asia, and Antony loses his self-restraint:

> *οὕτω δ' ἀλλήλων διακριθέντες, ὁ μὲν εὐθὺς εἴχετο τοῦ πρὸς Πομπήιον πολέμου Σικελίας ἐφιέμενος, Ἀντώνιος δ' Ὀκταουίαν μετὰ τῶν ἐξ ἐκείνης καὶ τοὺς ἐκ Φουλβίας παῖδας αὐτῷ παρακαταθέμενος, εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀπεπέρασεν. εὕδουσα δ' ἡ δεινὴ συμφορὰ χρόνον πολύν, ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρως, δοκῶν κατευνάσθαι καὶ κατακεκηλῆσθαι τοῖς βελτίοσι λογισμοῖς, αὖθις ἀνέλαμπε καὶ ἀνεθάρρει Συρίᾳ πλησιάζοντος αὐτοῦ. καὶ τέλος, ὥσπερ φησὶν ὁ Πλάτων τὸ δυσπειθὲς καὶ ἀκόλαστον τῆς ψυχῆς ὑποζύγιον, ἀπολακτίσας τὰ καλὰ καὶ σωτήρια πάντα, Καπίτωνα Φοντήιον ἔπεμψεν ἄξοντα Κλεοπάτραν εἰς Συρίαν.*
>
> Thus having separated from one another, Octavian, desirous of taking Sicily, at once set out for the war against [Sextus] Pompey, while

[78] Flacelière and Chambry (1977), Perrin (1920), Scott-Kilvert (1973), and Waterfield (1999) all take *τῷ λόγῳ* to be Antony's reason.

[79] Pelling (1988*b*), 202; see also Moles (1992).

> Antony, having placed Octavia, their children, and his children by Fulvia in the care of Octavian, crossed over to Asia. Though that powerful catastrophe, the *erōs* for Cleopatra, was dormant for a long time, thought to have been lulled to sleep and charmed away by better reasoning, it began to blaze up again and become emboldened as he approached Syria. And finally, as Plato says about the disobedient and undisciplined horse of the soul, he kicked away all that was good and salutary and sent Fonteius Capito to bring Cleopatra to Syria (35.8–36.2).

There is no break here between the putting aside of Octavia and the flaring of Antony's *erōs*, and Plutarch is explicit that Antony's reason/ (*λογισμοῖς*) has been holding his passion in check. The reference to Plato's *Phaedrus* makes the psychological connection certain.[80] The struggle against *erōs* begins, therefore, when Antony makes contact with Octavia and it ends when he separates from her. Moreover, when Antony 'kicked away all that was good and salutary', he spurned Octavia, whom, as we saw above, the Romans hoped would be 'the salvation from all their troubles' (31.4). When he parts from Octavia, Antony is relaxing his reason and allowing *erōs*, or more precisely, *ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρως*, to control his soul.

The preceding argument should not imply that Octavia represents Antony's reason alone. Her role is complicated, as is Plutarch's exploration of the psychology of Antony's character. Octavia creates an important bond between her brother and Antony, resolving a dispute (35) and providing Octavian with a pretext for war when she is finally rejected (53–4). Moreover, even though Antony is battling his *erōs*, he also struggles with the choice between dissolute living and his duty as general and triumvir. This has been a problem

[80] Ziegler identifies the reference as 254a, which is accepted by Brenk (1992), 4414, Scuderi (1984), 77, and Pelling (1988*b*), 217, who adds, 'The turbulent effects of *ἔρως* and the struggle of higher and lower elements [of the soul] are both apposite for [Antony]'. The passage itself, which describes the reaction of the appetitive aspect of the soul to the sight of a beautiful boy, is enlightening for the depth it gives to Plutarch's portrait of Antony: 'But the other horse is not even controlled with the charioteer's stick or his whip, but he jumps and rushes along forcefully. He makes great trouble for his yoke-mate and the driver, compels them to draw near to the beloved boy, and elicits a memory of the joy of sexual intercourse' (*ὁ δὲ οὔτε κέντρων ἡνιοχικῶν οὔτε μάστιγος ἔτι ἐντρέπεται, σκιρτῶν δὲ βίᾳ φέρεται, καὶ πάντα πράγματα παρέχων τῷ σύζυγί τε καὶ ἡνιόχῳ ἀναγκάζει ἰέναι τε πρὸς τὰ παιδικὰ καὶ μνείαν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς τῶν ἀφροδισίων χάριτος*). Note also that Plutarch applies Plato's example about *erōs* for a boy to Antony's desire for Cleopatra.

for him since his youth, a problem that his association with Cleopatra only compounds. Therefore, an important aspect of his psychological profile throughout the Life is the choice he must make between duty and pleasure, and toward the end of his life, between the Roman west and the Alexandrian east. Octavia can represent the world of Roman values that he eventually abandons.[81] However, none of this layered symbolism detracts from the fact that Octavia is also closely associated with Antony's struggle against *erōs*: rather than describe the inner turmoil of Antony's soul, Plutarch has chosen to represent reason and passion in the two persons of Octavia and Cleopatra.[82]

It appears from these two quoted passages that Antony is under the sway of either reason or passion. There is, however, one episode where his reason attempts to assert control but is rebuffed. Having collected new supplies and fresh troops for Antony, Octavia sets out to bring them eastward, but Antony orders her to come no farther than Athens, offering his upcoming campaign into Parthia as the reason. Octavia recognizes that Antony is making an excuse (53.1–2). She appears to be acting in Antony's interests, although her brother is not so innocent.[83] More important is the reaction of Cleopatra:

> *αἰσθομένη δ' ἡ Κλεοπάτρα τὴν Ὀκταουίαν ὁμόσε χωροῦσαν αὐτῇ, καὶ φοβηθεῖσα μὴ τοῦ τρόπου τῇ σεμνότητι καὶ τῇ Καίσαρος δυνάμει προσκτησαμένη τὸ καθ' ἡδονὴν ὁμιλεῖν καὶ θεραπεύειν Ἀντώνιον, ἄμαχος γένηται καὶ κρατήσῃ παντάπασι τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἐρᾶν αὐτὴ προσεποιεῖτο τοῦ Ἀντωνίου, καὶ τὸ σῶμα λεπταῖς καθῄρει διαίταις.*
>
> Cleopatra perceived that Octavia was moving into her sphere, and she feared that by the dignity of her manner and the power of Caesar, having acquired the opportunity to interact with Antony pleasurably and tend to him, Octavia would become invincible and would take complete control of the man. So she herself pretended to desire Antony, and she made her body thin through a meagre diet (53.5).

Cleopatra interprets Octavia's approach as hostile, but not only to Antony's cause. The intemperate (*ἀκόλαστος*) Antony is susceptible

[81] See Pelling (1988*b*), 13–14.

[82] There is also a geographical component to Antony's behaviour. His licentious living reaches its peak in Asia, where he also falls under the erotic influence of Cleopatra, resisting only when he is with Octavia in Italy and Greece. See Swain (1990*a*), 153, on the changes in Antony's behaviour in general as he goes from west to east.

[83] In fact, the passage reveals Octavian's ulterior motives: he encourages his sister, knowing that she will be rejected and thus provide him with an excuse for war (53.1).

to Cleopatra's charms, which affect him through the *erōs* they arouse. But Antony's malleability works in both directions, which makes Octavia a threat to Cleopatra's control over him. Her defence against the dignity (*σεμνότης*) of Octavia is *erōs*: Cleopatra responds by feigning to be an *erastēs*, that is, to feel *erōs* for him in return. Her tactic is very much like the one reported in the alternative tradition about Caesar's war in Alexandria, where Cleopatra is said to have taken advantage of Caesar's being 'very amorous' (*ἐρωτικώτατος*) to enslave him by *erōs* and compel him to restore her to the throne.[84] Cleopatra's assault on Antony, carried out through flatterers and by her own actions, results in the final defeat of Octavia. A few chapters later, while the couple are at Athens, Cleopatra wins over the population with her generous gifts as she seeks to replace Octavia as the people's favourite (57.2).[85] A few lines later, Antony expels Octavia from his house (57.4). Along with Octavia exits Antony's resistance to his *erōs* for Cleopatra.

Cleopatra

Octavia's absence is felt immediately. Cleopatra becomes a dominating figure, leading Antony as he prepares for war, driving away his supporters, and ruining his standing in Rome. All of this is a prelude to his destruction.[86] For instance, Antony's friends Titius and Plancus are abused by Cleopatra and flee to Octavian, to whom they also reveal the contents of Antony's will (58.4–9). Octavian reads the will publicly, creating animosity towards Antony, especially for the request that his body be transferred to Egypt for burial. An associate of Octavian, Calvisius, then recites a list of outrages committed by

[84] See above, p. 145; Plutarch rejects this explanation for Caesar but embraces it for Antony. Cleopatra will come to have real feelings for Antony by the end of the Life, as Plutarch foreshadows here (53.10). See Pelling (1988*b*), 247.

[85] In chapter 53, Plutarch also writes that Octavia was called Antony's wife (*γαμετή*), but Cleopatra his lover (*ἐρωμένη*). Pelling (1988*b*), 247, explains that these two roles comprise a recurring theme in love elegy, although usually one woman is wife to one man and lover to another. The statement also exposes the contrast between a relationship contracted through reason (cf. *De virt. moral.* 448d–f, and above, p. 23) and one forged through passion.

[86] Cf. the hostility that Lamia generated among the Athenians, which was, however, short-lived. The damage that Cleopatra causes will be permanent.

Antony with Cleopatra (58.9–11).[87] In response, Antony's supporters attempt to resuscitate his reputation in Rome and send a representative to him at Athens to warn him not to cause further damage to himself (59.2–5). However, Cleopatra immediately suspects the envoy, Geminius; she fears that he might be working for Octavia. She mistreats him, but he endures until the following exchange takes place at a dinner party:

> *κελευσθεὶς δὲ λέγειν ἐφ' οἷς ἥκει παρὰ τὸ δεῖπνον, τὴν μὲν ἄλλην ἔφη νήφοντος εἶναι διάλεξιν, ἓν δὲ καὶ νήφων ἐπίστασθαι καὶ μεθύων, ὅτι καλῶς ἕξει πάντα Κλεοπάτρας εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἀπαλλαγείσης. πρὸς τοῦτο τοῦ Ἀντωνίου χαλεπήναντος, ἡ Κλεοπάτρα «καλῶς» ἔφη «πεποίηκας, ὦ Γεμίνιε, τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἄνευ βασάνων ἐξομολογησάμενος».*
>
> Having been asked at a dinner to speak about the matter for which he had come, he said that it was a topic for a sober mind, but there was one thing he could understand sober or drunk: everything would be well if Cleopatra were returned to Egypt. Antony became angry, but Cleopatra said, 'You have done well, Geminius, to confess the truth without torture' (59.4–5).

The observation of the minor character reveals the truth of the situation, but the response is more telling. Antony becomes angry but does not act. Cleopatra speaks for the couple and acknowledges what Antony himself does not realize or will not admit: she is wilfully leading him to his destruction.

Much of the preceding is generic, in the sense that Cleopatra is controlling and destructive, though this is not explicitly tied to her erotic attachment with Antony. As Antony begins to fall, however, Plutarch is more precise. Once Antony's reputation has been sufficiently damaged, Octavian secures a resolution to make war against Cleopatra and to take *imperium* from Antony, the *imperium* that he had surrendered to a woman (*ἀφελέσθαι τῆς ἀρχῆς Ἀντώνιον ἧς ἐξέστη γυναικί*, 60.1). Later, at Actium, when Antony concedes to Cleopatra and decides to fight Octavian at sea rather than utilize his superior troops on land, Plutarch calls him 'an appendage' of the woman (*προσθήκη τῆς γυναικός*, 62.1). When Antony finally abandons the battle and follows Cleopatra's fleeing ships, the reader is

[87] Only after he has recounted the list of outrages does Plutarch inform the reader that Calvisius probably invented them (59.1).

hardly surprised. Nor does Plutarch lose the opportunity to remind us of the role played by *erōs*:

> *ἔνθα δὴ φανερὸν αὐτὸν Ἀντώνιος ἐποίησεν οὔτ᾽ ἄρχοντος οὔτ᾽ ἀνδρὸς οὔθ᾽ ὅλως ἰδίοις λογισμοῖς διοικούμενον, ἀλλ᾽ — ὅπερ τις παίζων εἶπε τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἐρῶντος ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ σώματι ζῆν — ἑλκόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς ὥσπερ συμπεφυκὼς καὶ συμμεταφερόμενος.*
>
> And there Antony revealed for all to see that he was not following the reasoned plans of a general, nor of a man, nor his own at all, but, as someone said in jest, that the soul of the erotic lover lives in the body of another, he was dragged by the woman as if he were a natural part of her and moved in unison (66.7).[88]

The flight from Actium is the beginning of the end for Antony. He makes a single, brief attempt to be free of everything in his Timonium on Pharos (69.6–7), but he quickly abandons his solitude. By introducing a digression on the reclusive Timon of Athens (70), Plutarch brings Antony's lack of self-sufficiency to the foreground. Antony has never been independent; he has been seeking guidance since the beginning of the Life. When Canidius arrives in Alexandria to inform him that his allies and his forces in the field are lost, he returns to Cleopatra in her palace (71.1–3). After Octavian arrives and collects Antony's deserting fleet and cavalry, Antony hears a rumour that Cleopatra is dead and attempts to take his own life (76).

Antony's suicide neatly intertwines his need to be guided with the domination of *erōs*. Antony's slave, who has the significant name Eros, has been retained for the purpose of killing him should the need arise.[89] However, when Antony requests the favour, Eros does not provide the service; he kills himself instead, which provokes the following from Antony: 'Well done, Eros. Unable to do it yourself, you teach me to do what I must' (*«εὖγε» εἶπεν «ὦ Ἔρως, ὅτι μὴ δυνηθεὶς αὐτὸς ἐμὲ ποιεῖν ὃ δεῖ διδάσκεις»*, 76.9). Eros, here standing for *erōs*, cannot kill Antony; he can only show him the way as others have been directing him throughout the Life. In the absence of any trace of *logismos*, *erōs* alone now leads, and Antony, as always, follows willingly. The succeeding scene, in which Antony dies in Cleopatra's

88 This translation depends in part on the interpretation of Pelling (1988*b*), 284–5.

89 Neither Eros nor Antony's secretary, Diomedes, are named outside of Plutarch's narrative. See Scuderi (1984), 114, and Pelling (1988*b*), 306, who calls the name Eros 'suggestive'.

tomb (77.5–7), provides a psychological as well as a romantic conclusion to his life: the lover dies in the arms of his beloved but also in the grip of the passion that destroyed him.

Comparison to the *Demetrius* highlights the extreme nature of Antony's submission to *erōs*. Demetrius was never overwhelmed by erotic desire as Antony was, nor did *erōs* play a leading role in his demise. Rather, once fortune had ended his military career, Demetrius was free to destroy himself in the licentious living to which he had always been disposed. The passion *erōs* is completely missing from the latter part of his Life, so much so that in order to introduce an example of its power, Plutarch must turn to the story of Antiochus and Stratonice. Conversely, once Antony bases himself in the east and begins his struggle with Octavian, he contends constantly with *erōs*. For example, his Parthian campaign is rushed on account of his attraction to Cleopatra (37), and he rejects Octavia, who could have saved his reputation at Rome, because of Cleopatra's hostility (53, 57). Demetrius, who could separate his involvement with *erōs* and his licentiousness in general from his responsibilities as commander, never dealt with such problems. However, they plague Antony until the end. As he dies, *erōs*, in the guise of Eros the slave, shows him the way and then, in the guise of Cleopatra, embraces him as he takes his last breath. The lonely and pitiful death of Demetrius seems almost passionless when compared with Antony's demise.[90]

While Antony surpasses Demetrius in the intensity of his erotic affairs, he stands in stark contrast to the examples of Plutarch's Alexander and Caesar. These men, although involved in erotic relationships, kept those relationships from distracting them from their ultimate objectives. Nor did they ever contract a relationship purely for reasons of erotic desire. Antony starts out along the same path: the three marriages featured by Plutarch all have political concerns as their basis. Fulvia helps to restrain Antony when Caesar has grown tired of his behaviour (10); Octavia cements the *amicitia* between Antony and Octavian (31); Cleopatra is summoned to Tarsus to answer the charge that she raised money for Cassius (25).[91] However,

90 At *Comp. Demetr.-Ant.* 6.3–4, Plutarch condemns Demetrius' death more strongly than Antony's because he died ignobly from drink rather than nobly by suicide. However, this is a brief and superficial analysis that does not do justice to the Lives. See Pelling (1988*b*), 19–20, who characterizes the entire *synkrisis* as an afterthought, and Duff (1999*a*), 278–81.

91 Pelling (1996), 12. Syme (1939), 214, says that Antony probably intended to solidify his position by ensuring that he had a strong ally in Egypt.

each of these women exerts much more political influence, whether positive or negative, than Plutarch's Alexander or Caesar would have tolerated. His Antony is ill equipped psychologically to conduct an erotic liaison without becoming overwhelmed by passion.

Also important for comparison is Plutarch's Pompey, whom I consider in the next and final chapter. Taken together with his Caesar and Antony, the three men represent three distinct levels of erotic involvement. Caesar is completely detached, and so, like Alexander, is not distracted in his pursuit of power. Pompey, although by no means intemperate (ἀκόλαστος), is nonetheless susceptible to the lure of *erōs*, and by submitting at critical moments, he weakens himself in his contest with Caesar. Antony is so completely dominated by *erōs* that he loses his chance at ruling Rome, and, more tragically, he loses his life.

5

Erōs and the Statesman

In this final chapter, I consider two features of Plutarch's representation of *erōs* and self-control in the historical-ethical reconstructions of the *Parallel Lives*. In the first section I take up again Plutarch's conception of *sōphrosynē*, reconsidering this fundamental aspect of his ethics in light of the studies of the Lives that followed my initial examination in Chapter 1. Then I turn to the *Agesilaus–Pompey*, arguing that these heroes, and Pompey in particular, represent a middle ground, both ethically and politically, between the extreme self-control described in the *Alexander–Caesar* and the overwhelming passion found in the *Demetrius–Antony*.

SŌPHROSYNĒ IN XENOPHON AND PLUTARCH

First, I would like to return to Plutarch's model for depicting the interaction between reason and passion in the soul. This was discussed in Chapter 1 in conjunction with Plutarch's adoption of the Aristotelian notions of *sōphrosynē* and *philia*, which in turn support his arguments in favour of heterosexual erotic relations, and in particular, erotic relations between husband and wife. Plutarch sets out his model in great detail in the essay *On Moral Virtue* where, having adopted an Aristotelian, bipartite conception of the soul to argue against the Stoic theory of emotions, he combines (as other Middle Platonists did) aspects of Peripatetic ethics with Platonic ideas about the struggle between the rational and irrational elements of the soul. His approach to moral virtue in the essay also allows him to adopt Aristotle's technical distinction between a virtuous moderation of the appetites (*sōphrosynē*) and simple self-control (*enkrateia*). This