

Morality in Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*

by

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Abstract

Understanding Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* as a literary text is the focus of current scholarship. However, to this date, no one has looked at Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* to analyze what it reveals about morality. My thesis endeavours to understand how Plutarch shapes Cimon as a literary character to bring to light the moral focus of this *Life*. It first investigates Plutarch's life and the atmosphere in which he lived to understand what influenced his writing. Chapter One follows with a discussion of the composition of the *Lives* to understand how they are organized. The insistence on reading each book's four parts (proem, *Life 1*, *Life 2*, *synkrisis*) to fully appreciate their moral relevance leads to Chapter Two, which dissects the main components of Plutarch's moral mirror. This provides the necessary background needed for Chapter Three's case study of Plutarch's *Cimon*. Here, I argue that the main moral message contained therein is the importance of generosity and euergetism.

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Introduction

Plutarch of Chaeronea left a gift for modern scholars. His *Parallel Lives* and *Moralia* grant us insight into the past, including the literary styles and philosophical schools of the period. Plutarch, however, although he produced a large literary oeuvre, is a man of whom we know very little. Despite writing extensively on the lives of men, including a now lost series of *Lives of the Caesars* as well as his extant work the *Parallel Lives*, Plutarch reveals surprisingly little about his own life and why he wrote. This mystery of the man invites scholars to investigate the atmosphere of his time to reconstruct possible influences on his writings. Understanding what shaped Plutarch's work accords a better appreciation of his *Lives* and how we must approach them to observe the past depicted within. This thesis thus begins by exploring the late first and early second centuries CE as well as Plutarch's life, to contextualize the investigation of his *Lives* and specifically his *Life of Cimon*.

Before the rehabilitation of his image in the mid-twentieth century, Plutarch was regarded negatively in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. J.P. Mahaffy wrote in his 1890 work, *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, "he is garrulous too, often repeating his *little* anecdotes, and urging again his *old* arguments, wanting perhaps in that humour which is *so inestimable* a safeguard against *twaddle* and *platitude*."¹ Mahaffy's use of rhetoric illustrates the nineteenth century scholarship's evaluation of Plutarch: a boorish compiler of facts who did not live up to research expectations. As T. Duff explains, the concept of history as a science from this period damaged our perception of Plutarch, who wrote about men far removed from his time and whose

¹ Mahaffy 1890 : 291-292. Italics are mine.

work was thus seen as less reliable than earlier works.² As a result, the study of Plutarch during the nineteenth century became more of an exercise in *Quellenforschung* than in trying to understand the author and his works. However, some scholars challenged this view³ and by the mid-twentieth century Plutarch and his works were regarded as worthy of investigation not just for the sources he used, but as original literature able to provide insight into the past.

As a result of this renewed interest in Plutarch, his *Lives* are approached from many different perspectives. Recent studies, such as T. Hägg's *The Art of Biography in Antiquity*,⁴ shed light on our understanding of biography as a literary genre and caution the reader not to mine ancient biographies for historical data. Since this theory is relatively new, there is a need to explore ancient biographies as literature rather than historiography. However, the division between history and biography and even between these two and fiction is problematic. In antiquity, history and biography overlapped and were considered literary endeavours, but modern understanding of these genres places them strikingly apart. Our impression that history and biography are disconnected from fiction clouds our appreciation of ancient literary works and limits what we can learn from them. Thus, the *Lives* should not be severed from any of these genres and approached cautiously, while bearing in mind our modern preconceptions.

Nevertheless, experts such as Duff and C. Pelling have accepted the challenge of looking at the *Lives* from a literary perspective all the while investigating the ethical significance of many of the *Lives*. Others explore what these writings mean for the audience of the *Lives*, such as J. Mossman with her theory of textual 'contact zones'.⁵ Still others choose to focus on Plutarch's

² Duff 1999 : 6

³ Duff (1999 : 8) points to the 1920s as beginning of his rehabilitation, which was successful by 1949 with Konrat Ziegler's monograph.

⁴ Hägg 2012.

⁵ Mossman 2006.

methodology and possible research techniques.⁶ Many of these approaches have recently been compiled in the *Companion to Plutarch* edited by M. Beck.⁷ My study will fill a gap in the scholarship by building on Duff and Pelling's works of Plutarch's ethics in the *Lives* with an investigation of a *Life* that has yet to be attempted: Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*. I will endeavour to understand how and why Plutarch shaped Cimon as an example of morality. This will both expand our knowledge of morality in Plutarch's *Lives* and trace Plutarch's contribution to the historical narrative of the fifth century BCE Athenian general.

Approach

To investigate *Cimon* it is essential to first consider Plutarch and the times in which he wrote. I will first bring context to my study by exploring the atmosphere of the Greek world under the Roman Empire in the late first and early second century CE. This frames the environment in which Plutarch lived and wrote by highlighting some of the key philosophical and cultural themes during his life. Such a discussion will situate Plutarch and his hometown of Chaeronea in the grander scale of the Roman Empire. Building from this, a brief survey of Plutarch's life follows. Investigating his life may allow us to uncover details that explain influences on his work. It is then possible to explore his oeuvre by briefly looking at how modern scholars understand the genre in which the *Lives* were written. Together, these three elements bring a larger context to the specific discussion found in the following chapters of this thesis.

The Late First and Early Second Century CE Atmosphere

Understanding the atmosphere of the time in which Plutarch lived and wrote is essential to glimpsing what influenced his writings. In the late first and early second century CE, power was

⁶ See, for example, Pelling 1980 and Stadter 2014.

⁷ Beck 2014; Duff 1999; Pelling 2002.

situated in Rome and the glory days of Marathon and Salamis were behind the Greeks. Nevertheless, the empire allowed the wealthy class of Greeks to maintain some local administrative control and influence.⁸ Rome's influence still extended to little towns and Plutarch would certainly have been aware of its far reaching hands. This helps explain why Plutarch wrote about Greeks and Romans: they were the two peoples he knew best and who, because of the political circumstances of his time, he must have felt were closely tied.

Yet the Greek world managed to maintain its own interests. The cultural movement known as the Second Sophistic, in roughly the first three centuries CE, is not clearly defined, as scholars do not agree on what it comprises except that it is a Greek rhetorical movement that stressed Hellenism and overlapped with philosophy.⁹ As M. Trapp states concerning the status of philosophy during the Second Sophistic, "...relatively foreign to modern perceptions, but crucial to those of [Plutarch's] era, is a sense of philosophy as one of the glories of a truly cultured society, whose distinguished representatives over the years had made incomparable contributions to the literary as well as the intellectual heritage of Hellenism."¹⁰ The Greek world continued its tradition of philosophical discourse under the Roman Empire and this independence and emphasis on their past and intellectual heritage certainly influenced Plutarch's education and his later writing of the *Lives*.

⁸ Jones 1971 : 43; Roskam 2014 : 516; Stadter 2014 : 13; Whitmarsh 2005 : 11.

⁹ Whitmarsh 2005 : 8. The term 'Second Sophistic' is borrowed from Flavius Philostratus who wrote in the late 230s CE and was revived as a term in late nineteenth century Germany (Whitmarsh 2005 : 4, 6). See also Bowie 1970.

As T. Whitmarsh explains, the debate hinges on how much cultural independence the Greeks maintained under Roman occupation. Unfortunately, this discussion is too complicated for the scope of this thesis and thus it must be simply concluded that there was a Greek philosophical movement that Plutarch was in touch with and influenced by.

¹⁰ Trapp 2014 : 43. Plutarch certainly fits within Trapp's (2014 : 45-46) broad definition of a philosopher in antiquity.

Closely linked to the Second Sophistic emphasis on Hellenism is Atticism in writing.¹¹ Parallel to the relatively new explosion in popularity of fiction¹² and biography,¹³ a marked trend in Atticism can be noted in this period. Although the Greek of this time was closer to its modern relative, many writers, including Plutarch, adopted some form of the Attic dialect of the fifth century BCE to display their elite identity and upbringing.¹⁴ This is particularly important, as Swain suggests, because language helps groups of people adopt a definition for themselves.¹⁵ By associating himself with the Attic movement, Plutarch lets his reader know that he is highly educated and thus his writings must be geared towards men who have the luxury to study.¹⁶

During this time there was a great nostalgia for the glorious past of the Greek world and in particular, Athens and her empire, a cultural movement known as archaism. The classics that recounted this history were widely read by educated men and even Plutarch himself noted that a man in Chaeronea who read two or three books of Ephorus was nicknamed 'Epameinondas'.¹⁷ This demonstrates that even men from small towns held an interest in Greek history. In a seminal article E. Bowie suggested, back in 1970, that this preoccupation with the past is the result of the Greeks' dissatisfaction with their political situation.¹⁸ They insisted on writing archaically in Greek and read extensively about their past to create an identity under Roman rule. It must therefore be

¹¹ Swain 1996 : 21.

¹² Bowersock 1995 : 22.

¹³ Whitmarsh 2005 : 75.

¹⁴ Swain 1996 : 33, 137; Whitmarsh 2005 : 42-43. It must be noted that Plutarch did not stick to the rigid rules of Atticism, but that he nonetheless adopts some vocabulary and grammar (Whitmarsh 2005 : 42).

¹⁵ Swain 1996 : 17.

¹⁶ A discussion of Plutarch's audience is found in Chapter Two pages 41-44.

¹⁷ Plutarch. *Concerning Talkativeness* 514 C. Plutarch says, "ὥς τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν τις κατὰ τύχην ἀνεγνωκὼς δύο τῶν Ἐφόρου βιβλίων ἢ τρία, πάντας ἀνθρώπους κατέτριβε καὶ πᾶν ἀνάστατον ἐποίει συμπόσιον, αἰετὴν ἐν Λεύκτροις μάχην καὶ τὰ συνεχῇ δηγοῦμενος· ὅθεν Ἐπαμεινώνδας παρωνύμιον ἔσχεν." "Just so, in my native town, there was a man who chanced to have read two or three books of Ephorus, and would always bore everybody to death and put every dinner-party to rout by invariably narrating the battle of Leuctra and its sequel; so he got the nickname of 'Epameinondas'." (translation by W.C. Hembold). See also: Bowie 1970 : 28 and Geiger 1981 : 89.

¹⁸ Bowie 1970 : 4. However, as K. Demoen emphasizes (1997 : 140-141), the stress of local Greek history is also an aspect of *exempla* in rhetoric. This would certainly also affect Plutarch's writings, specifically his focus on Chaeronea (see, for example, the discussion of the *Cimon-Lucullus* proem on pages 67-71).

posited that the men who identified as Greek felt that their status was threatened under Rome and thus did whatever they could to maintain their cultural heritage.

Interestingly, it should be noted that the stress is similar to our current interest in Greek and Roman history. Therefore, it is plausible that not all the emphasis on the Greek past results from dissatisfaction of the present, rather some of it stems from curiosity and a love of learning and history. The Greek world's loss of political power would surely lead to nostalgia, but it is also reasonable to assume that, similar to the Romans who studied the Greek classics, they were also simply interested in the great men and great cities that brought them to their present situation.

The late first and early second century CE featured a Roman world which was still very much influenced by the Greek. Local politics were important in Greece, and Rome allowed the wealthy citizens of each city to maintain some administrative tasks and control. These wealthy elites were educated and influenced by the Second Sophistic where Greek ideas, policies, and even names came to the forefront as a means to create an identity under Roman rule. This resulted in Atticism in writing and a nostalgia referred to as archaism. Plutarch thus lived in an age where the past was very present.

Plutarch's Life

Plutarch was born between 40 and 45 CE in his beloved hometown of Chaeronea. A member of the wealthy elite, Plutarch received a formal education and developed a love of learning that is evident in his extant works. His education brought him to Athens where he was a pupil of the philosopher Ammonios and where he was made an honorary citizen.¹⁹ He also became a citizen of Delphi where he held positions of influence. Russell suggests that he accomplished his largest

¹⁹ A reference to Plutarch in Athens can be found, for example, in *Moralia, De E apud Delphos* 385B. Beck 2014 : 3; Flacelière 1962 : 427; Podlecki 1988 : 232.

practical achievements in winning Delphi favours from Rome.²⁰ This was made possible by Rome's familiarity with Plutarch, as he travelled there and even became a Roman citizen through his consular friend Mestrius Florus. There, he gained many more elite friends and had the opportunity to speak and improve his Latin.²¹

His knowledge of Romans and their practices is plainly seen in his *Roman Questions*. This work endeavours to explain Roman customs to Greeks and sometimes Plutarch even seems to prefer the Roman practice to the Greek one. For example, in Question 40, Plutarch explains why a Roman priest cannot anoint himself outdoors. In the process, he also describes the Roman suspicion of the gymnasia and palestra as the reason for Rome's military prowess because they spend more time practicing their skills than wrestling.²² Thus we see here an example of Plutarch preferring the Roman practice and questioning the Greek method. Plutarch also, by the sheer writing of this treatise, presents himself as an insider in Roman culture. But although Plutarch places himself in a unique position as a cultural interpreter of Rome for the Greeks, he identifies very strongly with Greek cultural heritage,²³ and for him no place would match Chaeronea.

Plutarch states of Chaeronea, "But since I live in a small city, I am dwelling there in order that it may not become even smaller..."²⁴ Chaeronea was well situated on trade routes and Plutarch was a staunch supporter of Greeks remaining involved in local politics,²⁵ therefore his choice to stay was not so much a sacrifice as the taking of an opportunity. Alongside Chaeronea's strategic location, C.P. Jones proposes that Plutarch remained there because it was the centre of his family's wealth

²⁰ Flacelière 1962 : 428; Russell 1973 : 16; Stadter 2014 : 70, 80-81.

²¹ Duff 1999 : 1; Hägg 2012 : 239; Stadter 2014 : 15, 17. See the study by J. Scheid *A Rome sur les pas de Plutarque* (2012) for an interesting tour of ancient Rome using Plutarch's *Roman Questions*. Through Scheid's analysis, it is possible to see that Plutarch was very familiar with the city, its environment, monuments, and practices.

²² Plutarch. *The Roman Questions* 274A-E.

²³ Barrow 1967 : 13; Russell 1973 : 17; Stadter 2014 : 14.

²⁴ Plutarch. *Demosthenes* 2.2. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

²⁵ Jones 1971 : 3-4; Titchener 2014 : 485.

and connections to local aristocracies.²⁶ By staying in Chaeronea, he could model for other Greeks what he himself wished them to do: engage in their cities' activities and guide the citizens properly without damaging their own estates. Its accessibility to the rest of the world also ensured that Plutarch was kept abreast of happenings in the empire. This connection was also facilitated by Plutarch turning his home into a small philosophical school.²⁷

Most of what we know about Plutarch's philosophy derives from his *Moralia*. Plutarch presented himself as a philosopher and in particular as a Platonist, though his writings also carry an Aristotelian undertone.²⁸ As a result of his Platonic leanings, Plutarch stands against Sophists. Although he is now generally accepted as one of the great intellectuals of the Second Sophistic, Plutarch did not think highly of the men he referred to as 'Sophists'. Instead, he uses the term as a means to contrast moral men with amoral men (the sophists).²⁹ Similarly, he disagreed with some of the teachings of another philosophical branch: the Stoics. His disapproval focused particularly on the Stoics' dismissal of the ethical value of kindness.³⁰ Since Plutarch's philosophy focused on ethics, it is unsurprising that he took such a rigid stance against a school that was hostile to his views of morality. Yet Plutarch also adopted some Stoic aspects, especially in relation to physics.³¹ This demonstrates his remarkable ability to adapt and pick apart his learnings to create his own standards for morality that do not firmly fit within one school.

Plutarch also moulded his thoughts on religion in relation to his perception of the world. He was a pious man who believed that major historical changes were the result of divine guidance.³² He

²⁶ Jones 1971 : 8-10.

²⁷ Russell 1973 : 13.

²⁸ Dillon 2014 : 61-62; Russell 1973 : 84.

²⁹ Beck 2014 : 1; Schmitz 2014 : 32-35, 38; Swain 1996 : 135; Van Hoof 2010 : 261-2.

³⁰ Flacelière 1962 : 425; Russell 1973 : 63-69.

³¹ Dillon 2014 : 61.

³² Dihle 1994 : 196; Podlecki 1988 : 237; Stadter 2014 : 23; Swain 1996 : 136, 151.

uses this belief to help explain the world around him. For example, in his *Life of Philopoemen*, Plutarch states that Rome became great and its reach extended in all directions under the guidance of divine powers (17.2). Plutarch insisted that the divine cared for mankind, so his references to episodes of divine intervention are always associated with worldly benefits.³³ What is more, Plutarch sees all religions as essentially identical and identifies foreign deities with Greek ones. R. Hirsch-Luipold explains that, “this universalization of religion in Plutarch’s works might be described as ‘polylatric monotheism’: the multitude of approaches to traditional gods with their respective mythical and cultic embodiments in the end refer to one and the same divine essence.”³⁴

Plutarch’s religious beliefs and his travels influenced who he was, how he viewed the world around him, and, in the end, his writing. His *Parallel Lives*, which this thesis focuses upon, was written at the end of his life and thus incorporates all of these experiences.³⁵ Plutarch’s education from his travels created a strong familiarity with the Greek and Roman world; his elite friendships, his devotion to teaching philosophy, and the atmosphere of the late first and early second centuries CE added to his fascination for the past. All this contributed to his unique position for the comparative work of the *Parallel Lives*.

What genre are the *Lives*?

*There does, in fact, appear to be an irreducible ideological component in every historical account of reality. That is to say, simply because history is not a science, or is at best a protoscience with specifically determinable nonscientific elements in its constitution, the very claim to have discerned some kind of formal coherence in the historical record brings with it theories of the nature of the historical world and of historical knowledge itself which have ideological implications for attempts to understand ‘the present,’ however this ‘present’ is defined.*³⁶

³³ Swain 1996 : 152.

³⁴ Hirsch-Luipold 2014 : 168. See also: Nuffelen 2007 : 25.

³⁵ Hägg 2012 : 239; Larmour 2014 : 406; Russell 1973 : 3; Stadter 2014 : 120.

³⁶ White 1973 : 21.

H. White clearly presents the problem of framing historical accounts in his famous work *Metahistory*. Plutarch's life, his upbringing, and his conception of the present all affected his writings. The *Parallel Lives*, while not necessarily a history, comprise a series of books comparing great Greek and Roman statesmen of the past. As a result of its mixed nature, scholars are divided on how to categorize this work. Is it biography or history? As discussed, the genres of history and biography in antiquity were part of the literary tradition and often overlapped. Our conceptions of modern biography and history, and the research and methodology we believe they should contain, does not match that of Plutarch's time. Alongside problems with sources, chronology, and a lost understandings of the past, placing the *Lives* in a genre is no simple matter.³⁷

Some scholars point to the similarities between the *Lives* and encomia, its historical forbearer. This is a result of Plutarch's familiarity with the style and some of his works which descend from this tradition.³⁸ However, most scholars agree that his purpose in writing does not follow that of an encomiast. He presents his characters closer to reality than encomia by portraying their weaknesses and contrasting them with historical rather than mythological figures.³⁹ Plutarch's subjects' close association to reality has scholars in agreement that Plutarch was writing biography with a moral emphasis.⁴⁰

Where most do not agree, however, is whether the *Lives* have historical value. A. Dihle points out that Plutarch's biographies are the first of their kind to reach so far into the past.⁴¹ Many

³⁷ Brenk 1977 : 1; Larmour 2005 : 45; Tröster 2008 : 10.

³⁸ Geiger 2014 : 292; Stadter 1988 : 277; Wardman 1974 : 10; Whitmarsh 2005 : 78.

³⁹ Hägg 2012 : 249; Stadter 2014 : 238; Wardman 1974 : 10-18.

⁴⁰ Beck 2014 : 1; Hägg 2012 : 68; Russell 1973 : 106. For more information on the biographic genre and its development see: Geiger 1988, Momigliano 1971, Osley 1946, Stadter 1988, and Swain 1997. For biography in antiquity and its creative nature necessitating the use of fiction see: Hägg 2012 : 1-9. For Greek historians under Roman rule see: Pelling 2007.

⁴¹ Dihle 1994 : 189.

caution approaching the *Lives* as a work of history because Plutarch does not follow typical modern standards of history and, like all writers, he is influenced by the time in which he wrote, which naturally distorts his portrayal of the past.⁴² But although Plutarch's main purpose was writing ethical biography, he also offers insight into an era in which many of our sources are lost, necessitating the use of the *Lives* for historical information.⁴³ As long as the reader bears in mind the moral function of his oeuvre and that his account of history may also have a moral purpose, it is possible to interpret the *Lives* as a subgenre of history that offers a glimpse into the past and the great men therein. Furthermore, there is danger in applying modern categories to Plutarch's works. Assuming that it should fit our modern categorizations is risky, as he would not have analyzed his *Lives* using such rigid demarcations. Instead, the *Lives* should be read using the context in which they were written: as history, biography, and moral philosophy.⁴⁴

Closure

Since historians are consciously or unconsciously subjective in their descriptions of the past, the account of every individual and event in a history is affected by the education, beliefs, ideologies, and culture of the historians themselves. Plutarch is no exception. Written in Greek by a man who identifies with Greek heritage in a Roman Empire long divorced from the democracy of Athens, educated and surrounded by the ideas of the Second Sophistic,⁴⁵ and writing hundreds of years after the events in question, Plutarch's *Lives* shape the men and events

⁴² Barrow 1967 : 60-61; Beck 2014 : 3; Hägg 2012 : 3, 273; Jones 1971 : 82; Larmour 2005 : 44; Mehl 2011 : 185; Russell 1973 : 102-103, 115; Stadter 2014 : 22; Tröster 2008 : 14-15; Wardman 1974 : 6-7.

⁴³ Duff 1999 : 4; Geiger 2014 : 296; Hamilton 2007 : 8; Larmour 2005 : 51; Momigliano 1971 : 12; Osley 1946 : 8; Pelling 2002 : 144-148, 207; Romm 2012 : vii; Schettino 2014 : 417; Stadter 2014 : 216; Tröster 2008 : 15; Wardman 7-12.

⁴⁴ See page 26 for a discussion on the conception of the ancients of biography as separate from historiography.

⁴⁵ Some of the ideas of the Second Sophistic that may have influenced Plutarch include: the importance of military action as exempla (Whitmarsh 2005 : 78); the prominence of local history (Bowie 1970 : 4; Swain 1996 : 77); almost ignoring Greek history after Alexander (Geiger 2014 : 299); and atticism (Zadorojnyi 2014 : 308). For more information, see Hägg 2012 : 341-3 and Schmitz 2014 : 32-42, and Whitmarsh 2005.

they recall to achieve a moral framework meant to be used by his reader to improve his life. My thesis will examine how Plutarch composes these moral models for his reader and what can be learned from his heroes in the *Parallel Lives*.

To investigate this topic, I will explore Plutarch's composition of the *Lives* in Chapter One. This will provide context as to how and why Plutarch wrote. Once this is accomplished, the elements of Plutarch's writing will be used to understand morality in the *Lives*, discussed in Chapter Two. The final chapter of my thesis provides a case study of Plutarch's *Cimon* that explores the moral framework of that *Life* to complement Pelling's analysis of *Lucullus* and to supplement other case studies available on the *Lives*. Bringing this forward will improve our appreciation of morality in *Cimon* and what Plutarch understood about the fifth century BCE Athenian general and his *polis*.

Chapter One: The Many *Lives* of Plutarch

Plutarch's flexibility and command of many subjects, along with his extensive extant oeuvre, make for a rich study of the influence behind these works and their meaning. However, their diversity also ensures that any examination of Plutarch and his writings is complicated by their multifaceted nature. Arguably his most famous work, the *Parallel Lives* dominate the discourse of Plutarchan studies. Their unique position as a window into both the Greek and Roman worlds as well as a bridge between two very different times creates an opportunity to appreciate how a man who identifies as Greek under the Roman Empire understood his own history and its application to his world. Yet Plutarch doesn't offer his views directly to his reader, preferring instead to allow his *Lives* to speak for themselves. It is not enough to simply read a *Life* isolated from the collection, as this distorts the material. Instead, it is essential to consider each *Life* within its own sphere, with its partner *Life*, as well as within the entirety of the *Lives* to observe any discernable trends important for understanding how Plutarch portrays the leading men of Greece and Rome. This chapter investigates the composition of the *Lives* and its presentation of men to discern Plutarch's methodology and purpose in creating this work. Doing so will shed light on the elements essential to understanding morality in the *Lives*, as discussed in Chapter Two. These are in turn crucial for an analysis of *Cimon*, which is offered in Chapter Three.

A. Wardman observed that, "The *Lives* are so varied in subject-matter that there is bound to be some difference of opinion about what is most important in them, and what is most characteristic of their author's thought."⁴⁶ It is no surprise, then, that scholarship concerning Plutarch is varied in approach and opinion. Once considered a simple compiler of facts, Plutarch's current reputation is that of a creative genius who deliberately crafts history and the men therein

⁴⁶ Wardman 1974 : 245.

for the conveyance of morality in each *Life*.⁴⁷ Recently, a compilation of the leading scholars of Plutarchan studies has been released (*A Companion to Plutarch*), which contains the current scholarly views on various topics of Plutarch and his works.⁴⁸ Chapters One and Two of this thesis will contribute to complement *A Companion to Plutarch* and other scholarship by analyzing the main findings to reveal some striking features of Plutarch's writing. This will provide the background necessary to examine morality in Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*.

This chapter focuses on the composition of the *Lives*, asking how and why the *Lives* are organized as they are. Concentrating on the proems and the *synkriseis*, this section endeavours to understand Plutarch's methodology and purpose in writing. The outcome will be used as a means of comparison for the case study of *Cimon* in Chapter Three to see if *Cimon-Lucullus* fits overall within the moral boundaries and literary style that Plutarch lays out in his *Parallel Lives*. Once the basic structure and purpose of the *Lives* is determined, the discussion moves on to discern why Plutarch put Greeks and Romans in parallel. Was Plutarch following a political agenda? Or did he choose Greeks and Romans for some other purpose? Answering these questions will aid in drawing conclusions in Chapter Three about the material Plutarch includes in *Cimon* and why, as well as his comparison with *Lucullus*.

The Composition of the *Lives*

This section endeavours to understand the composition of the *Lives* and what this reveals about Plutarch's writing. As we saw in the Introduction, the *Lives* are striking as they do not strictly follow the example of any previous ancient writer. Even the individual *Lives*, as M. Tröster points

⁴⁷ Duff 1999 : 4-5, moralism: 52-71; Flacelière 1962 : 430-431; Hägg 2012 : 251; Pelling 2002 : 210, 237-251. For an impressive survey of how Plutarch sees virtue and vice in his *Moralia*, which is beyond the scope of this discussion, see Nikolaidis 2014 : 350-352.

⁴⁸ Beck 2014.

out, do not fit a rigid formulaic composition.⁴⁹ Although each *Life* is unique in specific details, it is crucial to dissect the basic flexible compositional pieces of the *Lives* to appreciate how they should be read and what we as readers can learn from them.

Recent scholarship has brought attention to the importance of reading the *Lives* as pairs,⁵⁰ since Plutarch consciously developed them to be compared and as such they build upon each other, like simpler versions of syncritic exercises,⁵¹ or a more complex form of the Greek fixation with analogy and polarity.⁵² The two *Lives*, therefore, must be presented to the reader as one unit to digest the full meaning of each. Even their length is indicative to understanding their composition. P. Stadter offers a glimpse into Plutarch's composition by analyzing the length of the pairs. Interestingly, the pairs that can be identified as written earlier are shorter than the average 97 Teubner pages. Similarly, the three longest pairs are all written later with a large focus on the Roman *Life* (averaging 90 pages).⁵³ From this, other *Lives* whose dates cannot be fixed as early or late can be cautiously placed into the context of Plutarch's composition. Surmising when Plutarch wrote a *Life* grants insight into the mind of the man who developed this work and what or who he saw as a priority to record for posterity and what he took more time to consider.

The length of the *Lives*, however, is a limited resource of concrete information about the author's method. Thus, our attention must be drawn to the division of the *Lives*. Duff persuasively argued against the traditional theory that each *Life* is divided into two sections, asserting instead that they are composed of four sections: the prologue (proem), the first *Life*, second *Life*, and *synkrisis*, and that each of these sections has a unique internal structure with elements that run

⁴⁹ Tröster 2008 : 14.

⁵⁰ Duff 2011b : 214; Stadter 1988 : 277.

⁵¹ Stadter 2014 : 244.

⁵² Hägg 2012 : 280.

⁵³ Stadter 1988 : 276-277.

through each to provide unity.⁵⁴ This four-part division feels natural and allows for a closer examination of Plutarch's methodology. The breakdown of the first and second *Lives* with their thematic, linguistic, and structural analysis is beyond the scope of this thesis, which aims to understand morality in Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*. Therefore, only the proems and the *synkriseis*, which contain the strongest elements of Plutarch's methodology, will be investigated here.⁵⁵

The Proems

The proems introduce the pair, set the stage for their comparison, and offer themes that flow into the two *Lives* that accompany it. This is not an invention of Plutarch's mind, but follows with other examples such as Tacitus and Cornelius Nepos.⁵⁶ These earlier works focus on praise of the subject (for single biographies) or learning about the subjects and their ways of life (for a set of biographies).⁵⁷ Plutarch, in writing a set of biographies, employs both praise of his subject and an interest in learning from their actions.

Plutarch's ability to include both approaches in his *synkriseis* leads to diversity in his proems, which has caused much debate on how to understand their differences. Until recently, Stadter's theory that there are formal and informal proems in the *Lives* was the consensus among scholars. Formal proems, Stadter suggests, reference the dedicatee of the work, Sosius Senecio, regularly using the first person, name the subjects of the two *Lives* that follow, and avoid the topics of family, education and physical appearance (the focus of informal proems) while concentrating instead on the purpose and method of Plutarch's work.⁵⁸ In 2011, Duff argued against this thesis, deeming it unhelpful and incorrect because it ignores the distinction between the book and the

⁵⁴ Duff 2011b : 216.

⁵⁵ See Duff (2011b : 224-252) and Pelling (2002 : 357-375) for a detailed investigation of the elements of the first and second *Lives*.

⁵⁶ Stadter 1988 : 280-281.

⁵⁷ Stadter 1988 : 283.

⁵⁸ Stadter 1988 : 275-276. See also Larmour 2014 : 411.

individual *Life*.⁵⁹ Duff proposes that the prologue should instead be regarded as separate from the first *Life* when the reader hits what he refers to as the ‘transitional’ phrase, which marks the end of one discussion and the beginning of another.⁶⁰ He also points to the asyndeton, indicating that nine of the thirteen pairs that have prologues, including *Cimon-Lucullus*, have no connective between the proem and the first *Life*. The remaining four, “...have logical particles (γάρ, οὐν, μὲν, οὐν, τοίνυν respectively) – but never the connective δέ.”⁶¹ In contrast, half of the second *Lives* begin with δέ. Duff convincingly argues that this evidence points to a stronger connection between the first and second *Lives* than the first *Life* and the proem, something that is not considered in Stadter’s theory.⁶²

Duff urges that instead of formal and informal proems, the books must be viewed as thirteen pairs having a prologue, eight without, and one corrupted (*Themistocles-Camillus*). The ones that contain a proem, Duff insists, stand separate from the paired *Lives* in the same way as the *synkriseis*.⁶³ While Duff’s analysis is certainly convincing and provides a basis for re-evaluating our current understanding of the proems, it is not absolutely necessary to divorce the two theories. Instead, I believe it is possible to combine Stadter’s theory of formal proems with Duff’s insistence of a separation from the first *Life*. Doing so accounts for the Greek language indicators and the thematic differences between the proems and the first *Life* that Duff notes, while maintaining a distinction with the other books that do not contain the necessary ingredients Stadter claims for a formal proem. If the ‘formal’ label is dropped but the criteria of the formal proem maintained, the theories mix elegantly.

⁵⁹ Duff 2011b : 216-217.

⁶⁰ Duff 2011b : 222.

⁶¹ Duff 2011b : 223-224.

⁶² Duff 2011b : 224.

⁶³ Duff 2011b : 218. He then goes into further detail by saying that the 13 prologues are divided into two sections: a general reflection section followed by a section that names the heroes (ibid : 219-220).

Despite its position at the beginning of each pair of *Lives*, the proem not only introduces the pair that follows, but therein Plutarch also relates his strategies and expectations for the *Lives*.⁶⁴ Since there is no preface to the *Parallel Lives*, these programmatic statements receive much attention in scholarship, particularly regarding whether they apply to the *Parallel Lives* as a whole or only to the respective pair in which they are found. I will argue against Duff's assertion that the proems apply only to the pair in which they are found,⁶⁵ by showing that the most quoted comments found in proems in the *Lives* (*Nicias-Crassus*, *Aemilius-Timoleon*, *Perciles-Fabius*, *Demetrius-Antony*, *Cimon-Lucullus*, *Alexander-Caesar*) not only pertain to the individual pair but also that elements in each relate to the *Lives* as a whole.

The 'Nicias-Crassus' ⁶⁶

In this proem, Plutarch is critical of his predecessors, claiming that he provides neglected material that best reveals the character of his subject. It must be noted that this statement is linked specifically to the pair in question, implying that the criticism holds true for this pair, but not necessarily that it is the case for others. Nevertheless it is suggestive of his mode of research – he does not collect ‘useless material’; rather, he gathers evidence to reveal character instead of recounting deeds. Duff points to a similar proem, that of *Demosthenes-Cicero*, in which Plutarch makes the same claim of gathering hitherto unknown sources (*Dem.* 2.1).⁶⁷ The appearance of such a claim on more than one occasion implies that Plutarch believed he was collecting evidence of character that other writers missed and that, as a result, his account was superior to others for understanding the character of his hero. This supports the argument that Plutarch was not merely

⁶⁴ Duff 1999 : 14; Pelling 2010 : xxv; Russell 1973 : 114-115; Stadter 1988 : 275, 290-292; Tröster 2008 : 16; Whitmarsh 2005 : 78.

⁶⁵ Duff 1999 : 59.

⁶⁶ See Appendix 1 for the proem statement.

⁶⁷ Duff 1999 : 23.

a compiler, as he reprimands such a practice. Therefore, Plutarch's *Lives* must be regarded as a work of his own design, as he specifically states how he interprets his heroes (through the actions as outlined by Thucydides and Philistus and through other neglected evidence) to reveal character.

The 'Aemilius-Timoleon' ⁶⁸

The *Aemilius-Timoleon* statement likens the *Lives* to a mirror in which the author and reader analogously evaluate their lives against those of great men in the past. Plutarch here implies that he has met and entertained these men by reading about their history and bringing them closer to the reader and to the author, making it seem as if they are present. This attempt to lend credibility to his work by suggesting that Plutarch is relaying the information from a first-hand source. Even if Plutarch is merely conveying his closeness and passion for the subject, this suggests that his research is so close to the original that it is as though the men themselves were dining at his side, regaling him with their stories. This helps build trust with the reader, not necessarily in the accuracy of the events portrayed, but certainly in the characters of the depicted men.

Unlike the other programmatic statements, Plutarch explicitly links this comment to the entirety of his work. Nowhere in the remainder of the *Lives* does Plutarch so plainly mention why he is writing ('for the sake of others'), why he continues his project ('for my own sake'), and what he is trying to achieve (a work using history as a moral mirror). This suggests that it is imperative that the *Lives* be studied not just as historical mines of information, but also with the purpose for which they were written in mind: moral improvement. Understanding this sheds light on why Plutarch includes certain anecdotes and ignores events found in other sources, such as Thucydides, or why he draws more attention to one aspect of his hero than another. Combined with the *Nikias*-

⁶⁸ See Appendix 2 for the proem statement.

Crassus, it can be deduced that Plutarch includes events only when they reveal an aspect of his character against which he or his reader may evaluate their own lives using his literary mirror.

The 'Pericles-Fabius' ⁶⁹

In this proem, Plutarch explains how his reader is to improve him/herself by reading about great men of the past: through imitation.⁷⁰ He explains that material delights, such as perfumes, were not necessarily conceived and produced by virtuous men. However, the attitudes of virtuous men are immediately identifiable and imitable. Beck points to the direct role of the *Life of Pericles* in leading the reader to appreciate the Periclean building program.⁷¹ The comment can also be applied to the *Lives* as a whole, in that the reader should imitate virtuous men of action, rather than artists whose products do not necessitate a morally outstanding creator. Plutarch, being the vehicle through which this moral virtue is conveyed, presents himself not as an artist, but as a portrayer of the men who are to be imitated. In this way, Plutarch again gives weight to his own work as exceptional and worthy of his reader and perhaps superior to the accounts that came before.

The 'Demetrius-Antony' ⁷²

Here Plutarch explains why he includes men whom he considers to be of a questionable moral nature: by presenting these men of unjust and disgraceful natures, the virtues of others are more evident. In this manner, Demetrius and Antony are 'deterrent examples'⁷³ consistent with the

⁶⁹ See Appendix 3 for the proem statement.

⁷⁰ The idea of presenting great men of the past for his reader to imitate is consistent throughout the *Lives* as a *topos* of Plutarch's work (Jiménez 2002 : 105). Jiménez (2002 : 106) states that Plutarch's reader learns to imitate moral leaders by reading of the leaders imitating other moral men: "In this manner, the *topos* of imitation functions in the *Lives* as a complement to the education of the ruler, and sometimes as the education itself, since he acquires a determined ethical behaviour or a particular orientation in public life by following several *exempla*." Other examples of Plutarch directing his reader to imitate the men in the *Lives* are outlined by Jones (1971 : 103) and Tröster (2008 : 15) and include: *Cim.* 2.2-5, *Nic.* 1.5, *Pomp.* 8.7, *Dem.* 11.7, *Cat. Min.* 24.1, *Galb.* 2.5, *Aem.* 1.1-5, *Alex.* 1, *Dem.* 1.1-6, *Arat.* 1.

⁷¹ Beck 2014 : 4.

⁷² See Appendix 4 for the proem statement.

⁷³ Duff 1999 : 47; Russell 1973 : 135.

Greek view that virtue comes from knowledge and thus vice must be understood to avoid it and be virtuous.⁷⁴ The reader is meant to evaluate each example of virtue and vice to improve his own nature. Accordingly, this statement can be applied to all the *Lives*, including those in which it is not necessarily the hero who is an example of vice, but minor characters in the *Life* to which the hero is compared.

The 'Cimon-Lucullus' ⁷⁵

One comment that Duff does not include in his section on programmatic statements⁷⁶ is in the proem to *Cimon-Lucullus*. I believe that this comment deserves to be included in this discussion as it reveals a strong sentiment of Plutarch and how he chose to prepare his work. Here Plutarch addresses the idea that esthetics are representative of character. Once again, Plutarch places himself and his work above that of artists, as he claims that his literary endeavour can better portray the character of his subject than a sculpture and is thus more pleasing to his reader because it is more accurate. Plutarch will not shy away from the shortcomings of his subject as a sculptor would, but instead endeavours to also present his heroes' virtues and failings. Hägg argues that this indicates that Plutarch believed he was writing something different from other historical narratives,⁷⁷ perhaps 'portraits of a person in words',⁷⁸ proclaiming once again the superior nature of his work.⁷⁹ Lastly, this statement should be considered as applicable to the *Lives* as a whole as part of Plutarch's methodological approach to presenting his characters. He believes in revealing the truth of his hero, including any flaws, but also presenting him in a balanced fashion without emphasizing the negative traits.

⁷⁴ Duff 1999 : 46. This is also consistent with *exemplum* in rhetoric, where deterrent models help to influence the opinions of the audience (Demoen 1997 : 130).

⁷⁵ See Appendix 5 for the proem statement.

⁷⁶ Duff 1999 : 13-51.

⁷⁷ Hägg 2012 : 271.

⁷⁸ Stadter 2014 : 215.

⁷⁹ Beck 2014 : 5; Stadter 2014 : 215; Wardman 1974 : 26.

*The 'Alexander-Caesar'*⁸⁰

Arguably the most quoted of all of the proem statements, *Alexander-Caesar* is a source of contention for scholars both in its applicability to the *Lives* and its meaning. It is traditionally accepted that Plutarch is stating that his work is part of biography and not history,⁸¹ but some scholars use this to show that Plutarch is actually closer to history than previously thought, as these great men cannot be treated in isolation from the past.⁸² Far from being evidence of Plutarch's 'protest against military history',⁸³ Duff convincingly argues that the terms 'history' and 'lives' were more fluid in antiquity and that classifying them by modern standards is problematic.⁸⁴ It cannot be denied that in this passage Plutarch explicitly places morality and character in the foreground; however, he also doesn't say that he is disregarding history, just choosing events that reveal his ethical purpose instead of relating a chain of historical events. Thus Plutarch was neglecting history, but it was not the focus of his work. That does not mean that it is sidelined completely, instead he includes it to add colourful accents to orient his reader and contextualize his character.

Furthermore, Plutarch's remark that sayings and jests are more revealing of character than large military skirmishes is another methodological statement about his composition of the *Lives*, and one that was widely accepted in antiquity.⁸⁵ He applies a process of qualitative selectivity.⁸⁶ This selectivity is evident throughout the *Lives*, where Plutarch neglects some events and

⁸⁰ See Appendix 6 for the proem statement.

⁸¹ Geiger 2014 : 293.

⁸² Hägg 2012 : 243; Pelling 2010 : xxx; Wardman 1974 : 1-10.

⁸³ Wardman 1971 : 254.

⁸⁴ Duff 1999 : 17-20. See also the presentation of the problem of genre on pages 14-15.

⁸⁵ Hägg 2012 : 12-5, 269, 271. The earliest example derives from fragments of Ion of Chios' *Epidemiai* which have anecdotes and sayings from famous Athenians whom Ion met at dinner parties (Hägg 2012 : 11). See also Xenophon's *Memorabilia* as an example of a series of anecdotes (Hägg 2012 : 14).

⁸⁶ Soares 2014 : 378.

emphasizes others. Such cases must be regarded as a conscious shearing of historical events that do not reveal enough about Plutarch's hero's character to be relevant for his work.

Other scholars argue that this statement has been misused and should only be applied to the pair in which it is placed.⁸⁷ For example, Plutarch contradicts himself here by saying that great actions do not reveal character, unlike his assertion that they do in the *Nicias-Crassus* statement. Duff and Wardman interpret this discrepancy as Plutarch tailoring his argument to suit each book.⁸⁸ While certainly relevant for the thesis that these statements apply to the *Lives* in their entirety, I believe that it is possible to glean aspects of Plutarch's methodology from the proem statements as long as the other *Lives* are not rigorously measured against them. So, while great actions can play a part in revealing character in *Nicias-Crassus*, they become a hindrance in *Alexander-Caesar*. But the premise remains the same: include any event, jest, or saying if they are indicative of character.

The programmatic statements found in the proems of the *Lives* are telling of their author's thought and process of composition. The *Nicias-Crassus* tells Plutarch's reader that he gathers evidence from multiple sources and that this evidence is often neglected, placing an air of superiority to his work. The *Aemilius-Timoleon* advises his audience to use the *Lives* and the actions of the great men within as a mirror to improve themselves by evaluating their own actions. Plutarch explains in the *Pericles-Fabius* prologue that in order to improve, his reader needs to imitate these great men. However, not all men are to be imitated, as the *Demetrius-Antony* reveals. This is Plutarch's justification for inclusion of men whose *Lives* were less than virtuous. Plutarch contends that by understanding such men and their vices, he could lead his reader to virtue. It is also for this reason that Plutarch includes weaknesses in his *Lives*, as explained by the *Cimon-*

⁸⁷ Duff 1999 : 14-15; Hägg 2012 : 269; Wardman 1971 : 258, 1974 : 154.

⁸⁸ Duff 1999 : 25; Wardman 1971 : 259.

Lucullus proem. By accurately portraying his hero, Plutarch helps his reader learn and see that men are not perfect but can be virtuous despite their flaws. His most famous proem, that of *Alexander-Caesar*, explains that he chooses material that best reveals his subject's character and not material that only relates historical events. Therefore, the general sentiment in which these programmatic statements were cast to papyrus should be attributed to the *Lives* as a whole with their specific elements left to the pair in which they are found.

The *Synkriseis*

Similar to the proems, the *synkriseis* hint at Plutarch's views and invite his reader to think critically about the *Lives* which he has read. All the *Lives* except for four books (*Themistocles-Camillus*, *Pyrrhus-Marius*, *Phocian-Cato Minor*, *Alexander-Caesar*) end with a *synkrisis*, and the others are presumed lost.⁸⁹ Coming from a weighty tradition in Greek thought and rhetorical training, predating Socratic and Hippocratic writings, and closely linked to *encomia*, a genre of discourse, and *agon*,⁹⁰ the *synkriseis* in the *Lives* rest on a proud literary background. It is not unusual to read Greek texts riddled with comparisons, such as the Greek-barbarian polarity. For the Greeks, this comparative method defined their moral characterization,⁹¹ making it a fitting inclusion in the *Lives*. Yet scholars have shied away from them as a serious piece to analyze. In response, Pelling suggests a rehabilitation of the *synkriseis*, arguing that modern scholars read the *synkriseis* with impatience because of the seeming artificiality of the comparison.⁹² This artificiality, according to Hägg, derives from the presentation of the paired men as equal.⁹³ D.H.J. Larmour takes a similar view, arguing that our criticisms of the *synkriseis* derive from our

⁸⁹ Duff 2011b : 253; Larmour 2014 : 410.

⁹⁰ Duff 1999 : 243; Hägg 2012 : 280; Larmour 2014 : 407; Tatum 2010 : 7.

⁹¹ Duff 1999 : 243.

⁹² Pelling 2002 : 377.

⁹³ Hägg 2012 : 266.

expectations that the *Lives* function like modern biography, which they are not.⁹⁴ These are prudent warnings, as it is artificial to consider an ancient work against the standards or structure of a modern one. The *synkriseis* in the *Lives* was created by Plutarch to be read alongside them, and thus must be considered as part of and revealing of the work. Without appreciating the *synkriseis*, the reader loses the concluding statements on his pair of *Lives* and the purpose of the exercise of comparison.

Plutarch was no stranger to the *synkrisis* and employed it even in his *Moralia*.⁹⁵ As Duff states, “It is this use of *synkrisis* as a means to explore common qualities, as a means not of grading but of understanding, which is so central to the moralism of the *Parallel Lives* and is one of Plutarch’s most original contributions to historiography”.⁹⁶ In the *synkriseis*, Plutarch invites his reader to pass judgement on the paired men and offers issues to be explored without setting one man up as superior to the other. Plutarch thus leaves his reader to draw their own conclusions about the men. Plutarch uses the *synkriseis* to lay out both the similarities and the differences between the compared men, unlike the proems which measure only their similarities. The theory of circularity⁹⁷ – drawing the reader back in the *synkrisis* to themes from the proem – is particularly intriguing. Not only does this theory frame the first and second *Life*, it also unifies the book as an ethical exercise. Larmour agrees, presenting the *synkriseis* as the lynchpin of the *Lives*: while the *synkriseis* are not inspiring from a literary point of view, they set in motion the moral judgment by the reader.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Larmour 2014 : 405-6.

⁹⁵ Duff 1999 : 245; Larmour 2014 : 408.

⁹⁶ Duff 1999 : 247.

⁹⁷ Duff 2011b : 256.

⁹⁸ Larmour 2014 : 215; Tatum 2010 : 15-16.

The reader's appraisal of the men while reading the *synkriseis* derives from the new information Plutarch presents in its pages. The *synkriseis* often explores different themes than those in the three other portions of the book and focuses on military and political achievements. Plutarch reviews how much help the men received and how great their ambition was.⁹⁹ On the opposite side of morality, Plutarch investigates his subject's temperance and self-control, particularly in regards to sex and wealth.¹⁰⁰ In this way, the *synkriseis* fail to provide a conclusion to the *Lives* they follow, and instead brings forth new considerations. Nevertheless, they offer a balanced approach to the two men and a teachable experience for the reader. Thus the *synkriseis* are more the end to a lesson than a conclusion.

The composition of the *Parallel Lives* presents scholars with valuable insight into the work, the lessons the *Lives* teach, and Plutarch's methodology to do so. The length of the *Lives* help determine the dates they were written as either early or late. The dates also highlight the men that Plutarch felt necessary to record, and which ones developed later when he continued the *Lives*. The proems confirm that the *Lives* are an exercise in comparison and evaluation of morality and provide key details into Plutarch's methods and writing. Lastly, the *synkriseis* remind Plutarch's audience of the practical application of these *Lives* as a mirror for evaluating one's own morality by offering the gavel to the reader. If we understand the importance of each of these sections, it is clear that the books in the *Lives* must be read in their entirety to fully appreciate any moral lessons developed by Plutarch.

⁹⁹ Duff 1999 : 263; Larmour 2014 : 413.

¹⁰⁰ Duff 1999 : 264.

Plutarch's Motive of Parallel Composition

The moral lessons that Plutarch imparts to the reader through the composition of his *Lives* leave many scholars trying to interpret his choice of setting Greek and Roman subjects in parallel as indicative of an additional moral message. Far from being in agreement, scholarship differs widely on why Plutarch chose men from these two cultures and times to set beside one another and what this tells us, if anything, about his aims in composing the *Parallel Lives*. As previously discussed, comparison of two things is inherent in Greek thought and their corpus, but since we are so divorced from Plutarch's time, the meaning of the pairing of Greeks and Romans and what that may signify to the first and second century Greek under Roman rule is lost in time. One of the main difficulties in assessing the meaning of the parallel composition is that Plutarch often explains his reasons for pairing two men, but never for pairing Greeks and Romans. As W.J. Tatum notes "...neither their parallelism nor their comparison obviously implies their amalgamation."¹⁰¹ To clarify why Plutarch paired Greeks and Romans, this section will look first at how Plutarch picks his protagonists followed by an assessment of the various scholarly opinions on why Plutarch chose to focus his work on Greeks and Romans.

Choosing Heroes

Plutarch isn't always explicit about how he chose the men for his *Lives*.¹⁰² Nevertheless, it is possible to detect some trends surrounding the subjects of this work. First, they are almost all elite men, usually from distinguished families, with good education, and at the highest echelons of

¹⁰¹ Tatum 2010 : 9.

¹⁰² Geiger 1981 : 86; Russell 1973 : 113-114. A rare example of Plutarch specifically telling his reader why he chose his subject is found in the proem to *Cimon-Lucullus* where he says that he is trying to repay the debt that Chaeronea owes to Lucullus by including him in the *Lives* (*Cim.* 2.2-3). This is also an example where Plutarch tells his reader that he found Lucullus first then searched for an accompanying hero (this is discussed in further detail in Chapter Three pages 67-71). This happens on a couple of occasions (i.e. *Thes.* 1.3; *Agis.* 2.6) (See Geiger 1981 : 88 or Hägg 2012 : 247). When placed together, the similarities of the heroes are often seen in their external circumstances (Duff 1999 : 249), their character (Russell 1973 : 114), and their minor counterparts (Wardman 1974 : 27).

society or significant to their local communities. Scholars explain this aspect of selection by arguing that Plutarch believed that political action was central to displaying virtue.¹⁰³ For Plutarch and other ancient authors, it is easier to learn about a man's character when he is involved in the public sphere with power in his hands. Besides being able to climb to a position of renown, Plutarch's heroes also all derive from the distant past and present a broad chronological span. There is no link with any contemporary men in his *Lives*. This may be the result of dissatisfaction with the present, with Plutarch and his contemporaries looking at the past and its men as morally superior. As D.A. Russell points out, Plutarch is not concerned with his subjects as figures of history, but rather as examples of virtue.¹⁰⁴ Thus the choice of men from the past, who are Plutarch's paradigms of virtue, must be interpreted partially as a statement about the unworthiness of Plutarch's contemporaries.¹⁰⁵ This choice has another implication: that virtue has a timeless quality that can be regained, imitated, and understood throughout different ages.

Many of the Greek paragons of virtue derive from the classical age. It has even been suggested, because of their limited number, that the Hellenistic biographies were added later to the *Lives*.¹⁰⁶ Such an interpretation implies that it was a greater priority to record the Greeks of the classical age than those of the Hellenistic period. It also affirms that Plutarch believed that the Greeks of the classical age were generally more virtuous than those of later times. The interest in this period ensured that there was more information available, as it was a critical period in Greek history.¹⁰⁷ It seems obvious that the selection of men would come from such a celebrated time in his peoples' past.

¹⁰³ Fulkerson 2012 : 52; Stadter 2014 : 219-220; Wardman 1974 : 3; Whitmarsh 2005 : 78.

¹⁰⁴ Russell 1973 : 103.

¹⁰⁵ Barrow 1967 : 146; Lavery 1994 : 261; Payen 2014 : 237; Wardman 1974 : 20-21.

¹⁰⁶ Geiger 2014 : 294.

¹⁰⁷ Duff 1999 : 4; Marincola 2010 : 122.

Similar to the Greeks, many of the Roman *Lives* derive from one period: the Republic. Jones believes that this indicates Plutarch's view that morals declined during the late Republic, leaving the men of the empire lacking in comparison to their ancestors.¹⁰⁸ This is certainly a plausible explanation, as Plutarch had recently completed biographies of the emperors, ensuring that he was familiar with the leading men of the Empire, yet he does not include them in his *Lives*.¹⁰⁹ J. Geiger develops another convincing explanation, relating to the Forum of Augustus in Rome. Having visited many times, Plutarch was familiar with the rows of marble statues of men of the Republic. Geiger suggests that this visual display of Rome's grandiosity in the development of what became an empire was a natural cutting point for Plutarch and easily relatable to the classical age of Greece.¹¹⁰ Interestingly, these two periods chosen by Plutarch reflect modern interests in the history of Greece and Rome. We focus on these times and see them, and sometimes the men from them, as superior to other periods. Perhaps this is a reflection of influence by the extant material, such as Plutarch's *Lives*, or maybe it is more indicative of our admiration for democracy and the Republic. Either way, the popularity of these periods in modern scholarship indicates a value placed on the worth of these men that is reflected in Plutarch's choice of heroes.

Why Greeks and Romans?

Plutarch was interested in the classical age of Greece and the development of the Roman Empire during the Republic, but that still does not explain why he decided to pair men from these very different cultures and times. Duff contends that this was radical and that other Greek historians ignored Rome.¹¹¹ However, S.C.R. Swain notes that this was not an unusual trend of Plutarch's time, as men such as Varro, Nepos and Valerius Maximus paired Greeks and Romans

¹⁰⁸ Jones 1971 : 99.

¹⁰⁹ Geiger 2014 : 294.

¹¹⁰ Geiger 2014 : 294.

¹¹¹ Duff 1999 : 289-290.

before Plutarch.¹¹² Therefore, Plutarch may have been unconventional as a Greek under the Roman Empire, but not as a biographer or historian of the time. Furthermore, growing up in Chaeronea and traveling extensively throughout the empire ingrained the intertwining nature of the two cultures. The Greek and Roman worlds were a natural part of his life. If this is the case, then the pairing of Greeks and Romans would seem anything but unusual to him. It is here that scholars are divided. Did Plutarch have a political agenda when he paired them, or did it just seem natural to do so?

Cultural Competitiveness?

Some scholars believe that the conception of the *Lives* comes from a cultural competitiveness that Plutarch wished to showcase. According to this theory, the contest is revealed in the *synkrisis* of each pair.¹¹³ However, Plutarch's efforts to present the men as equals in his *synkriseis* suggest that the men are not at odds with each other but are comparable characters to be used as mirrors for the reader's actions. If one departs from the *synkriseis*, however, there are instances in the *Lives* when Plutarch favours the Romans, and in particular their actions in Greece.¹¹⁴ Yet he is also unafraid of challenging and criticising their actions, especially in reference to education.¹¹⁵ Plutarch therefore does not favour either Greeks or Romans, but he admires aspects of each culture: the military strength and strategy of Rome, and the education of the Greeks. This once again demonstrates the importance of reading the entire book to grasp Plutarch's full synthesis of the men inside. Without it, the reader and scholar are left with inadequate information and a partial, blurred reflection. Plutarch's presentation of men almost fluidly transcends the cultures and their Greek or Roman identities only become apparent when he

¹¹² Swain 1996 : 138.

¹¹³ Duff 1999 : 291; Tatum 2010 : 18.

¹¹⁴ Barrow 1967 : 59; Jones 1971 : 103; Stadter 2014 : 22; Swain 1996 : 137.

¹¹⁵ Duff 1999 : 303-304. Jones 1971 : 107; Hägg 2012 : 247; Podlecki 1988 : 232-233; Stadter 2014 : 21.

is ready to praise or criticise something related to it. Therefore, Plutarch is more interested in having his subjects compete for who was more virtuous and a better statesman, than in choosing between Greeks and Romans.¹¹⁶

Political Motive?

Other scholars, although in agreement that he is not choosing Greece or Rome as superior, push for a political motive in which Plutarch is reminding the Romans of Greece's glorious past. Whether to present the Greek world as a useful partner to Rome,¹¹⁷ to encourage cultural exchange by portraying Greece as the timeless preserver of Mediterranean culture,¹¹⁸ to point out to the Romans that Greece could match their great generals and statesmen,¹¹⁹ or to negotiate the Greek present under Rome through their remembered past,¹²⁰ these scholars believe that Plutarch created the *Lives* to show the commonalities of their cultures. This, they argue, creates an atmosphere of cooperation between Greece and Rome by underlining their equality and partnership.¹²¹ As such, "...Greeks and Romans appear as equals and equally important...The former do not appear solely as 'poets and thinkers' while the latter do not appear solely as politicians and military men, but instead both appear as both, and to this extent complete."¹²² However, as previously discussed, Plutarch does not focus on historical events or the cultures in which his men lived, but rather on their characters. It does not follow, then, that the pairing of Greeks and Romans was conceived as a political reminder to the Romans that the Greeks had a glorious past. If this was the case, Plutarch

¹¹⁶ Wardman 1974 : 236, 244.

¹¹⁷ Russell 1973 : 31.

¹¹⁸ Payen 2014 : 247; Podlecki 1988 : 232.

¹¹⁹ Dihle 1994 : 193; Duff 1999 : 291.

¹²⁰ Larmour 2005 : 45.

¹²¹ Bowersock 1995 : 29-30; Duff 1999 : 302; Hägg 2012 : 243; Hartog 1998 : 161; Jones 1971 : 103; Mossman 2006 : 286-287; Payen 2014 : 242; Russell 1973 : 8; Swain 1996 : 139; Wardman 1974 : 104.

¹²² Mehl 2011 : 185.

would surely have placed more emphasis on Greek triumphs in his *Lives*. Instead, the reader is left with paired men who do not espouse a patriotic spirit.

Greek Lens

This atmosphere of cooperation, however, is shadowed by the Greek lens with which the work was conceived. The *Parallel Lives* are written in Greek and as such, the Romans and Rome are measured by Plutarch's understanding of the Greek world and Greeks.¹²³ Even the moral standards to which the Roman and Greek heroes are subjected are Greek, suggesting the universality of Greek ethics and distorting the motives of Romans and their politics.¹²⁴ Accordingly, Duff argues that Plutarch is not preaching for equality of the two nations, but rather exploring Hellenism and Romanness.¹²⁵ This reminds the modern scholar of the circumstances in which the *Lives* were created; Plutarch was raised with a Hellenic education and understanding of ethics, yet he was evaluating Romans. Thus his Greek perceptions affect the telling or interpretation of events and men, no matter how equitably he portrays them. It does not, however, imply purposeful distortion or necessitate a political agenda to bring Greeks and Romans together.

Creating Timelessness

Although the atmosphere of cultural equality cannot be denied in the *Lives*, especially since Plutarch presents each man on a level playing field, suggesting that they are comparable, the establishment of their equality is far from being the explicit purpose of this work and should be regarded merely as a pleasant undercurrent. As Russell explains, "nor is he making a conscious effort to build a bridge between alien cultures; he did not see them as alien."¹²⁶ For Plutarch, the pairing of these men was a natural by-product of his times. Stadter agrees and claims that Plutarch

¹²³ Geiger 2014 : 298; Larmour 2014 : 408-409; Swain 1996 : 86.

¹²⁴ Duff 1999 : 302.

¹²⁵ Duff 1999 : 302-309; Stadter 2014 : 2-6.

¹²⁶ Russell 1973v: 109. See also: Beck 2014 : 3; Geiger 1988 : 248; Geiger 2014 : 298.

was not trying to synthesize the two cultures, but rather to create a timeless nature of the statesman that can bridge any culture to speak clearly to the reader of his *Lives*.¹²⁷ This argument better suits Plutarch's moral purpose in his writing. If his *Lives* were created to bring the two cultures together, surely there would be more comparisons within them of similar government institutions, feedback from the people, military strategies, or anything else that he could find that would break down the barriers between them. But Plutarch wished for his *Lives* to be a mirror for himself and his reader and this can only be accomplished by creating something that is timeless and ignores to some extent the cultures in which the men lived. By doing so, Plutarch ensures that his work will last and speak to as many people as possible.

Double Loyalty

Hägg agrees with Stadter that the *Lives* are not advancing any political cause, but he suggests a different alternative: that Plutarch used them to propel his own personal interests and double loyalty to Greece and Rome.¹²⁸ But while it is true that Plutarch admires aspects of both cultures, it is dubious that he would compose the *Lives* and continue working on it for personal pleasure simply as an exercise of loyalty. Thinking back to the statements in the proems, there is no mention of loyalty to a nation. Therefore, without any evidence to support this theory, it is more probable that Plutarch chose Greeks and Romans because of his circumstances: a Greek in a Greek town under the Roman Empire in which he travelled extensively and whose people he saw as comparable to the remembered Greek heroes.

¹²⁷ Stadter 2014 : 25. Pelling (2011 : 44) also believes that scholars should stop dwelling on the 'Greekness' of Plutarch's *Lives* and should instead seek Plutarch's moral even-handedness.

¹²⁸ Hägg 2012 : 243.

As Pedagogy

Not only would Plutarch have chosen Greeks and Romans because of his circumstances and the nature of their interwoven cultures during this age, but by breathing life into the figures of both Greeks and Romans, Plutarch could also use his *Lives* to teach. The Romans of his age were familiar with the Greek past, and that past was the way in which the Greeks communicated with their rulers.¹²⁹ Hägg suggests that this was the best way for Plutarch to show character in different circumstances.¹³⁰ As such, it is more than conceivable that Plutarch's choice of Greeks and Romans in parallel was his way of teaching his audience, which included both cultures. As we saw in the proem of *Pericles-Fabius*, Plutarch outlines that his *Lives* are meant as an educational tool for the improvement of the reader. Thus any political motivations behind the composition of the *Lives* is subordinate to the ethical considerations of teaching his audience. L. Van der Stockt pushes this argument even further, insisting that, "the *Parallel Lives* are a pedagogical, not a cultural-historical project."¹³¹

A balance is needed between all of these views. Although the *Lives* are explicitly stated by Plutarch to be for pedagogical purposes, to cast aside other implications of choosing Greeks and Romans is fool-hardy. Presenting Greek and Roman men side-by-side is both a by-product of his time and a carefully crafted choice to show the superior morality of the Greek world in the fifth century BCE and the Roman Republic. For Plutarch, it was not about Greeks versus Romans or Greece versus Rome, instead it was an exercise to bring his reader various moral men to show that virtues run deeper than the artificial cultures and time of men. By divorcing his heroes from the specifics of their time, Plutarch ensures the ageless art of his text to teach young men about ethics.

¹²⁹ Swain 1996 : 66-67.

¹³⁰ Hägg 2012 : 242.

¹³¹ Van der Stockt 2014 : 323. Other scholars who believe in the educational purpose of the pairing of Greeks and Romans include Russell (1973) and Swain (1996).

Closure

The composition and conception of the *Parallel Lives* may have begun at the instigation of another,¹³² but the work became a masterpiece at Plutarch's own volition. This work, made up of paired *Lives*, proems, and *synkriseis*, brings the Greeks and Romans contained within to life, almost as if Plutarch is introducing an acquaintance from whom his reader can learn how to lead a virtuous life. Plutarch's desire to teach men by using historical figures as a mirror resonates with us today. With adages reminding us to learn from the past, such as "history repeats itself", our thirst for learning from our ancestors is still unquenchable. Plutarch recognized this curiosity back in the late first and early second century CE and used it to create a work that shows that morality spans cultures and time. It is to this aspect of morality that our discussion now turns in Chapter Two.

¹³² For Plutarch's statement that he began the *Lives* at the instigation of another but continued writing them for his own sake, see the *Aemilius-Timoleon* proem in Appendix 2 and its investigation on pages 23-24.

Chapter Two: Morality in Plutarch's *Lives*

Morality is the key ingredient in Plutarch's *Lives* and a case study of any of the *Lives* would be incomplete without an analysis of its meaning in this work. Like many aspects of Plutarch's oeuvre, labelling his definitions of virtue and vice is challenging. Nevertheless, it is essential to attempt to deduce the ethical purpose of the *Lives*. As Van der Stockt states, "the unity of Plutarch's oeuvre lies not so much in the coherence of the themes treated, but in the spirit of practical ethics in which they are treated."¹³³ As we saw in Chapter One, Plutarch's *Lives* insist on helping his readers improve themselves by using the work as a literary mirror. This chapter will bring focus to that mirror by considering morality and its influence on the portrayal of Plutarch's subjects in the *Lives* in order to collect any *topoi* relevant to the case study of *Cimon* in Chapter Three.

Current research focuses on the conveyance of morality as the primary purpose of Plutarch's writings. Experts such as Duff and Pelling explore what Plutarch portrayed as the ethical significance of many of the *Lives*.¹³⁴ This Chapter, however, does not investigate whether morality is the end goal of Plutarch's work; rather, it endeavours to find what morality consists of in the *Lives* and what this means for Plutarch's portrayal of men and his audience.

To understand Plutarch's moral purpose, it is essential to first investigate who he was writing for. A discussion of Plutarch's audience thus opens this chapter. Highlighting his target audience helps explain the structure, parallelism, and focus of the *Lives*. With this audience in mind, it is then possible to explore why he inserted or left out material. This brings us to a brief survey of how Plutarch interprets history in the *Lives*. This section will ask what the nature of history is in the *Lives* and for what purpose Plutarch constructs it. Considering this brings to light

¹³³ Van der Stockt 2014 : 9.

¹³⁴ Duff 1999 : 4-5, case studies: 13-51, moralism: 52-71; Pelling 2002 : 237-251. See also M. Beck 2014.

how Plutarch uses historical anecdotes for his moral purpose, which will in turn help compare Plutarch's account of *Cimon* to other ancient sources. A survey of Plutarch's malleable source material follows this section, to examine whether his sources reveal anything about his methods. Having outlined his audience, choices of how to represent the past, and his source use, it is possible to move into the final section of this chapter: morality in the *Lives*. The focus of Chapter Two, this section outlines Plutarch's moral agenda in the *Lives* and what it tells the reader about the men he chose and how he represented them. Bringing all of this forward provides the necessary understanding of Plutarch's ethical purpose for a case study of *Cimon* in Chapter Three.

Plutarch's Audience

In Chapter One, we saw that Plutarch was writing for the moral improvement of his audience, his *Lives* acting as a mirror for reflection of the reader's own behaviour. As the reader watches the men in the *Lives* shape the world around them and their eventual achievements or downfalls,¹³⁵ Plutarch wishes for his audience to see their own abilities to improve their lives through their actions. He does not, however, expect his readership to attain the same heights as the men in the *Lives*, instead only for each one to improve his own life.¹³⁶ So who was Plutarch writing for? Did he have a target audience and, if so, what can this tell us about his moral message?

The proems, besides being informative of Plutarch's purpose, are also revealing of his audience. The insistence that his audience imitate the men in the *Lives* (*Pericles-Fabius* 1.4) by using his literary work as a mirror (*Aemilius-Timoleon* 1.1-4) suggests that his reader was male

¹³⁵ Jones 1971 : 103; Stadter 2014 : 237; Tröster 2008 : 15.

¹³⁶ Geiger 2014 : 297. Plutarch was likely not writing for an intended audience of women, however, as Russell (1973 : 6) observed, the women in Plutarch's works are expected to have advanced literary and philosophical skills. Furthermore, Plutarch's wife may have written a book, and he himself seems to have dedicated one to Clea, one of his friend's daughters (Russell 1973 : 6). Therefore, while Plutarch is certainly targeting men for his *Lives* to help them with their political careers, it can also be assumed that some elite and educated women may have read his books and absorbed general qualities of leading a virtuous life that they could apply to their own. However, since these readers are a minority, they will not be discussed in this thesis.

and upper-class. This is further demonstrated in the *Nicias-Crassus* (1.5) and *Alexander-Caesar* (1.1-3) proems where Plutarch explains why he did not include the work of other ancient authors, such as Thucydides, implying that his audience is familiar with these works and thus educated. Furthermore, as we discovered in Chapter One in the section on *Choosing Heroes*, Plutarch believed that politics were essential to the display of virtue. Therefore, the *Lives* must be meant for those who could achieve some kind of political standing. Moreover, as Stadter argues, Plutarch thought of his reader as being much like himself, interested in morality but also politically active and wanting to improve his life.¹³⁷ Although these intended readers were mainly elite men with the luxury to engross themselves with such things, their levels of interest and involvement in politics presumably varied.

Plutarch believed in the importance of local politics and Greek involvement in helping to run the empire through their hometowns.¹³⁸ Some scholars explain the silence regarding local politics and Greek history, in contrast to the lengthy explanations of Roman names and politics, as Plutarch assuming his readers are Greek.¹³⁹ The idea that his readers share the same philosophical views is also derived from this explanation.¹⁴⁰ I believe that this is too narrow a view of Plutarch's reader. Since Plutarch wrote the *Lives* as an educational tool, it can also be assumed that he was educating his reader with his opinions, and thus they did not need to share them initially. Similarly, a Roman could have the same views as a Greek, especially if he is a philhellene. Moreover, the fact that knowledge of Greek history is presupposed does not preclude a wider audience, since the teaching of Greek history was also prevalent in Roman education. The incorporation of

¹³⁷ Stadter 1988 : 292-293.

¹³⁸ Beck 2014 : 5-6; Duff 1999 : 297; Hägg 2012 : 261; Russell 1973 : 109; Stadter 2014 : 8; Wardman 1974 : 39-40.

¹³⁹ Nikolaidis 2014 : 356; Pelling 1992 : 17; Wardman 1974 : 40-41.

¹⁴⁰ Stadter 2014 : 5, 21; Wardman 1974 : 42-44.

explanations for Roman cultural and political devices again does not dismiss the possibility of a greater audience, as it may have been included simply for his Greek readership who were not as familiar with the Romans as the Romans were with them. Therefore, the argument advanced by Wardman that the *Lives* are far from known works and are instead meant for a limited Greek elite audience¹⁴¹ is much too confined. Plutarch wished to write to as many people with political inclinations as he could reach, including Romans.

The intention to write for a Roman readership is discernible in the dedications of Plutarch's work. As Jones states, "the tradition whereby learned Greeks dispensed advice and consolation to Roman officials still flourished in Plutarch's day."¹⁴² It is unsurprising, then, that the *Lives* were dedicated to Sosius Senecio, a Roman official. Pelling believes that Plutarch's motivation to dedicate the *Lives* to Sosius was partially to reassure his Greek readers that Rome was sympathetic to them.¹⁴³ In contrast, Stadter argues that this dedication was all part of Plutarch's philosophical aspirations to be a moral educator to the powerful, as Sosius was intimately connected to Trajan.¹⁴⁴ Both are interesting ideas that are certainly worth considering; however, the answer may be even simpler: Sosius may be the man to whom Plutarch refers when he mentions that he was commissioned to write the *Lives* (*Aemilius-Timoelon* 1.1-4).¹⁴⁵ The optimism given to his Greek readers as a result of this dedication was a happy outcome of his commission rather than a carefully crafted decision. This assignation was not unusual for Plutarch, who almost evenly dedicated his works to Greeks and Romans: fourteen to local Greek politicians and twelve to high-ranking

¹⁴¹ Wardman 1974 : 47.

¹⁴² Jones 1971 : 63.

¹⁴³ Pelling 2010 : xx.

¹⁴⁴ Stadter 2014 : 45, 50-55.

¹⁴⁵ Nikolaidis 2014 : 356.

Romans officials.¹⁴⁶ While this confirms that Plutarch was indeed writing for an educated elite audience, it does not indicate that he was writing only for a select local Greek audience.

Although Greek readers were his main target, Plutarch's *Lives* reached more than this audience. His Roman readership was just as important, and the connection of the two cultures in the *Lives* brings them together in a shared experience. This once again indicates the stable nature of morality through time and culture, as the intended audiences of Romans and Greeks alike were both expected to be able to learn from the *Lives* to better their own. Therefore, Plutarch's audience shows us that morality in the *Lives* is of a timeless nature.

Interpreting History

History and its interpretation are always subjective because the author's views of the past, and what s/he chooses to represent from it, are held hostage by the author's experiences. By contracting or extending time, the author can emphasize certain aspects of an event, culture, or character. As A. Mehl explains, "*writing* history did not mean simply *narrating* a story, and even simple narration did not imply that the author refrained from *interpretation*." ¹⁴⁷ Although made in reference to the writing of history, this statement may be applied to Plutarch whose ethical biographies are composed of men from the past. This section looks at how Plutarch interprets history and the implications of this for the moral outlook of his *Lives*.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Stadter 2014 : 33. Stadter (2014 : 232-234) also includes a list of Plutarch's high profile friends, both Greek and Roman, to demonstrate that he had powerful alliances. See also: Russell 1973 : 9-10. Although it is not possible to garner numbers or percentages of Romans that knew Greek and would thus be able to read Plutarch's works, the dedication of half of Plutarch's works to Romans implies that some Romans could read Greek, just as some Greeks, like Plutarch, could read Latin.

¹⁴⁷ Mehl 2011 : 243. Italics are the author's own. Similarly, H. White (1973 : 30-31) describes the poetic, precognitive, and precritical nature of a historian's consciousness. Plutarch, however, is writing biographies focused on historical personages, not history. Here, it is possible to turn to M.R. Lefkowitz (1983) who demonstrates the interpretive nature of ancient biography by showing that it was frequently made into fiction to reflect current contemporary issues and problems. Thus Plutarch, who writes *Lives* of men from the past for the sake of imparting morality, engages in this contemporary reflection in order to aid his audience in improving their lives.

¹⁴⁸ There are many complaints from historians lodged against Plutarch and his work. His weak chronology, misunderstood social and economic conditions, obscure tactics and strategies, unexplained geography, and an alleged lack of understanding for the development of character are all on the short list of weaknesses recorded by

The *Lives*, like any historical account, adapt source-material to suit Plutarch's purpose. Plutarch arranges anecdotes from the past to build a consistent character, albeit not as sensationallly as R.H. Barrow's comparison of Plutarch's *Lives* to dramatic writing implies.¹⁴⁹ Plutarch states in his *Cimon-Lucullus* that he will accurately portray the nature of his subject's character (2.1-5). To do so he must ignore some historical events and emphasize others. He is also known to prefer the kinder version of a story over the harsher.¹⁵⁰ These two details are examples of Plutarch, "simply tacitly rewriting [history], elaborating, reordering, giving different emphases, often revising the detail."¹⁵¹ Plutarch's reorganizing of his source-material helps to consistently build his subject's character.

Pelling puts forward the idea that Plutarch was merely helping the truth along by using compositional devices that added a little bit of fiction.¹⁵² In the first section of his 1980 survey "Plutarch's Adaptation of his Source Material", Pelling explores some compositional devices Plutarch uses to streamline his sources for the men of the *Lives*. He starts with the conflation of similar items, citing for example, *Caesar* 7.7, in which Plutarch puts all the debates into what seems like one session instead of two. Pelling then moves into compression, in which Plutarch connects events to suggest chronological closeness. Next, he discusses displacement, which Plutarch uses to organize events in a more elegant manner, regardless of chronological sequence.

scholars (See: Barrow 1967 : 60-61; Pelling 2010 : xl-xli; Russell 1971 : 57). However, as discussed on pages 14 and 15, measuring Plutarch against a modern historical standard is superfluous, and thus we should not endeavour to imply that there is a standard from which he has departed. Instead, it is more conducive to show how Plutarch uses history to bring forward a consistent sketch of his hero's character.

¹⁴⁹ Barrow 1967 : 58.

¹⁵⁰ Cooper 2014 : 402; Jones 1971 : 91. Duff (1999 : 56-58) explains that this is part of Plutarch's nature of tolerance and understanding which falls within Hellenic patterns of presenting good and uplifting events for his reader, which explains why Plutarch is so kind even when he comes across a character flaw.

¹⁵¹ Pelling 2002 : 152. Other scholars who believe that Plutarch interprets history for a moral purpose include: : Blamire 1989 : 2; Hägg 2012 : 271; Jones 1971 : 85-88; Pelling 2002 : 148-152; Swain 1996: 79, 81; Tröster 2005 : 313; Wardman 1974 : 100.

¹⁵² Pelling 2002 : 150.

Following this, he addresses transfer, in which something is moved from one character to another to avoid introducing another person.¹⁵³ All of these compositional devices are linked to chronology and show that Plutarch manipulated his source-material to advance his subject's characterization in the *Lives*.

Another explanation for Plutarch condensing and sometimes neglecting periods of time is his belief that history is predetermined. As a deeply religious man, Plutarch thought of ἀρετή as a means to ascend to the divine.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, Plutarch portrays history as largely predetermined and success as the result of guiding providence. How his subject handles this success, a result of divine circumstances, defines the stability of his character.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, his project of the *Lives* plays with the chronological sequence of time portrayed by other sources in order to present examples of virtue to help others improve and reach the divine.

Plutarch does not always compose his *Lives* in a way that would suit modern expectations of biography or history, but applying our standards to Plutarch's work is an artificial exercise that does not respect the time in which it was composed. If he had to compress time, neglect periods of it, or elaborate events in order to highlight virtues and vices, he was not afraid of doing so because it would help him reach his goal of imparting morality to his reader. Consequently, his wish to help his reader improve serves as the impetus for his interpretation of the past.

Plutarch's Source Use in the *Lives*

Plutarch's manoeuvring of time and events is noticeable because of the availability of other ancient sources to which we can compare the *Lives*. Unfortunately, Plutarch does not always identify his sources, even if he adapts large portions from them. This silence means that his reading

¹⁵³ Pelling 2002 : 91-115.

¹⁵⁴ Wardman 1974 : 86. He also often quotes and seems to believe in the power of oracles (Swain 1989 b : 282). He quotes an oracle in *Nicias* as well as in *Demosthenes* (Swain 1989 b : 281).

¹⁵⁵ Swain 1989 b : 272-275; Wardman 1974 : 115, 181-184.

and access to materials is debated,¹⁵⁶ as he only mentions his source if there are different views or opinions on something that he finds interesting.¹⁵⁷ As a result, scholars debate many aspects of Plutarch's research and source use.

One of the main areas of contention is Plutarch's knowledge of Latin. His level of fluency is critical because it determines what sources he could have used. Jones argues that Plutarch did not need a thorough knowledge of Latin to write his *Lives*, but that he was propelled to learn some for the purpose of portraying the Roman ones. He further suggests that Plutarch may have used a translator or extracts and that this explains his occasional inaccuracies.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, Stadter contends that Plutarch had more Latin skill than he admits and that he was being modest about his abilities because he was measuring them against his knowledge of Greek. Stadter adduces citations of Roman prose authors in the *Lives* as well as his earlier composition of the *Lives of the Caesars* as examples of his fluency. Furthermore, Stadter asserts, Plutarch could learn and practise Latin with native speakers during his travels, helping him improve.¹⁵⁹ Hägg agrees with Stadter, explaining that Plutarch was being charming and trying to gain sympathy from his reader through a *topos* of the genre known as *captatio benevolentiae*.¹⁶⁰ Combined with the knowledge that Plutarch travelled extensively, was very well educated, and maintained friendships with many Romans, it is acceptable to assume that his fluency in Latin was more than elementary and that he was able to research and converse well enough to write the Roman *Lives*.

¹⁵⁶ Hägg (2012 : 256) believes that Plutarch had limited access to resources because he stayed in Chaeronea, whereas Larmour (2014 : 408) and Russell (1973 : 42) argue that Plutarch had a vast range of sources at his disposal, evident through the numerous citations made in his work.

¹⁵⁷ Blamire 1989 : 1; Jones 1971 : 84; Russell 1973 : 42.

¹⁵⁸ Jones 1971 : 82-86; See also: Russell 1973 : 54.

¹⁵⁹ Stadter 2014 : 130-137. Pelling (2010 : xxxi) concurs, saying that Plutarch needed to do more research for the Roman *Lives* than for the Greek ones because he would have already been very familiar with the Greek history.

¹⁶⁰ Hägg 2012 : 245.

Besides Plutarch's Latin proficiency, scholars are also divided on how many sources he used to write the *Lives*. M.T. Schettino points to approximately 135 historians to whom Plutarch makes reference, of which one hundred write in Greek.¹⁶¹ However, Schettino admits that citation does not necessarily indicate direct use,¹⁶² and therefore Plutarch may not be engaging with that many sources for his *Lives*. A far more common thesis is that Plutarch was interpreting the past using one source he kept in front of him as he wrote and supplemented from his notes when needed.¹⁶³ Pelling believes that this, instead of a lack of fluency in Latin, better explains why he makes errors or sometimes misrepresents things.¹⁶⁴ However, I find Hägg's theory more convincing. Hägg strikes a balance between the two views by suggesting that Plutarch worked from one source until he needed to supplement material, then he would move onto another. This process would vary between *Lives* with whatever sources Plutarch had available to him.¹⁶⁵ Since the *Lives* do not follow any mechanical means of composition, Plutarch's source use must be the same. He would build upon his knowledge, take notes while traveling, and supplement his main source as needed.

Assuming that Plutarch was working with many sources, he had to select which accounts to use and which to discard. As previously mentioned, Plutarch generally prefers the source that favours his subject, but his selection is also guided by what is psychologically probable and typical of his subject's behaviour.¹⁶⁶ However, Plutarch also had a competitive streak to him. As we saw in the proems section of Chapter One, Plutarch likes to present his work as superior to those of writers that preceded him. While his admiration for Thucydides is not in doubt,¹⁶⁷ it may be this

¹⁶¹ Schettino 2014 : 418. Larmour (2014) outlines his Greek sources (418-421) and Latin sources (421-422) in detail.

¹⁶² Schettino 2014 : 418.

¹⁶³ Pelling 2002 : 119; Tröster 2008 : 23; Van der Stockt 2014 : 329.

¹⁶⁴ Pelling 2002 : 119.

¹⁶⁵ Hägg 2012 : 256-257.

¹⁶⁶ Wardman 1974 : 167-168.

¹⁶⁷ Pelling 2002 : 117; Woodman 1988 : 20.

respect that propels Plutarch to compete with him by adding to his material. Pelling attributes some of this supplementing to Plutarch's greater emphasis on character,¹⁶⁸ but also suggests that "...he may simply be supplementing Thucydides for the thrill of it. A point against Thucydides was a point worth scoring."¹⁶⁹ Plutarch added to Thucydides with a variety of sources including epigraphic documents and decrees,¹⁷⁰ other historical works,¹⁷¹ large amounts of contemporary materials,¹⁷² comedies,¹⁷³ and oral tradition.¹⁷⁴ This speaks to the level of research that Plutarch was conducting. He wished to present a work as good as or better than Thucydides', and therefore he must have had or found access to materials and worked his way to a decent level of Latin needed to turn his work into a masterpiece.

Morality in the *Lives*

The *Lives* are considered a monument of the ancient literary world partially because of their ability to teach us about the author's view of morality. It must be noted that the modern abstract term 'morality', however, has no equivalent in Greek, except for words related to character like ἦθος. As Duff explains, "in Greek thought, character had an ethical element, conceived in terms of right and wrong, virtue and vice, in terms of conformity to or divergence from moral norms, and this was revealed by deeds."¹⁷⁵ Therefore the Greek world, and by extension Plutarch, focused on public actions to reveal the nature of a person's character rather than inner aspects of a person or their private sphere. This is easily accomplished by looking at leaders, and so Plutarch focused his *Lives* on great political and military men. Wardman explains that Plutarch's *Lives* are

¹⁶⁸ Pelling 1992 : 27.

¹⁶⁹ Pelling 1992 : 17.

¹⁷⁰ Gentili 1988 : 67.

¹⁷¹ Hägg 2012 : 280; Payen 2014 : 238.

¹⁷² Stadter 2014 : 125.

¹⁷³ Russell 1973 : 53-54.

¹⁷⁴ Beck 2007 : 66, 2014 : 2.

¹⁷⁵ Duff 1999 : 13.

typical of philosophers of the time, who used famous virtuous deeds to define virtue.¹⁷⁶ By evaluating how their φιλοτιμία motivated them to achieve political fame, and how they subsequently conducted themselves,¹⁷⁷ Plutarch creates models for his audience of good and bad attitudes.

These examples were Plutarch's way of communicating what he thought about morality. As we saw in Chapter One, as well as in the sections above concerning Plutarch's target audience and his deviation from the chronological sequence, Plutarch represents morality as timeless and trumping any historical or chronological considerations.¹⁷⁸ Duff, however, asserts that the differences in Plutarch's readers' worlds compared with the world they are reading about makes imitation impossible, especially bearing in mind Plutarch's aversion to including contemporary material.¹⁷⁹ While this is true to an extent (a Roman official certainly could not imitate the actions of Greek politicians from the fifth century BCE because of their divergent circumstances), I do not believe that Plutarch wished for his reader to imitate the exact actions of his subject, but rather the spirit in which they were performed.¹⁸⁰

Pelling offers a solution to the trouble of imitating a man so far divorced from the reader's time. He suggests that Plutarch uses what he calls 'exploratory' moralism (which acts to guide conduct)¹⁸¹ instead of 'expository' moralism (where the reader is given imperatives)¹⁸² and that he sometimes dabbles with 'descriptive' moralism (which points to a moral quality of the human

¹⁷⁶ Wardman 1974 : 36.

¹⁷⁷ For a discussion on φιλοτιμία see Nikolaidis (2012 : 32-33). See also: Duff 1999 : 66; Stadter 2012 : 96; Tröster 2008 : 14.

¹⁷⁸ For further information, see also: Mehl 2011 : 246; Pelling 2002 : 241-243; Schmidt 2002 : 58; Stadter 2014 : 241.

¹⁷⁹ Duff 1999 : 67-68.

¹⁸⁰ See page 24 (*Pericles-Fabius* proem) for a brief discussion of Plutarch's desire for his reader to imitate the attitudes of Plutarch's heroes.

¹⁸¹ Pelling 2002 : 239.

¹⁸² Pelling 2002 : 238-239.

condition).¹⁸³ All of these forms of moralism overlap and interplay in Plutarch's *Lives*. This idea that Plutarch is not using a formulaic set of 'prescriptions'¹⁸⁴ follows within Plutarch's general pattern of the *Lives*, where nothing is set or rigid, but instead is as flexible as the human condition.

By focusing on exploratory moralism, Plutarch allows his reader to interpret the events for himself and to evaluate the actions of the subject and what virtue or vice drove them. Plutarch expects his reader to first understand the hero's character and then to judge it.¹⁸⁵ Duff describes moralism in ancient historiographical works as being either explicit or implicit. Outside of the *synkriseis*, Plutarch's moralism is implicit, meaning the reader is offered a narrative without editorial comment so as to allow him to accord praise or blame on the subject. However, Plutarch also exploits explicit moralism, meaning the deeds of the subject are evaluated by the author on a moral scale, but only rarely, preferring his reader to pass judgement.¹⁸⁶ Once the reader has evaluated his hero, arguably a subconscious process of imitation of the virtuous aspects of the subject's character begins.¹⁸⁷

Plutarch, however, did not believe that perfection of character was possible. Since he contends that human nature is weak, no man can be entirely virtuous; however, he also contends that it is possible for a man to reach moral greatness, and this should be sought after.¹⁸⁸ Plutarch preferred stability of character and the consistency represented by it,¹⁸⁹ but he also espoused the

¹⁸³ Pelling 2002 : 239. Pelling (2002 : 239) explains descriptive moralism as, "...being more concerned to point truths about human behaviour and shared human experience." Thus, this descriptive moralism helps Plutarch's reader by making actions, attitudes, or emotions relatable despite the differences in time and culture.

¹⁸⁴ This is Duff's (1999 : 70) term. Duff follows Pelling's ideas to help explain what moralism means for Plutarch and the Greeks and Romans of his time.

¹⁸⁵ Duff 1999 : 5; Tröster 2008 : 16

¹⁸⁶ Duff 1999 : 53-55.

¹⁸⁷ The idea that the *Lives* were created primarily for Plutarch's readers to imitate and emulate the men within is the consensus among scholars. See for example: Beck 2014 : 4; Duff 1999 : 5, 13; Mehl 2011 : 185-6; Pelling 2002 : 317, 2010 : xxviii; Stadter 2014 : 240-241; Titchener 2014 : 480; Wardman 1974 : 100. This is also consistent with *exempla* in rhetoric (See Demoen 1997).

¹⁸⁸ Nikolaidis 2014 : 356-357; Russell 1973 : 85; Stadter 2014 : 242.

¹⁸⁹ Duff 1999 : 72-82; Fulkerson 2012 : 51-54; Swain 1989 : 62; Wardman 1974 : 105.

idea that a man could improve and this represented change did not pose a problem for Plutarch.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, a man's opportunity to attain such a state did not depend on his physical features. Although Plutarch took interest in the physical appearance of his heroes, he did not follow the physiognomical theory that it is possible to read the moral nature of a person through their appearance.¹⁹¹ However, C. Soares points to *Romulus* 6.3, in which Plutarch speaks of the face of young Romulus as indicative of the man he will become. Soares uses this as evidence that Plutarch believed that the face is the guide to the soul.¹⁹² Yet Soares only provides one example and the example is lifted from a mythical *Life*. Instead of considering this as indicative of Plutarch's belief, it is more prudent to take this as an extraordinary example deriving from an extraordinary *Life*.

Although Plutarch invites his reader to assess the moral issues in the *Lives*, the answers are far from obvious. As A.G. Nikolaidis and Swain observe, Plutarch himself says that virtues are not uniform (*Phocion* 3.4).¹⁹³ According to Plutarch, there are many forms of courage, bravery, wisdom, or justice. This ensures that the process of identifying morality in his *Lives* is a challenging one. This is further exacerbated by the proem to *Cimon-Lucullus* (1.5), which implies that Plutarch did not see men as able to attain perfection, but they could become great despite their flaws. However, elements exist that lend to good character development, including nature, education, environment, and practice.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ See Chapter Three pages 92-99 for a discussion of Cimon who grew into virtue and Lucullus who fell from it. Fulkerson 2012 : 54-55; Wardman 1974 : 134.

¹⁹¹ Geiger 2014 : 294; Wardman 1974 : 143.

¹⁹² Soares 2014 : 381.

¹⁹³ Nikolaidis 2012 : 31; Swain 1989 a : 63. For the variety and complexity of Plutarch's subjects, see also Nikolaidis (2014 : 365). See Appendix 7 for the statement in *Phocion*.

¹⁹⁴ Fulkerson 2012 : 53-54. See also: Duff 1999 : 72-78, 108-110; Pelling 2002 : 283-288, 302-304, 339-341; Swain 1989 a : 62, 64.

Wealth

Plutarch's views on wealth fall into both a good and bad character forming habit. He vehemently works to criticize luxurious living, which he associates with the barbarian world,¹⁹⁵ but he does not say that wealth in and of itself is a bad thing. In fact, if his hero uses wealth for the good of the state or obtained wealth from an enemy, Plutarch is quick to praise.¹⁹⁶ But if the gathering of wealth takes time away from his subject's political career, Plutarch condemns the action.¹⁹⁷ Thus wealth is not a bad thing, but what his hero does with the wealth and how he spends his time, i.e. his character, is how he is truly evaluated.

Barbaroi

Plutarch's view of wealth as being associated with the barbarian world stems from stereotypical images of barbarians in the Classical world. Plutarch consistently juxtaposes barbarians against his heroes to highlight his subjects' positive qualities.¹⁹⁸ The barbarians, then, become a literary device. This is evident in their indistinguishable nature.¹⁹⁹ The barbarians in the *Lives* come across as being the same without any distinction between their cultures. This is a clever moral device, as it allows Plutarch to present the barbarians as a timeless element in his *Lives*. Not only is morality timeless, but the lack of morality, represented strongly by foreign, uncultured peoples who lack civility, defies time. This is also evidence of Plutarch using a literary device as a means to create morality. By making all the *barbaroi* homogenous, the reader cannot appreciate the reality of their varied natures and peoples. However, this variety would not serve Plutarch's

¹⁹⁵ Tröster 2005 : 305; Warman 1974 : 34. See Chapter Three pages 94-95 for the discussion of *Lucullus* and his life of luxury in retirement.

¹⁹⁶ Swain 1990 : 127; Wardman 1974 : 83. See Chapter Three pages 79-86 for a discussion of *Cimon* and his euergetism.

¹⁹⁷ Wardman 1974 : 81.

¹⁹⁸ Schmidt (2002 : 58) lists the good qualities brought out by this comparison as: "...φιλανθρωπία, ἀρετή, σωφροσύνη, φρόνησις, δικαιοσύνη, and ἀνδρεία."

¹⁹⁹ Schmidt 2002 : 58.

ethical agenda, and thus by making them appear all the same, Plutarch strengthens the moral framework of the *Lives* while moulding history for his purpose.

Emotion and Reason

Plutarch presents civil and virtuous men as able to control their passions. For example, Plutarch commends ἀπάθεια for being able to continue working through grief.²⁰⁰ Here, his hero controls his emotion for the greater good of the state. This is not to say that Plutarch wants passion eradicated, just controlled, and thus actions taken as a result of reason are better than those taken from passion. In other words, Plutarch values choice. Men who choose to act for the good of the state when there is a possibility not to act at all are seen by Plutarch as being superior in virtue.²⁰¹

This system of beliefs derives from Platonic thought and is clearly articulated by Plutarch in his treatise *On Moral Virtue*.²⁰² Here, Plutarch outlines his conception of the human soul as divided between an irrational and rational part (441D), reason forming part of the rational and deriving from the divine (450E). He explains that the rational should guide the irrational (442A) and he applies this concept to his *Lives*.²⁰³ Plutarch also brings forward that control over the passions is never perfect, in line with his belief that men cannot attain perfection, and thus improvement is always needed. For example, in 447B, Plutarch explains that man is always between passion and reason and constantly going back and forth. Furthermore, in 442E, Plutarch says that “...lust cowers as reason asserts itself...” suggesting again that the body is torn between the rational and irrational part and that a man can only be virtuous if he can control his passions. Lastly, Plutarch asserts in 443C-D that reason should not completely eradicate passion, implying

²⁰⁰ Wardman 1974 : 108.

²⁰¹ Wardman 1974 : 113-114. See, for example, Brutus' actions against Caesar (*Brutus* 4.1).

²⁰² Duff 1999 : 72; Stadter 2014 : 239.

²⁰³ See, for example, Chapter Three's discussion from pages 71-74 of Cimon's vices in his youth and how these were brought under control through education.

that the latter is necessary for life and motivation. But if a man is overwhelmed by his passions, Plutarch describes his soul as sick (452A). It is thus necessary for a man to fight passion to avoid illness, but not to eradicate it completely and lose motivation. And while passions such as ambition and rivalry can sometimes help a young man, they have no place once that man is a statesman.²⁰⁴ For Plutarch explains that a man who has control over his passions is a better man than he who is led by them (450E). He also adds that a man can achieve this control through reason and habit (443D).

Childhood and Youth

The most vital time for the development of character, when a man learns to control his passions, is childhood and youth. Interestingly, Plutarch does not include much information on the childhood of his subjects. Pelling argues that this is a result of the dearth of material for his heroes because political biography was not concerned with childhood, as the tastes of the ancient reader did not demand this information and the politicians did not want it recorded in case it damaged their *gravitas*.²⁰⁵ Plutarch, unlike other ancient writers,²⁰⁶ resisted the temptation to make up stories about his subject's childhood, preferring instead to remain silent.

Plutarch's reticence to mention childhood is also indicative of his sources. If he had access to anecdotes that were telling of his subject's character, he would surely have included them to show the consistency of his subject's nature. However, the lack of information on his heroes' childhoods reveals that he did not have any available sources. Pelling thus points to any of Plutarch's general statements about his subject's childhood as the author embarking on 'creative

²⁰⁴ Duff 1999 : 76.

²⁰⁵ Pelling 2002 : 304, 307.

²⁰⁶ See Pelling 2002 : 301. Pelling (2002 : 301 – 302, 304) explains that unless it was the biography of an intellectual, both Greek and Roman biographers ignored childhood.

reconstruction'.²⁰⁷ This captures the spirit in which Plutarch was writing the *Lives*, as he would not intentionally deceive his audience. Since he generally presents character as being stable, to make a general statement about his subject's character in childhood as being the same as when he is an adult is Plutarch simply exercising his philosophical doctrine. However, these 'creative reconstructions' are not that common in Plutarch's *Lives* and, for the most part, he refrains from speaking about childhood.

Plutarch offers much more information about his subject's youth. While he does not explain when an individual becomes a youth, his understanding of what that age entails comes across clearly. During this period, his subjects are generally consumed with a search for pleasure, impudence, and an irrational amount of courage. Soares explains that youth in the *Lives* thus becomes a formative period that depends on the subject's experiences.²⁰⁸ This aspect of Plutarch's *Lives* derives from Aristotle's writings on ethics, which assert that a man can only become virtuous if he consistently seeks righteous behaviour using reason.²⁰⁹ Therefore, a man either learns to control his passions with reason, or becomes consumed with the vices he is drawn to by his youth. There is one aspect, however, that can help a youth develop into a virtuous man, and Plutarch is willing to discuss this at length.

Education

Interest in childhood for ancient biographers was limited to education, as it was credited with teaching men how to control their passions with their rational soul. Education introduced its pupil to the virtuous qualities needed to lead a good life,²¹⁰ and ignorance from a lack of education

²⁰⁷ Pelling 2002 : 309.

²⁰⁸ Soares 2014 : 382-383, 386-387. See also: Stadter 2014 : 21; Wardman 1974 : 34.

²⁰⁹ Dihle 1994 : 191; Fulkerson 2012 : 52; Pelling 2002 : 284; Swain 1989 : 62-63; Wardman 1974 : 109-114.

²¹⁰ Duff 1999 : 74, 2008 : 1; Pelling 2002 : 283, 290, 304-305; Stadter 2014 : 21; Swain 1989 a : 62-63. Duff (1999 : 76) also states that the emphasis on education is Plutarch's own and does not stem from earlier philosophy.

was seen as a mental disease.²¹¹ This echoes Plutarch's *On Moral Virtue* (452A), in which he describes a soul overrun with passions as ill. Thus, for Plutarch, missing the guiding part of the soul taught through education can lead to too much passion and ignorance, both described as a malady. The success or failure of the student to learn such things was attributed to the kind of character that student became later in life. Plutarch's *Lives* show the reader that a man with a good character and a good education guided by reason becomes a virtuous and successful man.²¹² This opposes men who have good characters but are not educated or men who are lacking both and become paradigms of vice.

Yet Plutarch does not tell his reader about the education of all the men in his *Lives*. Instead, he focuses on the education of the Roman men. Swain decisively argues that this is because Plutarch assumed that his Greek hero had a Greek education and thus he did not need to explore its effects.²¹³ This runs in contrast to Plutarch's usually carefully constructed themes that run through both *Lives*. Although Plutarch never tells us what makes up a good Hellenic education, he still includes whether a Roman received a Hellenic education and criticizes those who refuse or fail to learn Greek,²¹⁴ while largely ignoring the Greek counterpart's learning. Therefore, in contrast to the equality we saw in Chapter One, we observe here that Plutarch favours Greek culture and learning in the *Lives*, as he bases his evaluation of a Roman's education and character on whether he received Hellenic instruction.

Recently, Duff presented a thesis that education in Plutarch's *Lives* demonstrates two trends: character being formed in childhood and character as constant and revealed in childhood.

²¹¹ Nikolaidis 2014 : 351.

²¹² Mehl 2011 : 186.

²¹³ Swain 1990 : 134.

²¹⁴ Duff 2008 : 2; Swain 1990 : 129; Tröster 2005 : 304.

In the former, education affects the hero's development.²¹⁵ In other words, education helps the child control his passions and moulds his character to one that is virtuous. As previously discussed, Plutarch is only content with positive character change, and thus when he portrays education as changing character in his *Lives* it is only in a beneficial sense. Plutarch never looks at bad education as leading to bad disposition, but rather a lack of education as leading to vice.²¹⁶ In most cases, however, Plutarch follows the latter model, in which his hero's character is constant and uncovered by education. In these cases, education does not affect character, rather it is the subject's attitude to their education that reveals their nature.²¹⁷

Duff pushes his argument with the example of *Themistocles*. In this *Life*, Plutarch shows what Themistocles' rejection of a proper education revealed about his character and emphasizes how a proper one would have helped him control his passions.²¹⁸ Again, it is not that the lack of education led to Themistocles being unstable, but that he was born unstable and failed to benefit from what a good education may have helped him attain. As Duff states, "Themistocles' poor education, which concentrated only on the practical, caused his unbalanced character; and his unbalanced character is revealed in his rejection of proper education."²¹⁹ Plutarch uses education to highlight his subject's adult character, and that is why he includes it in the *Lives*. This thesis fits both within Plutarch's purpose in writing the *Lives* as well as his belief that character is consistent and only varies when the irrational and rational are at odds. The more one learns how to control passion, the more virtuous one becomes. However, this argument still implies that education is affecting change and that certain types of education will form character. Duff does not address

²¹⁵ Duff 2008 : 1, 4-5.

²¹⁶ Duff 2008 : 20-21.

²¹⁷ Duff 2008 : 5-9.

²¹⁸ Duff 2008 : 11.

²¹⁹ Duff 2008 : 13.

these concerns. Nonetheless, Plutarch's inclusion of education in the *Lives* is not so much about representing his hero's childhood, but rather as being indicative of his character.

The Demos and the State

Another *topos* in the *Lives* is Plutarch's presentation of the *demos*. A result of his Platonic leanings, Plutarch portrays democracy as coveting freedom too much and knowledge too little.²²⁰ S. Saïd investigates Plutarch's portrayal of the people, to show that he always casts them in the same negative light despite differences in culture or time, namely, as contemptible people who should not be controlling government. Once again, we have an aspect of the *Lives* that Plutarch depicts as timeless: the mob. Some of this is because they are poor, which results in Plutarch considering them lazy, ignorant, uneducated, insolent, and violent.²²¹ Even more alarmingly, the masses are associated with fickleness.²²² Such a hazardous trait becomes an issue when they are not well managed and become dangerous to themselves and others.²²³

In these situations, the *demos* often rises against the state. This is another example of a *topos* in Plutarch's *Lives*: the many against the few. Plutarch often simplifies situations to maintain the *demos-boule* conflict.²²⁴ This reductionism helps maintain the stereotype of the capricious *demos*, consistent with the views of Plutarch's time and reflected in the writings of other writers during the time of the Roman Empire, such as Dio Cassius and Tacitus.²²⁵ Plutarch thus comes by these opinions as a result of his education and his environment. Understanding this helps modern scholars reinterpret events as portrayed by Plutarch in comparison with those of other writers, like

²²⁰ Roskam 2014 : 516-517; Russell 1973 : 57; Saïd 2005 : 13; Santas 2007 : 70

²²¹ Saïd 2005 : 10.

²²² Fulkerson 2012 : 69; Podlecki 1988 : 241-242.

²²³ Pelling 2011 : 48; Fulkerson (2012 : note 75) lists as examples: *Them.* 22.1 and 22.4; *Cam.* 12.1-2, 18.6, 31.1-3; *Nic.* 11.5; *Cim.* 16.4, 17.6; *Per.* 10.2 and 37.1-2; *Phoc.* 14.5, 16.6; *Coriol.* 13.4, 20.5, 29.3; *C. Gracch.* 16.7; *Luc.* 33.2-5, 34.1-4.

²²⁴ Pelling 2002 : 212-213, 217; Pelling 2010 : xxxviii.

²²⁵ Saïd 2005 : 10. See also: Pelling 2002 : 213, 222.

Thucydides. It is important to consolidate the two opinions not to reach an accurate historical account of what happened, but to recognize the differences in time and thought as reflected by the authors. Bringing this forward helps our appreciation of the development of history.

Plutarch's insistent representation of the *demos* as dangerous and needing control places responsibility on the politicians for guiding the *demos*. It is therefore the statesman who must accept blame from Plutarch when things get out of hand, because he could not control the people and their passions.²²⁶ To do this, a leader must be shrewd,²²⁷ show foresight,²²⁸ be just, and demonstrate restraint, leniency, and gentleness.²²⁹ A leader should never pander to the people by presenting them with festivals and money²³⁰ but can practice euergetism if it serves an honourable purpose.²³¹ A politician, however, should never give into the people's wishes simply for ambition. Unbridled ambition is scorned by Plutarch, who believes that it can cause chaos by unbalancing the harmony of the state.²³² According to Plutarch, chaos is caused by envy incurred from successful ambition.²³³ This is particularly evident in Plutarch's fifth century BCE *Lives*, in which the envy of the people always targets their successful leaders. For example, in *Themistocles* (22), Plutarch explains that ostracism is a result of the people alleviating their envy.²³⁴ If Themistocles

²²⁶ Marincola 2010 : 135; Pelling 2011 : 53. Xenophontos (2013 : 126) explores Plutarch's analogy of the *demos* as bees and that this is demonstrative of how they must obey and respect their leader.

²²⁷ Pelling 2011 : 49. See also *Nic.* 23; *Comp. Nic. et Crass.* 5.3; and *Cim.* 9.14.

²²⁸ Marincola 2010 : 135. See *Them.* 3.5 for Themistocles' intelligence before Salamis, or Aristides defusing a conspiracy to overthrow the democracy (*Arist.* 13). Lastly, Cimon plans an expedition because he recognizes that the Athenians are growing restless (*Cim.* 18).

²²⁹ Stadter 2014 : 171; Wardman 1974 : 125. See also *Alex.* 54.4-6.

²³⁰ Roskam 2014 : 517. See *Political Precepts* 821F-822A.

²³¹ Roskam 2014 : 517. See *Political Precepts* 822A-C. See also Chapter Three pages 79-87.

²³² Duff 1999 : 89; Marincola 2010 : 135; Pelling 2002 : 219; Stadter 2014 : 169; Wardman 1974 : 118. See also *Political Precepts* (e.g. 823F-825F); *Mar.* 46; *Agis-Cleomenes* 2; *Cato Mai.* 32.

²³³ Wardman 1974 : 49, 70, who refers to *Envy and Hatred* and *Self-Praise without offence*; *Cor.* 3.6; *Dion* 11.7; *Fab.* 23.4, 25.2.

²³⁴ See Appendix 8 for the text. See also Chapter Three's discussion of the *demos* in *Cimon* (pages 87-92) for more information on Plutarch's representation of the people in fifth-century BCE Athens and where their unchecked envy leads them.

had better control over the people or if the people did not have so much power, such an action would not have occurred and the *polis* of Athens would be better as a result.

Plutarch's anti-democratic inclinations based on his belief that the people are unpredictable and prone to envy add to his preference for the Roman political system. For Plutarch, monarchy meant that competition between politicians and the people and the state did not lead to envy and the breakdown of harmony.²³⁵ However, he nowhere explicitly touts one form of government over another. Rather, as long as the *politici* were cooperating and working together to achieve the goals of the state, Plutarch was satisfied. Thus, he is not as concerned with the form of government as he is with the qualities of its leader and his ability to control the people to maintain civic harmony.

Closure

Morality in Plutarch's *Lives* is presented as a timeless system of values and attitudes. His audience is expected to learn from the actions of the men and the spirit in which they were committed to better their own lives in a search for virtuousness. For this reason, Plutarch purposefully displaces his subjects from the strict framework of chronological sequence to better convey his ideas of morality and to present his heroes' characters in a consistent manner. Similarly, Plutarch's source use betrays his views of chronology as secondary and aims to create something superior to his predecessors' works by incorporating material that has otherwise not been used to bring his reader closer to the character of his hero. This results in an oeuvre dedicated to Plutarch's portrayal of leading men and how they manage the people. For Plutarch, the irrational soul must be commanded by the rational in a never-ending battle to reach a virtuous life. But with the right education and natural predisposition to virtue, it is possible for a man to climb the political ladder

²³⁵ Duff 1999 : 90; Stadter 2014 : 23-24; Wardman 1974 : 50, 103.

and help guide others using reason. These strong men are essential to the balance and harmony of the state and only when the people become overconfident and envious is this balance upset.

The *Lives* are consumed with a curiosity of human nature and personality and each *Life* has something new to teach the reader, along with common themes that spread across the work, such as the fickleness of the *demos*. Yet, it is impossible to define every aspect of Plutarch's view on morality, as each *Life* illuminates unique elements of the man represented within. This is why it is so important to investigate each *Life*, to discover what aspects of the hero's personality mould it. Chapter Three is a case study of Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* that considers the conclusions from Chapters One and Two to see how *Cimon* fits within Plutarch's oeuvre. Chapter Three also dives into the unique elements of *Cimon* that make it an essential study for understanding the role of morality in Plutarch's *Lives*.

Chapter Three: A Case Study of Morality in *Cimon*

Cimon, the son of Miltiades, was an Athenian general in the fifth century BCE. Cimon left no writings of his own, and because he was prominent between the Persian War and the Peloponnesian War, during what is known as the *Pentecontaetia*, he was too late for the period covered by *The Histories* of Herodotus and too early for the one recounted by Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, meriting only brief mentions in both. Most other sources are lost. Nearly all the information on Cimon comes from his non-contemporary biographer Plutarch, who, as we have seen, is concerned primarily with morality and not historical narrative.

Studies of Plutarch, his sources, his methods, and his motivation abound in the scholarly world. Most recently, works by Pelling dominate the discourse of Plutarch's *Lives*.²³⁶ Pelling believes that the *Lives* provided character examples to help impart Plutarch's moral views to his readers. This moral concern has now become the primary focus of current scholarly research into Plutarch's *Lives*.²³⁷ However, not all of the *Lives* have been investigated. While Pelling completed a case study of *Lucullus*,²³⁸ a systematic study of how Plutarch uses the paired life, *Cimon*, to impart morality has yet to be undertaken. Currently, a detailed commentary by A. Blamire is available on Cimon, but provides little analysis of the moral implications of this *Life*. These two examinations of these paired *Lives* are important, since Plutarch does not make explicit the moral lessons he wishes his readers to learn. Instead, he expects his audience to look for these lessons by reading the pair, comparing the *Lives*, and pondering for themselves the merits of the characters represented. This chapter proposes such a case study, as a necessary complement to Pelling's study

²³⁶ See for example, Pelling 1992, 2002, 2007, 2010, and 2011. However, significant contributions have also been made by: Beck (2014), Duff (1999), Marincola (2010), Mossman (2006), Saïd (2005), and Stadter (2014), to name a few.

²³⁷ Duff 1999 : 4-5, case studies: 13-51, moralism: 52-71; Pelling 2002 : 237-251. See also: M. Beck 2014.

²³⁸ Pelling 2010 : 103-168.

of *Lucullus*, to outline how Plutarch uses *Cimon* to bring out moral lessons he wishes his audience to learn.

Since Plutarch wrote the *Parallel Lives* as pairs, not only will *Cimon* be explored in this chapter, but the proem, the paired *Life (Lucullus)*, and Plutarch's concluding remarks in the *synkrisis* will also be considered to investigate the themes of these two *Lives*. The first section begins with a brief discussion of the division of *Cimon-Lucullus*. This will bring to light the compositional framework that Plutarch created for this pair. This compositional outline is further elucidated through the unusual nature of the proem of this pair, which not only offers Plutarch's methodology for this pair but also oddly introduces a separate character. The discussion of the proem thus serves as the second section of this chapter. Following this, the main focus of the chapter is investigated, namely, how Plutarch presents *Cimon's Life* and what moral lessons can be found therein. A comparison of *Cimon* with *Lucullus* is then possible, to find similarities and differences in emphasis, structure, and Plutarch's portrayal of his characters' strengths and weaknesses. Is *Cimon* a mirror of *Lucullus*? Or should *Lucullus* be considered the reflection of *Cimon*? What moral lessons does the reader learn from *Cimon* and from the pair? How do these moral implications fit within Plutarch's usual practices explored in Chapters One and Two? This chapter dives into these questions to test current scholarly opinions on Plutarch and will surface with a study of *Cimon* that complements other case studies in modern research.

The Division of *Cimon-Lucullus*

As discussed in Chapter One, Duff argues that each pair of *Lives* should not be seen as two parts, but four: the proem, *Life 1*, *Life 2*, and the *synkrisis*.²³⁹ The *Cimon-Lucullus* fits this premise,

²³⁹ Duff 2011B : 216. See pages 19-20 for the earlier discussion.

and the division into four of the *Parallel Lives* seems natural in this case. However, *Cimon* differs in length. *Cimon* is one of the shortest accounts of the *Parallel Lives*, making it likely one of the earlier *Lives* composed.²⁴⁰ This suggests that *Cimon-Lucullus* was a priority for Plutarch to record, since these *Lives* were presumably among the first written. It also signals that Plutarch was in the infancy of this project and was still experimenting with his idea of comparison.²⁴¹ This may help explain how approximately 26% of the pair is dedicated to Cimon, which is in sharp contrast to the 65% given to *Lucullus*, leaving the remaining 9% fairly evenly divided between the proem and the *synkrisis*. This distribution is unusual for Plutarch, whose *Lives* are usually more evenly divided. Along with the early composition of the pair, the division may be the result of Plutarch's assumptions about his reader: he was writing for a reader familiar with Greek history and Greek culture.²⁴² He therefore did not need to explain circumstances or institutions in *Cimon*, but took care to provide details of his Roman counterpart.

Despite the lack of detail in *Cimon*, Plutarch still makes use of several authorities within this *Life*. In total, he cites seventeen sources, but Blamire finds evidence of at least twenty-one.²⁴³ Wardman argues that when Plutarch mentions other sources, he was not actually using them often but was rather relying upon the works of Thucydides and Xenophon.²⁴⁴ This, however, is problematic for *Cimon*, since the general is not mentioned frequently in Thucydides or Xenophon. Therefore, it is likely that Plutarch was actually using his mentioned sources while composing *Cimon* and not falsifying them as Wardman suggests.

²⁴⁰ See Chapter One page 19 for a discussion on using the length of the *Lives* to determine their age.

²⁴¹ Tröster 2008 : 19.

²⁴² Duff 1999 :302. See pages 41-44 for a discussion of Plutarch's audience.

²⁴³ Blamire (1989 : 4-10) includes a useful list of authorities cited and perhaps referenced by Plutarch. See also: Perrin 2010 : 50.

²⁴⁴ Wardman 1974 : 154-161.

As in other Greek *Lives*, Plutarch frequently only skims the surface,²⁴⁵ not including details his reader ought to be familiar with. Events are missing from *Cimon* that Plutarch could have exploited. Blamire points to the interval between 479-463 BCE, in which Plutarch mentions virtually nothing of Cimon's political career other than two references to his alliance with Aristides and his opposition to Themistocles (5.5-6, 10.8). Plutarch also fails to give the reader an account of Cimon's military activities for a period of approximately nine years between the capture of Skyros and his victory at Eurymedon.²⁴⁶ Why does Plutarch leave these out when including them could have fleshed out *Cimon* and made his *Life* a more balanced counterpart for *Lucullus*? Rather than concluding that this was simply a matter of Plutarch assuming his reader's knowledge of the subject, the missing periods in the *Life* should also be considered as a device of the author's moralizing tendency. Plutarch was including and emphasizing aspects of Cimon's life that helped push his moral focus and what he wanted his reader to imitate and admire.²⁴⁷ We must infer that for Plutarch, these intervening years did not contain anecdotes or actions to help convey Cimon's character. Since Plutarch was not writing a political or military history, omitting these years does not diminish his report of Cimon's life; rather, it adds emphasis to the actions Plutarch portrayed as more indicative of Cimon's character. Thus, these two neglected periods were probably insignificant to Plutarch for his moral goal. Since Plutarch seems unconcerned with the disproportionate representation of the *Lives* of Cimon and Lucullus, he was likely content with the emphasis his choice of conveyance placed on the moral implications of *Cimon*, despite the disparity in length.

²⁴⁵ Exceptions to this include, for example, *Alexander*.

²⁴⁶ Blamire 1989 : 4.

²⁴⁷ For a discussion on when and why Plutarch includes information, and the moral purpose associated with this, see pages 44-46.

The *Proem*

As we saw in Chapter One,²⁴⁸ Plutarch often announces themes specific to the pair and methodology that can be applied to the *Lives* in the introductory proems. The presentation of *Cimon-Lucullus*, however, is very different from the other twenty surviving proems, so much so that it has received much criticism and attempts at explanation.²⁴⁹ Although it contains all the ingredients necessary to be considered a formal proem, the debate hinges on the beginning, which contains not an anecdote on Cimon or Lucullus, but one concerning Damon (1.1-2.5), a man from the Greek town of Chaeronea. Stadter argues that this is a digression technique used by Plutarch to arouse interest in his readers.²⁵⁰ Similarly, Beck contends that it is an example of *insinuatio*, since the proem incorporates a technique of using a novel story to wake up the audience. Beck convincingly argues that this technique provides the audience with a negative behavioural model to introduce themes present in *Cimon* and *Lucullus* that Plutarch wanted his reader to focus on.²⁵¹ Plutarch achieves this by making Damon comparable to both Cimon and Lucullus: they are all handsome, intelligent, and leading members of their respective cities. Damon, however, instead of bringing aid to his city, very nearly brings about the end of his town through his actions. Plutarch wants his audience to remember how a man with these traits can use them destructively. That way, when his readers study *Cimon*, they see the general using his daring to help the city, not destroy it, and in *Lucullus* they encounter a man who helps Greek cities instead of bringing them to danger. In this sense, Plutarch also uses Damon to soften the negative aspects of Cimon and Lucullus, as his reader is meant to compare their failings to Damon's.

²⁴⁸ See pages 20-28.

²⁴⁹ For a quick overview of this debate, see Beck 2007 : 55.

²⁵⁰ Stadter 1988 : 290-1.

²⁵¹ Beck 2007 : 55-6, 64-6. Duff (2014 : 334) and Philip A. Stadter (1988 :291) presents a similar view. This is also consistent with the *Demetrius-Antony* proem discussed in Chapter One, pages 24-25.

Another interesting theory on the Damon anecdote is introduced by J. Ma. Ma argues that Damon should be considered in the black hunter paradigm, as outlined by P. Vidal-Naquet.²⁵² Ma believes that the Damon prologue differs from the other examples of the black hunter, in that it is set in reality instead of in the realm of myth.²⁵³ He explains that the anecdote is an example of folklorization brought about by oral tradition.²⁵⁴ While I think that this is interesting and fits within the parameters, the black hunter was likely not something Plutarch was deliberately constructing. Instead, Plutarch was drawing attention to an incident that brought Lucullus to Chaeronea and explains why the city needs to thank him.²⁵⁵ However, Ma's theory that the story derives from oral tradition is interesting and points to Plutarch's close association with and care for the history and traditions of his hometown of Chaeronea.

Plutarch's patronage of Chaeronea led him to include this story of Damon to introduce how Lucullus became involved with Chaeronea. Lucullus was responsible for sparing the city after Damon's actions (2.1-2). This shows the reader why Lucullus was chosen as a subject: Plutarch included Lucullus in the *Parallel Lives* because of this act of mercy and what he saw as justice for his hometown.²⁵⁶ Without Lucullus, Chaeronea may not have survived Damon's impetuous act of killing Roman officials. Plutarch even explicitly states that the town still owes Lucullus for the favour, and his portrait is an attempt at returning it (2.2-3). Furthermore, Swain explains that local history was particularly emphasized during the Second Sophistic,²⁵⁷ making the inclusion of

²⁵² Ma 1994 : 49. See also, Vidal-Naquet 1993.

²⁵³ Ma 1994 : 52.

²⁵⁴ Ma 1994 : 60.

²⁵⁵ This is consistent with *exempla* in rhetoric, which stresses local Greek history during the Empire (Demoen 1997 : 140-141). See also page 9, footnote 18.

²⁵⁶ Scholars that support this view include: Jones 1971 : 3; Lavery 1994 : 262; Pelling 2010 : 106.

²⁵⁷ Swain 1996 : 77. See also: Geiger 1981 : 87 and Lavery 1994 : 262.

Lucullus in the *Lives* essential to Plutarch's duty to disseminate his local sphere to the wider world of Rome.

There is another possible explanation why Plutarch chose Lucullus, since Lucullus' saving Chaeronea is insufficient to justify inclusion in the *Lives*. In line with Plutarch's goal of imparting morality, it is possible that Lucullus was included because he possesses positive characteristics that Plutarch wants his readers to assume. Pelling suggests that Lucullus fits within a *topos* of Plutarch's first subjects. These subjects, Scipio, Lucullus, Marcellus and Cicero, whose *Lives* were written earlier than the others, all loved Greece and Greek culture. Pelling argues that these philhellenes were the sorts of men whom Plutarch admired: intelligent, cultured men who used their talents for their states and the good of Greece.²⁵⁸ Lucullus, then, was chosen because he saved Chaeronea and possessed the general qualities that Plutarch applauded.

Now that Plutarch had a Roman subject, he needed a Greek counterpart. Plutarch tells his reader that he searched for someone suitable and decided that it must be Cimon (3.1). As we saw in Chapter One,²⁵⁹ the careful thought behind Plutarch's pairings insists that they be discussed together. Plutarch meant for the pair to be analyzed and taken as a whole, since themes are interwoven between the pages. He stitches men from two different times and cultures together with the thread of morality. The reader follows the stitches to compare the similarities and differences between the men and the static nature of character through time. Therefore, although *Cimon* is the subject of this chapter, common themes and the moral implications of both *Lives* are briefly discussed.

²⁵⁸ Pelling 2010 : 106. This is also supported by Plutarch's views of education and morality, as seen in Chapter Two (see pages 56-58 in particular).

²⁵⁹ See pages 19-20.

Although Plutarch admires these men, he was aware of their weaknesses and chose to frame these flaws in a certain way. In the *Lives*, he frequently presents failings of his characters to his audience, and to understand his purpose in including faults, many scholars quote the following section of the proem of *Cimon-Lucullus*:

For just as those who paint beautiful forms and forms having a lot of grace, if ever some small imperfection belongs to them, we expect them neither to omit it nor to labour after it completely. For the one way offers a shameful appearance and the other offers an unlike appearance. In this way, since it is difficult, perhaps rather impossible, to display a man's life as blameless and spotless in its good parts the truth must be filled out as a likeness. Considering the failures and ruins which, from some experience or political compulsion, attack a man's business as defects of some virtue rather than villainies of baseness, the biographer must not very eagerly and prodigiously emphasize them in the history, but as it were, respecting human nature, if it has given nothing purely beautiful and no character that is undisputed in regard to virtue (2.4-5).

This is a rare glimpse into Plutarch's explicit purpose, which reveals that he thought of his writing as different from that of other biographers. In line with what we discovered in Chapters One and Two,²⁶⁰ Plutarch forces an ethical agenda that also includes negative traits of his subjects. Plutarch thus claims that his work requires techniques not employed elsewhere.²⁶¹ He states that although he strives to create an accurate picture, it should not be so excessive in its precision that it paints the entire *Life* in a black hue. His generous representation, Duff explains, is Plutarch's way of showing humanity, which is appropriate for an educated man.²⁶²

Plutarch's statement is also presented within the proem of *Cimon-Lucullus* to defend his inclusion of Lucullus. Even though Lucullus possessed faults, such as falling into a life of luxury instead of being involved in politics at the end of his life, Plutarch includes him in his *Lives* and explains in the proem that no man is perfect and that his negative traits must also be dissected to

²⁶⁰ See Chapter One pages 25 for a brief look at the proem of *Cimon-Lucullus*. See also Chapter Two pages 54-55 for a discussion on the idea of perfection of character and the presentation of negative attributes.

²⁶¹ Hägg 2012 : 271; Tröster 2008 : 20-21.

²⁶² Duff 1999 : 59.

appreciate a morally outstanding life. Cimon acts as the perfect counterpart to Lucullus, since both demonstrate vices balanced with virtue. *Lucullus* and *Cimon* therefore form a balanced pair. The reader, then, having encountered Damon as well as Plutarch's methodology, is prepared for a pair of *Lives* that may not be models of perfect upstanding citizens.

The Life of Cimon - Weaknesses

Plutarch begins, as in many of the *Lives*, with a short passage on Cimon's family (4.1-3).²⁶³ The mention of his Thracian mother is particularly interesting. She was the daughter of Olorus, king of Thrace, and this indication of Cimon's royal lineage foreshadows the later references to his noble bearing. It also illustrates Plutarch's preference for aristocratic leadership. However, Cimon's father, Miltiades, did not leave his son with the same prestige. Miltiades was tried and convicted of treason after his failed expedition to Paros to bring down the islands that supported the Persians during the Persian War (4.3). We learn from Plutarch that Miltiades' death sentence was reduced to a fine and he was placed in prison where he died. Cimon was thus left with a fine to pay, fatherless, and the child of a traitor. And as Plutarch mentions, Cimon was by no means first in the city after this (4.3). Cimon had a very steep upward climb if he wanted to reach prominence in Athens.

As we explored in Chapter Two,²⁶⁴ Plutarch only rarely mentions childhood, so it is not surprising that he makes virtually no mention of Cimon's upbringing before or after his father's death. Instead, Plutarch begins the *Life* with an account of Cimon's youth, to showcase his

²⁶³ For a discussion on Cimon's family see Varto 2015 : 138-140. Varto argues (2015 : 140) that these genealogies were made for political interests and aspirations and not for a sequential ordering of time. I agree with her, though it can't be denied that there is also an aspect of chronology to these genealogies. For Cimon's family in particular, she contends that the genealogical retracing helped garner the favour of the Athenian people and secure their positions in society.

²⁶⁴ See pages 55-58 for a discussion on childhood, youth, and education.

weaknesses. One of Cimon's most startling flaws is his interactions with women. Plutarch references Cimon's supposed incest with his sister, Elpinice, and how he lived openly with her as his wife until Callias agreed to marry her (4.5-7). However, Plutarch's use of language in this passage indicates his skepticism, using phrases of doubt such as 'accused of' and 'there are some who say'. By contrast, in 4.8 Plutarch's language contrasts the aforementioned when he says that it is 'perfectly apparent' that Cimon was given to a love of women, that his infidelities were numerous, and that he loved his wife too much. This demonstrates that although Plutarch agrees that one of Cimon's weaknesses was his inability to control his youthful passion for women, he doubts that this weakness extended to his sister, dismissing the supposed incest as rumours, but confirming his inability to control the irrational part of his soul through reason.²⁶⁵

Plutarch tells us that Cimon was not only a philanderer, but he was also dissolute and bibulous (4.3), he took after his grandfather who was said to be simple,²⁶⁶ and he achieved no literary, liberal or other Hellenic education (4.4). After this statement, Plutarch mentions his lack of cleverness and Attic fluency (4.4). The absence of education is clearly important for Plutarch, as he makes it a focal point of Cimon's flaws. Plutarch equated good education with subsequent virtuous behaviour and poor education with moral failings. By placing Cimon's lack of education between his failings, Plutarch is emphasizing the importance of education to his reader, as well as highlighting what can happen without a proper education: it is implied that this shortcoming caused

²⁶⁵ Beneker (2014 : 503-504) explains that statesmen in Plutarch are expected to have high standards of self-control especially over sexual desires. However, he also says (2014 : 504) that, "Their private lives and their public conduct are, in fact, closely intertwined, and Plutarch really has no interest in narrating their sexual activity unless it explains, or at least helps to explain, the motivation for a political or military action." This does not explain the rumours of Plutarch's incest, as they are here presented without any reference to political or military action. Thus, *Cimon's* mention of sexual misconduct should be seen simply as revealing his character and his inability to control his passions when he was young.

²⁶⁶ Soares (2014 : 382) states that because Plutarch compares Cimon's behaviour here to his grandfather, it is indicative that Plutarch follows the belief that behaviour is inherited genetically. However, as this is the only mention of Cimon taking after his ancestors, this is a theme that is not possible to explore in the scope of this *Life* alone.

Cimon's licentiousness, drinking, and enjoyment of every possible luxury. As we saw in Chapter Two,²⁶⁷ had Cimon received a proper education, he would have been able to better control his passions and his irrational soul. Thus, in his youth, he was the opposite of a moral upstanding citizen. However, Plutarch specifically mentions Stesimbrotus, who was hostile towards Cimon,²⁶⁸ as his source for the general's education (4.4). It is likely that Plutarch, while familiar with Stesimbrotus' work, did not trust his account. Since Stesimbrotus' bias was understood, Plutarch's mention of his name indicates that the facts concerning Cimon's education are dubious.²⁶⁹

The discussion of Cimon's education, though brief, follows Plutarch's model for other *Lives* in which his subject's education is lacking and is a factor in Plutarch's evaluation of his hero's character. This *Life* follows Duff's model, in which the subject's character is revealed through his attitude towards education.²⁷⁰ In other *Lives*, Plutarch uses this model to explain what his character applied himself to instead of a Hellenic education. For example, in *Themistocles*, the absence of a proper education is explained with Themistocles' focus on practical training. In yet others, military training draws the subject.²⁷¹ Since Cimon was a prominent military figure, it is strange that Plutarch does not explicitly mention where Cimon directed his education. However, as S. Swain mentions, Plutarch scrutinizes Romans more than Greeks for their lack of education, and although Plutarch regularly assumes that Greeks received παιδεία, its effects are rarely explored.²⁷² In this pair, while Lucullus' education is emphasized, Cimon's is not mentioned.

²⁶⁷ See pages 56-58.

²⁶⁸ See *FGrH*, esp. frs. 11, 4, 6 (Pelling 2002 : 302).

²⁶⁹ Pelling 2002 : 302

²⁷⁰ Duff 2008 : 1. See also Chapter Two pages 56-58.

²⁷¹ Duff 2008 : 11.

²⁷² Swain : 129, 134.

Education is thus an exceptional theme in Plutarch that does not receive the same attention of other features of the *Life*.²⁷³

The answer to this silence on the focus of Cimon's education can be inferred by other passages in *Cimon*. For example, in 9.1 Plutarch uses an anecdote of a dinner party to show that Cimon could sing. The guests praise Cimon for being cleverer than Themistocles, who could not sing or play the lyre but could make a city great and rich. Here, Plutarch not only hints that Cimon must have received some form of education, since he could sing, but he also stresses the importance of education to success, as Cimon was considered to be a greater man than his rival Themistocles, even though Themistocles made Athens strong.

Plutarch also describes Cimon as noble and of a truthful bearing that resembled a Spartan, comparing him to the Euripidean Heracles (4.4). The presentation of Cimon as a Spartan is reinforced by the mention of Cimon's military skill and ability to sing, which reflect Spartan ideals. Combined with the allusion to Heracles, Cimon is portrayed as a man of strength, leadership, and determined demeanor. Plutarch's presentation of Cimon's character is therefore static: he was always, and continued to be, a Spartan in spirit. His military acumen was an aspect of natural talent moulded by his education and Cimon's Spartan attitude towards his education reveals pre-existing characteristics. Thus, in Plutarch's presentation, Cimon's poor education did not damage his character, rather, Cimon failed to benefit from what a good education might have given him: specifically, the ability to control his desires.

²⁷³ Swain:135.

The Life of Cimon - Strengths

Plutarch does not dwell on the negative aspects of his subject but continues to build on his character's strengths by alleging that all of Cimon's other traits were admirable and noble (5.1). One such strength is Cimon's attention to Athenian culture. Plutarch relates that the people cherished Cimon's participation in the Dionysia (8.7-8). The theatrical contest was normally decided by judges chosen by lot, but after the archon saw Cimon pouring a libation to the god, he appointed him and his fellow generals as the judges. This action shows two aspects of Cimon's character: he was pious, since he was making a libation to the god, and although he may not have had a traditional Hellenic education, he was still considered educated enough to play a significant role in Athens' largest cultural activity. Plutarch even states that the contest was more animated than in previous years because of the unusual decorum of the judges (8.7). Therefore, Cimon's political and military standing granted him a reputation that made him worthy of deciding the winner of the tragedies, and more worthy, so claims Plutarch, than the usual judges. This downplays Cimon's lack of education and portrays him as culturally apt and relevant.

Leadership

Cultural refinement, however, is not enough for a man to lead a state, so Plutarch also uses *Cimon* to characterize the general's best leadership qualities. Plutarch depicts one of these strengths in the telling of Cimon's first military act. During his youth, before the battle of Salamis, Cimon was the first to dedicate his bridle, an example of courage (5.2).²⁷⁴ This demonstrates that while Themistocles was in power, Cimon was also leading men, exhibiting from a young age that he was braver than most men in Athens. This fits Plutarch's belief that character is static. While

²⁷⁴ This is a trait that Plutarch frequently reveals in children or young men in the context of war or revolution (Soares 2014 : 383).

not yet old enough to be involved in politics, Cimon, just like the subjects of Plutarch's other *Lives*, is revealed as a man of action and a man who provides leadership for the masses. In this way, Plutarch presents Cimon's rise to power as natural, since he was given to leadership, as demonstrated by the people who were already following him while he was young and Themistocles was still in power.²⁷⁵

Plutarch also associates Cimon's following as a result of his appearance. He was tall and stately, with a head of curly hair (5.3). Plutarch reserves mention of Cimon's appearance for when he speaks about his rise to power, emphasizing how Cimon's appearance aided his rise. Plutarch links Cimon's positive physical traits as causal to his popularity using the linking words *δὲ καὶ*: "...κατέβαιναν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν, οὐκ ὀλίγοις ἀρχὴ τοῦ θαρρεῖν. ἦν δὲ καὶ τὴν ἰδέαν οὐ μεμπτός..." (5.3). Therefore, the people followed Cimon not only because of his bravery at Salamis, **but also** because he was attractive.²⁷⁶ These two things, his looks and his heroics at Salamis, earned him a reputation and good will in Athens. And because of this, the *demos* encouraged him to do something worthy of Marathon (5.4). In other words, they wanted Cimon to achieve a victory of the same value as his father – a victory against the Persians.

This idea of emulating one's predecessors is a common motif in Plutarch's Persian War *Lives*.²⁷⁷ J. Marincola's survey of these *Lives* explains that there is a parallel relationship between

²⁷⁵ Wardman (1974 : 55) refers to Plutarch's ideal men of power as *politici*. According to Wardman, these men are consistent in their behaviour despite changing circumstances.

²⁷⁶ Outward appearance as an indicator of character is a common philosophical reflection of (pseudo?) Aristotle, famously described in detail throughout his *Physiognomonica*. However, as mentioned in Chapter Two, page 52, Plutarch does not take much stock in this theory. Here, it is interesting to note that he indicates Cimon's attractiveness at the first mention of his positive qualities. However, it is not clear if this is Plutarch claiming that Cimon's appearance was a reflection of his character, or merely that it helped him win over the masses.

²⁷⁷ In fact, imitation of great men of the past is a *topos* of the *Lives* (see footnote 70 on page 20). Plutarch presents men becoming politically successful through the imitation of *exempla* (Jiménez 2002). Here, Cimon imitates the actions of his father Miltiades becoming greater than him, and thus making Cimon an *exemplum* for Plutarch's reader.

the subjects' dispositions and actions. In each, the hero must emulate either a predecessor or a rival to gain prestige and political standing.²⁷⁸ Cimon's need to reach the same heights as his father who won at Marathon is no exception to this rule and is a key ingredient for Cimon and Plutarch's other heroes' successes.

Cimon fought hard to garner such a success. He was first sent out as a commander when Athens did not yet have her naval empire and was under Pausanias' thumb. Though Cimon did not win any battles that Plutarch sees fit to mention, Plutarch uses this first command to set Cimon up as a foil to Pausanias, who was exchanging letters with the Persian King. The juxtaposition of such a treasonable offence so close to the mention of the victory of Marathon builds tension for the reader, and sets up the need for Cimon to lead while Athens was under such duress from the threat of Persia.²⁷⁹

Military Achievement

Plutarch writes that Cimon humbled the Great King more than anyone else. He chased the king out of Hellas, sacked Persian towns, and annexed territories for the Hellenes until the Persians were out of Asia from Ionia to Pamphylia (12.1). He sieged and conquered Phaselis, which refused to come to the Athenian side (12.3), and afterwards achieved a victory demanded by the people that was worthy of his father and Marathon: the victory at Eurymedon. There, Cimon won not only a naval engagement, but also a land battle. Although he was weary of fighting on land after an exhausting attack at sea, he examined his troops, and saw that they were eager to fight (13.1). A lesser commander may not have noticed the exalted troops and decided to camp for the night,

²⁷⁸ Marincola 2010 : 134.

²⁷⁹ Duff (1999 : 251) refers to this as an internal *synkrisis* within a Life, where Plutarch uses opposing characters for reflection and pause.

missing the glory of winning both a naval and land battle on the same day. Thus, Plutarch presents his reader with another example of what a strong leader must possess: the ability to read the needs and wants of his troops. Plutarch also asserts that Cimon outfitted and trained his troops better than any other, so that his force was more eager than others (6.1). These actions once again demonstrate how Cimon's awareness of his troops garnered their support and kept them under control.

The presentation of Cimon's awareness of his troops precedes the discussion of victory at Eurymedon, where Plutarch writes that Cimon surpassed both Salamis with a land battle and Plataea with a naval battle (13.3). Plutarch implies that for a leader to be successful, he must always compete with the past and with himself to achieve more. Cimon played a part in both Salamis and Plataea, which were considered the greatest military successes before Eurymedon, and yet he competed with himself and brought the greatest victory that Athens had seen. Although the probability of the reader of the *Lives* being in a position to achieve such a military success is small,²⁸⁰ the reader should nevertheless understand that through imitation of Cimon's competitive characteristic, it is possible to accomplish a feat beyond those of other great men as well as beyond his own actions.

Plutarch also shows that Cimon, who started with a lesser reputation than Themistocles and Miltiades, needed a bigger push to even compare to their reputations. Plutarch remarks that the recapture of Eion (7.2-3), a city lost during the Persian War, was the first instance in which Athens led an offensive attack against the Persians rather than defending themselves. Plutarch surmises that the offensive victory is the reason the Athenians allowed Cimon to set up three dedicatory Herms, an honour granted neither to Themistocles nor to Miltiades (8.1). This indicates

²⁸⁰ See Chapter Two pages 41-44 for a discussion on Plutarch's audience.

that because Cimon was a man of action and led his troops to ravage and capture the territory of their enemy, the Athenians placed Cimon on a higher standing than previous political giants and that Plutarch does as well.

Plutarch shows that Cimon surpassed other Athenian generals by giving him credit for developing the Athenian Empire. It was Cimon's hospitality, mildness to allies, and shrewd strategy, not force of arms, which earned him the leadership of Hellas. While other Athenian generals forced the allies to serve Athens by prosecuting them, Cimon took the opposite course and did not compel them with threats: instead, he accepted money and empty ships from those unwilling to serve. He then manned those ships with Athenians, making Athens the master and transforming the allies into tributary subjects because they were too caught up with the ease of farming to notice (11.2-3).

Generosity

Cimon's flexibility towards the allies is the first instance in Plutarch's *Cimon* that reveals his generosity, a theme that carries throughout this *Life*. The significance of Cimon's euergetism is especially evident when Plutarch states that Cimon's generosity towards the allies resulted in demands that Sparta recall the tyrant Pausanias from Athens, so that Athens may once again be in control of her own city. Thus, according to Plutarch, Cimon ended the tyranny in Athens and built an empire of allies through cleverly employing his generosity to unify the people. Hence, Plutarch's narrative shows that pragmatism is more important than physical strength to change the outcome of the city.

Cimon's generosity is highlighted again in the wake of the recapture of Eion (7.2-3). Here, Cimon defeats the Persians and frees the surrounding countryside from their rule. However, even

though the land was very fertile, he gave it to the Athenians instead of keeping it for himself. By juxtaposing his military victories with examples of his euergetism, Plutarch emphasizes that a commander must also be generous as well as victorious to be deserving of praise.²⁸¹ Even after all these victories, Cimon continued to give to the people and try to surpass what he had accomplished. For example, when the Persians refused to abandon the Chersonese, Cimon went in with four ships and captured their thirteen (14.1). He then granted the land of the Chersonese to Athens. Similarly, after he quelled a Thracian revolt, he bestowed their land and gold mines to Athens instead of keeping it for himself (14.2). Therefore, as Cimon continued to win military victories, he also continued to garner support from the people through his practice of euergetism.

Another instance of Cimon's euergetism is the account of the dinner party found in 9.14. Plutarch relates that the conversation turned to Cimon's exploits, in which Cimon dwelled on his division of spoils after Sestos and Byzantium as his best military tactic. He allowed the allies the choice of the booty or the captives. The allies, thinking him crazy, chose the booty. At the time, Cimon earned the reputation of a ridiculous distributor of loot, simply because the allies did not understand the potential of holding the captives for ransom. Cimon did not, however, keep the copious revenue he earned from the hostages, but he used it for the people of Athens. He allowed the people access to his fields, he put on a dinner party at his house each evening for the members of his tribe, he and his companions gave their clothes to elderly needy citizens when they chanced upon them, and these same men gave money to the poor in the agora (10.1-3). This example of euergetism, Plutarch reveals, earned Cimon praise in Cratinus' *Archilochi* (10.3-4), demonstrating the benefits of following Cimon's example.

²⁸¹ This is consistent with his other presentations of euergetism in other *Lives* and his *Moralia* (Roskam 2014 : 517, 519).

Cimon once again refuses to keep the spoils earned after his victory at Eurymedon and instead gives them to the public. He constructed the southern wall of the Acropolis through what he earned, he laid the foundation of the Long Walls to Piraeus, and he beautified the city of Athens with resorts, by planting trees in the agora and by converting the Academy into a watered grove (13.8). Though Plutarch does not explain what these actions earned for Cimon, they illustrate the importance of euergetism for the city. Once again, Plutarch uses Cimon as a model of generosity, the main form of praise that Plutarch reserves for the general, around which he focuses most of the account. The importance of the general's generosity as Plutarch's main moral message in *Cimon* is clearest in a passage in which Plutarch writes that Cimon's generosity surpasses even that of the Athenians of old, who gave mankind things such as agriculture and fire. In this way, Plutarch asserts, Cimon restored the golden age of Cronus (10.6). This is a strong statement for Plutarch to make, and the glory he places on Cimon's generosity is a calculated effort to show his reader how this genuine form of gifting one's riches can benefit the state. This comparison may also be linked to Plutarch following the encomiastic tradition. Hägg explains that encomiasts favoured comparisons of their subjects with mythological characters.²⁸² While Plutarch does not generally partake in such comparisons, he does here to emphasize the moral goodness of Cimon's actions.

In this same theme of generosity, falls the refusal of bribery. Plutarch relates that a strong leader should avoid it through the story of Rhoesaces, who came to Athens with a lot of money. This foreigner went to Cimon and offered him an abundance of silver and gold for his political support. Cimon then asked Rhoesaces if he preferred to be hired or befriended. When he answered befriended, Cimon gave him his money back and agreed to help him (10.8). This presents another

²⁸² Hägg 2012 : 249. For a brief discussion of Plutarch's *Lives* and their relation to encomia see the Introduction, page 14.

trait Plutarch considered as important for a good leader, namely, the ability to resist the temptation of money and wealth, which goes hand-in-hand with generosity. This is consistent with the discussion of wealth above in Chapter Two.²⁸³ Plutarch wanted his reader to know that Cimon could not be bought.

This reputation for resisting bribery is inserted to give verisimilitude to his defence in court after he put down the Thracian revolt. Some Athenians believed that after this victory, he had the perfect base to invade Macedonia. Since he did not, they accused him of taking bribes from King Alexander. Once in court, Cimon uses his reputation for generosity and leading a Spartan life as his only defence, saying that he could not accept a bribe as a result of these two things. He was acquitted (14.3). One can conclude two things from this anecdote: first, this story is included as a result of Plutarch's desire for his reader to emulate Cimon's Spartan nature and his generosity; and second, to impart to his reader the benefits of avoiding bribery and practicing euergetism.

The Bones of Theseus

Plutarch thus portrays Cimon's generosity and ability to resist bribery as beneficial to the state, since he was able to collect allies through his mild and fair nature and also of personal benefit, keeping Cimon out of judicial danger. But Plutarch's most striking example of Cimon's euergetism comes after he takes Scyros (8.3-5). The taking of this island is, however, morally ambiguous. Cimon answered the call for help from the Dolopian pirate inhabitants who plundered and imprisoned some Thessalian merchants. Although the Amphiktyonic Council ruled in favour of the Thessalians and the other islanders wished for the pirates to make restitution, the pirates refused and called on Cimon to take possession of the city. Cimon did, thus helping the robbers rather than

²⁸³ See pages 52-53.

the robbed. This is a strong example of Plutarch not telling his audience what he wishes them to learn, as he does not explicitly approve or disprove of this action. What is clear in the text is that Cimon takes advantage of an oracle for his own benefit, for the Athenians received an oracular response to retrieve the bones of their legendary founder, Theseus. Retrieving the bones of a hero was not so unusual in ancient Greece and saw a surge of activity in the fifth century BCE.²⁸⁴ Herodotus relates (1.67-8) that the Spartans, in a similar oracular command, were told to bring back the bones of Orestes, the son of Agamemnon. In another instance, Hagnon establishes a hero cult for Rhesos,²⁸⁵ a Thracian king who fought at Troy, by bringing his bones from Troy to Amphipolis. Besides Plutarch, the recovery of the bones of Theseus is also mentioned in Pausanias (iii 3.7), the expedition to Scyros is further described by Diodorus (xi 60.2), and there is a dedicatory inscription in Delphi which may be a thank offering for the recovery of Theseus' remains.²⁸⁶

Hero cults were an important part of Greek culture. This importance was not lost on Cimon, who, with the knowledge of the oracular response, went looking for the bones of Theseus on Scyros, where Theseus was purported to have fallen off a cliff (8.5). There he found a skeleton of extraordinary proportions, a description very similar to that of the bones of Orestes. Whether or not Cimon fostered this description of the bones, the comparison was certainly not something he would discourage. He brought the bones to Athens in the 470s BCE and erected a shrine to Theseus in a prominent part of the city (Paus. 1.17.2-6).²⁸⁷ This anecdote closes with a key phrase, "This

²⁸⁴ Zaccarini 2015 : 180.

²⁸⁵ As told by the Macedonian writer Polyaeus (6.53).

²⁸⁶ Blamire 1989 : 120. Podlecki 1971 : 142.

²⁸⁷ Castriota 1992 : 7; Gouschin 1999 : 169.

was the chief reason the people took kindly to him” (8.6). The people in Athens held more sway than in other Greek poleis and having their approval meant more influence for Cimon.

Prior to the recovery of his bones, Theseus was honoured mainly by the aristocracy, but by taking Scyros to avenge the death of Theseus, and establishing a new shrine to him (the Theseion), Cimon cemented Theseus’ presence with the masses. By aggrandizing his myth, refreshing his legend, and making him more prevalent in the city, Cimon transformed Theseus as not only the founder of Athens, but also created a new conception of him as a hero of Attica. This metamorphosis of his character and pervasiveness of his cult transferred the popularity of Theseus from the élite to the people,²⁸⁸ as a symbol of their new nationalistic and self-determined spirit.²⁸⁹ Once again, Cimon is seen by the masses as a generous man, a man who not only grants lands and spoils of war to Athens, but who also nurtures their mythological past through the donation of a relic and a physical space in which to worship.

It should be noted here that G. Roskam does not list the retrieval of Theseus’ bones as an act of euergetism.²⁹⁰ I believe this to be an oversight, as the bones were brought back, given to the people, and a new building was erected for their presentation. The bones of Theseus thus fit the requirements necessary to be considered benefactions for the people and the city state. Roskam further argues that Cimon only used his euergetic practices to maintain his reputation and not to acquire it.²⁹¹ However, if the bones are granted a place in the list of Cimon’s donations, then this statement again does not follow the narrative of *Cimon*, as Cimon here uses the bones to earn popularity.

²⁸⁸ Gouschin 1999 :169, 181.

²⁸⁹ Garland 1992 : 93.

²⁹⁰ Roskam’s list can be found here: 2014 : 518-519.

²⁹¹ Roskam 2014 : 520.

H. Walker reads the frequent renditions of Theseus on pottery as evidence of this boom in popularity, which went from one in every twenty Attic vases to one in every four, replacing Heracles as the most depicted hero on pottery in Athens,²⁹² if our limited evidence is representative. However, Walker believes that this popularity shift occurred before Cimon brought back the bones of Theseus and that Cimon was capitalizing on the stardom of this hero, though he does agree that the bones gave new life to the cult.²⁹³ Although the chronology certainly affects the historical narrative and is an interesting avenue for further research, in this thesis I am interested in how Plutarch presents Cimon and what his readers can learn from Cimon's actions and thus the exact chronology of the development of the cult of Theseus will not be debated here. What matters is that Cimon's retrieval of the bones is an important example of his generosity and his concern for the people. It is difficult to imagine that bringing home a relic of the mythological hero would not breathe new life into the spirit of his cult, as the Athenians now had something physical of their hero they could now claim to possess. What *is* certain is that Plutarch depicts this action to corroborate Cimon's image as a generous man, a man who not only grants lands and spoils of war to Athens, but also nurtures their mythological past.

The remains of the mythical character added more meat for the people to feast their eyes upon, and Cimon monopolized this explosion of the cult of Theseus for his own political benefit. Cimon used the favour he gained from the masses to cull the popularity of any of his political rivals, specifically, Themistocles. As Edmund Bloedow argues, so beloved was Cimon's bringing back the bones, there was no possibility in undermining his position in the first part of the 470s.²⁹⁴

²⁹² Walker 1995 : 24.

²⁹³ Walker 1995 : 56-57. M. Zaccarini (2015 : 178-180, 190) also doubts the chronology of the retrieval of the bones of Theseus and even questions Cimon's involvement. However, this thesis does not allow for this debate as the accuracy of the historical narrative is not part of its concerns. For a summary of his findings, see Appendix Figure 1.

²⁹⁴ Bloedow 1992 : 51. Varto (2015 : note 71) also believes that this action helped cement Cimon's popularity.

However, Cimon not only used Theseus' bones to bring down his political rival Themistocles, but he also used the myth to rehabilitate his father's image. Miltiades fell from prominence after his failure on the expedition at Paros, but by winning over some contemporaries with this gesture of returning the bones, Cimon again grasped the power of mythology in history and used it for his own benefit. Men such as Pherekydes, who attempted to retrace Cimon's genealogy to Theseus,²⁹⁵ altered both the mythology of Theseus and the history of Cimon's family to strengthen the tie between them. For, as Plutarch tells us in his *Life of Theseus* (35.8), there was a legend that Theseus came to Marathon to help Miltiades lead the way to victory. By bringing back the bones of Theseus, Cimon not only reminds the people of this divine connection and favour held by his father, but also of his stellar victory against the Persians, further outshining Themistocles' victory at Salamis. Not only did Miltiades lead the *first* victory, he did it with the help of a hero, brought by divine favour for the Athenians and Cimon's family. And now, Miltiades' son, Cimon, was shown that same favour in finding the bones and fulfilling an oracular response. Cimon continued to remind the people of his father's, and by association, his own, importance to Athens through paintings and statues of Miltiades, including one dedicated to Miltiades by Phidias,²⁹⁶ whom many regard as one of the greatest sculptors of ancient Greece. Cimon could not have been more shrewd in his political moves.

Cimon's restoration of the bones of Theseus helped skyrocket his career in Athens both by bringing down his political rival, Themistocles, and by rehabilitating his family name to the point of being revered. He seized a mythological past to engineer his political present. This instrumentalization of mythology brought the people over to his side by granting them a cult to

²⁹⁵ Castriota 1992 : 7.

²⁹⁶ Blamire 1989 : 103. See also Paus. 10.10.1

their beloved founder and a new tradition on an old character. By giving the people a place to worship, Cimon cemented their gratitude and drove their imaginations and aspirations. He created a physical space in which the past was materialized and more accessible to the common people. Plutarch thus demonstrates the power of the past, how one man can grasp a legend and transpose its symbolism onto himself. The return of the bones, then, can be seen as both giving to the people as well as manipulating the people for his own benefit,²⁹⁷ his generosity making him the most powerful man in Athens.

The Danger of the *Demos*

The account of the bones of Theseus not only demonstrates the moral value of euergetism, but it also hints at the unpredictability of the *demos*. As we saw in Chapter Two, this is a recurrent theme in *The Parallel Lives* and clearly seen in *Cimon*.²⁹⁸ In this *Life*, Plutarch uses a couple of instances to warn of the danger of democratic rule, and his preference for aristocratic leadership. While some of the actions of the *demos* that Plutarch relates may be accurate, taking these passages as historical truth would be a folly. Instead these passages should be approached with caution, as this is Plutarch's hand creating rather than excerpting to model his hero as a leader in contrast to the danger of democratic rule. This is consistent with Plutarch's anti-democratic stance, which is concurrent with Platonic philosophy,²⁹⁹ as well as with the *topos* of other historical writers in

²⁹⁷ Walker (1995: 60) argues that Cimon did not manipulate the myth of Theseus for his own advantage. However, based on Plutarch's presentation of the events in question, and specifically the quote "This was the chief reason the people took kindly to him" (8.6), it would be naïve to assume that Cimon did not use the repatriation of the bones of Theseus, and the myths associated with him, for his own political benefit.

²⁹⁸ See pages 59-61. See also: Duff 2011A : 48; Pelling 2011 : 49-50; Tröster 2008 : 93; Xenophontos 2013 : 126. Fulkerson (2012 : 69) explains that Plutarch's presentation of the people does not change among different nationalities or ethnicities.

²⁹⁹ Plutarch is generally considered a Platonic philosopher. Santas (2007 : 72-78) provides a very detailed and descriptive article on Plato's anti-democratic inclinations found in the *Republic*. The themes discussed, such as the avoidance of goods and luxury, are similar to Plutarch's moral beliefs as defined in his character models of leaders like Cimon and Lucullus. See also Chapter Two pages 59-61.

antiquity, such as Polybius, Appian, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.³⁰⁰ Therefore, when discussing these passages, it is important to keep in mind Plutarch's literary and philosophical aim as a possible blurring of the historical narrative.

The first example of the fickleness of the *demos* occurs when Plutarch states that Cimon's act of dedicating his bridle inspired many men to follow the suggestion of Themistocles (5.3). Here, the people did not recognize that Themistocles' plan would lead them to victory, but a young Cimon, imbued with a sense of leadership, invites them to follow through example. For Wardman, this is the ideal example of the behaviour of a *politicus*,³⁰¹ as Cimon unifies the people by giving them direction and a sense that the welfare of the state is more important than their own. Therefore, Plutarch shows how integral a strong leader is for the success of a city, for the masses, in Plutarch's opinion, cannot rule on their own.³⁰²

The next instance demonstrating the capriciousness of the *demos* comes with Cimon's distribution of spoils (mentioned above). Here, the people were again not intelligent enough to recognize that keeping the hostages would bring them more wealth than booty (9.2-4). This not only relates how Plutarch feels about the common people, who were not smart enough to understand this basic concept, but it also shows Cimon's worth as a leader through his intelligence. This passage, then, demonstrates how Cimon made the city rich, since the people were not able to do it themselves, emphasizing Plutarch's opinion of the importance of aristocratic leadership. Yet not all men felt as passionately as Plutarch that Cimon was acting for the good of the Athenians,

³⁰⁰ Duff 2011 A : 48; Pelling 2002 : 212-213; Suzanne Saïd (2005 : 10) discusses the consistency in which Plutarch presents the *demos* in his *Lives*. She also points to Dio Cassius and Tacitus, as sharing the same views.

³⁰¹ Wardman 1974 : 62-3.

³⁰² Fulkerson (2012 : note 75) lists instances where Plutarch warns of the danger of the uncontrolled masses, "...to themselves (*Them.* 28.5-6; *C. Gracch.* 18.2) and especially others (*Them.* 22.1 and 22.4; *Cam.* 12.1-2, 18.6, 31.1-3; *Nic.* 11.5; *Cim.* 16.4, 17.6; *Per.* 10.2 and 37.1-2; *Phoc.* 14.5, 16.6; *Coriol.* 13.4, 20.5, 29.3; *C. Gracch.* 16.7; *Luc.* 33.2-5, 34.1-4)".

and some felt that he was simply flattering the masses (10.7). Plutarch refutes these critics by saying that Cimon's aristocratic and Spartan political policy did not allow him to indulge the masses. Furthermore, he says that Cimon actually opposed leaders such as Themistocles, Aristides and Ephialtes when they pandered to the people (10.7-8). Therefore, Plutarch strongly exhibits his dislike of democracy, as he vehemently defends Cimon against what he calls the 'slander' of others who say that he was working to curry popular favour. For Plutarch, the suggestion that Cimon was indulging the masses instead of keeping them under control was a misrepresentation of what he saw as one of Cimon's greatest strengths: his ability to lead the people.

The weakness of the masses is highlighted next in 15-17.5. Here, Plutarch writes that while Cimon was in Athens, he was able to control the people, but when he left on another exploit, the people wrested all offices and took power for themselves. Not only did they upset the political order, they also shirked their traditions and plunged the city into unmitigated democracy (15.2). When Cimon returned, the people forgot all of his accomplishments and euergetism and renewed the old slanders against him. They brought him to trial and focused on his pro-Spartan sympathies to bring him down. His downfall was assured because when Cimon convinced the Athenians to march out to help the Spartans with the helot revolt in Ithome, the Spartans singled the Athenians out and sent them home humiliated. Since Cimon was their chief supporter, the Athenian people rallied against him and ostracized him. Wardman suggests that this was not actually the result of the Athenians feeling humiliated, but rather a case of envy. According to Wardman, the people envied Cimon because he was too honest in his praise of Sparta.³⁰³ The term 'envy', however, is not suitable for the situation. Not only is this word not used by Plutarch to describe the people's feelings, but he actually specifies that it was anger that brought about the ostracism, "οἱ δὲ πρὸς

³⁰³ Wardman 1974 : 73.

ὀργὴν ἀπελθόντες, ἤδη τοῖς λακωνίζουσι φανερώς ἐχαλέπαινον...” (17.3). This is in contrast to the findings in Chapter Two, in which the people are described as dangerous as a result of envy. While envy may be a contributing factor in this decision, Plutarch’s evaluation of the *demos* in this instance is that anger was dictating their rule. This does not, however, change his presentation of the people as fickle and dangerous to the harmony of the state and the good politician.

Although Cimon was now exiled, he nevertheless remained dedicated to his city, as he tried to help the Athenians while they were fighting the Spartans (17.4). For Plutarch, this is the highest form of virtue, since Cimon freely acted in very difficult circumstances, when he could have avoided helping Athens altogether.³⁰⁴ Plutarch thus shows Cimon as loyal to Athens while also portraying the people as disloyal to him. The Council of Five Hundred, fearing he was conspiring to help the Spartans, forbade him from fighting. But Cimon and others who were thought to be too Spartan fought nonetheless. The people then felt loss and regret for the charges laid against Cimon. Consequently, they welcomed Cimon back early from his banishment to help them. This is one of only two known incidents in which a man in exile was recalled before the end of his ten year ostracism.³⁰⁵ R.K. Unz suggests that the *demos* is only willing to bring back a man if Athens was threatened by “...the greatest possible magnitude...”³⁰⁶ While the accuracy of this statement cannot be determined, this nonetheless fits Plutarch’s evaluation of the *demos* as capricious and damaging to the state. Only under dire circumstances could they cast aside their envy to help restore the harmony of their state. Thus Plutarch exhibits his disparaging view of the masses and his preference for a strong leader not only through his use of language, but also by showing the

³⁰⁴ Wardman 1974 : 113. See also Chapter Two page 54.

³⁰⁵ Unz 1986 : 77.

³⁰⁶ Unz 1986 : 77.

Athenians' lack of foresight and abandonment of what Plutarch implies held Athens together, their leader.

On his return, Cimon did not disappoint the people. He put an end to the war and reconciled Sparta and Athens. This again shows Plutarch's political preferences because it took the return of an aristocratic leader to end the war begun by the people. For Plutarch, good government was not of the people, but for the people.³⁰⁷ To achieve this, the leader must be in full control of the masses, and the masses must fully submit to their leader. Cimon then ensured that they remain submissive by campaigning with them; for this would keep them in a constant state of training, while also benefiting Hellas with the spoils of foreign lands. Plutarch, then, demonstrates the importance of a leader on campaign not only for the prosperity of the land, but also to control what he saw as the fickle masses.

Since Cimon recognized the need to control the people when he saw their restlessness, he manned an expedition to Egypt and Cyprus.³⁰⁸ Before departing, Cimon had a dream in which a dog barked at him and told him to go away. Cimon's friend interpreted the dream as a sign of his impending death (18.3).³⁰⁹ This seemed to be confirmed by Cimon's sacrifice to Dionysius, which, after the victim was cut up, swarmed with ants that brought the congealed blood to Cimon, and contained a liver without a head (18.4). Nevertheless, Cimon set sail, because he understood the importance of steering a restless nation. This shows Cimon's courage as a general because he recognized the necessity of controlling the masses, even while risking death.

³⁰⁷ Duff 2011 A : 50.

³⁰⁸ A comparison of Plutarch's account of Cimon's campaigns with other ancient sources is brought forward by Parker (1976).

³⁰⁹ Brenk 1977 : 10.

F.E. Brenk explains that Plutarch believed in the portentous nature of dreams and thus treats them with respect. It is not surprising here, then, that Plutarch builds an ominous tone of impending disaster for Cimon. Furthermore, as showcased by G.W. Bowersock, dreams and their revelations were regarded highly by the educated elite in the second century CE.³¹⁰ Building from a heritage of interpretation reaching back to Homer,³¹¹ it is unsurprising that Plutarch lends space to this dream and the portents which followed it.

Cimon was met with initial success, defeating the royal armament of Phoenician and Cilician ships and winning over the cities in the area (12.5). But during the expedition, Cimon died. Plutarch uses Cimon's death to again emphasize the centrality of a strong leader for the success of a city. For, after the general's death, Hellas fell into chaos because they had no mediating hand and were led solely by demagogues (19.2). Plutarch implicitly argues that the leadership of the people incited the Peloponnesian War because there were no effective generals like Cimon to hold them at bay. Thus, Plutarch implies, if the masses are left to lead, they will only bring about chaos, as here they began one of the most devastating wars in Ancient history.

Comparison with *Lucullus*

Plutarch presents *Cimon* in a positive light, as a strong leader who is able to control the people, garner the love of allies, and abstain from excess while practicing euergetism. Though he does have his faults, these are confined in *Cimon* to his youth, which is addressed at the beginning of the *Life*. Staying true to Plutarch's wishes to receive the *Lives* as pairs, this chapter will now briefly compare the strengths and weaknesses found in *Cimon* and *Lucullus* to better understand

³¹⁰ Bowersock 1995 : 77-78.

³¹¹ Bowersock 1995 : 79.

the moral themes of this pair and the patterns of *Cimon* that vary in *Lucullus*. It is through this comparison that Plutarch explores ethical issues.³¹²

The beginning of *Lucullus* does not share the same display of excess in the protagonist that is found in *Cimon*. Instead, the reader is confronted with a series of strengths, beginning with education. Unlike Cimon, Lucullus was well educated and fluent in Latin and Greek, and Plutarch places much emphasis on his Hellenic culture (1.3-9). Since Lucullus was granted a better education than Cimon, the reader can assume that he was better prepared in childhood. Yet, Plutarch generally presents character as static, and so, while this detail is important to stress Lucullus' good education and upbringing, it is also meant to emphasize his affinity for the Greeks. This focus on Hellenic ties is not a surprise, as Plutarch was partial to men with affection for anything Greek.³¹³ As a result, Plutarch spends much of *Lucullus* focusing on Lucullus' benefactions to the Greeks. Swain has argued that Lucullus' love of Greeks may have led Plutarch to pay less attention to his faults.³¹⁴ However, if we bear in mind that Plutarch already described his duty as biographer to present faults but not dwell too closely on them, we can infer that far from being blinded by admiration, Plutarch was deliberately composing Lucullus to show his weaknesses at the end of his narration.

As a result, Plutarch spends the majority of *Lucullus* highlighting his strengths. Many are similar to Cimon's, whose *Life* sets the pattern upon which *Lucullus* is judged. Plutarch draws his reader to the invariable traits of the two men and their shared moral status. Like Cimon, Lucullus showed promise in war while he was young and was also taken under the wing of a prominent figure: Sulla (2.1). Both men are depicted as natural leaders: Lucullus' command, like Cimon's,

³¹² Duff 1999 : 251. Stadter 2014 : 244.

³¹³ Pelling 2010 : 106; Tröster 2008 : 270

³¹⁴ Swain 1992 : 315-6.

was gentle and humane (18.6), he was devoted to his work (2.6), loyal to his state and her citizens (8.3), and pious (23.6). Even his treatment of the allies is portrayed in a similar fashion to Cimon's, as Lucullus was fair and honest with tribute (4.1) and also generous with the defeated (19.6; 24.8). This generosity echoes the first life presented, and finds many examples in *Lucullus* that justifies their pairing. Similar to Cimon, Lucullus abstained from gifts and bribery (2.6), and instead of keeping all spoils for himself, he used them to finance his war and gave the rest to the people (29.3-4; 29.8). Throughout the *Life*, Lucullus aided many Greek cities and towns (19.6, 24.8, 29.3-4). Near the end of *Lucullus*, when Plutarch is attempting to understand and explain Lucullus' pitiful retirement, he inserts an example of euergetism: the financing and opening of a public library (42.1). Lucullus' generosity is well represented and echoes that portrayed in *Cimon* as a moral virtue that Plutarch provides as a moral compass for his reader.

However, even while Lucullus was leading his troops from victory to victory, demonstrating his shrewd tactics that recall those of Cimon,³¹⁵ the stitching of the two *Lives* unravels as *Lucullus* goes on. For, characteristically of Plutarch, his subject's strength is often related to his weakness.³¹⁶ Although he was a natural leader, Lucullus became a poor one as time went on. This is one of the most startling differences between the two men. While Cimon was in touch with his troops and controlled them well, Lucullus ignored their grievances (14.2-3) and found many instances in which he could not control them (19.3-4; 33.2; 33.4-34.5). This is a direct result of Lucullus' growing arrogance and *hubris*, highlighted in 33.2. It is this negative characteristic that led Lucullus into a retirement of luxury and leisure that Plutarch condemns, which also opposes Cimon's Spartan way of life.

³¹⁵ For examples of Lucullus' tactics, see: 3.23; 4.3; 8.7-8; 9.2; 27.1-7.

³¹⁶ Pelling 2010 : 111.

Lucullus grew out of virtue, unlike Cimon who grew into it. In many ways, Lucullus' later life baffles Plutarch, who associates luxury with the barbarian world. This view is most emphasized in *Lucullus*, in which Plutarch describes the Armenian king Tigranes (21.3).³¹⁷ Luxury, therefore, is a recurrent theme in this pair, but where Cimon uses it for the good of the state, Lucullus squanders it in his excess. Where Cimon learned to control his passions, Lucullus lost his grip. Yet, Plutarch is softer in *Lucullus* concerning his life of luxury than in his other works,³¹⁸ gently reminding the reader of Lucullus' philosophical pursuits in his retirement.³¹⁹ This is perhaps to justify choosing Lucullus as a subject of his *Lives*, by not dwelling on the negative portrayal of his end. Similarly, by giving less stress to his weaknesses, he stays true to his aim, while also not hiding Lucullus' failings from his reader. Lastly, Plutarch states in the proem that Chaeronea and its citizens still owe Lucullus a favour (2.3), so by accurately portraying his life and not emphasizing his mistakes in retirement, Plutarch pays his countrymen's debt to Lucullus.³²⁰

Plutarch also highlights another warning for his audience: the danger of the *demos*. Like *Cimon*, the masses in *Lucullus* attempt to take command and steer their states to danger.³²¹ Plutarch does not portray them as doing so willingly; rather, he shows this destructive tendency as being part of the nature of the *demos*. However, while Cimon manages to control them in almost every

³¹⁷ Tröster 2005 : 305.

³¹⁸ See, for example, *An seni respublica gerenda sit* (785f and 7972b-c) Beck 2007 : 57. See also, *Moralia* (204b; 782f; 785f-786a; 792b-c; 203a-b; 484d-e; 805e-f). Tröster 2005 : 306.

³¹⁹ Tröster 2008 : 58.

³²⁰ Note that Thomas Hillman (1993 : 228) believes that Plutarch is wrong about Lucullus' retirement being in 66 BCE. Instead, Hillman suggests that Lucullus, although living in luxury, was still involved in politics and that it was Plutarch's ignorance and biographical concerns that portrayed him that way. I do not find the argument that Plutarch altered Lucullus' retirement for biographical concerns convincing. As Plutarch stated in the beginning, he is trying to repay a debt owed to Lucullus for saving Chaeronea (2.2-3), and although he admires the man, he will represent him accurately (2.4-5). While it is possible that Lucullus was still involved in politics, I believe that if this was the case, rather than consciously altering the facts, Plutarch was unaware of this, as it would better suit his character to stay consistent and virtuous than to fall into a retirement of vices.

³²¹ The danger of the people in *Lucullus* is exemplified in 5.2-4; 6.1-5; 17.1-7; 34.1-5; 37.1-4.

circumstance, Lucullus is depicted as incapable of maintaining control the further one reads the *Life*. While these instances of popular rebellion are meant to highlight the dangers of democratic rule, they also show Lucullus' slow decline. As the leader's *daemon* of arrogance gradually consumes his better judgement, the people are more and more able to gain control, and havoc ensues. Thus Plutarch displays Cimon and Lucullus' different natures as to how they command, the moral implication being that a good leader must never succumb to *hubris* and must always be mindful of the tempers of the people to rule them.

Lucullus' gradual decline and inability to control the masses comes to a climax at his death. The depiction of his death is where Plutarch differs from his contemporaries. Normally, biographies of this time conclude with a general truth or theme expounded at the end of a subject's life.³²² Although Plutarch tends to end his *Lives* similarly and in a positive fashion, he does not do so for *Lucullus*. Instead, Plutarch shows Lucullus going mad, losing control not only of his estates, but also of his faculties. This is Plutarch's final warning for his reader to avoid a life of excess.

While looking at the pair as a whole, an interesting trend arises in Plutarch's deliberate structuring of the *Lives*. The flow of the narrative is reversed from *Cimon* to *Lucullus*. *Cimon* begins with his weaknesses, revealing them in his youth, as Plutarch mainly attributes them to his lack of education. This is found only in section 4 (4.3-9). *Lucullus*, on the other hand, starts with his strengths, and his weaknesses are not stressed until the end of the *Life*. These are relayed mainly in sections 33-34 (33.2-34.5). Although the descriptions are proportional given the length of each *Life*, they are reversed, in what must be a satisfying chiasmus for Plutarch. Plutarch could have emphasized or even discussed Lucullus' weaknesses earlier in the *Life*, such as when he was

³²² Lavery 1994 : 271.

beginning to lose control over his troops. Similarly, he also could have placed Cimon's failings later in his *Life*, where some of them, such as rumours of incest, belong chronologically. Yet this would not create the artistic vision Plutarch wished his reader to see: the portrait of a human character with flaws alongside strengths that lead to different outcomes depending on how the individual uses their natural gifts. Through his chiasmic organization, Plutarch is able to paint a vivid moral picture of his characters instead of an abstract and confusing piece that would result from confining himself to strict historical narrative.

The Synkrisis

However, Plutarch is not so kind to Lucullus in the *synkrisis*. As in other *Lives*, the concluding remarks are meant to expose the moral implications of the pair and to guide the reader's critical judgement of the men Plutarch presented.³²³ Here, the audience decides who the better man was. This *synkrisis* follows the circular theory advanced by Duff and discussed in Chapter One.³²⁴ The reader is reminded of the statement in the proem that it is easy to find similarities between the two men (*Cim.* 3.3) when Plutarch advances the notion that it is difficult to judge one as superior (*Cim.-Luc.* 3.6). But unlike other *Lives*, Plutarch explicitly states who he believes is superior, "...better surely, is the man in whom the change is for the better; for it argues a more wholesome nature when its evil withers and its good ripens" (*synkrisis* 1.4). Here, Plutarch explains the inconsistency of Cimon's character as a natural progression towards virtue,³²⁵ in contrast to Lucullus' descent, which is the result of the character flaw of his aristocratic nature (*Luc.* 33).³²⁶ This is consistent with Plutarch's use of the *synkriseis* to evaluate his subjects' temperance and self-control, as discussed in Chapter One. However, his harsh treatment of Lucullus deviates from

³²³ Tatum 2010 : 15-6.

³²⁴ Duff 2011 B : 256. See Chapter One pages 28-30.

³²⁵ Fulkerson 2012 : 54-5

³²⁶ Wylie 1994 : 109.

Plutarch's general equality and softer evaluations in other *Lives*. This unforgiving stance may be the result of this pair having been written early.³²⁷ Nevertheless, despite this great criticism of Lucullus, both Cimon and Lucullus come across in the *synkrisis* overall as fairly equal.

As in other pairs, the *synkrisis* of *Cimon-Lucullus* falls into the same pattern of arguing in favour of each subject in turn. Approximately halfway through each *synkrisis*, Plutarch changes the direction of his argument to the other subject.³²⁸ *Cimon-Lucullus* is no exception, and the transition is marked at 2.6-3.1, when the discussion moves from being agreeable to Cimon to supporting Lucullus. Plutarch puts in a stalwart effort to redeem the luxury-loving aristocrat by saying that he was greater in war than Cimon (3.1-5). Once again, this follows a similar pattern found in the *synkrisis* of many *Lives*, when the Roman is often portrayed as superior to the Greek in war.³²⁹ Here, it helps to balance Plutarch's two subjects in an attempt at creating moral equality. Duff rightly argues that this equality is not so much a means of evaluating the two men at hand, rather it focuses the attention of the reader on the virtues and vices revealed by their *Lives*.³³⁰

The *synkrisis* of *Cimon-Lucullus*, then, outlines the moral lessons the audience is meant to follow. First, Plutarch highlights the theme of luxury juxtaposed with euergetism. Here, the reader is meant to understand that a life of leisure does not compare with one in which the man continues to serve his country and gives to his people. As Stadter explains, "Plutarch's praise of Cimon's liberality and criticism of Lucullus' personal luxury reflects not only the aristocratic concept of noblesse oblige and Aristotle's notion of the magnanimous man, but also sentiments which

³²⁷ Cooper (2014 : 402) argues this by looking at Lucullus as presented in his *synkrisis* compared to Crassus, who also squanders away his old age but receives more sympathy from Plutarch.

³²⁸ Duff 1999 : 253.

³²⁹ Duff 1999 : 261.

³³⁰ Duff 1999 : 262.

flourished in the Roman empire of Plutarch's day."³³¹ Thus, we can see influence from Plutarch's cultural and intellectual surroundings in the moral highlights chosen for the *Lives*.

Next, the discussion turns to the importance of a leader understanding his troops and receiving the allies mildly (2.2-3). By acting similarly, his state benefits, and he will not find himself with the same troubles Lucullus encountered when he refused to acknowledge his troops' complaints. Plutarch remarks that the nature of the people is one of destruction (2.5), which once again imparts Plutarch's favour for aristocratic rule instead of the calamitous leadership of the people. *Cimon* and *Lucullus* both serve as examples of virtuous men at the height of their respective states' powers, and the differences in their lives may be regarded as differences not of character, which is static and akin to the other, but of their choices.

Plutarch wished for his models' strengths and positive choices to be imitated. While the vast majority of Plutarch's readers are not military leaders, this does not detract from the model function of *Cimon* and *Lucullus*, since Plutarch is not writing to encourage imitation of their exploits. Rather, Plutarch is using these two men as examples of upstanding citizens in respect to character. He creates *Cimon* to emphasize the importance of euergetism in improving the state, and *Lucullus* to show how devotion, honesty, and fair treatment of others can bring glory to a city, but also to warn of a retirement of luxury. For Plutarch's readers, *Cimon* and *Lucullus* are not entirely men of war, but also men of virtue.

Closure

While there are many moral lessons Plutarch sews into his recounting of *Cimon's* life, the most prominent ones derive from the themes of luxury and generosity. Plutarch uses *Cimon* and *Lucullus* to demonstrate not only the danger of succumbing to the temptation of luxury, but also

³³¹ Stadter 2014 : 224.

the benefits of its avoidance both for the individual and for the state. Once Cimon recognizes this, through his leniency and fair judgment, he builds an empire and makes Athens and its people rich. He even accomplishes this while earning power for himself. Similar to its treatment in the other *Lives*, this power is presented as fragile, as the *demos* continually threaten to crack and crumble the advantages of aristocratic rule. It is only through his careful management of them and the garnering of their love that Cimon is able to maintain peace and prosperity for Athens. However, the focus of Plutarch's portrayal of Cimon is as a model of euergetism. This generosity is echoed in *Lucullus*, in which Plutarch's subject abstains from gifts and bribes and shows hospitality to the Greeks. While also a strong military leader, Lucullus is faced with the same danger of the people but does not manage to control them to the same extent as Cimon, as revolts arise in his camp.

Plutarch carefully structured *Cimon* and *Lucullus* not as an echo of one another, but an equal reflection of each other. The opposite arrangement of their *Lives* is a purposeful construction by Plutarch to create a chiasmic structure upon which his reader is drawn to ethical considerations. It is through this chiasmus that the audience judges the worth of each man. While the *synkrisis* represents them in a fairly equal light, the pessimistic depiction of the death of Lucullus does not compare with the positive end of *Cimon*, emphasizing for the reader the importance of growing into virtue instead of falling from it. Plutarch tells of the people of Citium worshipping at a tomb of the general, since the god ordered them to revere him as superhuman. In this way, Plutarch shows the reader the benefits of Cimon's character and generosity, implying that should they follow his lead in a well-balanced and proportionally generous life-style, they too may be worshipped long after they are dead. Thus, Plutarch tempts his reader to follow Cimon's example with the ultimate in gifts: that of immortality.

Conclusion

Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* expound the moral standards that Plutarch wishes his reader to learn and imitate. The moral models in each *Life* present unique qualities that lend to their successes as political or military figures. Plutarch uses anecdotes and a carefully crafted narrative of the important moral moments in their lives to bring out lessons for his reader. He never explicitly states the ethical significance of each *Life*, preferring instead for his reader to gauge each hero and compare their weaknesses and failures for themselves. This thesis endeavoured to do just that: a critical reading of Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* with a brief comparison to his paired *Life of Lucullus* to understand the moral lessons found therein.

To provide context for this case study, it was necessary to first explore the influences of Plutarch's time and life that may have affected his understanding of morality and the men of the past whom he used as subjects for his *Lives*. The late first and early second century added elements to Plutarch's writings. Roman power over the Greeks lent to Plutarch's ability to travel the empire. As a result, he became a citizen of Chaeronea, Delphi, Athens, and Rome, and was extensively educated. His travels also afforded him the opportunity to grow many friendships with elites from both the Roman and Greek worlds. His familiarity with the two cultures helps to explain the coupling of Romans and Greeks in the *Lives*. The atmosphere of the times that surrounded his travels, learning, and friendship also accounts for the nostalgic feel of Plutarch's oeuvre, as the influence of the Second Sophistic stressed an Attic and archaic approach to writing. This love of Greek history was also keenly felt by many educated Romans, who shared in Hellenic learning. Thus, for Plutarch the past was very much a part of his everyday life and his Roman and Greek friends made the pairing of their cultures seem almost a natural enterprise.

The undertaking of the *Lives* was certainly a difficult challenge. This is sharply felt when reviewing scholarship's debate surrounding the genre of this artful work. However, it is not appropriate to evaluate Plutarch's work using modern standards, and therefore scholars should remain cautious when attempting to fit it within modern rigid definitions. The *Lives* are art that incorporate the important elements of Plutarch's life. Their historical subjects place them in the realm of history, an unsurprising detail since the Second Sophistic and Hellenic educations stressed the importance of this. They are also biography, as Plutarch focuses not on the events encircling his heroes, but rather on their characters. This accords with Plutarch's focus on education in philosophy, as his *Lives* examine the moral aspects of each hero to create a moral mirror for his readers to reflect upon. The *Lives* should therefore be enjoyed for their multifaceted approach to history, biography, philosophy, and even art, rather than trying to fit them within our modern constructs of genre.

Chapter One explored how Plutarch composed the *Lives*, to discover many aspects of his methodology. We learned that the *Lives* must be read in their entire four-part division of proem, first Life, second Life, and *synkrisis* to fully appreciate their moral message. Plutarch's methodology is also discernible through the proems, which do not simply introduce the pair that follows. Instead, by highlighting some of the most quoted proem statements, we found marked trends in Plutarch's methods that span the work as a whole. It became evident through these programmatic statements that Plutarch was working from many sources and prided himself on seeking out ones which were neglected. We also saw that he chose aspects from his sources that best reveal his subject's character. Finally, he includes men of dubious moral qualities to learn from them and to juxtapose them with his moral heroes. He does this so his reader may use the *Lives* as a mirror by imitating the men within.

Similar to the proems, the *synkriseis* are included as a teaching tool for Plutarch's audience. Here, he expects his reader to compare the two men and decide who was better. Often presenting new information on his subjects and deviating from the themes of the *Lives*, the proems are an important source of information on Plutarch's ethical evaluation. However, Plutarch as a narrator remains in the background and allows the audience to interpret the men for themselves. The *synkriseis* should therefore be considered not as a conclusion but an exercise in critical thinking that nicely frames the *Lives* as a pedagogical tool and insists upon the necessity of reading them as a whole to fully grasp the moral lessons included.

By comparing Greeks and Romans, Plutarch cryptically includes another message in his work: the moral superiority of both the Greek world in the fifth century BCE and the Roman Republic. It also connects Greeks and Romans by giving them a shared cultural and historical background. For Plutarch, the pairing was a natural by-product of his time and his life experiences, and by creating this osmotic effect he emphasizes the ability of morality to transcend time and peoples. This makes Plutarch's works powerful, as the timeless quality of his moral message can be applied to later generations.

The nature of morality in the *Lives* was tackled in Chapter Two. Here we saw that Plutarch's moral lessons are unique in each *Life*. He did not expect his readership to achieve the same glory as his subjects, but Plutarch certainly wanted them to learn how to lead a virtuous life. Thus, Plutarch aimed for a well-educated Greek and Roman audience. The timeless nature of his work is again realized, as Plutarch reaches for both peoples, implying that they can equally benefit from the lessons he wishes to teach.

The moral driving force of the *Lives* also pushed Plutarch to mould his source-material to better portray the consistency of his subject's character. Plutarch compresses time, neglects some

parts of it, or elaborates on the truth to reach his goal of imparting morality. When it is possible to detect his sources, Plutarch tends to prefer the one that is favourable to his hero over others. This is in keeping with his philosophical views of kindness. He also uses sources to one-up Thucydides in a friendly competition. Plutarch's source use demonstrates his extensive research for the *Lives* and the care and thought that he put into the composition of them to best present his subject's virtues and vices.

Understanding morality in the *Lives* is a complex task. Not only does Plutarch tell us that virtues are not uniform (*Phocion* 3.4), he presents each *Life* with different elements of strength and weakness so that each uniquely adds to our understanding of leading a good life. Nevertheless, some patterns emerge, such as the expenditure of wealth as good if used on the state or bad if spent on oneself, or praise for the ability of a man to control his passions. For Plutarch, this all derives from a man's education being able to help him overcome the extremes of youthful passions and emotions. His subject's formal education and attitude towards it thus occasionally receives attention in the *Lives* to reveal his subject's character, which Plutarch portrays as consistent. Any inconsistencies in character can be explained in two ways: if character is improved, Plutarch credits a change in understanding how to control passions, and if character declines, he sees it as revealing his subject's true nature. Thus Plutarch presents men as stable and constant and whose fluctuations are not related to a change in character.

Another stable aspect of Plutarch's oeuvre is his representation of the *demos*. Plutarch associates the people with fickleness, and therefore does not believe that they should be in charge of the state. It is to this quality that he credits the practice of ostracism, explaining how it may be a result of envy. Plutarch praises civic harmony and leaders he believed were working together not for ambition but for the benefit of the state. His representation of these leaders in contrast to the

demos also reveals him as more partial to the Roman system than the Athenian style democracy. This is not to say that he presents Roman politics as having mastered political leadership, simply that they were better at controlling the dangerous people. Plutarch wished for a government led by a philosopher king who could maintain harmony by controlling envy.

Although there are aspects of morality spread throughout the *Lives*, the uniqueness of each one cries for individual analysis. Chapter Three of this thesis thus undertook a critical study of Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* to complement Pelling's work on *Lucullus*. This chapter sought to discover Plutarch's moral message in this *Life* and how it relates to its paired companion. Plutarch begins by showcasing Cimon's character faults, confining them to his youth as representative of not yet being able to control his passions. Plutarch's silence on Cimon's education hints that Cimon failed to benefit from a good education, which would help him learn to control his desires.

However, Plutarch stays true to his Platonist ideals and does not dwell on Cimon's weaknesses. Instead, he spends the rest of this *Life* focused on Cimon's strengths. Alongside Cimon's attention to Athenian culture, political and military success, and his ability to control his troops, Plutarch emphasizes Cimon's generosity and euergetism. These two traits helped build the Athenian empire by joining the allies and recalling the tyrant Pausanias from Athens to Sparta. Cimon was aware of the power that his generosity afforded him and used it to his advantage by bringing back the bones of Theseus. By giving the people a place to worship them, Cimon cemented their gratitude and rehabilitated his family name. The return of the bones of Theseus had another advantageous effect for Cimon: control of the *demos*. Presented consistently in *Cimon* as in the *Lives*, the masses in this *Life* are unpredictable, prone to jealousy, and when left to their own measures, punish good leaders through envy to the detriment of the state.

Like Cimon, Lucullus had a natural ability to lead and control people. Lucullus is presented as a masterful commander of his troops, but as time goes on his ability to harness the people starts to slip, unlike Cimon who maintains control later in his life. These instances of rebellion once again emphasize the danger of the *demos* and also point to Lucullus' slow decline, ending in madness. This *Life* is thus set up in chiasmic contrast to *Cimon*, as Lucullus grew out of virtue and fell into a retirement of luxury. Plutarch condemns this action but, staying true to his promise not to focus on the negative, does not dwell on Lucullus' weakness. The theme of wealth is thus woven through this Book to show how it can be used for the good of the state or how it can lead a man into excess and a lapse in morality.

Exploring *Cimon* has brought to light the specific moral lessons Plutarch wished to portray in this *Life* alongside caution in *Lucullus* for what could happen if one falls into luxury. Further research is still needed to understand the broader scope of Plutarch's presentation of fifth century BCE Athens. This would reveal if Plutarch's *Lives* of this period betray a unified design, to see if Plutarch is trying to transcend the limits of individual biographies to create a more universalizing history of that period.

Plutarch's *Lives* continue to confound, fascinate, and draw readers. His moral message implanted in anecdotes of men of the past appeals to our curiosity and desire to understand the men of the fifth century BCE Greek world and the Roman Republic. Readers and scholars alike will continue to enjoy the *Lives* for their unique ability to allow us a glimpse of great men of the past and their moral strengths and weaknesses. We can all delight in the political genius of bringing back the bones of Theseus or understand the frustration of trying to help a group of people who react with contempt. In short, Plutarch's *Lives* have an unfailing ability to transcend the limits of time and culture so that they will continue to delight and teach future generations.

Appendix

1. The *Nicias-Crassus* proem statement.

ἄς γοῦν Θουκυδίδης ἐξήνεγκε πράξεις καὶ Φίλιστος, ἐπεὶ παρελθεῖν οὐκ ἔστι, μάλιστα γε δὴ τὸν τρόπον καὶ τὴν διάθεσιν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὑπὸ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων παθῶν καλυπτομένην περιεχούσας, ἐπιδραμῶν βραχέως καὶ διὰ τῶν ἀναγκαίων, ἵνα μὴ παντάπασιν ἀμελὴς δοκῶ καὶ ἀργὸς εἶναι, τὰ διαφεύγοντα τοὺς πολλούς, ὑφ' ἐτέρων δ' εἰρημένα σποράδην ἢ πρὸς ἀναθήμασιν ἢ ψηφίσμασιν εὐρημένα παλαιοῖς πεπείραμαι συναγαγεῖν, οὐ τὴν ἄχρηστον ἀθροίζων ἱστορίαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν πρὸς κατανόησιν ἥθους καὶ τρόπου παραδιδούς.³³²

At all events, Thucydides and Philistus brought forth actions, and since it is not possible to pass them by, because they indeed greatly encompass the manner and disposition of the man which is concealed by his many and great experiences, I treated them briefly and as far as it is necessary in order that I may not seem to be wholly negligent and idle, and I have tried to gather together that which escaped the great majority or was mentioned here and there by others, or which had been found on ancient votive offerings or decrees, not collecting useless information but imparting that which concerns the understanding of character and manner.³³³

2. The *Aemilius-Timoleon* proem statement.

Ἔμοι τῆς τῶν βίων ἄψασθαι μὲν γραφῆς συνέβη δι' ἐτέρους, ἐπιμένειν δὲ καὶ φιλοχωρεῖν ἤδη καὶ δι' ἐμαυτόν, ὥσπερ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ τῇ ἱστορίᾳ πειρώμενον ἀμῶς γέ πως κοσμεῖν καὶ ἀφομοιοῦν πρὸς τὰς ἐκείνων ἀρετὰς τὸν βίον. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλ' ἢ συνδιαιτήσῃ καὶ συμβιώσῃ τὸ γινόμενον ἔοικεν, ὅταν ὥσπερ ἐπιξενούμενον ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐν μέρει διὰ τῆς ἱστορίας ὑποδεχόμενοι καὶ παραλαμβάνοντες ἀναθεωρῶμεν “ὅστος ἔην οἷός τε,” τὰ κυριώτατα καὶ κάλλιστα πρὸς γνῶσιν ἀπὸ τῶν πράξεων λαμβάνοντες. Φεῦ, φεῦ· τί τούτου χάρμα μείζον ἢ λάβοις, καὶ πρὸς ἐπανάρθωσιν ἡθῶν ἐνεργότερον;³³⁴

Engaging in the writing of the *Lives* happened to me through others, but now I continue and delight in it also on account of myself, and using the investigation just as a mirror, I try in some way or other to arrange the *Life* and make it reflective of the excellence of those men. For the result resembles nothing other than living together and companionship, whenever I welcome and receive each of them in turn through my inquiries as my guest and examine them carefully, “How great he was and of what sort of nature,” taking from his deeds what is most beautiful and most important to know him. Oh! Oh! What greater delight than this can you take and what is more efficient for the correction of character?

3. The *Pericles-Fabius* proem statement

Ταῦτα δὲ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς ἀπ' ἀρετῆς ἔργοις, ἃ καὶ ζηλόν τινα καὶ προθυμίαν ἀγωγὸν εἰς μίμησιν ἐμποιεῖ τοῖς ἱστορήσασιν· ἐπεὶ τῶν γ' ἄλλων οὐκ εὐθὺς ἀκολουθεῖ τῷ θαυμάσαι τὸ πραχθὲν ὁρμὴ πρὸς τὸ πρᾶξαι· πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τὸναντίον χαίροντες τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καταφρονοῦμεν, ὥς ἐπὶ τῶν μύρων καὶ τῶν ἀλουργῶν τούτοις μὲν ἡδόμεθα, τοὺς δὲ βαφεῖς καὶ μυρεψοὺς

³³² Plutarch. *Nicias* 1.5.

³³³ All translations, unless otherwise specified, are my own.

³³⁴ Plutarch. *Timoleon* 1.1-2.

ἀνελευθέρους ἡγούμεθα καὶ βαναύσους (1.4)... οὐ γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον, εἰ τέρπει τὸ ἔργον ὡς χάριεν, ἄξιον σπουδῆς εἶναι τὸν εἰργασμένον. ὅθεν οὐδ' ὠφελεῖ τὰ τοιαῦτα τοὺς θεωμένους, πρὸς ᾧ μιμητικὸς οὐ γίνεται ζῆλος οὐδὲ ἀνάδοσις κινουῖσα προθυμίαν καὶ ὁρμὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξομοίωσιν. ἀλλ' ἢ γε ἀρετὴ ταῖς πράξεσιν εὐθὺς οὕτω διατίθησιν ὥστε ἅμα θαυμάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα καὶ ζηλοῦσθαι τοὺς εἰργασμένους. τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς τύχης ἀγαθῶν τὰς κτήσεις καὶ ἀπολαύσεις, τῶν δ' ἀπ' ἀρετῆς τὰς πράξεις ἀγαπῶμεν, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἡμῖν παρ' ἐτέρων, τὰ δὲ μᾶλλον ἐτέροις παρ' ἡμῶν ὑπάρχειν βουλόμεθα. τὸ γὰρ καλὸν ἐφ' αὐτὸ πρακτικῶς κινεῖ καὶ πρακτικὴν εὐθὺς ὁρμὴν ἐντίθησιν, ἡθοποιοῦν οὐ τῇ μιμήσει τὸν θεατὴν, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἱστορίᾳ τοῦ ἔργου τὴν προαίρεσιν παρεχόμενον (2.1-4).³³⁵

These things are in deeds of excellence, which instil in men who investigated both an eager rivalry and a zeal guiding towards imitation. For with other deeds the impulse to act does not immediately follow the admiration of what has been accomplished. To the contrary, often we rejoice in the product but despise the craftsman, such as in the case of perfumes and purple cloths which we delight in, but we believe dyers and perfumers to be servile and vulgar (1.4)... For it is not absolutely necessary that, if a product pleases because of its gracefulness, the man who has laboured is worthy of being treated with respect. Wherefore such things do not benefit spectators, upon which no zeal comes into being to imitate them nor a burst generating an eagerness and impulse to become the same. But virtue affects a man with its actions immediately in such a way so that he, at the same time, both admires the deeds and emulates the men who did them. For of the good things that come from fortune we love to possess and enjoy them, but of the good things that come from virtue we love the deeds. The former we wish to receive from others, but the latter we wish others to receive from us. For a good deed actively stirs towards itself and immediately inspires an impulse to action, moulding the character of the observer not through imitation but by granting him purpose through the investigation of the deed.

4. The *Demetrius-Antony* proem statement

...αἱ τε πασῶν τελειόταται τεχνῶν, σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ φρόνησις, οὐ καλῶν μόνον καὶ δικαίων καὶ ὠφελίμων, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλαβερῶν καὶ αἰσχυρῶν καὶ ἀδίκων κρίσεις οὔσαι, τὴν ἀπειρίαν τῶν κακῶν καλλωπιζομένην ἀκακίαν οὐκ ἐπαινοῦσιν, ἀλλ' ἀβελτερίαν ἡγοῦνται καὶ ἄγνοιαν ὧν μάλιστα γινώσκειν προσήκει τοὺς ὀρθῶς βιωσομένους. οἱ μὲν οὖν παλαιοὶ Σπαρτιᾶται τοὺς εἰλωτας ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς πολὺν ἀναγκάζοντες πίνειν ἄκρατον εἰσῆγον εἰς τὰ συμπόσια, τοῖς νέοις οἷόν ἐστι τὸ μεθύειν ἐπιδεικνύντες· ἡμεῖς δὲ τὴν μὲν ἐκ διαστροφῆς ἐτέρων ἐπανόρθωσιν οὐ πάνυ φιλόανθρωπον οὐδὲ πολιτικὴν ἡγούμεθα, τῶν δὲ κεκρημένων ἀσκεπτότερον αὐτοῖς καὶ γεγονότων ἐν ἐξουσίαις καὶ πράγμασι μεγάλους ἐπιφανῶν εἰς κακίαν, οὐ χεῖρον ἴσως ἐστὶ συζυγίαν μίαν ἢ δύο παρεμβалеῖν εἰς τὰ παραδείγματα τῶν βίων οὐκ ἐφ' ἡδονῇ, μὰ Δία, καὶ διαγωγῇ τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ποικίλλοντας τὴν γραφήν...οὕτω μοι δοκοῦμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς προθυμότεροι τῶν βελτιόνων ἔσεσθαι καὶ θεαταὶ καὶ μιμηταὶ βίων εἰ μὴδὲ τῶν φαύλων καὶ ψεγομένων ἀνιστορήτως ἔχοιμεν.³³⁶

The most accomplished of all arts are temperance, justice, and practical wisdom, since they distinguish not only the good, just, and useful, but also the harmful, shameful, and unjust. They do not applaud the guilelessness which embellishes itself with its ignorance of evil things, but they believe it to be stupidity and ignorance of the things which it is especially appropriate to know for

³³⁵ Plutarch. *Pericles* 1.4 and 2.1-4.

³³⁶ Plutarch. *Demetrius* 1.4-6.

the men who are to live upright. Therefore, when the ancient Spartans forced the helots during festivals to drink a lot of unmixed wine, they led them to the symposia and exhibited to their youth what it was to be drunk on wine. But I myself do not think that the correcting of some through the perversion of others is entirely humane or civil, but when men comported themselves inconsiderately and have led lives in power and in great deeds and became conspicuous in vice, perhaps it is not rather worse to insert one pair or two into the models of lives, not, by Zeus, for the pleasure and amusement of my readers, diversifying my writing... In this way it seems to me that we too will be more eager to observe and imitate better lives if we leave nothing unexplored of the paltry and blameworthy lives.

5. The *Cimon-Lucullus* proem statement

Ὡςπερ γὰρ τοὺς τὰ καλὰ καὶ πολλὴν ἔχοντα χάριν εἶδη ζωγραφοῦντας, ἂν προσῇ τι μικρὸν αὐτοῖς δυσχερές, ἀξιοῦμεν μήτε παραλιπεῖν τοῦτο τελέως μήτε ἐξακριβοῦν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ αἰσχροῦ, τὸ δ' ἀνομοίαν παρέχεται τὴν ὄψιν· οὕτως, ἐπεὶ χαλεπὸν ἐστὶ, μᾶλλον δ' ἴσως ἀμήχανον, ἀμεμφῇ καὶ καθαρὸν ἀνδρὸς ἐπιδειξάμεν βίον, ἐν τοῖς καλοῖς ἀναπληρωτέον ὥςπερ ὁμοιότητα τὴν ἀλήθειαν. τὰς δ' ἐκ πάθους τινὸς ἢ πολιτικῆς ἀνάγκης ἐπιτρεχούσας ταῖς πράξεσιν ἀμαρτίας καὶ κῆρας ἐλλείμματα μᾶλλον ἀρετῆς τινος ἢ κακίας πονηρεύματα νομίζοντας οὐ δεῖ πάννυ προθύμως ἐναποσημαίνειν τῇ ἱστορίᾳ καὶ περιπτῶς, ἀλλ' ὥςπερ αἰδουμένους ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως, εἰ καλὸν οὐδὲν εἰλικρινὲς οὐδ' ἀναμφισβήτητον εἰς ἀρετὴν ἦθος γεγονὸς ἀποδίδωσιν.³³⁷

For just as those who paint beautiful forms [and forms] having a lot of grace, if ever some small imperfection belongs to them, we expect them neither to omit it completely nor to labour after it. For the one way offers a shameful appearance and the other offers a dissimilar appearance. In this way, since it is difficult, perhaps rather impossible, to display a man's life as blameless and spotless, in its good parts the truth must be filled out as a likeness. Considering the failures and ruins which, from some experience or political compulsion, attack a man's business as defects of some virtue rather than villainies of baseness, the biographer must not very eagerly and prodigiously emphasize them in the history, but as it were, show respect to human nature, if it has given nothing purely beautiful and no character that is undisputed in regard to virtue.

6. The *Alexander-Caesar* proem statement

Τὸν Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ βασιλέως βίον καὶ τοῦ Καίσαρος, ὃν κατελύθη Πομπήϊος, ἐν τούτῳ τῷ βιβλίῳ γράφοντες, διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ὑποκειμένων πράξεων οὐδὲν ἄλλο προερούμεν ἢ παραιτησόμεθα τοὺς ἀναγινώσκοντας, ἐὰν μὴ πάντα μηδὲ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐξειργασμένως τι τῶν περιβοήτων ἀπαγγέλλωμεν, ἀλλὰ ἐπιτέμνοντες τὰ πλεῖστα, μὴ συκοφαντεῖν. οὔτε γὰρ ἱστορίας γράφομεν, ἀλλὰ βίους, οὔτε ταῖς ἐπιφανεστάταις πράξεσι πάντως ἔνεστι δῆλωσις ἀρετῆς ἢ κακίας, ἀλλὰ πρᾶγμα βραχὺ πολλάκις καὶ ῥῆμα καὶ παιδιὰ τις ἔμφασιν ἦθους ἐποίησε μᾶλλον ἢ μάχαι μυριόνεκροι καὶ παρατάξεις αἱ μέγισται καὶ πολιορκίαι πόλεων. ὥςπερ οὖν οἱ ζωγράφοι τὰς ὁμοιότητας ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν ὄψιν εἰδῶν, οἷς ἐμφαίνεται τὸ ἦθος, ἀναλαμβάνουσιν, ἐλάχιστα τῶν λοιπῶν μερῶν φροντίζοντας, οὕτως ἡμῖν δοτέον εἰς τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς σημεῖα μᾶλλον ἐνδύεσθαι καὶ διὰ τούτων εἰδοποιεῖν τὸν ἐκάστου βίον, ἐάσαντας ἑτέροις τὰ μεγέθη καὶ τοὺς ἀγῶνας.³³⁸

³³⁷ Plutarch. *Cimon* 2.1-5.

³³⁸ Plutarch. *Alexander* 1.1-3.

Writing in this book about the life of king Alexander and of Caesar, by whom Pompey was defeated, because of the multitude of deeds to be addressed, I will speak nothing beforehand other than to beg of the readers, if I do not relate all the deeds of these famous men nor each of them accurately, but abridge most of them, not to criticize me. For I am not writing histories, but lives, and in the most famous deeds there is not altogether a manifestation of virtue and vice, but a small deed, a phrase, or some childish play often emphasize more of character than battles where tens of thousands fall, the greatest of fights, or sieges of cities. Therefore, just as painters retrieve the likenesses from the face and the expressions around the eyes, in which character manifests itself, and rarely consider the other parts, thus I must rather enter and give attention to the signs of the soul of men and by means of these things, to make an image of the life of each man, allowing others their great deeds and contests.

7. The statement in *Phocion* that qualities differ from one man to another

...ἔστι γὰρ ἀμέλει καὶ ἀνδρείας διαφορὰ πρὸς ἀνδρείαν, ὡς τῆς Ἀλκιβιάδου πρὸς τὴν Ἐπαμεινώνδου, καὶ φρονήσεως πρὸς φρόνησιν, ὡς τῆς Θεμιστοκλέους πρὸς τὴν Ἀριστείδου, καὶ δικαιοσύνης πρὸς δικαιοσύνην, ὡς τῆς Νομᾶ πρὸς τὴν Ἀγησιλάου.³³⁹

For there is, of course, differences in the manliness of a man against that of another, as that of Alcibiades against that of Epaminondas, and differences in the wisdom of one and another, as that of Themistocles against that of Aristides, and differences in the justice of one against another, as that of Numa against that of Agesilaus.

8. The people ostracise Themistocles out of envy and fickleness.

Τὸν μὲν οὖν ἐξοστρακισμὸν ἐποιήσαντο κατ' αὐτοῦ κολούοντες τὸ ἀξίωμα καὶ τὴν ὑπεροχὴν, ὥσπερ εἰώθεσαν ἐπὶ πάντων, οὓς ὄντο τῇ δυνάμει βαρεῖς καὶ πρὸς ἰσότητα δημοκρατικὴν ἀσυμμέτρους εἶναι. κόλασις γὰρ οὐκ ἦν ὁ ἐξοστρακισμός, ἀλλὰ παραμυθία φθόνου καὶ κουφισμὸς ἡδομένου τῷ ταπεινοῦν τοὺς ὑπερέχοντας καὶ τὴν δυσμένειαν εἰς ταύτην τὴν ἀτιμίαν ἀποπνέοντος.³⁴⁰

In fact, they banished him by ostracism and degraded his honour and prominence, just as they had been accustomed to doing against everyone whom they believed to be heavy with power and incommensurate with the equality of democracy. For banishment by ostracism was not a penalty, but an abatement of envy and alleviation of one who delights in humbling powerful men and translated his hostility into this dishonour.

³³⁹ Plutarch *Phocion* 3.4

³⁴⁰ Plutarch *Themistocles* 22.3.

Figure 1: M. Zaccarini's Summary of the Traditions on the Recovery of Theseus' Bones ³⁴¹**Summary: The Traditions on the Recovery of Theseus' Bones**

Source period	Main events or components of the story	Related events or relevant details
Fifth century BC	First half (Athenian conquest of Scyros after the Persian wars)	Ancient tradition on Achilles and Scyros Theseus well known in Athens Theseus Ionian cultural hero (Bacchylides 17–18) Literary <i>topos</i> of hero bones transferal
	Second half Athenian conquest of Scyros as part of the growing <i>arche</i> (Thuc. 1.98.2)	<i>Theseion</i> certainly existed Theseus' resignation from monarchy: the peaceful version (Eur. <i>Suppl.</i>)
Fourth century BC	Death on Scyros? Recovery of the bones <i>περί τὰ Μηδικά?</i> (<i>Ath. Pol.</i> , <i>ap.</i> Heracld.Lernb. <i>Exc. Pol.</i> 1)	Theseus hero-symbol of Athens Theseus' resignation from monarchy: the violent version
	<i>Manteia</i> on the bone transfer? (<i>Ath. Pol.</i> , <i>ap. schol. ad Eur. Hipp.</i> 11)	<i>Ath. Pol.</i> drawing upon Attidography Attidographers writing extensively on Theseus
First century BC	Recovery of the bones from Scyros (in a remote time?) (Diod. 4.62.4)	Earliest source mentioning both episodes Lack of any connection between the two passages
	Cimon conquered Scyros in the late 470s (Diod. 11.60.2)	11.60.2: possibly based on a fourth-c. tradition (Ephorus?); <i>P.Oxy.</i> 1610
First–second century AD	Cimon conquered Scyros 400 years after Theseus' death / ca. 476/5 (cf. Plut. <i>Cim.</i> 8 and <i>Thes.</i> 36.1)	Several inconsistencies between the two accounts
	<i>Chresmos</i> (pre-existing) / Delphic <i>manteuma</i> (concurrent?) (cf. Plut. <i>Cim.</i> 8.7 and <i>Thes.</i> 36.1) Cimon discovered the bones (Plut. <i>Cim.</i> 8.6–7)	Main source of additional elements: Thessalians, Delphi, etc.

³⁴¹ Zaccarini 2015 : 192.

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