Manuel Tröster

Themes, Character, and Politics in Plutarch's *Life of Lucullus*

The Construction of a Roman Aristocrat

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PREFACE

This book started life as a doctoral thesis submitted to Fachbereich III of Trier University in October 2006. The debts I have incurred during its long gestation period are many. Above all, I wish to thank my supervisor Heinz Heinen for his guidance, support, and encouragement until my final examination on 25 April 2007 and beyond. I am also most grateful to my second examiner John Patterson (Magdalene College, Cambridge), who offered insightful criticism and valuable suggestions on my thesis and many earlier drafts, and to Altay Coşkun, who dedicated much time and energy to improving my work, thus helping to mitigate some of its shortcomings.

Moreover, I am indebted to Tim Duff, Christopher Pelling, and Barbara Scardigli as well as to Luis Ballesteros Pastor, Paolo Desideri, Gustav Adolf Lehmann, and Brian McGing, who all made helpful comments on various drafts and papers that underlie the present work. Thanks are also due to Federicomaria Muccioli, to Delfim Ferreira Leão, and to many other members of the International Plutarch Society (IPS) for stimulating discussions about Plutarch and beyond. Furthermore, I am grateful to the Cusanuswerk, which provided me with financial and spiritual support over many years, and to Dorothy Thompson, who kindly organised two periods of study at Girton College, Cambridge. At Trier University, I benefited enormously from collaborating on the project 'Roms auswärtige Freunde', which forms part of the Sonderforschungsbereich 'Fremdheit und Armut' funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Last but not least, I wish to thank my parents Gerlinde and Herbert as well as my sister Andrea and my grandmother Elfriede for their love and generous assistance.

Various aspects of this work have been treated in several articles: central ideas of chapters 2 and 3 have been discussed in a paper published in the proceedings of the 2002 IPS Conference at Nijmegen (Tröster 2005), while the acta of the 2005 Conference at Rethymno will contain a contribution on Lucullus' struggle with the *plêthos* (Tröster forthcoming), which is dealt with in chapters 4 and 5. Much of the argument presented in chapter 3 can also be found in an Italian article published in *Maia* (Tröster 2004). Finally, parts of chapter 6 have appeared in a volume on 'Roms auswärtige Freunde', edited by Altay Coşkun (Tröster 2005a). In all cases, the version submitted here tends to be more detailed except for the points specifically referred to in the notes.

Trier, August 2007 M. T.

1. INTRODUCTION

The political history of the late Roman Republic is commonly written as the history of great men.[1] The Gracchi, Marius and Sulla, and, above all, Pompey and Caesar tend to dominate existing handbooks and many a specialised study on events and developments from 133 to 44.[2] While other figures and forces are not necessarily left out of the picture, their rôle is all too often described primarily in terms of their relation to the aforementioned protagonists.[3] Even if this focus has become less marked over the last decades owing to the diversification of the subject matter investigated by modern scholars and due to the multiplication of their approaches and interpretative patterns, much of their material and hence many of their hypotheses continue to be most intimately connected with those prominent politicians.

In some ways, of course, this is inevitable since the majority of the literary sources relates historical events very closely to the careers of leading statesmen and generals – quite apart from the fact that a large proportion of the surviving texts were even written by those very protagonists. What is more, it is not in itself a bad thing to deal with great men; for individuals do influence history in an often decisive manner, after all, and their actions and ambitions must not be reduced to mere 'character masks'.[4] At the same time, their biographies serve to illustrate and help to understand broader historical processes, socio-cultural phenomena, and the interplay of norms, ideas, and identities. Beyond this, the careers of prominent individuals may be especially relevant to a period that marks the transition from a predominantly aristocratic polity to a monarchical régime. Still, the fact remains that the study of leading politicians continues to absorb a disproportionately large share of historians' attention.

Evidently, the present enquiry, focused as it is on a distinguished member of the Roman political élite, will do little to redress the balance. Granted, the figure

[1] Particularly obvious examples covering the whole period from Romulus to Augustus are Hölkeskamp/ Stein-Hölkeskamp 2000 and Matyszak 2003, both of them apparently responding to current popular demand. Cf. also Bleicken 1995, 6: "Die Auflösung der Republik wird gleichsam durch die großen Gestalten der späten Republik verdeckt".

[2] All dates in this study are B.C. unless otherwise indicated.

[3] In particular, this is characteristic of the prosopographical approach. Cf. – despite his explicit rejection of biography in favour of a study of the Roman governing class (pp. 7f.) – Syme 1939, with the review by Momigliano 1940, esp. 77f. = 1960, 410–413, and the references cited in chapter 4, n. 38.

[4] On the fundamental problem of the interrelation between structure and personality cf., e.g., Schieder 1968, 157–194. Beyond anthropological considerations, the significance of individual political actors continues to be debated by social scientists. Cf. Byman/ Pollack 2001, who argue the case for the importance of the personal factor in a variety of historical contexts, with further references. Also note Tröster/ Coşkun 2004, 497–499. For a rather positivist argument emphasising the rôle of the individual and the element of contingency in the history of the late Roman Republic cf. Brunt 1988a, 81–92.

of Lucullus does not play quite as prominent a rôle in the sources as the politicians mentioned above, and it may justly be argued that the consul of 74 has been neglected by the majority of scholars dealing with the final decades of the Republic. This latter point is undoubtedly important, and the author is confident that readers will accept it as a valid, though hardly sufficient, reason for producing the present study. However, it would be of rather limited value to compose yet another biography that essentially adopts the largely chronological framework shaping both the principal ancient sources and the existing modern treatments dedicated to Lucullus' career. Readers wishing to follow the sequence of events related to this late Republican politician are bound to be disappointed by the present book, and will best be served by consulting the more traditional works by Villoresi (1939), Van Ooteghem (1959), and Keaveney (1992), whose strengths and weaknesses shall briefly be discussed in the latter half of the ensuing section.

Despite being a study centred on an individual figure, the following investigation will be focusing on particular themes and problems rather than providing a comprehensive account of the course of Lucullus' career. Chapters 2 and 3 shall be concerned with the topics of Hellenism and τρυφή, which form the basis for most of the contrasting judgements of the consular's personality as a cultured benefactor or leisure-loving hedonist respectively. Subsequently, chapters 4 to 6 shall address questions pertaining to his political and military activities, both at Rome and abroad, including his relationships with friends, enemies, and the multitude of citizens and soldiers.

As themes, these issues play a central rôle in the most detailed and most influential source dealing with this Roman noble, namely Plutarch's *Life of Lucullus*. No serious historical analysis can ignore the questions raised by the nature of this text, which eludes any simplistic classification in terms of literary genre. As problems, the topics of the present enquiry constitute the background to many of the public debates associated with the 'crisis' and transformation of the Republic. The material to be discussed in the following chapters has therefore not been arranged chronologically or according to the structure of any particular source. Instead, the above-mentioned issues shall be analysed in turn in order to foster a better understanding of Lucullus' career, its late Republican context, and its representation in Plutarch's *Life*.

Inevitably, this approach means that the selection and conceptualisation of the relevant themes is highly subjective and falls short of covering either Lucullus' lifetime or the Plutarchan biography systematically from beginning to end. However, this drawback may be outweighed by the advantages of offering a novel reading complementary to the familiar chronological framework of analysis, thus allowing to highlight the links between interrelated concepts and ideas that tend to be separated in more conventional accounts. Nevertheless, the present study is not designed merely to string together a variety of isolated observations on a limited range of particular issues; for all of the topics to be discussed make an essential contribution to the overall picture of Lucullus as an active and ambitious member of the first-century Roman nobility.

Lucullus and His Late Republican Environment

In terms of the wealth of evidence, the final years of the Roman Republic are a good period to study. Thanks to Cicero and Caesar in particular, far more is known about the mid-first century than about most other epochs in antiquity. However, the documentation is rich only as far as a few people and their immediate environment are concerned, whereas the vast majority of the population, including the vast majority of the political and social élite, remains largely obscure.

Lucullus is undoubtedly one of those whose career is exceptionally well documented, especially with regard to his campaigns in the war against Mithridates the Great, but even in his case there are quite a few major gaps which make it exceedingly difficult to reconstruct, for instance, his political activities in the early seventies or in the wake of his return from the East in 66. Not surprisingly, this uneven distribution of information is mirrored in modern biographies of Lucullus, which are generally structured in accordance with the framework of the only ancient biography available on this late Republican noble: Plutarch's *Lucullus*.

In some ways, the degree of dependence on the biographer from Chaeronea is even higher in the present enquiry with its focus on themes in that very narrative. However, this reflects a conscious choice and will, in the course of the following investigation, often inspire critical considerations regarding the reasons for Plutarch's way of emphasising or marginalising certain aspects. Furthermore, in a study on particular themes and problems there will be no need, *faute de mieux*, to copy much of the biographer's account in order to fill otherwise embarrassing chronological lacunae. At the same time, it will not be sufficient occasionally to draw on the parallel sources dealing with Lucullus' career in order to supplement or to question, or simply better to understand Plutarch's composition. In all of the ensuing chapters, a closer look at the consular's late Republican environment will prove crucial as a way of contextualising his actions and objectives, thus making sense of their representation in the sources. Again, it is important to do so consciously.

The centrality of this concern may further be underlined by considering the conceptual framework of a doctoral thesis on Lucullus' early years (117–75) written by Günter Schütz little more than a decade ago; for his enquiry provides the most explicit and most radical formulation of some of the assumptions underlying the modern standard view of Lucullus as a 'conservative' politician. Deeming his argument basically uncontroversial, the German scholar suggests that the consul of 74, unlike the other Plutarchan heroes among his contemporaries, should be viewed as embodying the type of the late Republican noble *par excellence*.[5] Of course, Lucullus was in many ways typical of the Roman élite of

[5] Cf. Schütz 1994, 5–9: "Der Behauptung, daß Lucullus den Typ des spätrepublikanischen Nobilis schlechthin verkörpere, dürfte kaum widersprochen werden" (p. 5). He then goes on to call him a "*system- und stilkonformen* Vertreter der Nobilität" (Schütz' emphasis), which he understands to mean "Paradeoptimat[...]" (p. 6).

the first century, and the present study will attempt to demonstrate that in some respects he was even more 'typical' than the orthodox views on his extravagance and defective style of leadership would imply.

However, Schütz' proposition is problematic inasmuch as it is linked with a generic norm of 'optimate' behaviour which he seeks to define by simply excluding all comparatively well-documented careers except for Lucullus' while lamenting that the material pertaining to the other individuals that conform to his supposed norm is too poor to allow detailed analysis. Yet it is difficult to see how a single politician, let alone a figure as prominent as Lucullus, can be employed to establish a paradigm for the senatorial aristocracy as a whole.[6] As emerges most clearly in the sections covering political affairs in the main part of his thesis, Schütz actually fails to develop a cluster of standard behaviour on the basis of the evidence, but rather applies his undefended preconceptions about Lucullus' belonging to the 'conservative' core of the nobility, and interprets his lacunose material accordingly.[7] Most probably, a more conscious way of relating the data to the context of late Republican politics could have prevented so serious a conceptual flaw in an otherwise meticulous and exhaustive study.

This introduction is not the place to enter into current debates on the political culture of the Roman Republic, which shall be dealt with in chapter 4. At this stage, it should suffice to say that a less rigid and more nuanced picture of public life and discourse in the first century will be called for not only in the context of Lucullus' political and military activities but also with regard to the related issues of Hellenism and τρυφή. At any rate, the reconstruction of 'conservative' or 'optimate' factions is too simple a procedure to account for the complex and volatile nature of Republican politics.

The remainder of this section shall be dedicated to a brief review of modern scholarship on Lucullus.[8] Matthias Gelzer's contribution to the *Pauly-Wissowa*, published in 1926, continues to be a useful guide to the main sources and many of the problems posed by Lucullus' career, though his style of presentation and some of his judgements are obviously rather dated.[9] To a slightly lesser degree, this also applies to the monographic treatments by Marco Villoresi (1939) and Jules Van Ooteghem (1959), who both follow the ancient sources very closely and are generally reliable but offer little interpretation. The latter author in particular frequently cites various and sometimes contradictory views without expressing an opinion of his own.

[6] However little is known about the majority of the political class, such a paradigm would have to consider both structural factors and aggregate data. Cf., e.g., Beck 2005 with a complex approach to career patterns in the middle Republic. On the hierarchy of the Senate and the influence of its junior members cf. Gruen 1974, 162–210; Bonnefond-Coudry 1989, 593–709; Ryan 1998. The potential of statistical methods is demonstrated by Hopkins/ Burton 1983. See chapter 4 at nn. 89ff. for a broader discussion of the political culture of Republican Rome.

[7] Some fitting remarks about the pitfalls of the factional model (pp. 99–101) do not seem to affect his conclusions. On the substance of Schütz' argument about Lucullus' political activities in the seventies see chapter 4 at nn. 31ff.

[8] A similar overview can be found in Schütz 1994, 1–3.

[9] Cf., e.g., col. 413: "fehlte ihm [*scil.* Lucullus] das Heldische".

On the other hand, the most recent comprehensive biography by Arthur Keaveney, which appeared in 1992, is richer in analysis but sometimes lacking in scholarly rigour. While the Irish historian usefully tries to relate Lucullus' career to its late Republican environment, his regular willingness to identify with his subject serves to provide rather too sympathetic a view of the protagonist's actions.[10] By contrast, the aforementioned work by Günter Schütz is chiefly concerned with minor aspects relating to the early phase of Lucullus' career until before his consulship in 74, which corresponds to a mere four chapters of Plutarch's *Life*. Despite its conceptual shortcomings, the enquiry is mostly accurate and thorough in its argument on particular questions.

Beyond these biographical treatments, the thriving of Plutarchan studies in the last two decades has produced two important commentaries on the pair of *Cimon and Lucullus*. Both contain detailed and excellent introductions, one written by Barbara Scardigli (1989, on the *Lucullus*), whose analysis is especially helpful with regard to Plutarch's sources and his relation to the historical tradition, the other by Luigi Piccirilli (1990, on the pair), who is a specialist on the Greek rather than on the Roman protagonist, though. Further discussions include an article on the *Lucullus* submitted by Gerard Lavery in 1994 and several contributions on the proem to the *Life of Cimon*.[11]

Moreover, two other scholars have dealt with miscellaneous aspects of Lucullus' career in recent years. Thomas Hillman, whose PhD thesis on the evolution of Pompey's reputation between 83 and 59 appeared in 1989, published a number of papers on the relationship between Lucullus and Pompey and its function as a leitmotif in Plutarch. While the thesis is marked by a sometimes excessive reliance on the factional model of Roman politics, the relevant articles usefully serve to reconstruct the late Republican background to various pieces of information that are presented out of context by the ancient biographer. Apart from Hillman, Luis Ballesteros Pastor, building on a 1996 monograph on Mithridates Eupator, made valuable contributions to the understanding of contrasting aspects of Lucullus' public image by investigating his campaigns, his association with luxury, and his desire to emulate Alexander the Great.[12]

In many ways, then, the ensuing chapters will, on a much broader basis, confirm and amplify the basic approach adopted by the latter two historians; for it is the political context of the themes and problems to be investigated that is at the heart of the present enquiry. At the same time, it will be necessary constantly to consider the nature and purpose of Plutarch's biographical composition as the main source informing all modern accounts of Lucullus' career.

[10] Cf. the largely and perhaps excessively negative reviews by Gross-Albenhausen 1993; Rankov 1993.

[11] See below at nn. 49ff. and chapter 2 at nn. 30ff.

[12] All references can be found in the bibliography.

Plutarch and the *Parallel Lives*

In one of the most widely cited passages from his *Lives* of famous Greeks and Romans, Plutarch insists that he is not writing *Histories* (ἱστορίας) but *Lives* (βίους). Quoting this phrase from the introduction to the *Lives of Alexander and Caesar* (1.2), legions of scholars have pointed out that the Plutarchan biographies must not be read as if they belonged to the genre of historiography.[13] This is undoubtedly true and almost universally recognised in theory, even though many historians continue, in practice, to use or to criticise Plutarch according to what might be expected from a Thucydides.[14]

On the other hand, it is also true that the *Lives* are concerned with statesmen, i.e. with the usual protagonists of classical historiography. As a result, Plutarch's treatment is often based on accounts written by historians who are time and again explicitly cited by the biographer himself.[15] In fact, political and military aspects frequently constitute the essential focus of Plutarch's characterisation, which is in many cases based on the protagonists' style of leadership and their interaction with the common soldier or the people at large.[16] Still, this 'historiographical' tendency is not always equally strong since it depends on the nature of the sources consulted and, above all, on the specific interests and intentions underlying the biographer's composition in any given context. For rather than being a mere compiler or copyist of either contemporary accounts or later summary treatments, as many scholars used to think in the heyday of *Quellenforschung*, Plutarch can be seen to pursue various strategies to innovate on existing works and should generally be assumed to have adapted his material to suit his own purpose with utmost care.[17] Furthermore, it would be misleading to suggest that the biographer rigidly followed an unchanging standard plan in the arrangement of the individual *Lives*.[18]

[13] Cf., e.g., Ziegler 1964, 266–268; also Sonnabend 2002, 6f. and 165. On the significance of *Alex*. 1 cf. the detailed analysis in Duff 1999, 14–22 with further references.

[14] On Plutarch's shortcomings – from the historian's point of view – cf., e.g., Gomme 1945, 54–61. Also note De Romilly 1988; Pelling 1992 for comparisons between Plutarch and Thucydides.

[15] Cf. Wardman 1974, 1–10 and 153–161; also Theander 1951, 37–78; Homeyer 1963, 152–157; Stadter 1965, 125–140; Scardigli 1995 *passim*. Formerly, scholars used to hypothesise biographical sources which were supposed to have been based only in part on the testimony of historians. Cf. Meyer 1899, 22–25, 65–71, and *passim*; Leo 1901, 154–177; Uxkull-Gyllenband 1927, esp. 91–99 and 110–112; Smith 1940; Hillard 1987, 21–34; *contra* Von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1926, 269–271; Gomme 1945, 81–84. Also note Barbu 1934, 47–86. For the practical aspects of Plutarch's use of sources see the final section of this introduction.

[16] On the relationship between the Plutarchan statesman and the multitude see chapter 4 at nn. 76ff. and chapter 5 at nn. 21ff.

[17] For Plutarch's way of responding to the narrative designs of his predecessors, especially in the Greek *Lives*, cf. Duff 1999, 21–30; Cooper 2004 *passim*.

[18] Nevertheless, Russell 1966, 149–154 = 1995, 88–94 attempts to describe a "favoured structure" of the *Lives*. Further note the influential hypothesis advanced by Leo 1901, 178–192 on Plutarch's *Lives* belonging to the type of Peripatetic biography.

Notwithstanding, it is often puzzling to see that Plutarch can deal with divergent information in very different ways, sometimes perceptively applying criteria of historical criticism and at other times blatantly ignoring them as he prefers to rely on moral standards related to his conception of human character.[19] While he tends to neglect chronological precision and often fails to grasp the significance of fundamental differences in the historical setting of his protagonists' careers, he is nonetheless anxious to cite alternative versions on particular issues and at times even consults primary sources without, however, conducting any systematic research.[20] Consequently, the purpose of the *Lives* cannot uniformly be defined, but rather oscillates between moralism, which can be of a "protreptic" or "descriptive" nature, on the one hand and political analysis on the other.[21] Against this background, and in spite of Plutarch's aforementioned statement at the beginning of the *Alexander*, the theoretical distinction between biography and historiography as literary genres tends to fade away and cannot rigorously be applied to the *Lives*.[22]

The tension between these conflicting tendencies emerges most clearly upon considering some more of the biographer's programmatic statements. Following Plutarch's remark about composing *Lives* rather than *Histories*, the introduction to the *Alexander – Caesar* goes on to compare the biographer's work to that of a painter,[23] declaring that the author will chiefly be paying attention to the signs of the soul (τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς σημεῖα) (*Alex*. 1.3). Beyond this, various other statements underline Plutarch's desire to focus on his heroes' character (ἦθος) and to present models to be emulated by himself and by his readers.[24] At the same time, there are also passages in which the biographer shows himself to be aware of the problems involved in establishing the historical truth. Thus in the first chapter of the

[19] Cf. Russell 1973, 55–62; Wardman 1974, 161–168; Pelling 1990, esp. 22–35/ 2002, 144–152; Nikolaidis 1997. A more positive appraisal of Plutarch's source criticism can be found in Barbu 1934, 134–149; Buckler 1993; Marsoner 1995/96, 31–46; Badian 2003.

[20] Cf. Theander 1951, esp. 78–82; Buckler 1992; Desideri 1992a.

[21] Cf. Pelling 1980, 135–139/ 2002, 102–107; idem 1986, 159–165/ 2002, 207–211; idem 1990, 29–35/ 2002, 148–152. For the categories of "protreptic" and "descriptive" moralism cf. idem 1995.

[22] Cf. Wardman 1971; idem 1974, 1–10; Valgiglio 1987; idem 1991, 31–35; idem 1992, 3992–3998 and 4014; Gómez/ Mestre 1997; Hershbell 1997; Piccirilli 1998; again Duff 1999, 14–22; Wördemann 2002, 42–51; Cooper 2004, esp. 45–52; Späth 2005; also Mazzarino 1973, 136–138; *pace* Frazier 1996, 32–41, who minimises the 'historiographical' elements of the *Lives* and emphasises their moral and antiquarian tendencies instead. From a more general perspective on history and biography in ancient literature cf. Gentili/ Cerri 1983, 65–90; further Geiger 1985, 9–29 on the particular characteristics of *political* biography, but also note Momigliano 1993, 1, 12, and *passim*, who insists on the essential separation of the two genres; in addition Dihle 1987, 7–22.

[23] For Plutarch's use of this image cf. Hirsch-Luipold 2002, 41–118, esp. 41–50; Kaesser 2004; also Alexiou 2000, 110–117; Geiger 2000.

[24] Depiction of character: *Cim*. 2.2–5, which is discussed in the next section; *Nic*. 1.5; also *Pomp*. 8.7; *Dem*. 11.7; *Cat. Min*. 24.1; 37.10; further *Galb*. 2.5. Imitation of *exempla*: *Per*. 1f.; *Aem*. 1.1–5; *Demetr*. 1.1–6; further *Arat*. 1. On some of these passages cf. Duff 1999, 22–51; also Stadter 1988, 283–295; Desideri 1989, 199–204.

Theseus – Romulus, he compares his work to that of a geographer approaching the margins of the known world and sets out to submit the mythic element (τὸ μυθῶδες) to reason (λόγῳ), and to make it take on the appearance of history (ἱστορίας ὄψιν) (*Thes*. 1.5).[25]

Nowhere does the biographer advance to a more distant past than in the pair dedicated to the mythical founders of Athens and Rome, hence it is most appropriate that he takes the opportunity to talk about the difficulties of dealing with ancient history. Correspondingly, it is upon writing about Alexander and Caesar, whose careers are exceptionally rich in martial exploits, that Plutarch feels the need to explain that he does not intend to give exhaustive treatments of the protagonists' political and military record. Rather than being isolated statements about the nature of the *Lives* as a series, the proems are therefore primarily meant to respond to the exigencies of the respective pairs.[26] Moreover, they should not be misconstrued as 'objective' descriptions of aims and methods, but ought to be interpreted as elements of the author's conscious self-presentation and discursive strategies.[27] There is no doubt, then, that the introduction to the *Cimon – Lucullus* is of special significance to the present study, and it will therefore be discussed in more detail in the following section.

While this enquiry is committed to gaining historical insights from the investigation of a particular *Life* rather than to exploring its meaning as a piece of didactic writing, it is obvious that a thorough understanding of the Plutarchan biographies cannot be attained by trying to eliminate or to ignore their moral content. For the according of praise and blame is absolutely central to the structure of the *Lives*, to their emphases, and to the judgements advanced therein. Consequently, it is of limited analytical value schematically to distinguish what Adolf Weizsäcker once termed "chronographical" from "eidological" elements or narrative from reflective sections.[28]

Generally speaking, the protagonists of the *Lives* emerge not so much as individual personalities, but rather as "integrated" characters with particular and fairly stable virtues and vices.[29] Notwithstanding, Tim Duff has convincingly

[25] Cf. also *Lyc*. 1.7; further *Per*. 13.16, which outlines different kinds of distortion in contemporary sources on the one hand and in accounts written long after the events described on the other. For the implications of *Thes*. 1 cf. Ampolo 1988, ix–xvii; Paratore 1993; Pelling 2002a. More generally on the relationship between myth and history cf. Bettalli 2003, 87–95 with further references.

[26] Cf. Duff 1999, 13–51 *passim*; also Cooper 2004, 34–45; further the references cited below, n. 46, on the development of Plutarch's objectives as the series progressed.

[27] This point is rightly stressed by Zadorojnyi 2006, esp. 103.

[28] Cf. Weizsäcker 1931, 2–9, and the influential critique by Ziegler 1964, 270f. However, also note the more promising approach adopted by Hillman 1994a, who analyses the *Agesilaus – Pompeius* on the basis of Plutarch's authorial statements and their interrelation with the narrative; further the general remarks in Frazier 1996, 48–54.

[29] Cf. Pelling 1988, esp. 257–263/ 2002, 283–288; idem 1990a, 224–244/ 2002, 307–321 with a definition of the term "integrated" character (pp. 235ff./ 315ff.), partly building on Gill 1983, esp. 472–481 (on Plutarch), who distinguishes a moral "character-viewpoint" from an empathetic "personality-viewpoint", with the further theoretical elaboration and some modification in idem 1990, 1–9; idem 1996, 1–18, and with the observations in Pelling 2002, 321–329;

argued that Plutarch's moralism, disturbing though it may seem to some modern scholars, is often remarkably complex and challenging.[30] In many cases, the biographer contemplates alternative judgements, sometimes presenting the same issues in different ways at different points in the narrative, and often adding new aspects in the concluding *synkrisis*. This practice should not rashly be dismissed as inconsistent or careless, but generally ought to be viewed as an intentional and meaningful way of inviting the reader to reconsider the moral questions involved.[31]

Another feature of Plutarch's compositional technique – and one of special significance to the design of the present enquiry – is his way of pursuing certain themes and motifs like the ones to be analysed in the following chapters.[32] These structural elements may concern certain of the protagonists' characteristics or particular fields of action, or they may simply be based on accidental parallels in the development of their careers or in the prevailing circumstances. While they usually serve to structure the narrative of the respective pairs, they can also operate on the level of individual *Lives* or sections thereof, or be common to any number of biographies or syzygies.[33] Evidently, the choice and representation of these themes is heavily influenced by Plutarch's own experience as an author of the so-called Second Sophistic, as an adherent to the philosophy of Plato, and as a prominent member of the local aristocracy in imperial Greece.[34]

As Christopher Pelling has aptly observed, Plutarch strikes the reader as "a curiously varied writer".[35] To some extent, this certainly reflects his disparate source material, but most of all it seems to be a consequence of his multiple interests and of his complex and often changing intentions. At the same time, it may serve as a partial excuse for the frequent use of nebulous terms like 'in many cases' and 'sometimes' in the present section of this introduction. At any rate, it is highly problematic to make generalisations about Plutarch's approach to biographical characterisation and about his way of dealing with historical evidence. Pelling and others have tried to categorise various techniques of re-elaborating source material, concluding that the author of the *Lives* is prepared to amplify, compress, and at times reinterpret information, but usually refrains from large-scale fabrication.[36] Still, this general finding can only serve as a rough guide for the present enquiry and will have to be tested throughout the following chapters.

also Dihle 1956, 76–87; Frazier 1996, 76–93; *pace* Ingenkamp 1992, 4625–4631. Bucher-Isler 1972, 60f., 79–83, and 89–92 tends to overstate the point. Further note Bergen 1962, 66–94; Swain 1989; Lombardi 1997; Thome 1998 on the question of character change.

[30] Cf. Duff 1999, 52–71.

[31] Cf. Duff 1999, 257–286, who calls this phenomenon "closural dissonance".

[32] This is a central point in the numerous studies analysing the technique of *synkrisis*. See the next section with references.

[33] The complexity of comparisons both within and between individual *Lives* is emphasised by Beck 2002, esp. 467–470.

[34] Cf. generally Swain 1996, 135–186. Further literature shall be cited in the context of the individual themes. See esp. chapter 2 at nn. 74ff.

[35] Pelling 1980, 139: "a curiously uneven writer", with the modification in 2002, 107, as quoted in the text.

[36] Cf. Pelling 1980; idem 1990, 35–43/ 2002, 152–156; also Larmour 1992, 4162–4174;

The Pair of *Cimon and Lucullus*

The pair structure, as indicated above, must be regarded as one of the crucial features of Plutarch's *Lives*. While the often considerable historical gap between the Greek and Roman protagonists continues to induce modern scholars to ignore the respective parallel biography, a great many studies on the various syzygies have demonstrated that "no *Life* can be anywhere near fully understood without reference to its partner".[37] Following the publication of Hartmut Erbse's seminal article on the pairs of *Cicero – Demosthenes* and *Dion – Brutus* a half-century ago,[38] classicists have come to realise that the technique of *synkrisis* is by no means confined to the formal proems and comparisons, which commonly form the framework of the pairs, but actually serves to shape the biographical composition as a whole.[39] Beyond the two protagonists, moreover, it ought to be noted that the practice of drawing comparisons regularly involves secondary actors and foils as well.[40]

Yet again, Plutarch's approach is not uniform, and the significance of the comparative element in fact varies greatly among the *Lives*; for neither are his parallels always equally compelling, nor does the biographer consistently exploit analogies wherever possible.[41] However, this insight should not be invoked as a pretext for neglecting the Greek pair in the present enquiry. As shall emerge from the ensuing chapters, consideration of the *Cimon* often adds an important perspective to the interpretation of particular features in the *Lucullus*. In theory, this should also work vice versa, of course, but a thorough analysis of Cimon's career in fifth-century Athens is beyond the confines of this study. Nevertheless, a few general observations regarding Lucullus' Greek pair ought to be made at the end of the present section.

The *Lives of Cimon and Lucullus* seem to be one of the first pairs to have been written by Plutarch; for the *Cimon* is cited both in the *Theseus* (36.2) and in the *Pericles* (9.5), the latter being explicitly introduced as the tenth pair of the series (*Per.* 2.5). Further investigation of the biographer's cross-references suggests that the *Cimon – Lucullus* should occupy one of the places between two and four,

Frazier 1996, 17–32, 43–46 and *passim*. Further see the last section of this introduction on the process of writing.

[37] Cf. Larmour 1992, quotation 4156[9], who provides a useful review of earlier work, and the selected references in the following notes. Further studies are listed in Duff 1999, 250[25]. The *Cimon – Lucullus* has so far attracted relatively little attention, but note the sketches in Fuscagni 1989, 43–52; Stadter 1997, 70–75, both focusing on πρᾳότης and related qualities; also Larmour 2000, 269–271 on the use of metaphors in the syzygy.

[38] Cf. Erbse 1956.

[39] Nikolaidis 2005, 316f. and *passim* argues that most of the *Lives* were only paired at a fairly late stage of the composition process, yet this is unconvincing to the extent that he seeks to downplay the importance of the comparative element. For the pairing of Cimon and Lucullus see also below at n. 45.

[40] Cf. generally Bucher-Isler 1972, 62–68; Frazier 1996, 64–67.

[41] Cf. Pelling 1986a, 83f./ 2002, 349f., with his second thoughts in 2002, 359–361.

with the majority of scholars deeming the third book most likely.[42] This certainly has a number of important implications. Firstly, Plutarch had fairly little experience with his biographical project by the time he was composing the pair in question. In many ways, he was presumably still experimenting – an assumption that is corroborated by the fact that the later *Lives* tend to be longer and more complex than the earlier ones, with the *Cimon* being exceptionally short. As Pelling has convincingly argued, moreover, the *Lucullus* – as well as the *Cicero* – was apparently written before the biographer discovered a major source on the final years of the Republic which guided him in a number of other *Lives* including the *Pompeius*.[43]

Secondly, early composition underlines the importance Plutarch attached to the *Lucullus* in particular. Among the first *Lives* he composed, the lost *Epaminondas* as well as the *Pelopidas* are conspicuous for the protagonists' connexion with the biographer's native Boeotia. Lucullus, too, was related to Plutarch's home region as a benefactor of Chaeronea, as is revealed in the first two chapters of the *Cimon*, which shall be considered below.[44] Furthermore, it is clear that in this case the biographer chose the Roman hero first before going on to look for a suitable Greek pair (*Cim.* 3.1).[45] One may suspect that Plutarch still had a wide range of options upon deciding to link together Cimon and Lucullus, yet it is unknown to what extent he had devised an overall plan fixing at least some of the pairs when the project was launched in the first place.[46]

As for the significance of the *Cimon* for a fuller understanding of the *Lucullus*, the relevant points shall be integrated into the discussion of the Plutarchan themes to be analysed in the ensuing chapters, especially in chapter 2 on Hellen-

[42] Cf. the list drawn up by Jones 1966, 67f. = 1995, 108–111. Also note the earlier studies on the significance of the cross-references by Mewaldt 1907 and Stoltz 1929, with the reply by Mewaldt 1930. Cf. Nikolaidis 2005 for further discussion and up-to-date bibliography. Contrary to the standard view, García Moreno 2005, 229f. speculates that the *Lucullus* was composed as one of the later *Lives* after Plutarch had got access to a Greek translation of Sallust's *Histories*, but this is neither plausible nor persuasive.

[43] Cf. Pelling 1979, and see chapter 4 at n. 66 for more on this hypothesis.

[44] For local interests as a factor in Plutarch's choice of heroes cf. Geiger 1981, 87 = 1995, 167f.

[45] While Nikolaidis 2005, 311 and 317 surmises that this was Plutarch's usual procedure, Desideri 1992, 4479f. considers the *Cimon – Lucullus* to be exceptional inasmuch as the protagonists "si sono generati separatamente e sono stati poi accostati più per rispettare un principio compositivo ormai consolidato che per vera convinzione di 'parallelismo'" (p. 4480). This judgement seems to underestimate not only the degree to which the two *Lives* are interwoven but also the biographer's ability purposefully to employ the parallel structure as a means of furthering his interpretation.

[46] A more or less comprehensive plan is assumed by Steidle 1990, esp. 163–169, who insists on the unity of the late Republican *Lives* in particular. However, Plut. *Aem.* 1.1, taken at face value, would imply that the series was extended far beyond the scope envisaged at the beginning. The gradual development of the *Lives* is outlined by Sirinelli 2000, 302–320; more schematically Delvaux 1995; Nikolaidis 2005, 297–316. Further note the comments on Steidle's thesis in Pelling 2002, 26–28.

ism.[47] This shall include consideration of the two sections in which the biographer compares his two heroes directly, viz. the third chapter of the *Cimon* and the formal *synkrisis* at the end of the *Lucullus*. For the main items mentioned there: military achievements, lifestyle, and leadership qualities are evidently covered by the agenda of the present enquiry. In spite of their being different in emphasis from the rest of the syzygy, moreover, it is important to read these chapters as essential parts of the pair rather than as mere summaries or as isolated and artificial addenda.[48]

The same undoubtedly applies to the first two chapters of the *Cimon*, which deal with events in Plutarch's native Chaeronea at the time of the Mithridatic Wars and record Lucullus' testimony in favour of the town in a lawsuit before the governor involving the murder of Roman soldiers. While the episode itself serves to establish the theme of Hellenism and shall be considered in chapter 2,[49] the following observations by Plutarch (*Cim.* 2.2–5) obviously transcend the limits of any particular leitmotif and shall be discussed right here on account of their eminent significance for the whole of the pair.

Having expressed his enduring gratitude for the benefactions which earned Lucullus a marble statue in the town's market-place, the biographer announces that he is going to produce a portrait revealing character and disposition (τὸ ἦθος καὶ τὸν τρόπον) in return for the favour shown by his Roman hero. This remark closely resembles several other programmatic statements on the main purpose of biographical writing, as has been indicated in the preceding section.[50] After that, Plutarch hints at the implications of his personal connexion with Lucullus for the ensuing account, insisting that he is going to relate the protagonists' deeds according to the truth (τἀληθῆ). "For the favour of remembrance", he continues, "is sufficient; and as a return for his truthful testimony he himself surely would not deign to accept a false and garbled narrative of his life".[51]

Immediately afterwards, however, Plutarch inserts a comparison – similar to the one in the *Alexander* (1.3) – likening his work to that of a painter, and goes on to declare that "in its fair chapters we must round out the truth into fullest semblance; but those errors and defects which affect human actions owing to some passion or political necessity we must regard rather as shortcomings in some particular excellence than as wicked acts of evil, and we must not delineate them in our history (τῇ ἱστορίᾳ) with excessive zeal and emphasis, but treat them as though we were standing in awe of human nature for producing no character which is absolutely good and indisputably set towards virtue".[52] Consequently, a certain ambiguity results from the introduction to the *Cimon – Lucullus*: while

[47] See chapter 2 at nn. 65ff.

[48] The authenticity of the *synkriseis* is no longer controversial since the publication of Stiefenhofer 1916. As indicated above, moreover, note Duff 1999, 257–286 for their challenging nature.

[49] See chapter 2 at nn. 30ff.

[50] See above at n. 24.

[51] Translations are adapted from the Loeb Classical Library unless otherwise indicated.

[52] On the problem of representing good and bad traits see chapter 7 at nn. 6ff.