Received: 25th October 2024 Accepted: 12th November 2024

Reflections on Plutarch's Lives of Aemilius Paullus and Timoleon

[*Riflessioni sulle* Vite di Emilio Paolo e Timoleone *di Plutarco*]

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Abstract

Plutarch opens the *Lives of Aemilius Paullus and Timoleon* with a metaphor comparing his writing of biographies to a mirror in which he contemplates his own life. This is, surprisingly, the only time in the *Lives* he uses this metaphor. The paper seeks to relate this image to the fact that, apparently for the first time, Plutarch has placed the *Life* of his Greek hero after that of the Roman. It is suggested that this reversal of his usual practice, combined with several subtle indications throughout the pair of *Lives,* indicates Plutarch's greater sympathy for, and even identification with, Timoleon, despite his frequent efforts to appear to be even-handed in his treatment of the two men.

Key-words: Plutarch, Mirrors, Metaphor, Timoleon, Aemilius Paullus.

Riassunto

Plutarco apre le *Vite di Emilio Paolo e Timoleonte* con una metafora che paragona la sua scrittura di biografie a uno specchio in cui contempla la propria vita. Questa è, sorprendentemente, l'unica volta nelle *Vite* in cui usa questa metafora. L'articolo cerca di collegare questa immagine al fatto che, apparentemente per la prima volta, Plutarco ha collocato la *Vita* del suo eroe greco dopo quella del romano. Si suggerisce che questa inversione della sua pratica abituale, combinata con diverse sottili indicazioni in tutta la coppia di *Vite*, indichi la maggiore simpatia di Plutarco per, e persino l'identificazione con, Timoleonte, nonostante i suoi frequenti sforzi di apparire imparziale nel suo trattamento dei due uomini.

Parole chiave: Plutarco, Specchi, Metafora, Timoleonte, Emilio Paolo.

The opening sentence of the book that comprises Plutarch's biographies of Aemilius Paullus and Timoleon, which is, like the *Lives* as a whole, addressed to Q. Sosius Senecio, features a striking metaphor:

ἐμοὶ [μὲν] τῆς τῶν βίων ἅψασθαι μὲν γραφῆς συνέβη δι' ἑτέρους, 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.

I turned my hand to the writing of biographies, as it happens, for the sake of others, but I now continue to pursue the familiar activity for my own sake as well, attempting somehow to regulate my life in conformity with the virtues exhibited by the men of earlier times, treating my research *as a kind of looking-glass*[1].

Mirrors, both literal and figurative, are frequent occurrences in the works of Plutarch[2]. So, for example, he says that the flatterer has no character of his own, but merely reflects the emotions and manners of others, δίκην κατόπτρου (*De ad. et am.* 53a); that nature has given us the behavior of the tiny ant as a mirror of virtue on a larger scale (*De soll. an.* 967d); and that in scientific pursuits we can discover traces and images of the truth as if in smooth and undistorted mirrors (ὥσπερ ἀστραβέσι καὶ λείοις κατόπτροις, *Quaest. conv.* 718e). One is therefore surprised at how infrequent references are to mirrors in the *Lives*. Literal mirrors, of course, are for the most part associated with women, and so they are generally out of place in the largely masculine world of Plutarch's biographical heroes[3]. We are told, however, that Demosthenes had a large mirror in his house, before which he would practice his oratory (*Dem.* 11.1; cf. [*Dec. or. vit.*] 844e–f, Quint. *Inst.* 11.3.68, Apul. *Apol.* 15.8–9). And Plutarch, who was himself a priest at Delphi, tells us that, on the rare occasions when the sacred fire there was extinguished, it was rekindled by focusing the pure rays of the sun using a curved mirror[4].

1 Plut. *Aem.* 1.1. It should be noted that this section appears in some editions as the introduction to *Tim.* The text of Plut.'s *Aem./Tim.* used here is that of ZIEGLER and GÄRTNER 1993, which restores the manuscript order of the two *Lives*; see DUFF 2011: 221. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. I should like to thank the journal's referees for helpful suggestions that have served to improve my presentation.

2 See ZADOROJNYI 2010, with full references to earlier bibliography. κάτοπτρον, ἔσοπτρον (the two forms are used interchangeably) and their derivatives occur some fifty times in the Plutarchan corpus. For σκαφεῖον, see n. 4.

3 Mirrors are characteristic accompaniments of Aphrodite (*De fort. Rom.* 317f) and are generally associated with women and feminized men; see BARTSCH 2006: 28–32. In non-literary papyri, references to mirrors "occur mostly in documents … strictly concerned with the female world, such as lists of paraphernalia included in marriage contracts and lists of female goods in pawn," BONATI and REGGIANI 2020: 59, with the data presented at 61–65.

4 *Numa* 9.12–14, where the mirror is called a σκαφεῖον or σκάφιον (the spelling in the manuscripts varies); this meaning of the word is apparently found only here. For the use of mirrors to start fires, see *De facie* 937a and Pliny *NH* 2.239 *specula . . . concava adversa solis radiis*. That there is no mention of mirrors in Plut.'s lengthy account of Archimedes' military devices at *Marc.* 14–15 is likely attributable to the fact that the story of his using mirrors to set fire to enemy ships is a fabrication of a later date; see SIMMS 1977.

These are the only mirrors in the text of Plutarch's *Lives* and, of the three, the one that opens the *Life of Aemilius* is the lone occurrence of the mirror as metaphor. This is in stark contrast to the frequency with which metaphorical mirrors are found in the Moralia[5]. Not only is this the only metaphorical mirror in the *Lives*, it is used by Plutarch to introduce a book in which, apparently for the first time, he reverses the order of his treatment. The only other times he does this, where the biography of the Roman precedes that of the Greek, is in the books containing the *Lives* of Coriolanus and Alcibiades and the *Lives* of Sertorius and Eumenes, both of which are widely agreed to be later compositions[6]. Critics have been puzzled by this reversal of Plutarch's usual chronological order, with the most common explanation having to do with a desire on the author's part to have a second life "providing an interesting and complicating variation of the first."[7] A more attractive proposal has been put forward by Joseph Geiger, who sees the novel arrangement as presenting us with a dramatic arc that moves from the success of Aemilius' campaigns to the tragedy of his losing his two sons, followed by the reverse sequence, in which Timoleon's acquiescence in the killing of his brother precedes his accomplishment of liberating Sicily[8]. Curiously, Geiger makes no mention of mirrors and consequently does not connect Plutarch's reversal of the usual pattern with his opening sentence which, as we will see, serves to support Geiger's case. Conversely, Alexei Zadorojnyi's valuable recent study of "the rhetoric and philosophy of Plutarch's mirrors" opens by quoting *Aemilius* 1 but does not address the relationship between the *Lives* of Aemilius and Timoleon[9].

Not only is this the first time, apparently, when Plutarch put the *Life* of a Roman before that of a Greek, and not only does he introduce his account with the only metaphor of a mirror in the *Lives*, saying that he is now writing in part for his own benefit, but the very first word of the book is ἐμοί[10]. All of

5 In addition to the passages mentioned above, see *De prof. in virt*. 85b, *Con. praec*. 139f, *Reg. et imp. apophth*. 172d, *Bellone an pace* 345f, *De Is. et Os*. 382a, 384a, *De tranq. an*. 473e, *De genio Socr*. 591e, *Quaest. conv*. 672e, 736b, *Amatorius* 765b and f, *Ad princ. iner*. 781f, *Quaest. Plat*. 1002a.

6 For a recent survey of the various attempts at a relative chronology of the *Lives*, see VAN DER WIEL 2024: 458–69.

7 ROSKAM 2021: 92, with bibliography. According to TALBERT (1974: 21), "There seems no reasonable explanation of why Plutarch should depart from his usual practice."

8 GEIGER 1981, with discussion of *Aem./Tim*. at 99–104.

9 ZADOROJNYI 2010. The same is true of STADTER 2000 and 2003–4 and FRAZIER 2011.

10 DUFF 2014: 341. This is the only time Plut. opens a book of the *Lives* with a first-person

this suggests that Plutarch is announcing at the outset a much more personal investment in these two *Lives* than has generally been acknowledged. There is, then, little question that the *Lives of Aemilius Paullus and Timoleon* represents a notable departure from Plutarch's usual practice. As we will see, there are many points at which he has presented his two heroes and their actions as mirror-images of each other, and yet he has explicitly introduced the mirror as a means of seeing a reflection of himself, which is, after all, the most common function of a mirror. Further, as Tim Duff points out in his illuminating discussion of our passage, "for his readers, the mirror is Plutarch's own literary work."[11] We have, then, a text in which Sosius and the work's other readers are called upon to observe Plutarch reflecting on the lives of two men who have been chosen specifically because of the extent to which their careers mirror one another[12]. Clearly this is a matter of some complexity, not unlike the deliberately disorienting effect that Diego Velázquez's *Las Meninas* has on its viewers, and it will be necessary to examine it with care. In doing so we will find, I think, that despite Plutarch's conspicuously evenhanded construction in this pair of *Lives*, as in all the pairs, and especially in the Comparison, there is evidence of a clear sympathy on Plutarch's part for his fellow countryman in preference to his Roman counterpart and that he subtly and systematically undermines the parity that his seemingly balanced treatment purports to convey[13].

* * *

In this context, as in the story about Demosthenes' literal mirror, the point of the simile is to suggest that Plutarch is attempting to see himself as he is seen by others so that he can make the appropriate adjustments to his behavior[14]. But, as Plutarch was well aware, the analogy is imperfect. The imperfection is made

pronoun. The *Lives of the Gracchi*, which is paired with and follows the *Lives of Agis and Cleomenes*, opens with ἡμεῖς δέ (= ἐγὼ δέ). As VERDEGEM (2010: 20) notes, while the remainder of *Aem*. 1 uses first-person plurals, "the last 'we' of the passage … only refers to Plutarch himself (*Aem*. 1.6: προκεχειρίσμεθά σοι)," where σοι refers to his addressee Sosius.

11 DUFF 1999: 33.

12 As STADTER (2003–4: 37) notes, without specific reference to *Aem*./*Tim*., each "pair of *Lives* in fact offers readers a multiple mirroring: the Roman and Greek *Lives* reflect each other, and the readers' own lives are reflected in each of the pair."

13 For this feature of the *Lives*, see DUFF 1999: 301–9, but here, noticeably, it is the Greek hero whose *Life*, coming last, sticks in the reader's mind.

14 Similarly, as Plut. notes at *De prof. in virt*. 85a–b, one can modify one's manners by looking to the actions of Plato (relating, presumably, to his dealings with the Syracusan tyrants), Epameinondas, Lycurgus or Agesilaus οἷον πρὸς ἔσοπτρα; cf. [*De lib. educ*.] 14a, where the author recommends that a father act in such a way that his sons can model their behavior on his, ὥσπερ κάτοπτρον ἀποβλέποντες.

explicit in the story of Demosthenes as told by Quintilian and perhaps by Quintilian's source, who is likely to have been Plutarch's source as well: After mentioning Demosthenes' practice of rehearsing his gestures in front of a mirror, Quintilian continues, "despite the fact that the bright surface reverses the image (*sinistras imagines reddat*), he had complete trust in his own eyes' ability to tell him what effect he was making."[15] That is, when Demosthenes rehearsed his peroration to *On the Crown* and gestured to accompany his mockery of Aeschines holding out his right hand in delight at the enemy's success (18.323), the mirror would seem to be mocking Demosthenes, who sees himself using the wrong hand. The very need for a mental adjustment is what makes the image in the mirror a useful pedagogical instrument; if the reflection were an exact replica, there would be no point in using it for self-improvement. Plutarch acknowledges this left-right reversal when he mocks the Epicureans for their belief in a soul that is, "as it were, a blank or a mirror (ἐκμαγεῖον ἢ κάτοπτρον) that receives impressions or images of the perceptions that occur in the body" (*Quaest. conv.* 672e). The comparison here is with lumps of wax or clay into which seal rings are pressed or planchets that are stamped to produce coins[16]. The engravers who carve the "originals," namely the seal stones or dies, must create a negative so that the coin or the seal impression will turn out with the "correct" orientation. If there is a written component, the lettering needs to be inscribed backwards, like the alternating recursive lines of a boustrophedon inscription. Just as Demosthenes has to make a mental adjustment to imagine what impression he will be making on his audience, so the engraver who is commissioned to depict a warrior must carve a left-handed hoplite or archer. By referring indifferently to blanks and mirrors Plutarch – and it is Plutarch who is the speaker at 672e – glosses over the distinction between the impressions made on the two surfaces: Mirrors simply reflect and reverse whatever they happen to be facing in the "real world," whereas ἐκμαγεῖα are stamped with an image that has been deliberately manipulated

15 Quint. *Inst.* 11.3.68, in the translation of Russell 2001. Zadorojnyi (2010: 176) cites Plato, *Tht.* 193c and *Tim.* 46a–c for the mirror as "a flawed metaphor," since it reverses right and left. Cf. Gunderson 2000: 103: "Demosthenes mentally corrects for the inversion" of the mirror's image.

16 The analogy is apparently as old as Democritus, who is said to have compared a perception by the visual sense to an impression made in wax, παραβάλλων τοιαύτην εἶναι τὴν ἐντύπωσιν οἷον εἰ ἐκμάξειας εἰς κηρόν (68 A135 D-K = Theophr. *De sens.* 51). Achilles Tatius uses the language of imprinting in combination with the image of the mirror in speaking of visual impressions: ἀπομάττουσιν ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ 1.9.4, ἐναπομάττει τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς κατόπτρῳ and ἐναποσφραγίζει 5.13.4.

so that the impression will appear the "right" way about.

In each case, a mental adjustment must be made, either by the engraver or by the person looking in the mirror. Here, in the introduction to the *Life of Aemilius Paullus*, Plutarch indicates that he is viewing (and he invites his reader to join him in viewing) the lives of men from the past who are outstanding for ἀρετή. He continues, in the next sentence, by comparing his inspection of his subjects to having them as guests at dinner (*Aem*. 1.2):

> οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀλλ' ἢ συνδιαιτήσει καὶ συμβιώσει τὸ γινόμενον ἔοικεν, ὅταν ὥσπερ ἐπιξενούμενον ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐν μέρει διὰ τῆς ἱστορίας ὑποδεχόμενοι καὶ παραλαμβάνοντες ἀναθεωρῶμεν "ὅσσος ἔην οἷός τε," τὰ κυριώτατα καὶ κάλλιστα πρὸς γνῶσιν ἀπὸ τῶν πράξεων λαμβάνοντες.
>
> The circumstance resembles nothing so much as socializing and keeping company, whenever through the medium of my research I take in and welcome each one of them in turn as though he is a guest, and I contemplate "the magnitude and the quality" of the man, adopting those elements of his behavior that are the finest and most important to get to know.

The repetitions from the previous sentence are notable; each comparison is introduced by ὥσπερ and in each instance the comparison involves Plutarch using his researches (τῇ ἱστορίᾳ ≈ διὰ τῆς ἱστορίας) as a means of guiding his own behavior. The Homeric quotation (= *Il*. 24.630) implicitly compares Plutarch to the aged Priam admiring the greatest of Greek heroes, with whom he is sharing a meal tête-à-tête. One can be forgiven, given the way Plutarch has introduced the quotation, for thinking that in Homer Priam is hosting Achilles. But, as every reader knows, Priam is the guest in Achilles' tent. Of course, Plutarch knows this as well, and he will allude to this Homeric scene again at the end of the *Life of Aemilius* (34.8), when he refers to Achilles' consolation of Priam with the account of Zeus' two storage urns (*Il*. 24.527–33). Here Plutarch has gone out of his way to reverse the roles of host and guest, continuing, as it were, the mirror-image that he had introduced in the previous sentence and giving us an immediate example of the mental adjustment that we can be expected to make. He is counting on us to put ourselves not only in the unaccustomed position of Hector's father facing his son's killer but in the familiar role of Homer's reader, conjuring the feelings of one literary character confronted with another[17].

We ought to be struck by the dynamic way in which Plutarch has taken the

[17] At *De aud*. *poet*. 25d–26b Plut. warns young readers not to read Homer and other poets uncritically. For a fruitful discussion of Plut.'s use of *Iliad* 24 at both the beginning and end of *Aem*., see CAIRNS 2014: 12–16.

image of the mirror, the medium that passively reflects whatever is set before it, and has gone on to assert his agency, not merely as spectator (ἀναθεωρῶμεν) but as researcher and as the man who takes up and puts to his own use the history of the past. This insistence on Plutarch's active role continues in the remainder of the opening paragraph. He contrasts his own practice with that of the atomist Democritus[18]. The philosopher is criticized for saying that we should pray that we encounter propitious images impinging on us from our environment[19]. For his part, Plutarch actively trains himself (παρασκευάζομεν ἑαυτούς) by means of the diligent pursuit of research (τῇ περὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν διατριβῇ), repeating the word that had occurred already twice before. The only reason, it seems, that Plutarch has introduced the apparently irrelevant mention of Democritus is to ensure, by calling attention to the contrast, that his readers appreciate the active role Plutarch plays in the transmission and arrangement of his material. And that arrangement includes not only the selection of which lives to treat but, in the present instance, the decision to put the later life first. In this case he has chosen two (almost) wholly admirable subjects and he has made the unusual choice to put the Roman life ahead of the Greek. He is thus inviting us to pay even closer attention than usual to the correspondences and divergences between the two lives.

Especially the divergences. For Plutarch assures us at the end of the introductory paragraph that his two heroes are almost indistinguishable when it comes to their circumstances and their responses to those circumstances (*Aem*. 1.6):

> ὧν ἐν τῷ παρόντι προκεχειρίσμεθά σοι τὸν Τιμολέοντος τοῦ Κορινθίου καὶ τὸν Αἰμιλίου Παύλου βίον, ἀνδρῶν οὐ μόνον ταῖς αἱρέσεσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς τύχαις ἀγαθαῖς ὁμοίως κεχρημένων ἐπὶ τὰ πράγματα, καὶ διαμφισβήτησιν παρεξόντων, πότερον εὐποτμίᾳ μᾶλλον ἢ φρονήσει τὰ μέγιστα τῶν πεπραγμένων κατώρθωσαν.
>
> From which (*sc*. παραδειγμάτων) I have picked out for you the careers of Timoleon of Corinth and Aemilius Paullus, men who were comparable not only in their life choices but also with regard to the strokes of luck that attended their actions, and who supply material for debate concerning the greatest of their accomplishments, whether they were due to the blessings of fortune or to good judgment.

[18] *Aem*. 1.4–5 Δημόκριτος μέν … ἡμεῖς δέ; see VAN DER WIEL 2024: 350, with 346–351 for a detailed analysis of the prologue to *Aem*./*Tim*.

[19] εὐλόγχων εἰδώλων τυγχάνωμεν … ἐκ τοῦ περιέχοντος, referred to also at *De def. or*. 419a (Δημόκριτος εὐχόμενος εὐλόγχων εἰδώλων τυγχάνειν); cf., with DESIDERI 2012: 201–202, Democr. 68 B166 D-K = Sext. *Adv. math*. 9.19.

The balance and the appearance of non-committal fairness are underlined by the chiastic arrangement of αἱρέσεσιν … τύχαις and εὐποτμίᾳ … φρονήσει[20]; they are in evidence again at the very end of the book, where the assessment in the Comparison alternates between giving the advantage now to Aemilius and now to Timoleon, ending with the balanced statement about the latter that his prolonged avoidance of human society following his participation in his brother's assassination is a mark of a respectable and sensitive character (ἐπιεικοῦς … ἤθους καὶ ἀπαλοῦ), but not of grandeur (μέγεθος). Comparable are the general statements found at the start of the *Lives* of Pericles and Demosthenes, both of which were written before the *Life* of Aemilius. The former gives a brief list of the ways in which Pericles and Fabius Maximus were comparable (ὁμοίων, *Per*. 2.5) before inviting the reader to judge the validity of Plutarch's statement from the accounts that follow. The similarities (ὁμοιοτήτων, *Dem*. 3.3–5) between Demosthenes and Cicero are so great that Plutarch gives the impression that he has chosen more or less arbitrarily to begin his account with the earlier of the two: λεκτέον δὲ περὶ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου πρότερον. But, again, it has been Plutarch's regular practice to set the biography of the Greek before that of the Roman, at least until he composed the *Lives* of Aemilius and Timoleon.

Let us, then, accept Plutarch's invitation and scrutinize the lives of Aemilius and Timoleon, or rather their *Lives*, since that is what Plutarch presents us with, not necessarily the historical reality of the careers of the two men (for which these *Lives* are, to be sure, a valuable source). We should begin with the similarities, which prompted Plutarch to pair Timoleon with Aemilius in the first place and which will serve to isolate the divergences between the two, like Demosthenes' left-hand gesture in his mirror. The most striking similarity is the fact – and it does appear to be a fact – that the events that made them worthy of having their *Lives* written, τὰ μέγιστα τῶν πεπραγμένων, occurred in their later years. Plutarch's sources provided him with little information regarding the earlier careers of his two heroes, so it was natural for him to concentrate on their late accomplishments[21]. Still, it is clear that the reasons for the belated efflorescence in each case differed, and Plutarch takes

[20] In this way Aem. represents a contrast with his father, who died at Cannae and who, Plut. tells us just below (2.3), was characterized by both good judgment (φρόνησις) and bad luck (ἀτύχημα), being unlike most of the prominent members of the family, whose good luck was due to the excellence to which they aspired (δι' ἀρετὴν ἣν ἐζήλωσαν εὐτύχησαν); cf. *Tim*. 36.4 ἀρετῆς εὐτυχούσης, of Tim.'s "excellence attended by good luck." In the Hall of Mirrors that is the *Parallel Lives* everyone, it seems, is compared to, or contrasted with, someone else.

[21] "The brief treatment of Aemilius' earlier career is due to an absence of information in the main sources," SWAIN 1989a: 317. For those sources, see FLACELIÈRE and CHAMBRY 1966: 60–65; the sources of *Tim*. are covered in greater detail by TALBERT (1974: 22–38).

care to ensure that neither man is seen to come out ahead of the other in this regard. Aemilius' successful campaign against Perseus and consequent triumph occurred during his second consulship, when he was, as Plutarch tells us, "about sixty" years old (*Aem*. 10.2). His career before that time, while impressive, was no more noteworthy than that of a number of his contemporaries in the senatorial class, and we are told that "he came to maturity at just the time when there happened to be an abundance of very prominent men who were distinguished by a reputation for excellence" (2.5). Plutarch acknowledges that Aemilius' earlier attempt at securing a second consulship was unsuccessful (6.8), but he palliates that failure by detailing Aemilius' exemplary performance of his duties as curule aedile and augur (3), as praetor with proconsular imperium (4) and during his first consulship in Liguria (6.1–7).

By contrast, Timoleon took no part in public life for a period of twenty years (*Tim*. 7.1, Comp. 2.11) before his departure for Sicily, where he spent his last eight years until his death in old age[22]. Unlike Aemilius, he was not confronted with overwhelming competition for leadership in Corinth; rather the reason for this withdrawal was his complicity in the murder of his brother, the tyrant Timophanes, which can be viewed in either of two ways. Plutarch chooses both. Timoleon deserves great praise for first trying to persuade Timophanes to relinquish his tyranny over Corinth and then, when he is met with contempt on his brother's part, countenancing his assassination (*Tim*. 4.4–8). Indeed, the leading citizens of Corinth extol Timoleon's patriotic sacrifice of a family member, whose life he had earlier saved at great risk to himself (4.1–3), in order to ensure the freedom of his homeland (5.1). On the other hand, his mother refuses to see him and she "curses him with dreadful imprecations" (κατάρας ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀρᾶσθαι φρικώδεις, 5.3), and Timoleon abandons his decision to starve himself to death only at the pleading of his friends. Now, a parent's curse is an awesome occurrence; in Homer it causes Phoenix to flee his homeland permanently (*Il.* 9.453–80) and in tragedy it results in the mutual slaughter of Eteocles and Polyneices. That Timoleon not only overcame this obstacle but went on to liberate the cities of Sicily and to receive honors appropriate to a founding father (35.1–3, 39.1) could have been portrayed in an entirely positive light. But that would have greatly unbalanced the presentation of Plutarch's two heroes in Timoleon's favor. And so a chapter (6) is inserted in which Plutarch chides Timoleon for his failure to treat his brother's murder in a sufficiently philosophical manner, returning to this in the last sentence of the Comparison, where that failure is said to deprive Timoleon of a claim to true

[22] *Tim*. 37.7 ἤδη πρεσβύτερος ὤν, 39.1 γηροτροφούμενος; eight years: 37.6, D.S. 16.90.1.

greatness (μέγεθος)[23]. Plutarch suggests that Timoleon ought to have gotten over his mental torment and behaved more like Phocion, whose education Plutarch elsewhere attributes to Plato and Xenocrates (*Phoc*. 4.2): When Phocion's rival Leosthenes met with success by adopting a policy against which Phocion had advised, the latter said that he would have preferred the success to have been his own, but that he did not regret having given the advice that he did[24]. It is true that Plutarch follows this up with a less trivial parallel, telling the story, not found elsewhere, of "Aristeides the Locrian, one of Plato's companions," who said that he would rather see his daughter dead than be married to the tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse, who had asked for her hand; when Dionysius later murdered Aristeides' sons, he professed that he did not regret what he had said[25]. That Aristeides did not suffer prolonged mental anguish over his comment is admirable, but his situation is not comparable to that of Timoleon, who deliberately acted to put the freedom of his homeland ahead of the life of his brother and who suffered the curses of his mother as a result. Nor did Timoleon have the benefit of Plato's tuition. Plutarch seems to concede that his own idealistic view of the matter is not shared in the real-life world of Timoleon's fellow citizens, in whose eyes he still has an opportunity to redeem himself. In what immediately follows (7.1–2) Plutarch tells us that Timoleon's commission to lead the expedition in Syracuse was handed to him by Telecleides, "the most powerful and esteemed man in the city at that time," who predicts that, if he succeeds on his mission, his reputation will be that of a tyrannicide, otherwise of a fratricide[26]. In what remains of the *Life* Plutarch recounts the resounding success of Timoleon's mission.

We see, then, that Plutarch has taken great care to be seen as balancing his presentation of the two men, both of whom rose to prominence late in life, although the reasons for the delay were different in each case. This pattern is repeated, with variations, throughout the pair of *Lives*. For example, both Aemilius and Timoleon liberated people who were not their own countrymen and, what was important for Plutarch, the people in question were in

[23] In this regard Tim. contrasts with Aem., for whose "philosophical" character, see HOLLAND 2004. Plut. even records a tradition (*Aem*. 2.2), not elsewhere attested, connecting the family of Aem. with Pythagoras.

[24] *Tim*. 6.5; cf. *Phoc*. 23.6, *Reg. et imp. apophth*. 188d–e, Val. Max. 3.8.ext.2.

[25] *Tim*. 6.6–7. Dionysius appears in fact to have married Aristeides' daughter, if she is the woman whose marriage is said by Aristotle to have undone the city of the Locrians (*Pol*. 5.10 1307a38–39).

[26] The same anecdote is preserved by Diodorus (16.65.8), but attributed more generally to the members of the synedrion.

both cases Greeks: Sicilians liberated by a Corinthian and mainland Greeks by a Roman[27]. In keeping with the metaphor of the mirror introduced at the start, Aemilius' commission required him to travel to the east, while Timoleon led his troops in the opposite direction. We may compare another pair of Plutarchan subjects, Alexander and Caesar, the former having conquered the east, the latter bringing western Europe under Roman rule. In fact, at one point Caesar compares himself (unfavorably) with his Macedonian predecessor: While serving his proconsulship in Spain he lamented that he had accomplished nothing remarkable although he had reached the same age at which Alexander was already ruler over many nations (*Caes*. 11.5–6). The *Lives of Alexander and Caesar* follows Plutarch's usual practice of placing the Roman after the Greek (or in this case the Macedonian), so that the comparison is made not only by the reader but by the subject of the second *Life* himself. The same is true of the *Lives of Demosthenes and Cicero*, where Plutarch makes explicit Cicero's conscious rivalry with his Greek predecessor, noting that he even named his invectives against Antony "Philippics" (*Cic*. 24.6). There is no evidence that Aemilius was influenced by, or was even familiar with, the career of Timoleon; still, Plutarch's arrangement, inverting the chronological order, gives the impression of an additional level of impartiality[28].

An even clearer instance of the mirror-image that we have seen on the geographical level with the east–west reversal of the two men's campaigns is in evidence on the temporal level in the tactics of Aemilius at Pydna and Timoleon's at Adranum. When Aemilius arrives to find that Perseus' troops are waiting for him, his impetuous younger officers urge him to order an immediate engagement; Aemilius curbs their enthusiasm by telling them that his years of experience and his many victories have taught him that it is unwise to follow up an arduous march with an attack on an enemy that is already drawn up in battle array[29]. Conversely, Timoleon refuses to

27 See Jacobs 2017: 307: "*Timoleon*, like *Aemilius*, depicts the role of the outsider acting to free another state from tyranny and then serving as an overlord to maintain stability and foster prosperity in the region." It is, however, difficult to see Plut.'s portrayal of Tim. as an "overlord" when he allows himself to be subjected to the same legal jeopardy as any other citizen (*Tim*. 37.1–2). It is precisely the opportunity open to any Syracusan who wished to take advantage of the laws that, in Plut.'s view, rendered the city a democracy and created stability, all of which was due to Tim.'s efforts.

28 *Dem*./*Cic*. was certainly written well before *Aem*./*Tim*.; *Alex*./*Caes*. appears to date from about the same time (see van der Wiel 2024: 468).

29 *Aem*. 17.4 συντεταγμένην, repeated when the same anecdote is given at *Reg. et imp. apophth*. 198a–b. Contrast Livy 44.36.1–14, where the emphasis is less on the preparedness

give in to his officers' inclination to rest their troops after a forced march and he insists that they attack immediately so as to encounter the opposing army while they are in disarray (ἀσυντάκτοις, *Tim*. 12.6). In both instances the tactics are seen to be fully justified and they result in complete success. Timoleon's victory is particularly impressive, given that his troops are outnumbered more than four to one[30]. Undeterred, he takes up his shield and leads the attack on foot at the front of his men (12.7 τὴν ἀσπίδα λαβὼν ἡγεῖτο πρῶτος). If Plutarch knew the relative troop strengths at the Battle of Pydna, he does not record them, telling us only that the Macedonian cavalry numbered 4,000 and the infantry not much less than 40,000 (*Aem*. 13.4) and that Perseus was reassured by the size of his own forces (16.6). When Aemilius sees the number and composition of the enemy army he is astonished (θαυμάσας, 17.2; cf. 13.4 τὴν … παρασκευὴν καὶ δύναμιν ἐθαύμαζεν) and calls a halt in order to consider his options. Later, once the battle has begun, he is gripped by ἔκπληξις and δέος (19.2). No other source gives the numbers for Aemilius' army, but modern scholars seem to be in agreement that the Romans were not in fact significantly outnumbered[31]. One advantage that Aemilius had is not mentioned by Plutarch, namely war elephants, for which the Macedonians could not effectively prepare and in the face of which their left wing was, according to Livy, the first unit to give way before the Roman advance[32].

Another advantage that was available to Aemilius, but not to Timoleon, was an all-star cast of lieutenants and advisers. Plutarch does not present this explicitly as an advantage, but he mentions prominently in the course of his description of the Battle of Pydna several distinguished members of Aemilius' staff. The task of taking charge of the defeated Perseus following the Roman victory is entrusted to Q. Aelius Tubero, who was later to marry one of Aemilius' daughters[33]. After handing his

of the enemy forces than on the disarray the Roman troops (*nondum omnibus instructis*, 4) after their march in the summer heat. For Aem.'s generalship at Pydna, see LENDON 2005: 203–211 and WORTHINGTON 2023: 223–233.

30 *Tim*. 12.4: Hicetas has 5,000 troops while Tim. has "not more than 1,200." Diodorus (16.68.9) gives the same number for Hicetas but says that Tim. had "not more than a thousand."

31 See HAMMOND 1984: 46.

32 Livy 44.41.3–5; cf. 42.6, where the elephants trample the routed enemy soldiers. Livy notes the irony of the – in the end ineffective – Macedonian preparations for the encounter with elephants, which are recorded also by Polyaenus (*Strat*. 4.21) and Zonaras (*Epit*. 9.22 = 2.314 Dindorf) from a Greek source that was likely known to Plut., presumably Polybius, whose account of Pydna exists now in a fragmentary state.

33 *Aem*. 27.1. Plut. elsewhere describes Tubero as ἀνὴρ ἄριστος (5.6) and tells us that Aem. gave Tubero from the spoils a silver basin weighing five pounds as ἀριστεῖα τῆς μάχης

prisoner of war over to Tubero, Aemilius calls a meeting of "his sons and sons-in-law and especially the younger officers" (*Aem*. 27.1). These include M. Porcius Cato Licinianus, the son of Cato the Censor, who married another of Aemilius' daughters and whose exceptional bravery is singled out in Plutarch's account of the battle. The two sons of Aemilius at the meeting were from his first marriage, to the daughter of C. Papirius Maso[34]. One of them, Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, who would himself attain the consulship in 145 BC, was adopted by the Fabius Maximus who is the subject of another of Plutarch's *Lives*. Although still young at the time of Pydna, he volunteers, much to the delight of his proud natural father, to join a force that goes on a successful nighttime mission that, Plutarch suggests, causes Perseus to be terrified and to have his hopes confounded (περίφοβος … καὶ συγκεχυμένος ταῖς ἐλπίσιν, 16.4). The mission is under the command of P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, son of the consul of 191 BC, who was himself to serve twice as consul, in 162 and 155. The other son of Aemilius on the staff is P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, whom Plutarch refers to as τὸν κλεινότατον Σκιπίωνα (5.1), consul in 147 and 134 and recipient of a triumph for his devastating defeat of Carthage. At Pydna he is carried away by his youthful exuberance to pursue the fleeing enemy until after nightfall, causing his father to fear needlessly that he had been killed in the engagement.

What, then, was Aemilius' contribution to the victory that earned him a triumph lasting for three days (*Aem*. 32.4)? In Plutarch's telling, his role is overshadowed by the initiative and courageous exploits of others, including Nasica (16.3), Cato (21.1–5) and Scipio (22.3–7). In addition, he says that, when the Romans were unable to disrupt the Macedonian phalanx, an otherwise unknown Paelignian named Salvius hurled his company's standard in among the enemy troops, inspiring his men to sacrifice their lives in an effort to retrieve it[35]. When this impetuous action failed to force a break in the enemy front, so Plutarch tells us citing "a certain Posidonius," Aemilius rent his tunic[36]. Before long, however, Aemilius notices that, because of the irregularity of the terrain and the extent of the Macedonian line, gaps were opening up in the enemy phalanx and he orders his men to break their own line and attack the openings afforded them, which proves decisive and the enemy are finally routed[37]. Ae-

(28.11). For Tubero and the other members of Aem.'s staff, see LINDERSKI 1990.

34 For their adoption into other, very prestigious Roman families, see LINDSAY 2009: 147–150.

35 *Aem*. 20.1–2. Livy 44.41.9 refers to this action as "recklessly" (*incaute*) undertaken by the Paelignians, but without naming Salvius.

36 *Aem*. 20.6 = *FGrH* 169 F2; cf. Ποσειδώνιός τις, 19.7.

37 *Aem*. 20.10. Cf. LENDON 2005: 209: "Aemilius was able to rally enough troops to attack

milius' role throughout, appropriately, was as tactician and commander. The image Plutarch uses is that of a helmsman (18.3), who guides the ship from the stern; here Aemilius bases his assessment of the magnitude of the impending battle on the restless to-ing and fro-ing in the opposing camps. Before the battle, he recognizes, by considering and weighing all the possibilities (κινῶν ἅπαντα καὶ πειρώμενος, 15.2), that there was an unguarded avenue of approach that would allow a unit to circle around the flank of Perseus' army, the mission for which Nasica and Fabius Maximus volunteered. Once the engagement had begun, despite his alarm and trepidation, Aemilius rode past his troops on horseback, showing himself with a bright and cheerful expression, without helmet or breastplate (19.2–3).

There is no doubt that Aemilius deserves credit for the victory, which put an end to the succession of rulers that goes back to Alexander the Great, as Plutarch details in an excursus on the Macedonian kingship in chapter 8. But Plutarch does not portray his hero performing any heroic actions, as he does in the case of Timoleon, who leads from the front his outnumbered troops at Adranum (*Tim*. 12.7) and who "suffered numerous blows to his body and his armor from the javelins and swords" of the enemy when he rescued his brother on an earlier occasion (4.3). And the closest Timoleon comes to experiencing the awe and anxiety that Plutarch repeatedly ascribes to Aemilius in the face of Perseus' forces (*Aem*. 13.4, 17.2, 19.2, 20.6) is the bewilderment, not at Adranum, where he has no hesitation to attack at once, but at the start of his mission, even before reaching Sicily, when he learns at Rhegium that Hicetas has changed sides in favor of the Carthaginians and has won a military victory over Dionysius. The way Plutarch expresses this is interesting: The report that reaches him causes πολλὴν ἀπορίαν τῷ Τιμολέοντι καὶ δυσθυμίαν τοῖς στρατιώταις (*Tim*. 9.2), seeming to ascribe considerable perplexity only to Timoleon and considerable disheartenment – the adjective πολλήν surely modifies both nouns – only to his troops[38]. Timoleon's response to this betrayal is characteristic of him, or rather of Plutarch's portrayal of him. When he finds himself abandoned by his former Greek ally and confronted by a Carthaginian fleet twice the size of his own (9.8), he meets with the Carthaginian envoys and coolly (ἐπιεικῶς, 10.1) tells them that there is no point in his rejecting their demand that he send his troops back

vulnerable points in the phalanx as it lost its order." One wonders, however, if orders could be heard or even needed to be given. With gaps opening up in the Macedonian line, surely the experienced Roman legionaries would rush into them on their own initiative?

38 See the translations by PERRIN (1918) "much perplexed Timoleon and disheartened his soldiers," FLACELIÈRE and CHAMBRY (1966) "jetèrent Timoléon dans un grand embarras et découragèrent ses troupes" and SCOTT-KILVERT (1973) "perplexed Timoleon and disheartened his men."

to Corinth; but he requests that there be a public meeting to reassure the citizens of Rhegium, which he takes advantage of to deceive the proverbially faithless Carthaginians, sneaking out of the meeting only after he has been informed that all but one of his ships has set sail for Sicily. The locals cooperate in this strategy because they are "frightened at the prospect of having barbarians as neighbors" on the east coast of Sicily (10.3) and they deliver lengthy speeches and then crowd around Timoleon to allow him to depart from the meeting unobserved so he can board his ship. This is the man who voluntarily removed himself from public view for twenty years, until he was nominated by an unnamed Corinthian to lead the expedition to Syracuse, a commission which he had not sought and which he did not expect (3.2). On the surface this appears to be exactly parallel to the situation of Aemilius who, at approximately the same age, is entreated by friends and family to stand for a second consulship in order to prosecute the war against Perseus[39]. "At first he demurred," in the translation of 10.3 by Robin Waterfield, and turned down the opportunity to serve[40]. But the verb used, ἐθρύπτετο, "almost always implies a disingenuous refusal, soon to be withdrawn."[41] The implication that Aemilius is being coy is intended by Plutarch. He had earlier told us that, after his first consulship in 182, Aemilius "often let it be known that he wished to hold the office again," but was passed over[42].

The surreptitiousness that allows Timoleon to evade the Carthaginian delegation is not merely a successful strategy deployed against a notoriously duplicitous enemy; it is emblematic of his career and his person. For example, Timoleon supplies the troops on the acropolis of Corinth when a Carthaginian fleet of 150 warships

39 *Aem*. 10.2. Swain (1989a: 321) notes that Tim.'s "sudden summons into public life invites comparison with *Aem*. 10."

40 Waterfield 1999.

41 Pelling 1988: 146, on *Ant*. 12.4, describing Caesar's show of rejecting the diadem offered by Antony.

42 *Aem*. 6.8 πολλάκις ποιήσας φανερὸν αὐτὸν αὖθις ὑπατεῦσαι βουλόμενον, which seems to conflict with his haughty statement after being elected to his second consulship (11.1), that he sought the office the first time because he wanted it himself, but this time because the people wanted a leader. Livy 39.32.6, describing the election of 184, lists Aem. among the *veteres candidatos* for the consulship who failed to be elected in that year. On the matter of Plut.'s reporting of Aem.'s electoral defeats, see Bailey 2022. It will be clear, however, that I do not share Bailey's view (128), that Aem.'s resigned acceptance of his defeat(s) is intended by Plut. to serve as a model against which to judge Tim.'s failure to deal with the "change in his fortune with the equanimity which … the reader has already seen Aemilius display." Losing an election, even multiple elections, is not quite comparable to participating in the assassination of one's brother and enduring a mother's curses.

blockades the harbor by sending grain in dispatch boats and other small vessels that slip unobtrusively (ὑποπορευόμενα, *Tim*. 18.1) between the barbarian triremes. Rather than seeking the spotlight himself, Timoleon wishes to make a spectacle of the tyrants he has deposed, sending them to Corinth to be viewed (ἀποθεωρεῖσθαι, 24.2) as lowly exiles. We may see visibility and its opposite as a theme that runs throughout this pair of *Lives*. In contrast to the ambitious Aemilius, who strives continually for recognition and advancement, ultimately attaining the pinnacle of success by celebrating a magnificent triumph in Rome, Timoleon is characterized by Plutarch as modest and self-effacing[43]. His standing aside and hiding his face while his brother is murdered (4.8), the action that preserved Corinth from tyranny, serves as an apt metaphor for Timoleon's character. We have already seen him sneaking out of a meeting to rejoin his fleet. When someone else nominates him to lead the expedition to Syracuse, he is put up against "those who were eager to make a name for themselves in the city" (τοὺς εὐδοκιμεῖν ἐν τῇ πόλει σπουδάζοντας, 3.2). In a Greek context the person who is especially eager to make a name for himself is the tyrant, and Timoleon is introduced as μισοτύραννος (3.4), a trait that he shares with his Corinthian homeland (2.2). The longest digression in the *Life* deals with the deposed Syracusan tyrant Dionysius, whom everyone wants to view (θεάσασθαι, 14.1) when he takes up residence in Corinth, some of whom "were contemplating the power of imperceptible divine workings as manifested in the weakness of mankind."[44] The tyrant Dionysius is thus a mirror-image of the tyrant-hating Timoleon. He was deposed from a position of supreme power to become a private citizen while Timoleon was plucked from retirement to effect the liberation of Sicily. But despite his change of status, and unlike the unpretentious Timoleon, Dionysius spent his days in Corinth very much in the public eye (14.3–4). At the end of the digression Plutarch suggests that the account he has given in the previous two chapters is not extraneous to the biographer's purpose and not without point (15.11). The point, however, is somewhat obscured in modern texts, which start a new chapter with τῆς δὲ Διονυσίου δυστυχίας (16.1), responding to the ταῦτα μὲν οὖν of 15.11. The

[43] The historical Tim.'s aversion to self-promotion perhaps accounts for the fact that there are few references to him in contemporary sources; see TALBERT 1974: 40–43. Aem. was not so modest. When he saw a large pillar at Delphi on which a golden statue of Perseus was to be mounted, he ordered a statue of himself to be placed on it instead (*Aem*. 28.4). For the nearly 10m-tall pillar with a relief depicting the battle and a Latin inscription celebrating Aem.'s victory, with which Plut. was certainly familiar, see TAYLOR 2016.

[44] *Tim*. 14.2 ἐθεῶντο πολλὴν ἐν ἀσθενέσι τοῖς ἀνθρωπίνοις καὶ προδήλοις τὴν τῶν ἀδήλων αἰτιῶν καὶ θείων δύναμιν.

explanation of the digression's relevance, Plutarch suggests, is that it brings home the contrast between Dionysius' δυστυχία and Timoleon's εὐτυχία[45].

The description of Timoleon, who participated in the murder of his own brother and was under a curse by his mother, as someone blessed with good luck is arresting. In fact, Plutarch attributes the description to Timoleon himself. After contrasting the effortlessness that characterized Timoleon's actions with the struggles that led to the successes of men like Agesilaus and Epameinondas (*Tim*. 36.1), and even going so far as to compare his ease of accomplishment with the fluency of Homer (36.3), Plutarch affirms that Timoleon's generalship strikes those who consider the matter in the proper light to be "not the product of fortune but of excellence attended by good luck."[46] "And yet," Plutarch continues, "he attributed *all* his successes to fortune."[47] That Plutarch inherited this aspect of Timoleon's character is clear from Nepos, according to whom Timoleon never said anything boastful and, whenever he was praised, he would express his gratitude to the gods, since nothing comes about in human affairs without divine influence (*sine deorum numine*, *Tim*. 4.4). The reason for this modesty, which undoubtedly appealed to Plutarch, was surely a desire to avert nemesis, something about which the historical Timoleon must often have been concerned[48]. Interestingly, nemesis is never mentioned by Plutarch in the *Life* of Timoleon, but it is a theme in that of Aemilius, whose success is met with nemesis, in the form of the deaths of his two young sons, delivered by fortune (τύχη)[49]. The implication seems to be that Timoleon's accomplishments were offset beforehand by his terrible domestic tragedy, just as Aemilius' personal losses were the price he paid for his earlier conquest of Macedon.

One respect in which both Aemilius and Timoleon were fortunate, in Plutarch's

45 For the role of *tyche* in this pair of *Lives*, see Swain 1989a and 1989b, Tatum 2010 and Cairns 2014.

46 *Tim*. 36.4 οὐ τύχης ἔργον, ἀλλ' ἀρετῆς εὐτυχούσης; for the latter expression, see Desideri 2012 (orig. 1989): 214–215, Ingenkamp 1997.

47 *Tim*. 36.5 καίτοι πάντα γ' ἐκεῖνος εἰς τὴν τύχην ἀνῆπτε τὰ κατορθούμενα. Plut. intensifies καίτοι with γε only a dozen times in the *Lives*. The combination is not common in Hellenistic prose; see Blomqvist 1969: 36.

48 So Jacobs 2017: 317, citing *Praec*. *ger*. *reip*. 816d–e, where Tim.'s behavior is mentioned as a model of avoidance of damaging φθόνος, in connection with an anecdote in which the young Plut. is advised by his father to refrain from self-promotion.

49 *Aem*. 22.9, 36.6, 36.9. Following his victory at Pydna, Aem. himself warns his younger officers of the potential risk of divine nemesis (27.5) and he regards Perseus' defeat as itself νεμεσητόν (26.8).

telling, is in the individual opponents that they were called upon to face. None was especially formidable, but Plutarch differentiates his heroes by focusing in the case of Timoleon on the quantity and variety of his enemies, in the case of Aemilius on the character of the Macedonian ruler. For, while the Roman commander is matched against the successor to Alexander the Great, Timoleon is confronted, as Plutarch repeatedly mentions, by both barbarians and a series of Greek tyrants. Susan Jacobs (2017: 307) lists the tyrants expelled by Timoleon: Dionysius (*Tim*. 13), Leptines (14), Hicetas (21), Mamercus and Hippo (34). They had at their disposal mercenary forces and, at various times, they allied themselves with the Carthaginians to oppose Timoleon. Fortunately for Timoleon, the Carthaginians proved to be unreliable allies. Still, Plutarch continually reminds us that Timoleon had to deal with both "tyrants and barbarians," a refrain that is sounded throughout the *Life*[50]. Aemilius, on the other hand, had only a single adversary, but Plutarch is careful to distinguish the danger posed by the Macedonian army from the incompetence of its commander. From beginning to end Perseus is presented as a thoroughly unworthy adversary for the Roman general, who even complains that Perseus' abject behavior at his surrender diminishes the magnitude of Aemilius' victory[51]. The way Perseus is introduced into the narrative, at the end of the excursus on the Macedonian succession, is designed to contrast him with the likes of Demetrius Poliorcetes and Antigonus Gonatas, and Plutarch reports an account that he was not even legitimately descended from those illustrious forebears[52]. He follows this up by describing Perseus as "ignoble and contemptible" (ἀγεννὴς καὶ ταπεινός, 9.1), the first adjective leaving open the possibility that his craven nature may be attributable to his inferior genes.

Among Perseus' many faults, Plutarch singles out his avarice[53]. This is not merely

50 *Tim*. 1.2–3, 9.7–8, 17.1–2, 23.4, 37.5, 39.5.

51 *Aem*. 26.11 τί δέ μου καταβάλλεις τὴν νίκην καὶ τὸ κατόρθωμα ποιεῖς μικρόν; By contrast, Mamercus, one of Tim.'s many defeated adversaries, at least attempts to kill himself (*Tim*. 34.5–7), which is what Aem. suggests would be the proper thing for Perseus to do (*Aem*. 34.3–4) and which another Macedonian – and a woman! – would later do, defiantly and memorably depriving Octavian of the chance to parade her at Rome in his triumph (*Ant*. 86). For a detailed study of Perseus' surrender and its treatment in the historiographical tradition, see PITTIA 2009. BARZANÒ 1994: 405–406 notes the way in which Plut.'s exaggeratedly negative portrait of Perseus contrasts with the positive image he seeks to convey of Aemilius.

52 *Aem*. 8.11–12. As at *Arat*. 54.7, Plut. gives the name of Perseus' alleged mother as Gnathaenion, the form of which would identify her as a hetaera (e.g. *Amatorius* 759e); cf. Livy 39.53.3, reporting that Perseus' mother was an unnamed *paelex* and that he bore no physical resemblance to his royal father.

a contemptible flaw in Perseus' character; Plutarch suggests that it is a major contributing factor in his downfall and, by implication, in Aemilius' success. Critics have focused on the opening of chapter 12, where a distinction is made between, on the one hand, the ease of the Romans' crossing over to Greece and overland march into Macedonia, which Plutarch attributes to good luck and the favor of the gods, and, on the other hand, the skill and daring of Aemilius' generalship[54]:

> Αἰμίλιον δὲ Παῦλον, ὡς ἐξώρμησεν ἐπὶ στρατείαν, πλοῦ μὲν εὐτυχίᾳ καὶ ῥᾳστώνῃ χρήσασθαι πορείας κατὰ δαίμονα τίθημι, σὺν τάχει καὶ μετ' ἀσφαλείας ἐπὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον κομισθέντα· τοῦ δὲ πολέμου καὶ τῆς στρατηγίας αὐτοῦ τὸ μὲν τόλμης ὀξύτητι, τὸ δὲ βουλεύμασι χρηστοῖς, τὸ δὲ φίλων ἐκθύμοις ὑπηρεσίαις, τὸ δὲ τῷ παρὰ τὰ δεινὰ θαρρεῖν καὶ χρῆσθαι λογισμοῖς ἀραρόσιν ὁρῶν διαπεπραγμένον, οὐκ ἔχω τῇ λεγομένῃ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς εὐτυχίᾳ λαμπρὸν ἀποδοῦναι καὶ διάσημον ἔργον, οἷον ἑτέρων στρατηγῶν,
>
> I attribute to the gods the fact that when Aemilius Paullus set out on his campaign he met with good luck on his voyage, had an easy journey overland, and reached the army's encampment quickly and safely; but when I consider that the successful conclusion of the war and his command was due partly to bold and rapid strikes, partly to good planning, partly to the willing service of friends, and partly to a combination of courage and appropriate decisions in the face of danger, I find myself incapable of attributing the brilliance and sheer perfection of the achievement to the man's famous good fortune, as one might in the case of other military commanders.

Both Simon Swain and Jeffrey Tatum cite this passage as evidence that, in contrast to the prominence of the role of τύχη in the *Life of Timoleon*, Plutarch plays it down in the case of *Aemilius*, Tatum even saying that the matter "seems straightforward enough."[55] Neither, however, considers what follows immediately – note the comma that ends the quotation in Ziegler's text – which continues, in my translation, "unless one claims that Perseus' avarice turned out to be a stroke of good luck for Aemilius in his endeavors …"[56] Having just referred

[53] *Aem*. 8.10, 12.3 (φιλαργυρία), surpassed only by his cowardly insistence on clinging to life, 26.7 τῆς φιλαργυρίας ἦν ἐν αὐτῷ τι κακὸν ἀγεννέστερον ἡ φιλοψυχία; cf. 34.3, where Aem. derides Perseus' ἀνανδρία and φιλοψυχία.

[54] *Aem*. 12.1–2, with the translation of Waterfield 1999. Note the contribution of "the spirited service of his friends" (my translation) to his success.

[55] Tatum 2010: 453; Swain 1989a: 324 and 1989b: 275.

[56] *Aem*. 12.3 εἰ μή τις ἄρα τὴν Περσέως φιλαργυρίαν Αἰμιλίῳ τύχην ἀγαθὴν περὶ τὰ πράγματα γενέσθαι φησίν … .

to Aemilius' "famous good fortune," Plutarch then spends the rest of chapter 12 and the first part of 13 describing in great detail how Perseus, because of his unwillingness to part with a portion of the vast fortune that he had inherited, "brought the Macedonians' prospects for the war crashing and tumbling down from the great and glorious heights to which they had been raised by their hopes."[57] Plutarch devotes two whole Teubner pages out of the *Life*'s thirty-seven, from 12.3 to 13.3, to describing Perseus' avarice and contrasting his attitude toward money with that of Philip and Alexander, whose lavish strategic use of cash helped to enable them to conquer first Greece, then Asia. And avarice, as we have seen, is not even his most prominent failing[58]. It is difficult not to see this and Perseus' other deficiencies as instances of good luck on Aemilius' part, who chanced to have this man, rather than one of his more competent predecessors, as his adversary. And it is difficult to account for Plutarch's lengthy recital of those deficiencies as anything other than a subtle but deliberate attempt to diminish the merits of Aemilius[59].

The way in which each of the *Lives* draws to a close may give us an insight into Plutarch's reasons for reversing his usual procedure. If the biography of Timoleon had preceded that of Aemilius, Plutarch would have committed himself to a structural pattern in which the first major event would be Timoleon's collaboration in his brother's murder and the last Aemilius' lavish triumph. Even with the complicating factor of the deaths of Aemilius' sons tempering the magnificence of his triumph, the narrative arc would still proceed from the nadir of Timoleon's career to Aemilius' crowning achievement, thereby unsettling Plutarch's carefully balanced scheme and giving preferential prominence to the Roman general whose accomplishments, as we have seen, Plutarch delicately attenuates. Instead we have a book which traces Aemilius' gradual rise to the pinnacle of Roman success, mirrored by Timoleon's even more dramatic and sudden transformation from failed suicide and virtual exile to the savior of Greek Sicily. The closing chapters of the two *Lives* seem to illustrate the way in which Plutarch has attempted to give a balanced assessment of the two men. When we read them in the light of what we have seen so far, however, he appears to be gently elevating Timoleon at the expense of Aemilius.

The concluding sentence of the *Life of Aemilius* serves as a transition (οὗτος μὲν …) to that of Timoleon.

57 *Aem*. 12.3, in the translation of WATERFIELD 1999.

58 See above, n. 53 for his cowardice, and compare 12.3 and 19.4 ἀποδειλιάσας. By contrast, it is not Tim.'s opponent, but some of his own troops who ἀποδειλιάσαντες ἀνεχώρησαν rather than face the enemy (*Tim*. 25.5).

59 As we have seen (above, n. 51), Plut. portrays Aem. himself lamenting that Perseus' craven behavior risks tarnishing Aem.'s greatest achievement.

The sentence before that purports to record the modest size of the estate Aemilius left on his death, barely 370,000 drachmas, but it has the effect of reminding us that the two surviving sons who inherited it had both been adopted into other families, so that Aemilius died effectively without male issue. By contrast, Timoleon lived out the last years of his life in contented retirement in the bosom of his family, having sent for his wife and children to join him in Syracuse (*Tim*. 36.7). The last sentence of the *Life of Timoleon* refers, however, not to the εὐδαιμονία of Timoleon or his immediate family but to that of the community of which he is the savior and in which he chose to live: "For their part, the Syracusans lived in happy prosperity (εὐδαιμονοῦντες διετέλεσαν) for a long time, having adopted the form of government and the laws that he had established."[60] It is characteristic of Timoleon, as Plutarch portrays him, that his primary concern is with the happiness and the freedom of his fellows. In reporting his decision to stay away from Corinth and avoid involvement in the turmoil of public life, the reef "against which a great many military leaders run aground because of an insatiable craving for recognition and power," Plutarch tells us that Timoleon preferred to remain in Sicily, "enjoying the blessings brought about through his own devising, the greatest of which was witnessing so many cities and so many thousands of men living in happy prosperity because of him" (δι᾽ ἑαυτὸν ἐφορᾶν εὐδαιμονούσας, 36.9). These are the only occurrences of εὐδαιμ- in the *Life of Timoleon*, both referring to the communal happiness of the Sicilians, which is the result of Timoleon's efforts.

That is not to say that Aemilius did not also liberate Greek cities from an oppressor. After defeating Perseus he restored to the Macedonians "their lands and cities, to be occupied as free and self-governing" (τὴν χώραν καὶ τὰς πόλεις ἐλευθέρας οἰκεῖν καὶ αὐτονόμους, *Aem*. 28.6). What is more, they were required to pay the Romans only one hundred talents, whereas previously they were taxed at twice that amount. Plutarch uses the same language in the *Life of Timoleon*; after the liberation of Syracuse, the inhabitants asked to become once again a colony of Corinth, but the Corinthians declined to take financial advantage of the situation and welcomed any former residents of Syracuse or others who wished to do so "to occupy the city as free and self-governing citizens" (οἰκεῖν τὴν πόλιν ἐλευθέρους καὶ αὐτονόμους, *Tim*. 23.2). What is more, the Corinthians agreed to distribute land on fair and equitable terms and to provide at their

60 *Tim*. 39.7, the *Life* ending, as it had begun, with τὰ Συρακοσίων πράγματα (1.1). "For a long time" is a considerable exaggeration. Only about twenty years after Tim.'s death the Syracusan Agathocles returned from exile and staged a coup, assuming power as tyrant in the city.

own expense transportation and leaders for those who wished to return to Syracuse or to settle there. Of course, this magnanimous gesture on the part of the Corinthians was in reality little more than a recognition that there was no prospect of extracting revenues from Syracuse, which was seriously impoverished and underpopulated at the time. Still, Plutarch gives us to believe that the Corinthians' motivation was a reluctance to enrich themselves at the expense of their former colony[61].

By contrast, Plutarch describes at great length the Romans' extraction of wealth following Aemilius' victory over Perseus. The account of Aemilius' triumph, chapters 32.2–34.7, occupies two and a half Teubner pages of text out of thirty-seven. In part, of course, Plutarch has devoted so much space and lavished such care in depicting the opulence of the display in order to magnify the contrast with Aemilius' loss of his two sons, the notice of which follows in the next chapter. It also serves to distinguish the luxuriance of the Roman's reception from the modesty of Timoleon's retirement. Plutarch's account of the triumph is fuller than that found in the lacunose text of Livy, which also follows up the description of the triumph with mention of Aemilius' loss[62]. The amount of booty that Aemilius brought back to Rome was so extensive that his triumphal procession required three days, and the unruly Roman crowds that thronged the route had to be held back by lictors (*Aem*. 32.3–4). They were greeted on the first day by the spectacle of a procession consisting of 250 wagonloads of looted artworks, both paintings and sculptures. The following day began with the display of captured Macedonian arms and armor, polished for the occasion and gleaming, artificially arranged to give the impression of having been heaped up at random and clattering with a frightful clamor as though brandished by a hostile multitude. The remainder of the day and much of the next were given over to the transport of the valuables destined for the Roman treasury, including 2,250 talents of silver coins (≈ $48m), 231 talents of gold coins (= over $400m) and a gem-encrusted ritual vessel made at Aemilius' direction from ten talents of gold (≈ $18m)[63]. Aemilius himself followed, "mounted in a

[61] *Tim*. 23.1 οὐχ ἥρπασαν οἱ Κορίνθιοι τὴν πλεονεξίαν; cf. 2.2, where the Sicilians appeal to Corinth for aid, knowing that the city has always been φιλελεύθερον καὶ μισοτύραννον and that it has consistently fought not ὑπὲρ ἡγεμονίας καὶ πλεονεξίας but on behalf of the freedom of the Greeks.

[62] Livy 45.40.1–8; cf. also D.S. 31.8.9–12. Livy notes the irony of the fact that Perseus' sons bore the dynastic names Philip and Alexander (45.39.7); Plut. names the latter at *Aem*. 37.4.

[63] *Aem*. 33.4. This seems inconsistent with Plut.'s earlier statement (28.10) that Aem. was not even interested in looking at the great quantities of silver and gold that his victory over Perseus secured.

splendidly decorated chariot."[64]

Unlike the triumphant Aemilius, resplendent in his gold-embroidered purple cloak (*Aem*. 34.6), transporting the accumulated riches of the east through the adulatory crowds lining the streets of the Eternal City, Timoleon chose not to return to his native city. Instead, he remained in Syracuse and had the finest of the captured Carthaginian armor dispatched to Corinth, because he wanted his home town to have the distinction of being the only Greek city whose temples were decorated not with arms taken in victories over fellow Greeks but with barbarian spoils (*Tim*. 29.5–6). Plutarch was not unaware of the fact that Carthage and Corinth were later to suffer similar, simultaneous fates at the hands of the Romans[65]. In 146 BC Carthage was destroyed and its population enslaved by, as it happens, Aemilius' son Scipio Aemilianus, for which accomplishment he celebrated a triumph. In the same year L. Mummius sacked Corinth, dispersing its artistic treasures and making dedications at various cities in both Italy and Greece[66]. He too was honored with a triumph in Rome and was given the surname Achaicus in recognition of his victories in Greece (*Mar*. 1.1). Likewise Sulla, at a later date, was to celebrate a triumph for his brutal conquest of "many cities of Greece and Asia," including most notably Athens[67]. Plutarch's *Life of Scipio* has not survived, so we cannot know whether it described Aemilianus' triumph and, if it did, how much detail it included[68]. With regard to the triumphs of Mummius and Sulla over cities in Greece, which surely rivaled and likely surpassed that of Aemilius in magnificence, Plutarch does not mention the former and has only a brief notice of the latter at *Sulla* 34.1–2. Presumably, Plutarch would have found it uncongenial to write at length about Mummius' or Sulla's plundering of Greece, which would not have been the case with Aemilianus' transport of the treasures of Carthage to Rome. How, then, does he bring himself to describe in such detail Aemilius' return from Greece in triumph? After all, Perseus and the Macedonians are not, like the

64 *Aem*. 34.6; according to Diodorus (31.8.12), the stunning chariot was made of ivory. For the magnificence of the triumphal chariot, "which was often used as a shorthand for the ceremony as a whole," see Beard 2007: 223.

65 *Caes*. 57.8: the two cities were refounded at the same time, just as they had been overthrown at the same time, a hundred years previously; see Purcell 1995.

66 See Yarrow 2006.

67 Val. Max. 2.8.7.

68 Nor do we even know whether it was a biography of Scipio Africanus or Aemilianus; see Georgiadou 1997: 7–8. According to Appian (*Pun*. 20.135) Aemilianus' triumph, described as πολύχρυσον, was the most impressive of all; cf. Livy 30.45.2–3 *triumpho omnium clarissimo*, adding that it brought 123,000 pounds of silver into the treasury.

Carthaginians, exactly barbarians. But are they Greek? The uncomfortable answer seems to be that, for Plutarch, they are when he wants them to be[69]. Perseus was a direct descendant of Demetrius Poliorcetes, whose biography, like that of Alexander the Great, Plutarch included in his series of *Parallel Lives*, which otherwise consists of Greeks paired with Romans. But Plutarch does not refer to the Macedonians as Greeks, as he would so refer to the Athenians or the Thebans, nor does he call Perseus or Demetrius or Alexander "Greek," although the last is alleged to be descended on both his mother's and his father's side from legendary Greek heroes (*Alex*. 2.1). Alexander speaks Greek, and he studied Homer with Aristotle (*Alex*. 8.2), but he could also "speak Macedonian," and it is not certain which was his native tongue[70]. All of this means that Plutarch can allow himself to think of the Macedonian Perseus as non-Greek and, therefore, a suitable candidate for display in Aemilius' Roman triumph. Still, Plutarch will have known, and can have expected his readers to assume, that some, perhaps much, of the treasure Aemilius was conveying in his triumph had been accumulated by two of Plutarch's (Greek) subjects, Alexander and Demetrius.

We cannot know how Plutarch negotiated in his own mind the awkward prospect of a Roman general triumphing over a king and a population who could be considered to be Greek. The question is not whether Plutarch knew the history of Rome's conquest of the east. Of course he did. The question is why he chose to describe at such length and in such detail the opulence and grandeur of Aemilius' return to Rome, bringing spoils from Greece. As so often in the *Lives*, Plutarch is concerned to establish a contrast, even, if possible, multiple contrasts. As we have seen, Aemilius' triumph is juxtaposed with the notice of his sons' deaths. And, coming as it does near the end of the *Life*, it sets up the further contrast with what is to come early in the next *Life*, Timoleon's participation in his brother's assassination. The resulting self-isolation and eventual permanent departure from his homeland is the mirror-image of the story of the Roman hero who returns home in triumph. In both instances, the personal is intimately connected with the communal. The death of Aemilius' sons coincides with the celebration of his triumphant contribution to Rome's success, while the liberation of Corinth from tyranny is brought about by the death of Timoleon's brother. In a sense, each man has sacrificed family members for the benefit of his community. When put this way – and Plutarch's construction of this pair of *Lives* encourages us to see it in these terms – a fundamental difference

69 For the contentious issue of whether the Macedonians were in fact, or were felt to be, Greek, see BADIAN 2012 (orig. 1982) and WHITMARSH 2002.

70 In the heat of a drunken argument Alexander uses Macedonian rather than Greek to summon his bodyguards (*Alex*. 51.6 ἀνεβόα Μακεδονιστί); see BADIAN 2012: 293–294.

between Timoleon and Aemilius emerges: The freedom of Corinth is the direct result of the intentional act undertaken by Timoleon whereas the relationship between the death of Aemilius' sons and the Roman victory over Perseus is a matter entirely outside Aemilius' control. It is not clear whether this distinction, on which Plutarch does not dwell, has escaped Plutarch's notice.

The timing of Aemilius' loss is, as Aemilius himself is repeatedly represented as saying, a matter of *tyche*[71]. In introducing the public speech he delivered following the death of his second son, Plutarch says that Aemilius recognized the importance of fortitude in the face of the adversity of fortune[72]. Plutarch quotes Aemilius as saying that, of the things outside men's control (τῶν θείων, 36.3), he has always feared *tyche*, as being supremely unreliable and variable[73]. After his stunning and rapid victory over Perseus he says that he feared the worst, mistrusting his luck (ἀπιστῶν τῇ τύχῃ, 36.5). Once he had safely brought home his army and the booty acquired in the war, he was still wary of fortune (ἔτι τὴν τύχην δι᾽ ὑποψίας εἶχον, 36.6), knowing that none of its bounteous gifts is unalloyed or bestowed without a cost, echoing a sentiment as old as Herodotus[74]. That sense of dread persisted until the death of his two young sons convinced him that the powers that be were now satisfied and that fortune would stand by the Romans safely and steadfastly[75]. For, he says, fortune had made full use of him and his misfortunes as a form of compensation for his successes[76]. Plu-

71 Nor is he alone in attributing his loss to *tyche*. Plut. says that "everyone shuddered in alarm at the cruelty of fortune" (*Aem*. 35.3).

72 *Aem*. 36.1 τύχης ἀντίστασιν. Plut. uses this expression once – and only once – elsewhere, at *Nic*. 17.4: Taking issue with τὰ θεῶν in the epitaph for the Athenians who died at Syracuse ("Euripides" I *FGE*), Plut. questions whether it was really a matter of the gods' involvement or, rather, an instance of bad luck, ἐκ θεῶν ὄντως ἢ τύχης ἀντίστασίν τινα.

73 *Aem*. 36.3 ὡς ἀπιστότατον καὶ ποικιλώτατον πρᾶγμα τὴν τύχην, except that Ziegler's text capitalizes τύχην here and throughout Aem.'s speech, but nowhere else in the *Life*, personalizing it and giving it an intentional capability that is difficult to justify. For Plut., τύχη stands in for the cause of anything that is not readily explicable in human terms, ranging from action on the part of gods or daimons to pure chance.

74 Hdt. 1.5.4 ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τὠυτῷ μένουσαν and 1.32.1 (Solon addressing Croesus) ἐπιστάμενόν με τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὸν φθονερόν τε καὶ ταραχῶδες ἐπειρωτᾷς ἀνθρωπηίων πρηγμάτων πέρι.

75 *Aem*. 36.8 νομίζω τὴν τύχην ὑμῖν παραμενεῖν ἀβλαβῆ καὶ βέβαιον. The manuscripts are divided between ὑμῖν and ἡμῖν, but editors rightly prefer the former, as Aem. has consistently referred to himself in the singular. The second-person pronoun encapsulates the message of his speech, that the Roman people have been the beneficiaries of Aem.'s personal loss.

76 *Aem*. 36.9 ἱκανῶς γὰρ ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς εἰς τὴν τῶν κατωρθωμένων ἀποκέχρηται νέμεσιν; cf. *Them*. 28.4 ἀπόχρησαι ταῖς ἐμαῖς τύχαις πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν ἀρετῆς. For ἀποχρῶμαι

tarch's language is designed to recall his own earlier forecast of this setback, when he described the aftermath of the Battle of Pydna. At that time Aemilius was afraid that his son had been killed in action but, Plutarch tells us, "fortune postponed until another occasion the payment due for Aemilius' success."[77] We are thus reminded that, in addition to the two sons whose deaths coincided with his triumph over Perseus, Aemilius had two sons from his previous marriage, Scipio Aemilianus and Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, both of whom survived their natural father, but were now considered to belong to the families into which they had been adopted (see above, n. 34). Fortune had been kind to Rome, having preserved the conqueror of Carthage, claiming instead the lives of Aemilius' sons by another wife. Aemilius lived for another seven years with the grief of losing his heirs, dying in 160. Plutarch returns to the death of Aemilius' sons at the very end of the Comparison, commending the Roman, in contrast to Timoleon, for his dignified, stoical endurance in the face of the pain suffered at the hands of a cruel fate (Comp. 2.10). It is therefore surprising that in Plutarch's obituary notice we are told that Aemilius, "lacked for nothing that is traditionally held to contribute to happiness."[78]

That Aemilius ended his life childless, then, was a matter of τύχη, whether that is taken to mean random chance or some kind of divinely imposed requital intended to counterbalance the success of his military victory. Plutarch allows us a glimpse of what he has in mind when he speaks of τύχη near the end of the *Life of Timoleon* (37.7). As he aged, Timoleon began to lose his sight until he eventually went completely blind, neither having done anything to bring it upon himself nor being the object of fortune's caprice (παροινηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῆς τύχης) but, apparently, suffering from an affliction hereditary in origin and aggravated by the advance of time.

In other words, his blindness was neither a chance occurrence nor a supernatural punishment, like that which beset Teiresias and Stesichorus, but had a recognizable explanation in human terms. While no causal relationship is discernible between Timoleon's disability and the details of his career, his blindness admirably suits Plutarch's literary purpo-

εἰς (or πρός), see also *Alex*. 71.2, *Eum*. 16.3, *Nic*. 6.1, *Tim*. 16.3. Aem. goes on to contrast his own situation with that of the defeated Perseus, whose sons were still living.

77 *Aem*. 22.9 τὴν τοῦ κατορθώματος νέμεσιν εἰς ἕτερον ἡ τύχη καιρὸν ὑπερβαλλομένη.

78 *Aem*. 39.5 οὐδενὸς ἐνδεὴς οὐδ᾽ ἀτελὴς τῶν πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν νενομισμένων γενόμενος, in WATERFIELD's 1999 translation. This is perhaps only a nod (and a wink?) in the direction of Sosius, the dedicatee of the *Lives* and of the anti-Stoic polemic *De prof. in virt*., for which, see SWAIN 1996: 144–45 and ROSKAM 2005: 220–363. As we have seen (above p. 119), Plut. does not attribute εὐδαιμονία to Tim., but only to the community that benefits from his efforts. Rather, Tim. is the beneficiary of εὐτυχία (above p. 115).

ses. The man who stayed out of sight for twenty years and, even after he returned to public service, consistently maintained a low profile ended his life sightless. In his last years, as it happens, Timoleon became the revered object of public attention and gratitude. In his retirement, citizens of Syracuse would come to his door, bringing with them any foreigners who happened to be visiting the city, "so that they could gaze upon their benefactor" (ὅπως θεάσαιντο τὸν εὐεργέτην αὐτῶν, *Tim*. 38.2). And, whenever they needed to appoint a general to lead them in war, the proceedings of the assembly provided an opportunity for a grand spectacle (καλὴν … ὄψιν, 38.5) to honor him: They would summon him to the theater (τὸ θέατρον, 38.6–7), where they held their meetings, and he would be driven there and back home to the shouts and applause of the populace in a cart, an ἀπήνη, a much more modest vehicle than the elaborate quadriga in which Aemilius rode in triumph[79].

In the end, both men finished up their lives in similar fashion. Aemilius fell ill and, on doctor's orders, spent most of his time away from Rome, in Velia. But, Plutarch tells us, the audiences in the Roman theaters (ἐν θεάτροις, *Aem*. 39.2), because they missed him and were eager to see him, would often shout out his name and, when his augural duties required his presence, he would return to the metropolis. On his death he was, like Timoleon, hailed as a benefactor (εὐεργέτην, 39.8) by those whose freedom he had secured. And Plutarch describes in quite similar terms the sincerity with which the two men were mourned:

> ... ἐπικοσμοῦντα τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τοῖς ἀρίστοις καὶ μακαριωτάτοις ἐνταφίοις. ταῦτα δ' ἦν οὐ χρυσὸς οὐδ' ἐλέφας οὐδ' ἡ λοιπὴ πολυτέλεια καὶ φιλοτιμία τῆς παρασκευῆς, ἀλλ' εὔνοια καὶ τιμὴ καὶ χάρις οὐ μόνον παρὰ τῶν πολιτῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πολεμίων. (*Aem*. 39.6–7)
>
> ... (wonderment and admiration that) added further luster to his merits by providing him with the most glorious and felicitous funeral rites. This consisted not in the gold or ivory or the other expensive and pretentious trappings, but in the goodwill, respect and gratitude that was displayed not only by his fellow citizens but even by foreign adversaries.

> φωναὶ δὲ καὶ δάκρυα, συγκεκραμένα τῷ μακαρισμῷ τοῦ τεθνηκότος, οὐ τιμῆς ἀφοσίωσιν οὐδὲ λειτουργίαν ἐκ προβουλεύματος, ἀλλὰ πόθον δίκαιον ἐπεδείκνυντο καὶ χάριν ἀληθινῆς εὐνοίας. (*Tim*. 39.3)

Lamentations and tears, combined with the felicitations conferred

[79] See above, n. 64. Plut. uses the word ἀπήνη only a handful of times: of the enclosed wagon in which Themistocles travels incognito (*Them*. 26.6), of the 200 wagons that the Parthian commander Surena uses to transport his concubines (*Crass*. 21.7) and of the mule-cart that carries the corpse of Hector discreetly past the Greek sentries (*De aud. poet*. 31b).

> on the deceased, gave evidence that this was not merely a formal paying of respects or the performance of prescribed obligations, but a sincere expression of bereavement and a sense of gratitude born of genuine goodwill.

The expression ἐπικοσμοῦντα τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ ἀνδρός (*Aem*. 39.6) is repeated two pages later. It shows up near the beginning of the *Life of Timoleon* even though it relates to an event that takes place when the hero is about sixty years old. We can now appreciate the echo, and its contribution to Plutarch's carefully prepared mirror-effect, which had been muted by the practice of earlier editors, who printed *Aemilius* after *Timoleon* (see above, n. 1). Even before he launches into the excursus that explains Timoleon's twenty-year absence from public life, Plutarch introduces the selection of Timoleon to lead the expedition to Sicily, attributing it to the χάρις that added further luster to his merits. The Reverend Hubert A. Holden, in his valuable school commentary on the *Life*, takes χάρις here as "grace," presumably Timoleon's[80]. But the sentence, which begins in asyndeton, is explanatory of what had gone just before, namely that "some divinity, so it seems" (θεοῦ τινος ὡς ἔοικεν, 3.2) had prompted an anonymous citizen to nominate Timoleon to lead the expedition:

> τοσαύτη καὶ περὶ τὴν αἵρεσιν εὐθὺς <ἀν>έλαμψε τύχης εὐμένεια καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις πράξεσιν ἐπηκολούθησε χάρις, ἐπικοσμοῦσα τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ ἀνδρός[81].
>
> Such was fortune's affection that shone forth initially at the time of his selection and the favor that attended his subsequent accomplishments, adding further luster to his merits.

Like all people who believe in the existence of supernatural powers, Plutarch struggles to come to terms with questions of causality on the innumerable occasions when it is not clear whether an event is the result of the action of some divine force or pure chance. Plutarch chooses both. The ambassadors from Syracuse come to seek aid from the Corinthians just at a time when, by chance (κατὰ τύχην, *Tim*. 3.1), they are not distracted by external affairs. When the Corinthians enthusiastically vote to send aid to their former colony and begin casting about for someone to lead the expedition, it is some divinity that suggests a candidate. Thus Plutarch presents here in concentrated form all the factors that contributed to Timoleon's success: innate talent (ἀρετή), recognition

[80] HOLDEN 1889: 60 and 272, comparing 35.4 and 36.3. FLACELIÈRE and CHAMBRY (1966) translate "la faveur divine," I think correctly.

[81] *Tim*. 3.3 in ZIEGLER and GÄRTNER's text, except that I have removed the comma following εὐμένεια, which obscures the parallelism of καὶ … καί and suggests that the editors took χάρις in the same sense as HOLDEN. For explanatory asyndeton with τοσοῦτο, see *Alc*. 23.7, *Cam*. 13.2, 20.1, *Lyc*. 29.10, *Mar*. 46.7, *Pel*. 29.3, *Per*. 39.4.

of that talent by fellow citizens, the favor of the divine and τύχη, with the relationship between the last two necessarily uncertain. The grammar of the sentence has the effect of identifying them, with τοσαύτη and ἐπικοσμοῦσα agreeing with both τύχης εὐμένεια and χάρις[82]. That is, "fortune's affection" and the "favor" that attends Timoleon's actions are two aspects of the divine esteem that graces the man's career: The first manifests itself in his commission as leader of the expedition, augmenting Timoleon's ἀρετή prospectively (εὐθύς) by giving his talents an arena in which to be exercised and publicly recognized, in the same way the adulation of the Romans retrospectively enhanced the glorious achievements of Aemilius at the time of his funeral; the second, χάρις, having a reciprocal character, is suitable to his activities as commander, in which he can show gratitude for his successes by making appropriate acknowledgments. That he will make such acknowledgment is clear from 36.5, where, as we have seen (above, n. 47), he pointedly attributes all his successes to τύχη. In what immediately follows, Plutarch explains (καὶ γάρ) that Timoleon often said in both public and private that he was grateful to the god (πολλάκις ἔφη τῷ θεῷ χάριν ἔχειν) for having allowed the record to name him as Sicily's liberator.

The favor of the gods in no way diminishes what Timoleon has achieved. On the contrary, his accomplishments are enhanced, as Plutarch says, by the recognition that is conferred by the divine, which recognition Timoleon gratefully acknowledges. As we have seen, Plutarch emphasizes the similarity between Timoleon and Aemilius by describing in comparable terms the affection in which they were held at the end of their respective lives and *Lives* (*Tim*. 39.3 and *Aem*. 39.6–7), with the latter passage being further echoed near the start of the *Life* of Timoleon (3.3). The echo, however, marks the distinction between the two men: What "added further luster" to the merits of Aemilius was the splendid funeral that he received, whereas in the case of Timoleon, if we have interpreted the latter passage correctly, it was the favor of the divine. And, while the *Life* of Aemilius ends, as we have seen, with a terse statement of his inheritance, calling attention to his lack of male heirs, that of Timoleon concludes by quoting the official proclamation pronounced at this funeral, decreeing that he be honored for all time to come (εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον) with musical, equestrian and athletic contests for having defeated tyrants and barbarians (see above, n. 50), for having repopulated the most important cities of Sicily and for having restored their laws to their citizens. That he was buried at public expense in the agora, where a gymnasium was named the Timoleonteion in his

[82] For the pairing εὐμένεια καὶ χάρις (*sc*. θεοῦ), see *Amatorius* 762b, Luc. *Merc*. *cond*. 1. It should be noted that the only other occurrence of εὐμένεια in this pair of *Lives* is at *Tim*. 30.10, where Plut. affirms that the remarkable affection of the gods (τὴν … τῶν θεῶν εὐμένειαν) for Tim. was manifested in his setbacks as well as his successes.

honor, indicates that he was accorded the distinction appropriate to heroes and city founders[83]. This is followed by the closing sentence of the *Life*, attributing the long-term happiness and prosperity of the Sicilians to their adoption of the laws and political arrangements established by Timoleon.

* * *

When L. Mestrius Plutarchus looked in the mirror, did he see a Greek gentleman or a Roman citizen? It was, after all, as he suggested in his opening sentence, part of the reason for composing these *Lives* to aid in the contemplation of his own life. Of course, he saw both, because he was both. But he had always been Greek, whereas he had only become Roman in his adulthood[84]. Plutarch traveled to Italy and Rome on a number of occasions, but he chose to live out his life in his provincial home town of Chaeronea. He calls it a small city, contrasting it with Rome, and he jokes that he chose not to leave it to prevent it from becoming even smaller (*Demosth*. 2.2). By the time he wrote biographies of Aemilius and Timoleon he had already published his *Lives of the Caesars* and, most likely, a dozen pairs of *Parallel Lives*, in each of which the Roman *Life* followed its Greek counterpart. He does not explain why, in this pair, he decided to put Aemilius before Timoleon, reversing both chronology and his earlier practice. We have suggested that there appears to be a personal motive, about which we can only speculate. The first sentence, beginning with ἐμοί, states that Plutarch was looking at these lives as models for his own, and we may well imagine that the life of Timoleon supplied a more congenial template for the man who preferred the quiet of his home town to the hectic Rome of emperors and triumphs. Plutarch explains that Timoleon stayed away from Corinth to avoid turmoil and political contentiousness, implicitly comparing the latter to the reef "against which a great many military leaders run aground because of an insatiable craving for recognition and power," using an image that Plutarch applies elsewhere in a Roman context[85]. Further, being a devoted family man himself, Plutarch must have felt a greater sympathy for Timoleon, who sent for his family to join him in his retirement (*Tim*. 36.7), than for the Roman who divorced his first wife for reasons that Plutarch ad-

[83] *Tim*. 39.4–7; Nepos (*Tim*. 5.1) adds that his birthday was celebrated as a public holiday throughout Sicily. See SERRATI 2008: 90 and PROIETTI 2014: 207.

[84] It is not known when Plut. became a Roman citizen, but it was necessarily after he had met L. Mestrius Florus, who was his sponsor; see JONES 1971: 22, suggesting that citizenship was obtained in the 70s, under Vespasian. See Jones in general for what is known of Plut.'s life, especially his relations with Rome and the Romans.

[85] *Tim*. 36.8 εἰς ὃν (*sc*. φθόνον) οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν στρατηγῶν ἀπληστίᾳ τιμῶν καὶ δυνάμεως ἐξοκέλλουσιν. For the metaphor, see *De fort. Rom*. 319f (Antony), *Brut*. 1.2 (Junius Brutus), *Luc*. 38.3, *Mar*. 2.4, 45.10 (Marius).

mits to not knowing. Instead, Plutarch tells a story about an anonymous Roman who, in response to those who criticized him for divorcing a chaste, beautiful and fertile wife, showed them his shoe, telling them that they cannot know where his foot is chafe[86]. The suggestion is that it is only those involved in the relationship who can understand the underlying tensions. That may well be true, but why has Plutarch given us this story, which can be used by any man to justify divorcing any wife, when he does not know why Aemilius ended his marriage to Papiria?[87] I am embarrassed to admit that I can think of no better reason than that it serves as filler. Plutarch often enlivens his biographies with asides and digressions, one of the features that make reading the *Lives* so engrossing. But the *Life* of Aemilius has an unusually large number of passages that seem irrelevant to Plutarch's purpose, perhaps, as Simon Swain suggests, because of lack of material[88]: the potted history of Macedonia (*Aem*. 7–8), the digression on the sources of underground water (14.3–11), the height of Mt. Olympus (15.9–11), differing reactions to the eclipse of the moon (17.7–13), rumors concerning various battles from the fifth century to Plutarch's day (25), the details of the triumphal procession (32.2–34.8). Comparable to the last, in both length and detail, is the excursus on Dionysius which, we have suggested above, serves as a foil to the description of Timoleon as someone blessed with good fortune who shuns the limelight[89]. The account of Aemilius' triumph similarly contrasts the conspicuous recognition of the man who persistently strove for success with the personal tragedy that offset his glorious achievement. To have ended this pair of *Lives*, which Plutarch had begun by looking himself in the mirror, with a man whose reversal of fortune was from positive to negative would have been too difficult for him to contemplate.

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86 *Aem*. 5.2–3. The anecdote is repeated by Plut. at *Con*. *praec*. 141a and by Jerome (*Jovin*. 1.48 = II 292 Migne).

87 Elsewhere, Plut. tells us that Lucullus divorced first Clodia and then Servilia because of their vile character (*Luc*. 38.1) and that Pericles and his unnamed first wife were divorced by common consent, allowing him to marry Aspasia (*Per*. 24.8).

88 Swain 1989a: 317–18.

89 *Tim*. 14–15. See above p. 115.

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