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TAXIS OU BARBAROS: GREEK AND ROMAN IN PLUTARCH'S *PYRRHUS**

Meetings between great opponents in history are highly evocative. If they do not actually take place there is a strong urge to invent them and, if they do actually occur, they must be imagined with care and described with art. So Sir Walter Scott centres his novel *The Talisman* (1825) on an encounter between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart, who certainly never met;[1] and so Plutarch dealt at length with two 'first encounters' between Greeks and Romans: one in the *Flamininus* and one, the subject of this essay, in the *Pyrrhus*. He also, like other writers, imagined (in *On the Fortune of the Romans*[2]) what might have happened had Alexander and the Romans fought each other.[3] So his account of the battles between the Romans and one of Alexander's most prominent successors was bound to be highly charged.

* An earlier version of this paper was given at the sixth international conference of the International Plutarch Society held at Hernen, Nijmegen, 1 5 May 2002. I am most grateful to the audience on that occasion for helpful and courteous criticism, to the anonymous *CQ* reader, to the Centre for Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies at Trinity College, Dublin, and above all to Christopher Pelling. Translations of Plutarch are taken from the Loeb editions, adapted.

[1] Saïd 1995, 101 2 provides a very tendentious reading of part of the novel's opening, an encounter between Saladin and the hero, Kenneth of Glenalmond. In fact the thrust of the text as a whole is much more about deconstructing polarities than reinforcing them, even if it is done in a rather heavy-handed way. Emblematic of this is the fact that both Saladin and Glenalmond spend much of the novel in disguise: both of their identities are thus problematized in ways more interesting than Saïd is prepared to admit. The close of the novel emphasizes moral kinship rather than ethnic, or even religious, difference, and does not support Saïd's contention that for Scott the general category of 'Oriental' will always reclaim the specific human being. It was indeed precisely the relationship between the two leaders—the specific exceptions to the Orient/Occident dichotomy which clinched Scott's decision to proceed with the novel and to set it during the Third Crusade: 'The period relating more immediately to the Crusades which I at last fixed upon was that at which the warlike character of Richard I, wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry, with all its extravagant virtues, and its no less absurd errors, was opposed to that of Saladin, in which the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty and violence of an Eastern sultan, and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign, whilst each contended which should excel the other in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity. This singular contrast afforded, as the author conceived, materials for a work of fiction possessing peculiar interest.' Scott is certainly working with stereotypes, but he is trying to modify them and to create a more fluid identity for his characters. It seems to me that there are some themes and ideas in play in the novel which can be paralleled from Plutarch, as we shall see.

[2] *Mor.* 326A C, the climax of the essay: see further below.

[3] Plut. *Flam.* 5, *Pyrrh.* 16 25. Alexander and the Romans: see also Livy 9.16.19ff., Braund 1997 n. 6, Spencer 2002, and Whitmarsh 2002, 175 6. Another, similar, set of anecdotes clusters around Hannibal: in *Pyrrhus* 8, which refers to the lost *Scipio*, Hannibal is said to have regarded Pyrrhus as the best general of all time, then Scipio and then himself: this presumably implies imagined encounters between the two contemporaries and the contender from the past. There are other versions of this anecdote: in *Flamininus* 21 Plutarch uses as part of his comment on Flamininus' role in Hannibal's death a version in which Hannibal in conversation with Scipio describes Alexander as the best, Pyrrhus as number two, and himself as third. Scipio smiles and asks what he would have said if he had not been defeated by Scipio, to which Hannibal replies that he would have placed himself first. This is the version of Livy

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In the light of so much excellent recent work on the cultural politics of Greece and Rome in the Second Sophistic,[4] it is perhaps surprising that so few extended treatments of these Plutarchan passages have appeared.[5] This essay attempts to suggest a reading of these passages, particularly the Roman section of the *Pyrrhus*. I have argued elsewhere (and still believe, despite some caveats from Schepens and Braund) that for Plutarch Pyrrhus, despite some flashes of brilliance, is essentially an Alexander *manqué*, a marginal hero who never quite lives up to the promise of the portents surrounding his early youth and who fails on his own terms and on Plutarch's; the Roman episode can be seen as developing Pyrrhus' character, but also opens up larger perspectives in the *Life* and in the pair and is particularly important in representing a sort of pre-history in Greek and Roman relations and in offering a complex narrative that can potentially be read quite differently by different readers, Greek and Roman.[6] As Whitmarsh has noted, discussions of Greek–Roman relations have been invigorated by the application of post-colonial theory, and this study will make use of such theory and terminology. However, it may be as well first to raise a few caveats.

Classicists have tended to be quite selective in their use of post-colonial theory, and with good reason; but it is perhaps unfortunately paradoxical that the post-colonial concepts which have been most evidently employed are detached in classical scholarship from their historical framework—and of all theoretical systems, post-colonial theory is one of the most tied to history.[7] While the questions raised by post-colonialism often ring bells with classicists, they do so despite an enormous number of irreducible historical differences between the imperial experience of the South at the hands of the North in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that of the Greeks under Rome. Furthermore, these differences are often at their greatest precisely in terms of the prime concern of post-colonial theory, namely literature and cultural activity, since these are the very areas where Greeks, unlike the colonized

35.14.5 12, who uses it as a chivalrous episode in stark contrast with the atmosphere of intrigue at Antiochus' court in 193. Note Hannibal's reasons for placing Pyrrhus second: *castra metari primum docuisse; ad hoc neminem elegantius loca cepisse, praesidia disposuisse; artem etiam conciliandi sibi homines eam habuisse, ut Italicae gentes regis externi quam populi Romani, tam diu principis in ea terra, imperium esse mallent.* Livy attributes the story to Acilius via Q. Claudius Quadrigarius. See Briscoe 1981 ad loc. for its lack of authenticity, but that is hardly the point here. It is interesting that Plutarch uses the version which omits Alexander and puts Pyrrhus in the number one slot in the *Pyrrhus*, and records the one in which the punch line compliments the Roman in the *Flamininus*. For an attempt to determine the bravest general in a group of contemporaries see Hdt. 8.123 4: all the competitors vote for themselves and therefore only have one vote each, but they all put Themistocles second.

[4] There is a useful bibliographical summary to 1999 in Whitmarsh 1999 (itself an important contribution to this subject) n. 8, to which should now be added Whitmarsh 2001 and Goldhill 2001.

[5] I know of only two, both by Schepens, 2000 and 2000a.

[6] Mossman 1992; Schepens 2000, esp. 430 n. 48; Braund 1997 n. 9. I would now be bolder in claiming that the *Lives* of the Successors were prepared in the light of the *Alexander*: for Plutarch preparing *Lives* in series see Harrison 1995 and Pelling 2002, ch. 7, esp. 151.

[7] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 1 13 make this clear; they also suggest (3) that 'the study of English and the growth of Empire proceeded from a single ideological climate and that the development of the one is intrinsically bound up with the development of the other, both at the level of simple utility (as propaganda for instance) and at the unconscious level, where it leads to the naturalizing of constructed values (e.g. civilization, humanity, etc.) which, conversely, established "savagery", "native", "primitive", as their antitheses and as the object of reforming zeal'. If any parallel is possible between this scenario and Roman Greece, it would have to be a reverse one: it is Greece which constructs value systems and Rome which adopts them.

nations of the modern period, successfully asserted their superiority over their political masters: Greek, not Latin, is the language of cultural power, Rome only one of a number of competing cultural centres in the Mediterranean. It only makes sense to see Latin literature as a 'branch' of the Greek literary 'tree', not vice versa (and Latin authors are only too uncomfortably aware of that). Greek literature cannot straightforwardly be seen as the Empire writing back to the Centre. So is Greek literature dominated, or dominating?[8] Who is the cultural subaltern? No modern empire can offer any kind of parallel to that separation of cultural and political power, which can be seen most clearly in the case of the status of the Greek language;[9] indeed, at the heart of an overwhelming majority of post-colonial literature and theory lies the assumption that literature and culture have been colonized as surely as political life and territory and that they must in some way be reclaimed, decolonized along with them.[10] So the fact that most of the studies which examine the Greek literature of the Roman period do so precisely from the starting point of how it asserts and publicizes its Greekness, indeed uses it as a strategy for survival *within* the Empire, is perhaps paradoxical.

I do, however, think that it is potentially very fruitful to use post-colonial theory to ask appropriate questions of ancient texts as long as the process of doing so remains a self-conscious one and as long as the concepts used are clearly flagged as to some extent anachronistic. It may also be prudent to be aware of the lurking danger of ahistoricity in another sense. Perhaps we do not always have enough evidence precisely to discern differences between the imperial experience of the first century and, say, the third, but it is *prima facie* likely that there will be such differences, and we should try to be alert for them, however hard that may be.[11]

One of the interesting aspects of the Roman chapters of the *Pyrrhus* is that they construct a sort of historical fantasy, almost like an *aition* in a Greek tragedy, which seems designed to convey something important about the world as it is,

[8] For 'branch' and 'tree' metaphors see Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989, 16 7. 'The Empire writes back . . .' is Salman Rushdie's phrase. For 'dominated' and 'dominating' see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 32 3.

[9] On which see Swain 1996, 17 64. Contrast the privileged position of Greek with the fact that 'The crucial function of language as a medium of power demands that post-colonial writing define itself by seizing the language of the centre and re-placing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 38). This in fact reverses the process whereby 'The imperial education system installs a 'standard' version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all 'variants' as impurities' (7). The decolonizing of language is one of the central features of post-colonial literature and theory, so it is a hugely significant difference. Interestingly, Greek even finds its own terms from within itself for Roman political institutions: it does not transliterate the Roman terms except very late on and/or in exceptional circumstances, or even, generally, resort to glossing. This more closely resembles the practice of a colonizing observer than a post-colonial text.

[10] There are various strategies for doing so (see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 29 32), including, in some countries, ceasing to write in English (or english). Sometimes post-colonial texts are in danger of not being perceived as such by readers, of having their hybridity overlooked (see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 184–5 on *Midnight's Children* and *The Palm wine Drunkard* in this connection); it is certainly very hard to discern any traits of true hybridity with Rome in Greek literary texts of this period (late first/early second century A.D.)—Roman material is treated in a very Greek manner. One must rather look to texts like *De Dea Syria* for Greek hybridity with the East (see Elsner 2001 and now Lightfoot 2003). Later, Dio Cassius might be an example of a Greek Roman hybrid text in that it combines the Roman annalistic tradition with features characteristic of Greek historiography.

[11] There are a number of helpful studies which foreground historical considerations, especially Alcock 1993 and 2002, 36 98, and Woolf 1994 and 2000.

which has some historical basis, and yet which does not really closely reflect factual historical 'truth'. Should we not at least ask if there anything about this fictitious history which makes it particularly appropriate for the specific historical moment of its production? It might be possible to answer that partially by linking it to a more open intellectual atmosphere resulting from the downfall of Domitian;[12] but this is so general as not to be of very much use, especially as *Pyrrhus-Marius* is among the last pairs to be composed.[13] In the end we may just have to note that their imperial experience seems to have made Greek readers particularly sensitive to ironies, dialogic readings, and textual substrata, and that Plutarch exploits this to the full: but at least we have asked the question.[14]

Pyrrhus' meeting with the Romans, indeed, is itself deliberately ahistorical in one way, essentially artificial in its insistence on their mutual ignorance hitherto; even elsewhere in Plutarch we find envoys being sent from Rome to the Delphic oracle much earlier (*Cam.* 4.4, early fourth century), and Wiseman now argues that regular contacts can be pushed back far further than has been thought.[15] But the artificiality is part of the point, not only to increase the dramatic impact of the moment, but also to free the author to create a more challenging dialogue between Greece and Rome. Just as Scott felt more confident in and more excited by a historical novel than one whose ethnographical detail could be refuted by his better travelled contemporaries, so for Plutarch the re-presented past could provide greater opportunities for exploring questions of identity.[16]

The construction of identity is an area of post-colonial theory that has been particularly prominently—and successfully—exploited by classicists, and the Roman chapters of the *Pyrrhus* are particularly interesting in this regard.[17] Identity is a complex and fluid concept in general, and these chapters are especially slippery partly because Pyrrhus' own identity is a very problematic one, as we shall see: as an Epirote his Greekness is potentially contestable (and in the later part of the *Life* it is contested) and it is hard to gauge how strongly Plutarch's Greek readers would identify with

[12] Bowersock 1998, 205, for instance, suggests that the *Parallel Lives* as a whole are part of a 'general repudiation of Domitianic literary taste after 96'. But of course this involves the assumption that Plutarch's Greek readers would have followed the Roman senatorial view of Domitian, which is far from secure, even if Plutarch himself, as a friend of Rusticus (*De cur iositate* 522d e), bought into it. See Bowersock 1998, 200 1.

[13] See Jones 1995, 111.

[14] It could also be argued that Roman senatorial readers had also been sensitized to irony by their experiences under Domitianic autocracy. On irony distinctively used by post-colonial texts, see New 1975, Bhabha 1994, esp. 85 92, and for an application of this to a Greek text, Whitmarsh 1999.

[15] Wiseman 2004, ch. 5.

[16] Plutarch leaves this implicit; Scott makes it clear in his introduction: 'On the other hand, I felt the difficulty of giving a vivid picture of a part of the world with which I was almost totally unacquainted, unless by early recollections of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments; and not only did I labour under the incapacity of ignorance– in which, as far as regards Eastern manners, I was as thickly wrapped as an Egyptian in his fog—but my contemporaries were, many of them, as much enlightened upon the subject as if they had been inhabitants of the favoured land of Goshen. The love of travelling had pervaded all ranks, and carried the subjects of Britain into all quarters of the world. . . . These were powerful objections; nor did they lose force when they became the subject of anxious reflection, although they did not finally prevail. The arguments on the other side were, that though I had no hope of rivalling the contemporaries whom I have mentioned, yet it occurred to me as possible to acquit myself of the task I was engaged in without entering into competition with them.'

[17] For a full discussion of ideas of identity and culture, see Goldhill 2001, esp. 15 20. See also Whitmarsh 1999, 143, and Preston 2001, esp. 87 93.

him. To begin with, though, I shall assume that, unless the text encourages us to believe otherwise, Plutarch's Greek readers would at least initially have considered Pyrrhus Greek in this context, in relation to a series of *Parallel Lives* in which Greeks from a number of different cities, including Macedonians, were compared and contrasted with Romans.

I. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Pyrrhus' first reaction to the Romans is famous, and provides my title (*Pyrrh.* 16. 6–7):

πυθόμενος δὲ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ἐγγὺς εἶναι καὶ πέραν τοῦ Σίριος ποταμοῦ καταστρατοπεδεύειν, προσίππευσε τῷ ποταμῷ θέας ἕνεκα· καὶ κατιδὼν τάξιν τε καὶ φυλακὰς καὶ κόσμον αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς στρατοπεδείας, ἐθαύμασε καὶ τῶν φιλῶν προσαγορεύσας τὸν ἐγγυτάτω, Τάξις μέν, εἶπεν, Ὦ Μεγάκλεις αὕτη τῶν βαρβάρων οὐ βάρβαρος, τὸ δ' ἔργον εἰσόμεθα.

When he discovered that the Romans were close by and had encamped on the other side of the river Siris, he rode up to the river to get a sight of them. And seeing their *taxis*, and their watches, their orderliness and the appearance of their camp, he wondered at it, and remarked to the friend nearest him 'This *taxis* of the barbarians, Megacles, is not barbarian (North: This order... though it be of barbarous people, yet is it not barbarously done); but we shall see what it is in action.'[18]

Thomas Schmidt has carefully examined the many scenes in Plutarch that illustrate encounters between colonizers and exotic barbarians, and this scene is clearly in dialogue with those: Pyrrhus' avowedly imperialist agenda has been made clear in the scene with Cineas in 14; but the normal picture of the unruly mass of savages opposing the forces of order and civilization is here turned entirely on its head, even though the numerousness of the Romans, a regular feature of barbarians, is often stressed (for example 19.7).[19] The piquancy of calling the Romans barbarians, even as part of a paradox, is clearly meant to be felt.[20] The effect of these chapters, and particularly of Pyrrhus' first remark, seems at first sight much like the scene in Aeschylus' *Persians* where the queen asks carefully casual questions of the form 'So where is this Athens place anyway?' and the entire Athenian audience swells with pride at the complimentary responses of the chorus (*Pers.* 230–44).[21] It has the same slightly self-conscious air. It certainly seems designed to please a Roman readership rather than a Greek one. More, the narrative is sometimes actually focalized around the Romans, we actually hear what they say and think among themselves, which is not

[18] Gibbon was clearly struck by this passage: see his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 53: 'In their transactions of peace and war with the Saracens, the princes of Constantinople too often felt that these barbarians had nothing barbarous in their discipline ...'. There is irony in his application of the phrase here: his narrative plays with the competing claims of the Byzantine emperors and the Latin emperors to be the true heirs of Rome; by applying this phrase in this way here, he is intimating that the Byzantines are non-Romans and perhaps foreshadowing their ultimate failure.

[19] Schmidt 1999: on numbers, see esp. 141–201. See also Nikolaidis 1986.

[20] On how Romans are generally classified during the Second Sophistic see Swain 1996, 350–2: they are neither Greek nor barbarian, but constitute a third category. This is supported by the fact that, in addition to his *Greek* and *Roman Questions*, Plutarch also produced a *Barbarian Questions*: see Preston 2001. Pyrrhus' remark and the subsequent narrative can be seen as a dramatization of the evolution of this prevalent Greek attitude.

[21] On this passage, itself more subtle than it at first appears (and than I have space to discuss), see Goldhill 2002, esp. 52–57. See also Hdt. 7.101–4, a passage to which Spartans and Athenians might respond in subtly different ways, and 7.139, which actually anticipates objections from others, presumably non-Athenians: see next note.

the case in many historiographical or biographical narratives of battles between Greeks and barbarians. That all seems very satisfactory for Roman readers: they will obviously enjoy it. But what about Greek readers? What does this section hold for them? They are unlikely to derive the same satisfaction from it, as they are not being cast in a particularly heroic role here, despite the fact that technically Pyrrhus defeats the Romans right up to the very end of the section.[22] They cannot even read the section as tragic in the mode of Thucydides' account of the Sicilian expedition, since there is little pathos attached to Pyrrhus' ultimate withdrawal (see further below). Schepens states that the whole narrative of Pyrrhus' Italian adventure is 'written in a spirit of absolute loyalty'[23] and suggests that 'The implied message clearly is that the Greeks are better off with the Romans ruling them than with their own Hellenistic kings'.[24] He also suggests that

> 'in these chapters the narrative breaks away from the biography of Pyrrhus to what appears to be a βίος 'Ρωμαίων. The author's way of keeping track [he continues] with his proper subject consists in interweaving the Roman *logoi* with brief indications of the reactions that Pyrrhus develops in response.... The narrative thus amounts to a collection of pro Roman anecdotes strung together by the thin biographical thread of Pyrrhus' changing moods ... the dominant feeling which eventually comes through is one of great respect and boundless admiration for the Romans: at no time ... is the psychological portrait a very consistent or persuasive one.[25]

On this interpretation the passage would add little complexity to the *Life* and offer little to our Greek reader but a rather ham-fisted justification of Roman rule, which would be unlike Plutarch.[26] I would like to argue that these chapters are rather more complicated than this and that they are in fact readable by both Greeks and Romans in ways which problematize the moral status of both sides and create a highly interesting narrative in which colonizers and colonized, both in and out of the text, can become hard to distinguish: the Greeks in the text try to colonize their own future colonizers at the literal level, and fail, and Rome's imperial future is foreshadowed at the end of the section in such a way as to point to Greece's own ultimate

[22] On different readerships responding differently to Plutarch, and the narrative techniques which elicit such diverging responses, see Pelling 2002, ch. 12, esp. 215; Swain 1996, 139–45; on Roman readers, see Stadter 2002, 123–35; Duff 1999 rightly stresses Plutarch's multivocal qualities and his refusal to take sides, or to be simplistic, at e.g. 302–3 and 309. For an extreme example in modern times of different audiences reading a colonial 'text' in widely divergent ways, in this case to the satisfaction of neither side, see Chowdhry 2000, on *The Drum* (1938) and *Gunga Din* (1939), films very successful outside India which caused rioting in a number of Indian states when they were released there, as well as (perhaps more surprisingly) complaints from the British military intelligence directorate (quoted on p. 173, on *Gunga Din*): 'It shows the army in a ridiculous light. The troops from the commanding officers downwards commit the most elementary military mistakes, discipline is lamentably slack and, in general, the film is an excellent example of how things are *not* done in the British army.' It was banned in India in May 1939 and 'The British and Hollywood producers were sternly warned (by the British authorities) and told to desist from making such films; a warning which brought the production of empire films located in India to a virtual halt' (180). Audiences and their reactions may be miscalculated by authors, but they matter. Plutarch was unlikely to start any riots, but no author wishes to alienate his readers, and in the case of Roman readers there could potentially be consequences: loss of influence if nothing else, but one Hermogenes of Tarsus (not the famous one) was even put to death by Domitian *propter quasdam in historia figuras*, and his research assistants (*librarii*) crucified (Suet. *Dom.* 10.2, discussed by Bowersock 1998).

[23] Schepens 2000, 416 n. 12.

[24] Schepens 2000, 416.

[25] Schepens 2000, 433–4.

[26] See also Schepens 2000a, 363, moderated somewhat on 364. As will become clear, I think it is more complex than he does.

capitulation; but at a literary level things are more complex: the text can be seen to position the Romans as the colonized, though varying degrees of success in, and resistance to, this project are implied both by the characters in the narrative and by the narrative itself.

I would also want to contradict what Schepens says about the lack of coherence of the episode within the biography of Pyrrhus,[27] and indeed what I said previously[28] about the lack of psychological plausibility here: in fact I now think that this section of the *Life* is extremely important for Plutarch's portrayal of the fault-lines in Pyrrhus' character and for the moral decline he suffers in the final section of the *Life*.[29]

II. SOLDIER AND STATESMEN

One essential feature of Pyrrhus' character throughout the *Life* is that he tends to be at his best when at war, and I have argued elsewhere that this is reflected by comparisons with Achilles and with Alexander.[30] But even before the Roman expedition begins it has become apparent that he is no statesman, at least not of the kind Plutarch would approve: his success in Greece has been due to perfidy and deceit above all else. The expedition is shown in the scene with Cineas (14) to be misconceived, as is often pointed out, but nonetheless affords him opportunities, as in the military passages earlier in the *Life*, to show that he is a gallant fighter.

The Romans, on the other hand, are shown as not only brave and gallant fighters but also as politically mature in a manner to which Pyrrhus cannot aspire (see further below): Cineas in 19 reports back to Pyrrhus on τῆς πολιτείας τὴν ἀρετήν. It is perhaps significant that the term *taxis*, though Pyrrhus clearly uses it of military organization, can also mean 'constitution', and is so used by Aristotle (for example *Pol.* 1271b40). Plutarch has set up the cause of the conflict in a way that interestingly avoids showing the Romans as pleonectic (something of which it would not have been hard to accuse them) at least until right at the end of the section (25.9). The stress on Italy and Italian soil in Appius Claudius' speech and the conditions which are laid down for a Roman alliance after it (19.3, 5) make it sound almost as though the Romans are standing up for the Italians, not absorbing them (and Pyrrhus' stiffest fight is actually with an Italian, Hoplax the Frentanian, at the end of 16); and Plutarch gives an extremely unflattering portrait of the Tarentines, who invite Pyrrhus to help them.

Interestingly, he even omits an anecdote found in Dionysius, Appian, and Dio about the Roman envoy to the Tarentines, L. Postumius Megellus, who addressed the Tarentine assembly in rather poor Greek and was jeered for it: Roman dignity (and educated eloquence) is not compromised.[31] Instead one of the Tarentines' own dubious politicians plays an undignified joke on the assembly and warns them of the dangers of inviting in Pyrrhus. So certainly Plutarch is presenting the Romans very positively; but Pyrrhus comes out well from this narrative too.

[27] See above and Schepens 2000a, 350.

[28] Mossman 1992, 101.

[29] Mossman 1992, 101 now seems quite wrong to me: 'Plutarch rather unconvincingly and with rather perfunctory motivation allows him to turn into a tyrant overnight before he leaves the storm-tossed ship (23.7) of Sicily and returns to Italy.'

[30] Mossman 1992, *passim*.

[31] L. Postumius Megellus: see Dion. Hal. 19.5.1 5; App. *Samn.* 7.2, Dio fr. 39, 6–9 and Cornell 1995, 363 4 on Pyrrhus, Rome, and Italy at this time.

Although Pyrrhus does spoil the Tarentines' way of life as Meton warned he would, it is all in the good cause of military discipline. This passage strongly recalls the behaviour of Dionysius the Phocaean in Herodotus 6.12, who tries, but unfortunately fails, to discipline the Ionians. Both the Ionians in Herodotus and the Tarentines in Plutarch regard military discipline as slavery.[32] So, by assimilating—paradoxically—the Dorian Tarentines to the effete Ionians and contrasting them with Pyrrhus, Plutarch enables him, as well as the Romans, to be presented positively in terms of the military virtues;[33] indeed the focus is uninterruptedly on him during the fighting. It is when he is not fighting that the narrative takes a more surprising turn.

III. NOBLE SAVAGES

We know, after all, that Romans are good at fighting: but we might have expected them to be rather less cultivated in other ways: that would fit in extremely well with the other half of the pair and the notoriously uncultivated Marius. But, perhaps surprisingly, the Romans are not uncouth: instead they are made to resemble those barbarian figures who embody a wisdom which their would-be conquerors can only admire (hence, perhaps, the omission of the Megellus anecdote).[34] This impression is present during Cineas' mission to Rome in 19, where he takes care *τῶν τε βίων γενέσθαι θεατὴν καὶ τῆς πολιτείας τὴν ἀρετὴν κατανοῆσαι*[35] and is particularly strengthened by the scornful reaction of Fabricius to Cineas' exposition of Epicureanism (Plutarch's least favourite philosophical doctrine!), and by his sublime indifference to Pyrrhus' childish practical joke, when he tries to surprise and terrify Fabricius by suddenly revealing a concealed elephant in 20.[36] There are resemblances between Fabricius and the philosophers in chapter 65 of the *Alexander*, who refuse to be impressed by their visitors (Dandamis will only ask 'Why did he [Alexander] come so far?' according to one version, and according to another says that Socrates, Pythagoras, and Diogenes were just too obsessed with rules to be truly wise). Of course there is a difference in tone: the Indians are

[32] Note also 16.2 *λόγῳ διεστρατήγουν* and contrast Pyrrhus' concentration on *ἔργον* in his response to the Romans. See also Buszard, 2005.

[33] Braund 1997, 3 and n. 7 connects this with Pyrrhus' lack of enthusiasm for the flute and education, which would fit with the *Marius* in stressing Pyrrhus' lack of *paideia*; but the Tarentines are persistently characterized as worthless. See *Pyrrhus* 13.4 5, 11 and Buszard 2005.

[34] It is perhaps because he wished to present the Romans in this unusual way that Plutarch does not exploit any tradition of them as latter day Trojans, in contrast to Pausanias 1.112.11, which has Pyrrhus drawing a parallel between his expedition as a descendant of Achilles against the descendants of the Trojans and the Trojan War. Clearly this story would have fitted beautifully with Plutarch's presentation of Pyrrhus as emulating Alexander and Achilles. The source of the story is unclear, but none of the most popular candidates was unknown to Plutarch and, if it is invented, Plutarch might have invented it just as easily as Pausanias: but though it fits beautifully with his picture of Pyrrhus, it does not fit with his picture of the Romans. The passage and its source are discussed by Erskine 2001, 157 61.

[35] The vocabulary of this expression seems designed to recall obliquely both Herodotus (*θεατὴν* ≈ *θεωρίης* 1.29 30, of Solon) and perhaps the *Odyssey* (*κατανοῆσαι* ≈ *νόον ἔγνω* 1.3).

[36] On the Fabricius anecdotes as a group, see Schepens 2000a, 350, 356 8. In the context of the pair as a whole it is interesting that Fabricius is naturally able to remain calm even in the face of a *θηρίον* which is utterly alien to him; Marius, on the other hand, must carefully train his soldiers to withstand the unfamiliar threat of the barbarians with their *ἀλλόκοτον καὶ θηριώδη* language in *Marius* 16. This change from nature to culture neatly expresses the Romans' different roles in the two *Lives*. The barbarians in *Marius* are regularly described as subhuman: see also 6.2, 20.3, and perhaps also 25.10.

extraordinarily exotic, whereas the Romans are given a Livian simplicity (Livy seems particularly close in the story of their sending back the perfidious doctor who offers to poison Pyrrhus for them in 21, which may indeed be a Roman story),[37] and a scrupulous integrity. Elephants, so frightening and barbaric in the *Alexander*, are here transported westwards to frighten the 'barbarians' who inhabit the portion of the world opposite to Alexander's sphere of operation; but both in the East and the West the inhabitants have their own alien wisdom and indigenous culture which should, and does, impress their would-be conquerors. A Herodotean analogy would be the way in which Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetae, in Book 1 (206) and the King of the Ethiopians in Book 3 (21), though very different and representing extremes of various kinds, both reproach the Persians for coveting countries that are not theirs.[38] The textual strategy of presenting the Romans as 'noble savages', however, is a remarkable one, and, it seems to me, invests this section with a subtle irony. Pyrrhus wants to conquer—'colonize'—the Romans (ἕξομεν, 14. 6), whose cultural strength then diverts him into seeking an alliance and wooing them with gifts, wildly generous terms, and so on; but they remain not to be won. Are both Greek and Roman readers here meant to detect a reverse parallel with their own day?[39] Possibly—but there are multiple strands of meaning here. In the rest of this portion of my essay I will argue (1) that Plutarch had other possible ways of portraying early Rome open to him; (2) that it is important not to lose sight of the effect using this strategy has on the characterization of Pyrrhus; and (3) that the way that Pyrrhus relates to these early Romans in turn suggests that figuring them as 'noble savages' does not in this case exclude a multivocal presentation of Roman culture—it can still be seen as ambivalent and complex.

(1) That it was by no means necessary to portray early Romans in this way is evident from the *Camillus*, where for much of the *Life* Rome of the early fourth century is made to seem a sophisticated, luxurious, and even, perhaps, senescent, society compared with the Gauls. So in *Camillus* 15 we are told that the barbarically numerous Gauls are attracted to Italy by the (to them) wonderful new invention of wine. There is a good deal of emphasis on the wealth of Italy and Rome (for example 2.3, 5.5, 6.2, 6.14, 23.5, 29.4–5), usually in the context of its becoming someone else's booty. Chapter 22 is also important, the scene where the silent, aged (21.2), senators sit mum and motionless until one of the Gauls naïvely strokes Papirius' beard; when he strikes the man, slaughter breaks out. This account of the sack is most interestingly prefaced at the start of the chapter by Plutarch's account of how a garbled version reached Greece:

Τοῦ μέντοι πάθους αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἁλώσεως ἔοικεν ἀμυδρά τις εὐθὺς εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα φήμη διελθεῖν. Ἡρακλείδης γὰρ ὁ Ποντικὸς οὐ πολὺ τῶν χρόνων ἐκείνων ἀπολειπόμενος ἐν τῷ Περὶ ψυχῆς συγγράμματί φησιν ἀπὸ τῆς ἑσπέρας λόγον κατασχεῖν, ὡς στρατὸς ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων ἐλθὼν ἔξωθεν ἠρήκοι πόλιν Ἑλληνίδα Ῥώμην, ἐκεῖ που κατῳκημένην περὶ τὴν μεγάλην θάλασσαν. οὐκ

[37] Garoufalias 1979, 198. The whole incident is very reminiscent of the story of Camillus and the schoolmaster at Livy 5.27; the narrative is strikingly similar, especially at the start, to Plutarch's account of that incident at *Camillus* 10, even down to the comparison with Greek educational practice (5.27.1 = *Cam.* 10.1 2). Also, the patterning of Pyrrhus' encounter with Hoplax the Frentanian in *Pyrrhus* 16 is similar to the clash between Herminius and Mamilius at the Battle of Lake Regillus (Livy 2.20.8 10).

[38] See Romm 1992, 45–81 on this theme.

[39] This textual strategy takes to extremes the phenomenon observable in the *Greek* and *Roman Questions*, succinctly described by Whitmarsh (2002, 178): 'Greece is analysed from within, Rome as though it were an object of anthropological curiosity.' See also Preston 2001 for further nuances.

ἂν οὖν θαυμάσαιμι μυθώδη καὶ πλασματίαν ὄντα τὸν Ἡρακλείδην ἀληθεῖ λόγῳ τῷ περὶ τῆς ἁλώσεως ἐπικομπάσαι τοὺς Ὑπερβορέους καὶ τὴν μεγάλην θάλατταν. Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ ὁ φιλόσοφος τὸ μὲν ἁλῶναι τὴν πόλιν ὑπὸ Κελτῶν ἀκριβῶς δῆλός ἐστιν ἀκηκοώς, τὸν δὲ σώσαντα Λεύκιον εἶναί φησιν· ἦν δὲ Μάρκος, οὐ Λεύκιος, ὁ Κάμιλλος. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν εἰκασμῷ λέλεκται.

However, it seems that some vague news of its suffering and capture immediately got as far as Greece. For Heraclides of Pontus, who lived not long after those days, says in his treatise *On the Soul* that a story was current from the West that an army from the Hyperboreans came from afar and captured Rome, a Greek city settled somewhere there on the great sea. Now I would not be surprised that Heraclides, being a fabulous and fictitious author, should add to the true story of the sack exaggerations about Hyperboreans and the great sea. But Aristotle the philosopher had clearly heard accurately that the city had been taken by Celts, yet he says that the one who saved it was Lucius; but Camillus was Marcus, not Lucius. But these things have been said out of conjecture.

On the one hand this passage seems to distance the whole struggle between Romans and Gauls: Greece, it is implied, is the true centre of the world and the importance of these events can be gauged by whether or not Greece has heard of them. The shadowy geography of Heraclides, and even the error of the better-informed Aristotle about something as fundamental as Camillus' name, seems to relegate Rome to the edge of civilization. And yet Heracleides' description of Rome as a Greek city, though mistaken, both implies a high degree of civilization in keeping with the rest of the narrative and the contrast with the Gauls and 'zooms' the (Greek) reader's sympathies back with the Romans: these people can be thought of as 'like us', despite geography.[40] This is quite different from Plutarch's technique in the *Pyrrhus*, where he is largely insisting on the differences between Romans and Greeks. Perhaps this different emphasis is simply due to the contrast between a Greek *Life* and a Roman one; perhaps it is necessary to any *Life* if some real, unambiguously barbaric, barbarians are to play a part in it.

(2) Cultural encounter, in any case, notoriously supplants any clear impression of the political actualities of the negotiations between Pyrrhus and the Romans,[41] partly because it affords opportunities for characterizing early Rome, but also because it is more illuminating for characterizing Pyrrhus. Pyrrhus' reactions to the Romans are rather more interesting and important than Schepens allows: originally he wonders at them (ἐθαύμασε, 16.7); then they astound him by the speed of their recovery (18. 2, ἔκπληξιν παρεῖχον); then he wonders at Fabricius (20.8, θαυμάσας again).[42] These are not changing moods: they are consistent expressions of admiration, which also allow him to show a degree of magnanimity himself. In particular, in 20, when he invites Fabricius to come and live with him in Greece and Fabricius retorts that it would be unwise from Pyrrhus' point of view as the Greeks would undoubtedly prefer to have Fabricius rule over them than Pyrrhus, he does not react angrily or τυραννικῶς, but tells his friends of Fabricius' μεγαλοφροσύνη, and thus displays the same quality himself.

(3) What do we make of Fabricius' remark? Schepens takes it as loyalism *tout court*; but can we be so sure? After all, a Greek reader might say, a Roman would

[40] On 'zooming' and 'distancing' see Sourvinou-Inwood 1989, 136, and (used very slightly differently) 1997, 254 5.

[41] On the negotiations, see Lefkowitz 1959 and Garoufalias 1979, 171 85. See also Schepens 2000a, 351 2.

[42] A rather Herodotean usage: see Powell 1977 s.v. θωμάζω and cognates. There may also be overtones of the θάμβος felt by Achilles and the other Greeks at Priam's audacity at *Il.* 24. 482 4.

say that, wouldn't he? The Romans in this section are by no means obviously right when they make assertions or assumptions about the Greeks: Fabricius' assumption that Pyrrhus himself is an Epicurean, for instance, is rather easily refuted by the reader, since Pyrrhus has already shown in 14 that he is incapable of a proper Epicurean attitude to pleasure. In any case, how much resemblance is there between these Romans of long ago, and latter-day Romans, not only those of Plutarch's own day who, after all, no longer live in a republic, but even those of the later years of the republic, the heirs of those who conquered Greeks, as depicted in the *Marius*? Buszard has made a good case for the idea that this pair depicts among other things the decline of the Roman republic, and in particular the erosion of its unity—and of course Plutarch never discusses figures who post-date the republic in the *Parallel Lives*.[43]

That said, Fabricius is taken very seriously as an icon of early Roman virtue, as later Romans certainly would have seen him, filtered through the elder Cato and Ennius; but there might also be reasons for preferring him to Pyrrhus as a ruler that had nothing to do with his being a Roman: namely that very virtue which Pyrrhus does not, or does not consistently, possess. Then, too, Fabricius is a prominent participant in a state with an admirable constitution, as we have seen. Pyrrhus is, for Plutarch's purposes, an absolute monarch,[44] who is always in danger of behaving tyrannically. Unlike Alexander, who emerges as more politically sophisticated than, say, Porus in *Alexander* 60, Pyrrhus is less so than the Romans almost by definition.[45]

A factor that further complicates reader perception of the Roman state is that it is partly observed through the filter of Cineas. His remarks on it deserve further attention: when he reports on the wonders of Rome at 19.6 he describes the Senate as a βασιλέων πολλῶν συνέδριον. A more back-handed compliment, at least from the point of view of a Roman reader, could hardly be imagined,[46] and it gives Cineas a curiously naïve air (and he *is* an Epicurean, or at least is pictured expounding

[43] Buszard, 2005. There is a concentration in Plutarch's choice of subjects on the later republic and especially on figures who can be seen as contending for kingship or attempting to prevent others from doing so: Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Cicero, Brutus, Antony. Of these some are also responsible for repression in Greece as well as elsewhere (Sulla, Antony). Once Plutarch had produced his series of *Lives of the Caesars*, the choice of subjects in the imperial period would have been greatly diminished. On the dates of the *Caesars* and the *Parallel Lives* see Jones 1995, 95 123, esp. 116; see also Bowersock 1998, and for a different view Geiger 1975.

[44] On Pyrrhus' exact political status see Hammond 1967, 570 1; Garoufalias 1979, 171 85.

[45] Schmidt has pointed out (2004, 229) that absolute monarchy can be seen as a barbaric trait in and of itself; if this is meant to be felt, it has very interesting implications for the Roman reader of Plutarch. Buszard (2005) makes the interesting point that in the first, Epirote, part of the life, although popular opinion is politically important, political activity on the part of the people is not really portrayed in detail, unlike the accounts of assemblies at Rome and Tarentum in this section.

[46] βασιλεύς is generally used by Plutarch in a Roman context of the seven kings of early Rome, with whom it is unlikely a Roman Senate would wish to be compared. Its cognates are occasionally used by Plutarch of the Roman emperors, though sometimes with pejorative overtones (e.g. *Amat.* 771c, where Empona uses it in a scornful speech to Vespasian) and never as part of an official title or in a political context. See Mason 1974, 120 1: 'βασιλεύς, the title *par excellence* of the Hellenistic monarchs, never in the central period entered the official language of Rome; not until well into the Byzantine period would a Roman emperor style himself in formal documents βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων ... [he cites an inscription, *SEG* 17.759, the minutes of a *cognitio* of Caracalla, where the emperor refers to himself as αὐτοκράτωρ, but is described by the advocate as εὐσεβεστάτῳ βασιλεῖ καὶ δικαστῇ 'a nice distinction between the formal language employed by the emperor and the *Graeca adulatio* of the lawyer'] ... βασιλεύς is applied to the emperor in verse as early as the time of Augustus, in a poem of Antipater of Thessaly (AP 10.25). But in prose, βασιλεύς is not employed before the second

Epicureanism to Fabricius).[47] Perhaps it is intended as a somewhat Homeric description, conveying a primitive virtue and nobility? If so, it is a very Greek thing to say, and does not imply that Cineas has learnt much in his conversations with 'the best people'.

Perhaps a more direct insight into the Roman polity is provided by the comparison, implicit in the narrative, of Rome with Tarentum. Tarentum is indeed another democracy, but such a comparison is very much in Rome's favour: the Tarentines are at the mercy of irresponsible demagogues and warmongers (*πολεμοποῖων*, 13. 5), honest citizens are keeping away from the assembly, which is an *ὄχλος δημοκρατίας κόσμον οὐκ ἐχούσης* (13.7), and which is manipulated by demagogues who are afraid for their own safety. Rome, on the other hand, has a population that is disciplined not only on the battlefield but also in the face of Pyrrhus' gifts (18.5: and that includes women! *πάντες καὶ πᾶσαι*).[48]

Finally, of course, we actually see Appius Claudius in action. Unlike the older Tarentines at 13.5 he is not to be intimidated away from the assembly, and indeed is received by that sober body with the deepest respect: 18.8–9 is a quite elaborate description of his arrival and reception that must be intended partly to contrast with the Tarentines and partly to prepare the reader for his climactic speech.

Appius Claudius' speech against Pyrrhus was a famous one, preserved at least until Cicero's day and considered an early example of high eloquence,[49] though there is no evidence as to its actual content, and it seems to me more than likely that even if he knew the original speech Plutarch will have adapted it freely. In particular, the reference to Alexander is important here: Appius wishes himself deaf as well as blind in order to be oblivious of the dishonourable proposals before the Senate and continues (19.2):

Ποῦ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὁ πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους θρυλούμενος ἀεὶ λόγος, ὡς εἰ παρῆν ἐκεῖνος εἰς Ἰταλίαν ὁ μέγας Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ συνηνέχθη νέοις ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς πατράσιν ἡμῶν ἀκμάζουσιν, οὐκ ἂν ὑμνεῖτο νῦν ἀνίκητος, ἀλλ' ἢ φυγὼν ἂν ἤ που πεσὼν ἐνταῦθα τὴν Ῥώμην ἐνδοξοτέραν ἀπέλιπε;

century ... *βασιλεύς* and related words begin to occur in inscriptions, though not yet in formal titulature, about the time of Hadrian ... examples gradually increase during the second century.... In general these do not employ the word in formal titles but merely in casual refer ences.' Jones 1995, 97 8 must surely be right that *De tranquillitate animi* 467e refers to the kings and not to the emperors. The term is nowhere else applied to senators and it is clearly a metaphorical expression. But even if it conjures up emperors as well as early kings, it still has an uncomfortable element for a Roman reader, indeed perhaps foreshadows the picture given in the *Marius* of rival senators setting themselves up as candidates for (virtual) sole rule. Did Plutarch know of Tiberius' dismissal of the Senate as *o homines ad seruitutem paratos!* (Tac. *Ann.* 3.65.3)? If so, there might be another irony in the contrast between the republican Senate and the Senate under the emperors.

[47] The moral status of Cineas is not entirely clear cut. On the one hand, 14 establishes him as wiser than Pyrrhus, as he Socratically interrogates him and exposes the futility of his restless ambition; on the other hand, at the beginning of this conversation he is described not as a phi losopher but as an orator, a pupil of Demosthenes, and as a spokesman for Epicureanism is fal lible, more like Callisthenes in the *Alexander* than like Solon in the *Solon.*

[48] See Buszard, 2005. In the *Marius* the women of the far more obviously barbaric nations are much to the fore, usually in dismal contexts as befits the atmosphere of the darker *Life*: see 19 and 27.

[49] On Appius Claudius' speech, see Cic. *Brut.* 55, 61 and *Sen.* 16: *Ad Appi Claudi senectu tem accedebat etiam ut caecus esset; tamen is, cum sententia senatus inclinaret ad pacem cum Pyrrho foedusque faciendum, non dubitauit dicere illa, quae uersibus persecutus est Ennius:*

Quo uobis mentes, rectae quae stare solebant
antehac, dementis sese flexere uiai?

cetera grauissime, notum enim uobis carmen est, et tamen ipsius Appi exstat oratio.

For what has become of your boast which you always repeated to all men, that if the famous Alexander the Great had invaded Italy, and encountered us when we were young men and our fathers when they were in their prime, he would not now be praised as unconquered, but would either have fled or perhaps have fallen here and so left Rome more glorious?

We have already touched on the counterfactual historical tradition that liked to wonder what would have happened if Alexander and the Romans had met on the field of battle (see n. 2 above): normally this trope was used by Greeks (somewhat to the annoyance of Livy, at least, who says the '*leuissimi e Graecis*'claim Alexander would have won and responds rather grumpily to that).[50] Plutarch himself elsewhere seems to imply that the Romans were frankly pretty lucky to have avoided the encounter: it is part of their good fortune in the *Moralia* (*On the fortune of the Romans*) that they never had to try to beat Alexander. Here, on the other hand, a Roman uses the *topos*, and the effect is very complicated. Obviously, Appius' point is to shame the Romans into tackling Pyrrhus: they are in danger of becoming like the Tarentines and fighting in words only. To achieve this he belittles Pyrrhus and his men as not even Macedonian (a point to which we should return), and not even having a direct link with Alexander (which must form part of the dialogue in the *Life* as a whole around Pyrrhus' worthiness, or lack of it, to be compared with Alexander): Appius' scornful words ὅς τῶν Ἀλεξάνδρου δορυφόρων ἕνα γοῦν ἀεὶ περιέπων καὶ θεραπεύων διατετέληκε ('who has spent his time constantly attending and serving one or other of Alexander's bodyguards') contrast with the Macedonians' view in chapter 8 that 'it was Pyrrhus alone who could remind them of him [Alexander] in arms and in action'. But what does the speaker's rhetoric convey about his own character? Although Appius is an awe-inspiring figure, his counterfactual history does not actually compel belief in any reader on either side: once again, a Greek reader's response might well be: well, he would say that, wouldn't he?[51] And as the speech goes on, a considerable level of wilful ignorance is displayed: the whole of 14 has been making the point that Pyrrhus could perfectly well have stayed in Epirus, so Appius' charge that he is only escaping his enemies is, the reader knows, false. Nor, in fact, was it his army which was not good enough to hold Macedonia, as Appius claims, but, significantly, his own lack of nerve (12.11–12): yet he has already beaten one Roman general at a very personal level (that is Fabricius' analysis at the start of 18) and will go on to beat another.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Appius' speech, though, is that it rather disrupts the portrayal of the Romans as 'noble savages' set up in the preceding chapters. In Tacitus' *Agricola* the Briton Calgacus is given a pre-battle speech at Mons Graupius which rings out a denunciation of Roman imperialism (30): *auferre, trucidare, rapere, falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*[52] In Plutarch's *Camillus* (17) Brennus the Gaul dismisses Roman interference in

[50] Livy 9.16.19ff., esp. 18.6. On the topic as a whole, and particularly for a sensitive reading of Livy 9.18.1–19, see Spencer 2002, 41–53. See also Braund 1997 and Whitmarsh 2002, 175–6.

[51] There may well be a double irony in θρυλούμενος, which often denotes meaningless repetition, chatter. Appius, of course, uses the word to shame the Romans, but presumably believes the boast: a reader, though, might well take it that the Romans are always saying this without in the least believing they are right.

[52] 'Plunder, butchery and rape they call by the false name of empire, and when they have made a desert, they call it peace.' See Clarke 2001 for a very interesting treatment of the *Agricola* generally and the speeches before Mons Graupius in particular (esp. 105–7). One of her contentions is that Calgacus comes to embody Roman virtue ('He is almost more Roman than the Romans themselves', 106), that Agricola (a Gaul) and his motley army of Gauls, Germans, and some Britons represent a Romanness compromised by time and servitude

his attack on Clusium as hypocrisy. He describes his grudge against the Clusians as being that they are rich and the Gauls are poor: this, he says, is the same grudge as the Romans have against others: ἐφ' οὓς ὑμεῖς στρατεύοντες, ἐὰν μὴ μεταδιδῶσιν ὑμῖν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀνδραποδίζεσθε καὶ λεηλατεῖτε καὶ κατασκάπτετε τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν, οὐδὲν οὐδὲ ὑμεῖς γε δεινὸν οὐδὲ ἄδικον ποιοῦντες, ἀλλὰ τῷ πρεσβυτάτῳ τῶν νόμων ἀκολουθοῦντες, ὃς τῷ κρείττονι τὰ τῶν ἡττόνων δίδωσιν ἀρχόμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τελευτῶν εἰς τὰ θηρία. ('Against whom you march, and if they will not share their goods with you, you enslave them and despoil them and raze their cities to the ground, not indeed doing anything terrible or unjust, but following the oldest of laws, which gives to the stronger the property of the weaker, beginning with the god and ending with the beasts.') Significantly, the high moral tone of Calgacus' speech, or even the amoral candour of Brennus', is absent from Appius' speech, which moves from belittling Pyrrhus to *Realpolitik* (appeasement will only bring other invaders eager to try their luck) and more use of humiliation as a spur: the Tarentines and the Samnites are laughing at the Romans, he says. Appius inhabits the same world as the Greeks, and constantly makes that clear by referring to them and their views in detail: Calgacus quite literally does not live in the same world as the Romans, spiritually or geographically, as Clarke has shown;[53] even Brennus, though well equipped to live in the Romans' world, seems a newcomer to it, operating from first principles rather than with inside information like Appius. And yet all Appius' suspicion of Pyrrhus might seem rather unnecessary: it is not suggested in 18 that Pyrrhus has ulterior motives: he just wants to avoid further costly struggles with these remarkable Romans and enhance his δόξα (18. 3). So Appius cannot really be compared with the Herodotean barbarians who send the Persians away, or even the canny Brennus, let alone with the noble, alienated Calgacus: Pyrrhus is more honest than the Persians in Herodotus, or the Romans in *Camillus*, less efficient than Agricola in Tacitus. What saves Appius from being a πολεμοποίος like the Tarentines is just that he has no private interest in prolonging the war and is no demagogue: he has come out of retirement specifically to deliver this speech, and he is sincere. But as an example of early Roman virtue, the speech leaves Appius looking more bad tempered than admirable.[54] And of course, although the advice is honestly given, it leads to another big Roman defeat.

So I would argue that the context of the speech, and to some extent the very fact that a serious assembly meets, listens to a serious speech, and changes its mind as a result, suggests that the Roman polity is indeed in very good heart.[55] But I would

to emperors like Domitian, Calgacus its pristine counterpart. It is intriguing to apply this idea to the *Pyrrhus*: Plutarch seems to be playing some analogous games in contrasting Roman primitive virtue with Pyrrhus' 'sophisticated' inferiority and to be breaking down (see further below) the polarity between Greek and Roman/barbarian. The philosophical discussion in 20 plays an important part here: Cineas instructs the Roman, but his pupil is able to see the poverty of the lesson immediately. Pyrrhus and Cineas are not able to represent the value of Greek culture to the Romans because they are morally compromised, except in so far as Pyrrhus is able occasionally to be presented as an Homeric hero. Braund 1997, n. 22 draws a parallel between *Pyrrhus* 12.2 4 and Tacitus *Agricola* 30.

[53] Clarke 2001, 100 4, 109 12.

[54] That Plutarch was capable of suggesting explicitly that imperial conquest was a mixed blessing even for the Romans themselves is shown by *Numa/Lycurgus* 4.6 7.

[55] Buszard makes this point well, and contrasts Roman unity in this *Life* with the almost pathological lack of it in the *Marius*. A case in point is the bitter contrast between the citizens' escort of Appius to the Senate (*Pyrrh.* 18.8 9) and Marius' use of his bodyguard to attack the Senate and the consuls at *Mar.* 35. 2: αὐτὸς δὲ μὴ μέλλων ἑξακοσίους μὲν εἶχε περὶ αὑτὸν τῶν ἱππικῶν οἷον δορυφόρους, καὶ τούτους ἀντισύγκλητον ὠνόμαζεν, ἐπελθὼν δὲ μεθ' ὅπλων

also argue that the speech itself has dissonances which might be read rather differently by Greek readers, who might be more alert to Appius' arrogance and misinterpretations, compared with some Roman readers, who might be more inclined to concentrate on the implication (suggested by the narrative technique of the build-up to Appius' speech) that Appius indeed saved Rome from an unwise piece of appeasement. These divergent readings might well re-emerge at the end of 25, where Appius' fear that giving way to Pyrrhus will bring other aggressors down on Rome is turned on its head—the conflict with Pyrrhus hones their battle skills and boosts their reputation so much that they swiftly achieve what he could not, the conquest of Italy and Sicily. This surely foreshadows their future control of the known world, including Greece. It is interesting that Scott's last sentence in *The Talisman* has a similar effect of closing the tale and pointing forward to a darker, less chivalric but more 'historical' future: 'Our story closes here, as the terms on which Richard relinquished his conquests are to be found in every history of the period.'[56]

IV. IDENTITY

Appius also raises the question of Pyrrhus' own national identity, which, along with his political status, could be seen as making him less than the ideal representative from the Greek world to encounter Rome. In fact, Appius makes exactly the same points against Pyrrhus that Lysimachus made in 12.9–11, and so aligns himself with Pyrrhus' enemies at home: that he is no true Macedonian, but inferior to the Macedonians. Now is the time to examine the *Flamininus* and its treatment of the first encounter between Greeks and Romans on Greek soil: there are some interesting comparisons to be made between Plutarch's account of Pyrrhus in this regard and the early chapters of *Flamininus*, especially 5 (4–6).[57]

Πύρρον μὲν οὖν λέγουσιν, ὅτε πρῶτον ἀπὸ σκοπῆς κατεῖδε τὸ στράτευμα τῶν Ῥωμαίων διακεκοσμημένον, εἰπεῖν οὐ βαρβαρικὴν αὐτῷ φανῆναι τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων παράταξιν· οἱ δὲ Τίτῳ πρῶτον ἐντυγχάνοντες ἠναγκάζοντο παραπλησίας ἀφιέναι φωνάς. ἀκούοντες γὰρ τῶν Μακεδόνων ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἄρχων βαρβάρου στρατιᾶς ἔπεισι δι' ὅπλων πάντα καταστρεφόμενος καὶ δουλούμενος, εἶτα ἁπαντῶντες ἀνδρὶ τήν τε ἡλικίαν νέῳ καὶ τὴν ὄψιν φιλανθρώπῳ, φωνήν τε καὶ διάλεκτον Ἕλληνι καὶ τιμῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐραστῇ, θαυμασίως ἐκηλοῦντο, καὶ τὰς πόλεις ἀπιόντες ἐνεπίμπλασαν εὐνοίας τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν ὡς ἐχούσας ἡγεμόνα τῆς ἐλευθερίας . . . παντάπασιν ἤδη τότε καὶ τοῖς θεραπεύουσι τὰ τοῦ Φιλίππου παρέστη Ῥωμαίους πολεμήσοντας ἥκειν οὐχ Ἕλλησιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ Ἑλλήνων Μακεδόσι.

Now, they say that Pyrrhus, when for the first time he saw from a vantage-point the army of the Romans in full array, said that he saw nothing barbaric in the barbarians' battle-line; and those

ἐκκλησιάζουσι τοῖς ὑπάτοις . . . 'He himself did not hesitate to have about him six hundred of the knights as bodyguards, and he called them his 'anti-Senate', and attacked the consuls in the assembly under arms . . .' Actually creating an alternative, illegal, Senate of armed men con firms that Marius is perverting Roman public life.

[56] It is important that the novel ends by anticipating Richard's defeat and the failure of the Crusade: the power relationship between Saladin and Richard thus ends with Richard at a pol itical and military disadvantage as well as an intellectual one: morally, however, the honours are evenly divided. This is not at all dissimilar from the situation in the *Pyrrhus*: see 26.1 2.

[57] On *Phil. Flam.* see Swain 1996, 145 61, and Pelling 1997 ad loc. Schepens 2000a, 363 also uses this passage as a parallel for the *Pyrrhus*. It is interesting that Plutarch makes no use of the fact that it seems likely that ultimately Pyrrhus was forced to leave Italy because of lack of support from Antigonus and Antiochus at home; an example of disunity in the Greek world which on the analogy of the *Flamininus* one might have expected him to stress. See Hammond and Walbank 1988, 246 7.

who met Titus for the first time were compelled to speak in similar terms.[58] For they had heard the Macedonians say that a commander of a barbarian host was attacking them, subduing and enslaving everything by force of arms; and then, when they met a man who was young in years, humane in aspect, a Greek in voice and language, and a lover of genuine honour, they were wonderfully charmed, and when they returned to their cities they filled them with kindly feelings towards him and the belief that in him they had a champion of their liberties. . . . Then at last it became quite clear even to the partisans of Philip that the Romans were come to wage war, not upon the Greeks, but upon the Macedonians on behalf of the Greeks.

Here Plutarch exploits a certain marginality the Macedonians always had[59] to present the struggle between the Macedonians and Romans very unexpectedly: far from the Romans being barbarians, it is the Macedonians who seem hardly Greek at all, whereas Titus is an honorary Greek, even, indeed emphatically, linguistically.[60] Virtue, the Greeks reflect later in chapter 11, is the most important thing, and it outweighs kinship and race.[61] So it was always open to Plutarch to present Pyrrhus as an oppressor of Greeks rather than as a true Hellene. In fact, though, he largely eschews this possibility until the narrative takes us to Sicily: until then the charge of being not even a proper Macedonian (let alone a real Greek) is only made by his enemies, and his troops are referred to as Hellenes, unlike the Macedonians in the *Flamininus*, who are always *Μακεδόνες*. And of course, unlike Philip V but like Philopoemen, he is allowed to be Homeric (and there is no better marker of Greek identity).[62] Still, once the suggestion has been made intratextually, even by his detractors, it is open to readers to engage with it as well as distance themselves from it. Pyrrhus' floating

[58] Livy 31.34.8 has Philip V making similar observations to Pyrrhus: *ac subiecta cernens castra, admiratus esse dicitur et uniuersam speciem castrorum et descripta suis quaeque parti bus cum tendentium ordine tum itinerum interuallis et negasse barbarorum ea castra ulli uideri posse*. But I do not see why Briscoe 1973 ad loc. assumes that this is the original incident which is then projected back on to Pyrrhus: it seems just as plausible to see it the other way round, or indeed to suppose that similar reactions were recorded in both cases.

[59] See Hdt. 5.22, Dem. 3. 24, where Philip is called a *barbaros*, and Badian 1994, 107 30, esp. 119 20 n. 13. See also Whitmarsh 2002, 174 5. Of course Pyrrhus can be represented as even more marginal than a Macedonian, as he is by Appius. For a highly sophisticated treatment of the ethnicity of another marginal group, the Pelasgians, see Sourvinou-Inwood 2003, 103 144, esp. 140 and 144. Appius thinks in stereotypes, like Scott's characters until their assumptions are challenged by events; it is left to the reader to challenge Appius' assumptions.

[60] Note the constant stress in this passage on speech and hearing: Pyrrhus' remark is reported in indirect speech; those who encounter Titus are compelled, literally, to 'send out similar voices'; they hear from the Macedonians that Titus is a barbarian, but his 'voice and language' (or is it, more technically, 'language and dialect'?) are Greek; they are 'charmed' and *κηλέω* is almost always used of a spell conveyed in words or music. The human voice is a motif which runs throughout the *Life*: see esp. ch. 10.4 6.

[61] 11.2 4: *ἦν δ' ἄρα σπάνιον μὲν ἀνδρεία καὶ φρόνησις ἐν ἀνθρώποις, σπανιώτατον δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ἀγαθῶν ὁ δίκαιος* . . . (the Greek leaders only fought for their own ends and Greece has usually fought to achieve only her own slavery) . . . *ἀλλόφυλοι δὲ ἄνδρες, ἐναύσματα μικρὰ καὶ γλίσχρα κοινωνήματα παλαιοῦ γένους ἔχειν δοκοῦντες, ἀφ' ὧγ καὶ λόγῳ τι καὶ γνώμῃ τῶν χρησίμων ὑπάρξαι τῇ Ἑλλάδι θαυμαστὸν ἦν, οὗτοι τοῖς μεγίστοις κινδύνοις καὶ πόνοις ἐξελόμενοι τήν Ἑλλάδα δεσποτῶν χαλεπῶν καὶ τυράννων ἐλευθεροῦσι*. See Erskine 2001, 169 72 for an inscription recording the approaches of Lampsacus to the Romans in the mid-190s B.C. citing kinship with them (Lampsacus having some claim to be a Trojan city); this is in contrast to Plutarch stressing the foreignness of the Romans, only to suggest that it is unimpor tant compared with morality. The claim to have saved the Greeks from Philip is made by Flamininus at Livy 34.58.11 13, and is seen as hard for Antiochus' representative to combat.

[62] Note for example the importance of Homer to the marginal but proudly Greek city in Dio's *Borysthenitic*us; it is only in this context that the wit of Lucian's interviewing Homer (*VH* 117 [2.20]) and discovering that he is really a Babylonian called Tigranes can be fully appreciated. See Kindstrand 1973 and Swain 1996, index s.v. Homer index of Hellenism, and Zeitlin 2001, esp. 203 5.

status, potentially marginal, links in with a certain instability of character: Sicily constitutes a turning point, as it so often does in historiography (see n. 64).

Although, as before, magnificent (and Homeric) in battle, in 23 Pyrrhus undergoes a change. Interestingly, when he is offered peace by the Carthaginians, he responds by insisting, exactly as the Romans had done in his own case, that they leave the island altogether (19.5, 23.2). But where the Romans had said that if he left they would consider making an alliance with him, Pyrrhus thinks only of expansion, and it is in conscripting rowers to pursue the invasion of Libya that he behaves oppressively for the first time in the western narrative. Alexander certainly lost something, if only his *joie de vivre*, in his retreat from India, but he did at least seem to learn something from his Indian experiences: his association with Calanus, for example, suggests as much;[63] Pyrrhus, on the other hand, has not learned the right lessons from the Romans. The reversal is stressed by symmetries with the preceding narrative, and in fact is thus preserved from inconsistency: Pyrrhus, who always had the potential to behave tyrannically but did not, now does. The expression (23.3) ἐκ δημαγωγοῦ τύραννος also suggests Pyrrhus' general instability as a statesman: he is always at one extreme or the other. The fact that his behaviour actually seems worse because he behaved so well to begin with also underlines this instability, which he has had in some measure all along.[64] Strikingly, when Pyrrhus has returned to Italy and fights the Romans for the last time, the narrative now describes him and his troops as 'the enemy', οἱ πολεμίοι (25. 7, a rapid switch of focus from 25. 5, where the πολεμίοι are the Romans). The *Flamininus* also describes the Macedonians as the enemy at 4.5.

Another indication that Pyrrhus is to be seen as consistently inconsistent, rather than suddenly so, in that it binds this section closely into the texture of the rest of the *Life*, is the constant use of water imagery, throughout this section as well as the other parts of the narrative.[65] Apart from the great storm in 15, and the fact that both the first two battles are fought on river banks, the Romans in imagery become another elemental force against which Pyrrhus must struggle, like Achilles against Scamander (and in this they resemble other, more barbaric barbarians again): Cineas compares them to the watery Lernean Hydra in 19, and the ease with which they replenish their troops is compared to a domestic spring constantly gushing up water. But Pyrrhus, too, is elemental: his elephants at Asculum are like a tidal wave (ἐφόδῳ κύματος) or an earthquake.

So, unstable though Pyrrhus may be, that is part of his character and not a weakness in the *Life*. On the contrary, it is central to it: instability of character will be a major theme throughout the pair, culminating in the condemnation of Marius and his lack of *paideia* at *Marius* 45–6.[66] It may be, indeed, that his very instability and

[63] See *Alex*. 65, 69; *pace* Whitmarsh 2002, 186–92.

[64] Political instability becomes a leading characteristic of Marius, too: from his initial even-handed approach to the classes in 4 (esp. 4.7), he becomes more and more extreme: see first 9, then esp. 28, where his subservience to the mob is said to be 'against his real nature'. Then in 31.3 and 32 2 he is said to be simply unsuited to peace, which perhaps recalls in a rather different register *Pyrrhus* 14. On discontent in the pair, see Duff 1999, 103 21. See Duff 1999, 115 on echoes of Thucydides in Pyrrhus' Sicilian expedition: one other similarity might be the suggestion that everything in Sicily is so similar to Greece, even though it is a long way away (and this could be extended to Plutarch's Italy, too, perhaps: the opposition between young and old at Tarentum perhaps recalls that contrast in Thucydides 6. See also Buszard 2005, n. 6. On this idea in Thucydides, see Rood 1998, 164.

[65] On water imagery used to describe barbarians see Schmidt 1999, 152–5, which concentrates on the *Marius*. On water imagery in the *Pyrrhus* see Mossman 1992, 93, 99, 103; in the pair, Duff 1999, 122 3.

unpredictability is partly why the narrative of his encounter with Rome is so interesting, in that as a whole it imitates his internal contradictions. Pyrrhus, and hence this narrative, is like a fractured mirror in which all sorts of reflections can be caught and held, depending on where the watcher is standing. His problematic identity allows, even encourages, Plutarch to write multiple and complex identities for Greeks and Romans and encourages readers from both sides to join in the dialogue between Greek and Roman. There is room in this text for Greeks to pride themselves on Pyrrhus' magnanimity and courage, to deplore his shortcomings and wish that it had been Alexander instead; to prefer non-Greek virtue to Hellenic moral failure, in many and varying degrees and instances of which I have tried to give examples. There is room, too, for Romans to pride themselves on early Roman (or Italian) virtue, and to compare or contrast it with either (or: both/and) the damning portrayal of Marius in the second *Life* of the pair or with their own day, whose political system, after all, resembled that of the Epirotes rather than that of the early Romans.

Some of Plutarch's textual strategies, especially positioning the Romans as noble savages, are comparable to the subversive rewriting of the 'European historical and fictional record'[67] essential to so much post-colonial literature, and the reading I have suggested could be compared with Duff's view of the *Lives* as a 'statement of cultural resistance'.[68] But I have been arguing for a text so equivocal, so dialogic, that (if my reading is accepted) it is as hard to see it as straightforwardly subversive as to describe it as straightforwardly conciliatory. If I am right, it opens a forum for debate, where both sides might ponder the clash of cultures and the opportunities and pitfalls of cultural exchange in an imperial or imperialist context; and both might feel that there were lessons to be learned, even though it was all such a very long time ago.

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[66] Marius can also be seen as a person of marginal Roman status, matching Pyrrhus' mar ginal Greek status, though it is marginal in terms of social position rather than ethnicity: *Marius* 1, which discusses the Roman practice of naming, opens up the possibility that people with only two names (like Marius) are nameless, and ch. 3 stresses that he was not brought up in Rome itself, but in the countryside, even though such education as he had 'con formed to traditional Roman methods of upbringing'. His humble background and the insecur ity it engenders deforms his political career in ch. 28 and his plebeian lack of finesse shocks Mithradates in ch. 31: 'though he had often heard Romans speak, this was the first time he had been addressed so bluntly.'

[67] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 196.

[68] Duff 1999, 298.

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