Journal of Hellenic Studies cviii (1988) 83–93

TRAGEDY AND EPIC IN PLUTARCH'S *ALEXANDER*

ACHILLES is the poetic paradigm of a hero, Alexander his real-life counterpart as well as his descendant. This idea is a commonplace of all our sources for Alexander's life. There are numerous examples of it: Diodorus says at xvii 1.4:

> ἐν ἔτεσι γὰρ δώδεκα καταστρεψάμενος τῆς μὲν Εὐρώπης οὐκ ὀλίγα, τὴν δὲ Ἀσίαν σχεδὸν ἅπασαν εἰκότως περιβόητον ἔσχε τὴν δόξαν καὶ τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἥρωσι καὶ ἡμιθέοις ἰσάζουσαν ... Ἀλέξανδρος οὖν γεγονὼς κατὰ πατέρα μὲν ἀφ' Ἡρακλέους, κατὰ δὲ μητέρα τῶν Αἰακιδῶν οἰκείαν ἔσχε τὴν φύσιν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν τῆς τῶν προγόνων εὐδοξίας.[1]

Diodorus xvii 97.3 extends the parallelism to a specific incident: Achilles' fight with Scamander, Alexander's lucky escape from drowning.[2] Arrian's account of Alexander's landing at Sigeum (i 11–12) strongly suggests that Alexander himself encouraged the parallel:

> θῦσαι δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ Πριάμωι ἐπὶ τοῦ βωμοῦ τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ἑρκείου λόγος κατέχει, μῆνιν Πριάμου παραιτούμενον τῶι Νεοπτολέμου γένει, ὃ δὴ ἐς αὐτὸν καθῆκεν ... οἱ δέ, ὅτι καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέως ἄρα τάφον ἐστεφάνωσεν· Ἡφαιστίωνα δὲ λέγουσιν ὅτι τοῦ Πατρόκλου τὸν τάφον ἐστεφάνωσε· καὶ εὐδαιμόνισεν ἄρα, ὡς λόγος, Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀχιλλέα ὅτι Ὁμήρου κήρυκος ἐς τὴν ἔπειτα μνήμην ἔτυχε.

Compare also Diodorus xvii 17.3. The sacrifice is a public act affirming his lineage.

Plutarch in the *de Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute* (*Mor.* 327f–328a) makes it clear that Alexander's love of Homer was well-known (though for the purposes of his argument he subordinates Homer to philosophy here):

> ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν γράφουσιν, ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος ἔφη ποτὲ τὴν Ἰλιάδα καὶ τὴν Ὀδύσσειαν ἀκολυθεῖν αὐτῶι τῆς στρατείας ἐφόδιον, πιστεύομεν, Ὅμηρον σεμνύνοντες· ἂν δέ τις φῆι Ἰλίαδα καὶ τὴν Ὀδύσσειαν παραμύθια πόνου καὶ διατριβὴν ἕπεσθαι σχολῆς γλυκείας, ἐφόδιον δ' ἀληθῶς γεγονέναι τὸν ἐκ φιλοσοφίας λόγον ..., καταφρονοῦμεν;

Compare also the *Life*, 8.2 and 26.2.

Elsewhere in the treatise there are comparisons of some length between Alexander and a number of Homeric heroes: for example 331cd, which also stresses Alexander's knowledge of Homer and his espousal of Homeric ideals:

> Καὶ μὴν εἴ ποτε γένοιτο τῶν Ὁμήρου σύγκρισις ἐπῶν ἐν ταῖς διατριβαῖς ἢ παρὰ τὰ συμπόσια, ἄλλον ἄλλου στίχον προκρίνοντος, αὐτὸς ὡς διαφέροντα πάντων ἐνέκρινε τοῦτον,
>
> ἀμφότερον βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθὸς κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής
> (*Il.* iii 179; *cf.* Xen. *Mem.* iii 2.2)
>
> ὃν ἄλλος ἔπαινον τῶι χρόνωι προέλαβε, τοῦτον αὐτῶι νόμον κεῖσθαι λογιζόμενος, ὥστ' εἰπεῖν Ὅμηρον ὅτι τῶι αὐτῶι μέτρωι τὴν μὲν Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀνδραγαθίαν κεκόσμηκε, τὴν δ' Ἀλεξάνδρου μεμάντευται.

[1] *Cf.* Plut. *Alex.* 2.1. An earlier draft of this paper was delivered at the conference of the International Plutarch Society held at the Canadian and American Schools of Classical Studies at Athens, 26th–28th June 1987. I am most grateful to the Society and to the organisers of the conference. I owe a special debt to Dr C. B. R. Pelling and Mr E. L. Bowie, whose perceptive criticisms were invaluable, to the very useful remarks of an unnamed referee, and to Mark Edwards for his generous interest and stimulating conversation.

[2] D.S. xvii 97.3:

> σωθεὶς δὲ παραδόξως τοῖς θεοῖς ἔθυσεν ὡς μεγίστους ἐκπεφευγὼς κινδύνους καὶ πρὸς ποταμὸν ὁμοίως Ἀχιλλεῖ διαγωνισάμενος.

The description is indeed of Agamemnon—Helen says it in the Teichoskopia. Later in the section we find another Achilles comparison.

> καί τινος αὐτῶι τῶν ἐγχωρίων ὑποσχομένου τὴν Πάριδος λύραν εἰ βούλοιτο δώσειν 'οὐδέν' ἔφη 'τῆς ἐκείνου δέομαι· τὴν γὰρ Ἀχιλλέως κέκτημαι, πρὸς ἣν ἐκεῖνος ἀνεπαύετο
>
> ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν (*Il.* ix 189)·
>
> ἡ δὲ Πάριδος πάντως μαλακήν τινα καὶ θήλειαν ἁρμονίαν ἐρωτικοῖς ἔψαλλε μέλεσι.'

At 343ab we find a more elaborate system of comparisons: Alexander is more self-restrained in dealing with his female captives than Agamemnon, more magnanimous to Darius than Achilles was to Hector, more generous than Achilles because he enriched even his enemies, whereas Achilles accepted gifts from his friends in compensation after his anger had passed, more reverent than Diomedes and more deeply mourned by his relatives than Odysseus, for Odysseus' mother died of grief, but the mother of Alexander's greatest enemy loved him so much that she chose to share his death.

We should notice two points here: firstly, that there are *two* points of comparison with Achilles, one with each of the other heroes; secondly, that although this type of comparison is a commonplace of encomium, particularly when the subject of the encomium claims to be related to a hero like Achilles or to a god,[3] at 343ab the scale of the passage and the detailed references to the poems perhaps suggest a more conscious identification with the heroes as they appear in the Homeric epics.

Plutarch's source for Alexander's love of Homer is presumably Onesicritus. It is interesting that, although most Onesicritus material is treated more lightly in the *Life* than in the *de Alexandri Magni*, notably Onesicritus' picture of Alexander as the philosopher man of action, the material on Alexander's love of Homer and literature generally is given just as much weight.[4]

Since Alexander's association with Homer was well-known, and since he does seem to have encouraged such Iliadic parallelism,[5] and since a certain encomiastic strain inherent in epic poetry encouraged such comparisons to become well-rooted in the later encomiastic tradition, it comes as no surprise to find Plutarch developing and exploring the epic dimension of Alexander in the *Life*. It is considerably more unexpected to find him introducing *tragic* atmosphere as a counterbalance to the epic view, as I would argue he does. This may seem surprising because, as Phillip de Lacy has pointed out ('Biography and tragedy in Plutarch', *AJP* lxxiii [1952] 159 ff.), although tragedy obviously has an important place in Plutarch's literary background, allusions to it usually imply an adverse moral judgement and in literary contexts it is used as a term of censure in his writings.[6] This view is associated with Plutarch's Platonism, as de Lacy has

[3] Compare for example Theocritus xvii 53 ff.:

> Ἀργεία κυάνοφρυ, σὺ λαοφόνον Διομήδεα
> μισγομένα Τυδῆι τέκες, Καλυδώνιον ἄνδρα,
> ἀλλὰ Θέτις βαθύκολπος ἀκοντιστὰν Ἀχιλῆα
> Αἰακίδαι Πηλῆι· σὲ δ' αἰχμητὰ Πτολεμαῖε
> αἰχμητᾶι Πτολεμαίωι ἀρίζηλος Βερενίκα.

[4] A. Momigliano, *The development of Greek biography, Four Lectures* (Harvard 1971) 82–3 shows the importance of accounts of education to Greek biography, and this may explain Plutarch's selection of material. But in that case it is perhaps surprising that he did not make more use of Onesicritus in the early part of the *Life*: *cf.* J. R. Hamilton, *Plutarch, Alexander: a commentary* (Oxford 1969) lvii.

Onesicritus' ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος ἤχθη is paralleled by the Ἀλεξάνδρου ἀγωγή of Marsyas of Pella, another companion of Alexander.

[5] This cannot of course be deduced simply from the *de Alexandri Magni* but the conjunction of Diodorus and Arrian is convincing.

[6] Plutarch and tragedy: the material is false: *de Aud. Poet.* 16a–17e passim; tragedy contrasted with historical truth: *Theseus* 1.3–4, 2.3, 15.2, 16.3–4 (*cf.* Plato, *Minos* 318de, 320e–321b); cf. *Romulus* 8.9. Theopompus condemned as 'tragic' for giving a false account: *Demosthenes* 21.2; Phylarchus ditto, cf. *Themistocles* 32.4; Herodotus, cf. *de Mal. Herod.* 870c; Ctesias, *Artaxerxes* 6.9; others, cf. *Alexander* 75.5. Also of philosophical arguments: *de Pyth. Or.* 399e–400c; *Adv. Col.* 1119c, 1123b.

The audience is deceived: *de Aud. Poet.* 15cd, 16a–17c, esp. 17c. So are the poets: 17d. Tragedy = pretence: in philosophy *Mor.* 528bc (*de genio Socratis*), 724d (*Quaestiones Conviviales*); in wild stories *Mor.* 926c (*de facie in Orbe lunae*) cf. *Lucullus* 11.2; putting extra tragoedia in oracles cf. *de Pyth. Or.* 407b.

The actor pretends: *Mor.* 50e (*Quomodo Adulator ab Amico Internoscatur*): *cf.* Ps.-Plut. *de Liberis Educandis* 13b; *Non posse suaviter vivi* 1102b.

Against actors: cf. *Sulla* 2.3–4, 36.1; *Galba* 16.3;

shown.[7]

A distinction needs to be made, however, as we shall see, between the sensationalism of so-called 'tragic history' which Plutarch dislikes so much and the sustained tragic patterning and imagery which is a perfectly respectable feature of both biography and history. Plutarch himself not infrequently chooses to characterise some of the subjects of the *Lives* and their actions by using such tragic imagery: Dionysius, Pompey, Lysander, Antony, and Demetrius are examples.[8] Some of these we will discuss more fully below. De Lacy comments: 'Plutarch's tragic figures are not his great heroes, such as Alexander and Epaminondas; they are his villains: the elder Dionysius, Antony, and Nero.' As I hope will become clear, this is an inadequate description of the way in which Plutarch uses tragedy. Central to the *Alexander* is the tension, first made explicit as early as 4.5–8 (an important passage), between Alexander's hot temper and his self-control;[9] his θυμός is the source of great achievements, but also of disaster, when, combined with heavy drinking, it breaks down his σωφροσύνη. Plutarch often chooses to illustrate this tension by interweaving and contrasting epic and tragic elements throughout the *Life*.[10] In short, I would argue that in the *Alexander* Plutarch is interested not only in what Alexander does, but in what he does to himself, and that just as he may use epic colouring to chronicle Alexander's great deeds, so he also uses tragic colouring to delineate the darker side of Alexander's character.

In putting forward this argument we shall encounter one fundamental methodological problem: identifying and distinguishing 'epic' and 'tragic' tone. Since antiquity the intimate nature of the connection between tragedy and epic has been recognised.[11] Aristotle in the *Poetics* lays great stress on it: *cf.* 1448b34–1449a1, 1449b9–20, 1456a10–19, 1459b–1460a5, 1461b26 ff. However, Aristotle also makes it clear that there is a difference between the two: this is perhaps most clearly formulated at 1449b16–20:

> μέρη δ' ἐστὶ τὰ μὲν ταὐτά, τὰ δὲ ἴδια τῆς τραγωιδίας· διόπερ ὅστις περὶ τραγωιδίας οἶδε σπουδαίας καὶ φαύλης, οἶδε καὶ περὶ ἐπῶν· ἃ μὲν γὰρ ἐποποιία ἔχει, ὑπάρχει τῆι τραγωιδίαι, ἃ δὲ αὐτῆι, οὐ πάντα ἐν τῆι ἐποποιίαι.

Apophthegmata Laconica 212f (cf. *Agesilaos* 21.8); *Solon* 29.7; *Demosthenes* 28.3–29.7; *An Seni Resp.* 785a.

Tragedy = madness and anger: *de Cohib. Ira* 462b

Tragedy vs. philosophy *Mor.* 545f; = naughty stories *de Aud. Poet.* 27f.

Cf. also A. E. Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (London 1974) 168–79.

[7] *Art. cit.* 167–8. For Plutarch's Platonism in general *cf.* eg. R. M. Jones, *The Platonism of Plutarch* (Diss. Menasha, Wisconsin 1916).

[8] Deception = 'constructing a tragic machine', cf. *Them.* 10.1; *Lysander* 25.2, 26.6; Numa's meetings with the Muses etc. a 'drama': *Numa* 8.10; *cf.* Marius and the Syrian prophetess: *Marius* 17.5.

Pomp and circumstance to deceive the eye: *Aratus* 15.3 'tragedy and scene-painting'; *Pompey* 31.10; *Nicias* 21.1; *Lucullus* 21.6; *de Cupid. Div.* 527ef, 528b.

Tyrants and tragedy: *Demosthenes* 22.5 (*cf. de Alex. Mag.* 337d); *Lucullus* 21.3; *Poplicola* 10.3; *Antony* 54.5 (cf. *de Alex. Mag.* 329f: Persian dress 'tragic'). Nero: *Quomodo Adul.* 56e: *cf.* also *Galba* 14.2–3; *Quaest. Conviv.* 717c; *Pelopidas* 34.1; *Quomodo Adul.* 63a; *Praecepta Rei p. Gerendae* 823e.

Opposition of tragic to military: *Eumenes* 2.2; *Otho* 5.8.

Tragic calamities: *QC* 714e; *Galba* 1.7–8, 12.5; *Crassus* 33 passim, esp. 33.7; *Marius* 27.2; *Pompey* 9.3–4.

[9] 4.5–8 (Plutarch is speculating as to the cause of Alexander's pleasant body-odour: he concludes that the κρᾶσις of Alexander's body was responsible, πολύθερμος οὖσα καὶ πυρώδης, and continues by saying): 'Αλέξανδρον δ' ἡ θερμότης τοῦ σώματος ὡς ἔοικε καὶ ποτικὸν καὶ θυμοειδῆ παρεῖχεν.

Ἔτι δ' ὄντος αὐτοῦ παιδὸς ἥ τε σωφροσύνη διεφαίνετο . . .

This passage is heavily influenced by philosophy: it refers to Theophrastus' *de Odoribus* and is akin to such works as the *Airs, Waters, Places*, and θυμοειδής is a Platonic word: cf. *Rep.* 375c, 411c, 456a. As Wardman has pointed out (A. E. Wardman, 'Plutarch and Alexander', *CQ* n.s. v [1955] 96–107), θυμός and *ira* are frequently cited in Hellenistic philosophy (for example by Plutarch himself in the *de Cohibenda Ira*, *Mor.* 458b) as denoting bad qualities, which Alexander is used to exemplify; though in the *Life*, as in epic and often in tragedy, θυμός is more ambiguous.

[10] The alternation of motifs is a favorite technique of Plutarch's: one may compare the early chapters of the *Antony*, where Antony's military virtues are dwelt on alternately with his submissiveness first to Fulvia, then to Cleopatra. On this *cf.* the forthcoming commentary by C. B. R. Pelling.

[11] For recent, perceptive accounts of this relationship *cf.* R. B. Rutherford, 'Tragic Form and Feeling in the *Iliad*', *JHS* cii (1982) 145–60, and J. Gould, 'Homeric Epic and the Tragic Moment', in T. Winnifrith *et al.* (edd.) *Aspects of the Epic* (London 1983).

The remarks of Stephen Halliwell (*The Poetics of Aristotle, translation and commentary* [London 1987] 81) are helpful and perceptive; 'Epic poetry . . . developed from the original impulse to portray and celebrate the actions of outstanding or noble men; but the essence of tragedy, *both in its Homeric* (my italics) and in its later Attic form, involves such characters in great changes of fortune, or transformations, which arouse pity or fear in those who contemplate them.' Halliwell is right to remind us that tragic feeling lies at the very heart of the *Iliad*: it is not by any means the exclusive preserve of Attic drama, but can be traced in Herodotus and, as Macleod pointed out ('Thucydides and Tragedy', *Collected Papers* [Oxford 1983] 140), in Thucydides: '. . . his theme, like the tragedians', is suffering on the grand scale, and . . . like them, he is not afraid to represent it as the utmost of human experience'. Nonetheless, in the *Alexander*, theatrical imagery or a tragic quotation or an obvious reminiscence or quotation from Homer will usually be sufficient to pin down a passage firmly as 'epic' or 'tragic'.

In the chapters following 4.5–8 the epic tone prevails: for example we are told that Lysimachus called himself Phoenix, Alexander Achilles, and Philip Peleus, and the taming of Bucephalas is narrated. Horse-taming is a very Iliadic activity: heroes are given the epithet ἱπποδάμος, 'tamer of horses'. Achilles of course has divine horses, so it is appropriate that there should be something distinguished about Alexander's. In ch. 8 we hear more of Alexander's love of Homer: (8.2)

> καὶ τὴν μὲν Ἰλιάδα τῆς πολεμικῆς ἀρετῆς ἐφόδιον καὶ νομίζων καὶ ὀνομάζων, ἔλαβε μὲν Ἀριστοτέλους διορθώσαντος ἣν ἐκ τοῦ νάρθηκος καλοῦσιν, εἶχε δ' ἀεὶ μετὰ τοῦ ἐγχειριδίου κειμένην ὑπὸ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον, ὡς Ὀνησίκριτος ἱστόρηκε (*FGrH* 134 F 38).

In the chapters describing the end of Philip's life the tragic tone is uppermost: in contrast to the campaigns at the start of ch. 9 we hear of αἱ δὲ περὶ τὴν οἰκίαν ταραχαί, the stuff of tragedy, Olympias' βαρυθυμία and Philip's drunkenness sketching the origins of, and foreshadowing, Alexander's own proclivities in these directions. Philip's drunken attempt to attack Alexander is a doublet of the death of Cleitus: here Philip stumbles, and the incident comes to nothing εὐτυχίαι δὲ ἑκατέρου—Cleitus dies δυστυχίαι τινι . . . τοῦ βασιλέως. Philip's troubles arise διὰ τοὺς γάμους καὶ τοὺς ἔρωτας. The quotation from the *Medea* (288)

τὸν δόντα καὶ γήμαντα καὶ γαμουμένην

attributed to Alexander is thus an apposite one to complete the mood: *cf.* also eg. *Med.* 626 ff.[12]

The destruction of Thebes is a display of θυμός (tempered by the story of Timocleia, which prefigures Alexander's chivalry to Darius' household): Plutarch suggests that Alexander forgave Athens μεστὸς ὢν ἤδη τὸν θυμόν, ὥσπερ οἱ λέοντες (cf. *Demosthenes* 23.5). The simile must look back to the portent of Alexander's birth at 2.4 and is important for what follows, for lions are very much associated with Alexander as Dionysus.[13] It is immediately followed by 13.4:

> ὅλως δὲ καὶ τὸ περὶ Κλεῖτον ἔργον ἐν οἴνωι γενόμενον, καὶ τὴν πρὸς Ἰνδοὺς τῶν Μακεδόνων ἀποδειλίασιν, ὥσπερ ἀτελῆ τὴν στρατείαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ προεμένων, εἰς μῆνιν ἀνῆγε Διονύσου καὶ νέμεσιν.

[12] Eur. *Med.* 626 ff.:
ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν
ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν
οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν
ἀνδράσιν.

[13] *Cf.* E. E. Rice, *The Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus* (Oxford 1983) 112–3: Athenaeus 201f: there were twenty-four extremely large lions in the procession with statues of Alexander and Ptolemy. For lions' role in Dionysiac cult *cf.* the lion in the Hellenistic Dionysiac procession in the dromos of the Memphian Serapeum and the frieze of the Great Altar of Pergamum. Lions are frequent on later sarcophagi depicting Dionysus' Indian Campaign, either as part of his triumph or drawing the god's chariot.

Lions and Alexander: *cf.* Curt. Ruf. v 1.21 (A. fights a lion in Bactria) and viii 1.14 (he is given presents of lions by the Babylonians). Lions are royal animals in the east. A. hunts lions on the Alexander sarcophagus; a Delphian statue of Craterus records that C. saved A.'s life on a lion-hunt (*FD* III [4] 137). A. wore the lion-skin as Heracles: Ath. 537f.

This is the first of several connections between Alexander and Dionysus, always (with the single exception of 17.9, crowning Theodectas' statue in his cups) with sinister force. In the *Life* Dionysus comes to represent the traits in Alexander which lead him to take his most disastrous actions: his drinking and his temper.[14] Olympias is also particularly associated with Dionysus: *cf.* 2.9,

> ἡ δ' Ὀλυμπιὰς μᾶλλον ἑτέρων ζηλώσασα τὰς κατοχάς, καὶ τοὺς ἐνθουσιασμοὺς (i.e. the Orphic rites and the orgies of Dionysus) ἐξάγουσα βαρβαρικώτερον, ὄφεις μεγάλους χειροήθεις ἐφείλκετο τοῖς θιάσοις . . .

This special link with Dionysus constitutes a bold reinterpretation of the relationship between Alexander and the god: the Diadochi usually made the connection a complimentary one to Alexander and hence to his current royal successor: Dionysus is seen as the world-conqueror, the bringer of joy, rather than as the Dionysus of the *Bacchae* of Euripides.[15] Plutarch also makes a similar link between Dionysus and Antony in the *Antony*, with the same sort of effect. To those familiar with the Alexandrian identification, this view of Dionysus as a malevolent force in Alexander's make-up would have been very striking.

The epic tone, as one would expect, is reintroduced with the beginning of the expedition and Alexander's arrival at Troy. The parallelism with Achilles is very strong here, with Alexander's reverence for Achilles' tomb and the anecdote about the lyres (15.8–9), for which compare *Mor.* 331d above. Coming at the very beginning of the expedition, this acts as a declaration of Alexander's heroic intentions: the pun on his name and Paris' helps to drive home the point. This Alexander will be as completely different from the mythological one as Achilles was: his preoccupations will be with glory and conquest; he will shun the pleasures of the palace and the bedroom with which Paris is particularly associated in Homer. The heroics in the battle of the Granicus should be read in this context (there is a similar arrangement in Arrian). 16.7 is significant: Alexander has wonderful armour like Achilles:

> ἦν δὲ τῆι πέλτηι καὶ τοῦ κράνους τῆι χαίτηι διαπρεπής, ἧς ἑκατέρωθεν εἱστήκει πτερὸν λευκότητι καὶ μεγέθει θαυμαστόν.

In the incident of Philip the Acarnanian and the cup of medicine (ch. 19) we find the exception to the usual use of tragic imagery in the *Life*: for, as Plutarch depicts θαυμαστὴν καὶ θεατρικὴν τὴν ὄψιν of Philip reading the letter accusing him of trying to poison Alexander and Alexander simultaneously drinking the cup which may be poisoned, we find tragic imagery used to illustrate Alexander's best qualities, with admirable economy, in one action: Alexander's trust in his friends, his fondness for the grand gesture and his physical courage are all brought out. The scene is at once a fine exercise in the sort of character drawing described in 1.2–3 and simply

[14] The two are closely associated by Plutarch, as we have seen, at 4.7–8: they are seen as springing from the same natural cause.

[15] Clearly in the *Bacchae* both elements are present; but the terrifying aspect is uppermost in the end.

For Alexander as Dionysus in Alexandria *cf.* Rice, 43, 48 (Dionysus' Indian triumph in the light of Alexander's successes in the east), 67 (Alexander as new Dionysus following in the god's footsteps, identifying landmarks associated with the god. *Cf.* Arrian v 1.1 ff., vi 28.1 ff., vii 20.1 ff., *Ind.* i 1 ff., v 8 ff.). The key text is Athenaeus 200d–201c, the procession of Dionysus (*cf.* Rice *passim*, esp. 83–6 and P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* [Oxford 1972] 202–6, 211): Alexander is more the hero of the procession than Dionysus. Dionysus in military contexts: *cf.* Eur. *Cyc.* 5 ff., *Ba.* 13–20.

The Ptolemies connect themselves with A. through Dionysus: *cf.* the genealogy in Satyrus. The procession is 'the indirect celebration of A. through the glorification of D.' (Rice).

Rice sums up: (191–2) 'The importance of the emphatic presentation of Alexander as the Neos Dionysos who followed in the footsteps of the god and succeeded as an equal conqueror in the east can hardly be over-estimated. These scenes from the Dionysiac procession give support to the claims that this picture of Alexander had an Alexandrian origin . . . the Ptolemaic kings adopted and publicised this view of Alexander, and shared in the glory of this vision themselves through their claim to a blood-relationship with both A. and D. This in turn enhanced their position as the legitimate heirs of Alexander in Egypt and endowed them with a convenient legitimisation of the divine status of their dynasty.'

Cf. also P. Goukowsky, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre* (Nancy 1978–81) vol. II *passim*, esp. 79 ff.

For the similar link in the *Antony*, *cf.* esp. *Ant.* 24.

a tremendous stage-picture. Its economy and ἐναργεία, realised particularly by the skilful narration in 19.4, fully justify the epithet θεατρικὴν.[16]

As Alexander's successes mount up, we find more Homeric reminders—Lysimachus as Phoenix once again at 24.10, and the placing of the *Iliad* in the precious coffer of Darius at 26.2 leading into the dream of Homer telling Alexander to found Alexandria in the proper site at 26.4–5. The 'arming scene' at 32.8–11 before Gaugamela certainly owes something to those in the *Iliad*, with its careful descriptions of the appearance of the armour and weapons, who made them and who gave them to the wearer: we may compare for example *Il.* xi 16 ff.

The burning of Persepolis (ch. 38), however, continues the theme of dubious deeds committed by Alexander while drunk. Dionysus is very much in our minds here: the palace is burned by a band of revellers κώμωι καὶ βοῆι, with Alexander in a garland (38.5–6). The remark at 23.1 ἦν δὲ καὶ πρὸς οἶνον ἧττον ἢ ἐδόκει καταφερής, despite Plutarch's careful discussion and rejection of the extremity of the prevailing view in chapter 23, is not really borne out by his narrative. Once again, as after Thebes, repentance speedily follows: *cf.* 38.8.

Alexander's relationship with his friends is carefully dwelt on throughout the *Life* (right from 5.4), and their difficulty in adapting to foreign ways forms a major theme. The transplanting of Greek plants by Harpalus at 35.15, with limited success (ivy will not grow in the πυρώδης Babylonian soil), is a metaphor for this. Chs. 47 and following skilfully sketch deteriorating relationships with what may conveniently be thought of as a series of scenes. They contrast with 40–42—Alexander's amazement at his friends extravagance—where one is only just aware of trouble on the horizon and the present is all sweetness and light.

The affair of Philotas and Parmenio leads into the more traumatic episode of Cleitus, who, we remember, saved Alexander's life at the Granicus. Plutarch's introduction is extremely interesting: at first sight the affair is ἀγριώτερα, he says, but if we consider τὴν αἰτίαν καὶ τὸν καιρόν, we see that it happened οὐκ ἀπὸ γνώμης, ἀλλὰ δυστυχίαι τινι . . . τοῦ βασιλέως, ὀργὴν καὶ μέθην πρόφασιν τῶι Κλείτωι δαίμονι παρασχόντος (50.2). In other words both men suffered from forces beyond their control. One is reminded of Alexander's conviction that this incident was part of Dionysus' revenge for the burning of Thebes. This and the evil omen, the sacrifices ordered by Alexander (in vain) for the safety of Cleitus, and the sinister dream linking Cleitus and Philotas, and the fact that Cleitus goes to his final feast straight from his unfinished sacrifice all reinforce the impression that both men are caught in some inexorable divine plan, a favorite theme of tragedy, exemplified by the *Oedipus Tyrannus.* Of course it is not a theme confined to tragedy: historians may make use of such story-patterns too: *cf.* e.g. Hdt. i 35 ff., the story of Adrastus; but it is one particularly characteristic of it. The quarrel is reported with a high proportion of direct speech, which adds vividness. The climax comes when Alexander loses control: οὐκέτι φέρων τὴν ὀργὴν. Despite the precautions taken by Aristophanes, the pleadings of his friends and the reluctance of the trumpeter, and despite Cleitus' removal, the killing still occurs: the emphasis on the precautions taken intensifies the idea of inevitability: it happened despite everything that mortal man could do. Cleitus' re-entry and continued defiance, marked by the tragic quotation, seem to be so irrational as to be the work of his *daimon.* The terrible remorse which instantly follows the deed emphasises his horror and how alien it is to Alexander's true intentions and feelings: his attempt at self-destruction, his extreme grief, and the seer's reminder of τήν τε ὄψιν ἣν εἶδε περὶ τοῦ Κλείτου, καὶ τὸ σημεῖον, ὡς δὴ πάλαι καθειμαρμένων τούτων (52.2), all reinforce the initial impression that here we are in the world of tragedy, with inexorable divine forces working on the characters of men to produce disaster which brings bitter regret. As in a number of tragedies, the gods work through the men themselves and their characteristics: in Alexander's case through his propensity for drink and his θυμός. In tragedy

[16] It is perhaps possible that the use of θεατρικὴν here rather than τραγικὴν is significant, either because Plutarch is thinking of another genre, mime, for instance, or because he does not want to label the episode directly as tragic, as, after all, it does turn out happily; if either of these possibilities is correct, then this is an exception which proves a rule.

Dionysus works on Pentheus' prurience, and Hera, Iris, and Lyssa on Heracles' great strength and force in the *Heracles Mainomenos*. It may well be no accident that the Cleitus episode, with its pattern of madness/murder—remorse—consolation is highly reminiscent of the *Heracles*: Heracles is of course Alexander's other ancestor and is closely associated with him.[17]

A comparison between Plutarch's account of this incident and Arrian's is instructive: Arrian has no evil omens, no dream: Cleitus makes no unfinished sacrifice, though Alexander fails to sacrifice to Dionysus as is usual on that day. Arrian interrupts Cleitus' tirade with his own criticisms of Cleitus, and has almost none of Plutarch's elaborate precautions: Alexander's friends merely try to hold him back and fail. Cleitus' voluntary return is mentioned as an alternative version of Aristobulus, who, however, left the drinking bout without a context, according to Arrian. Cleitus does not use a tragic quotation. It seems very likely from this that Plutarch has carefully constructed his version from various sources to produce the maximum tragic effect.

The consolations of the philosophers Callisthenes and Anaxarchus bring no real relief: for the narrative continues with the destruction of Callisthenes and the Pages' conspiracy which are brought about by too great reliance on the doctrines of Anaxarchus: his words at 52.6–7 are specifically said to have a bad effect on Alexander: τὸ δὲ ἦθος εἰς πολλὰ χαυνότερον καὶ παρανομώτερον ἐποίησεν . . . καὶ τοῦ Καλλισθένους τὴν ὁμιλίαν . . . προσδιέβαλε.

As to Anaxarchus' actual words (also in Arrian), Dike is the πάρεδρος of Zeus as early as Pindar (*Ol.* viii 21 ff.) and Sophocles (*OC* 1381 ff.). But for the idea that the king can do no wrong we must turn to Hdt. iii 31 (of Persia) and to Creon in the *Antigone*: (666–7)

ἀλλ' ὃν πόλις στήσειε, τοῦδε χρὴ κλύειν
καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ δίκαια καὶ τἀναντία.[18]

Plutarch transplants in time the downfall of Callisthenes and the Pages' conspiracy to act as an illustration of the deterioration in Alexander's morals (*cf.* 56.1)—they really belong to the spring of 327. On the present arrangement the episodes grow organically one out of the other (Arrian too saw the benefits of this plan and also adopted it, apologising for the change at iv 14): Callisthenes is first played off against Anaxarchus in the aftermath of the death of Cleitus: his character is then developed. He is represented as an honest, upright and independent, if rather irritating, character. Plutarch's portrait of him is far more favourable than Arrian's, who calls him ὑπαγροικότερον and refers to his ὕβρις καὶ σκαιότης and his ἄκαιρος παρρησία καὶ ὑπέρογκος ἀβελτερία (iv 10.1, 12.6–7). The episode of the speeches (ch. 53) does not show Alexander in a good light, for it is by his request that Callisthenes speaks against the Macedonians and alienates both them and Alexander himself. The quotation from the *Bacchae* which Alexander applies to Callisthenes is by no means really complimentary: it is from Teiresias' speech to Pentheus (and thus indicates an interesting role-reversal when it is put into Alexander's mouth in this context) and continues: (278)

σὺ δ' εὔτροχον μὲν γλῶσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις
ἐν τοῖς λόγοισι δ' οὐκ ἔνεισί σοι φρένες.

[17] Most frequently in art, for example on his coins, and on the Alexander sarcophagus.

Shakespeare (*Henry V* IV vii) makes Fluellen compare Henry's rejection of Falstaff with the death of Cleitus:

Alexander—God knows, and you know—in his rages, and his furies, and his wraths, and his cholers, and his moods, and his displeasures, and his indignations, and also being a little intoxicates in his prains, did, in his ales and his angers, look you, kill his best friend, Cleitus. . . . I speak but in the figures and comparisons of it; as Alexander kill'd his friend Cleitus, being in his ales and his cups, so also Harry Monmouth, being in his right wits and his good judgments, turn'd away the fat knight with the great belly doublet; . . .

[18] For discussion on Plutarch's views on ruler-cult *cf.* K. Scott, 'Plutarch and the Ruler Cult', *TAPA* lx (1929) 117–35; G. W. Bowersock, 'Greek Intellectuals and the Imperial Cult in the Second Century AD', *Entr. Hardt.* xix (1972), esp. 187–90; S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power* (Cambridge 1984) 116–7.

The story of the kiss (ch. 54) confirms Callisthenes as the proud philosopher, Alexander as the demanding monarch. The treatment of the Pages' conspiracy, far less detailed than Arrian's account, keeps Callisthenes rather than Hermoläus and the boys in the forefront of our minds, and it is his fate that is dwelt on rather than theirs. His miserable end is immediately contrasted with that of Demaratus and his magnificent funeral: we are reminded that Alexander can be loyal and generous to his friends.

The expedition into India moves into the epic sphere again after these dark interludes: Alexander's courage is to the fore, contrasted with the cowardice of Sisimithres in 58. His generous behaviour to Taxiles and Porus recalls his earlier munificence: the death of Bucephalas and the dog Peritas remind us of his gentleness. Then there is his Achillean withdrawal into his tent in protest at his soldiers' reluctance to advance and his relenting to their pleas. The climax of this epic phase of the narrative is of course the battle in the Malli township, where he leapt from the wall into the mêlée: τιναξαμένου δὲ τοῖς ὅπλοις, ἔδοξαν οἱ βάρβαροι σέλας τι καὶ φάσμα πρὸ τοῦ σώματος φέρεσθαι (63.4). (*Cf.* also *Mor.* 343e.)

This is surely to be compared with Achillles' appearance in the closing books of the *Iliad*, shining in his divine armour: cf. *Il.* xix 375 ff.:[19] note the repeated use of σέλας (375, 379) and that the flashing light comes from the movement of the armour. Alexander is never more like Achilles than this, in his magnificent courage: it is a fine touch to mark the resemblance with so plain a reference to his Iliadic model. Arrian, too, makes such a reference, though, as one would expect, in less romantic fashion:

> δῆλος μὲν ἦν 'Αλέξανδρος ὢν τῶν τε ὅπλων τῆι λαμπρότητι καὶ τῶι ἀτόπωι τῆς τόλμης . . .

he says at vi 9.5.

The hardships of campaign and exploration are contrasted with the unlikely Bacchanalian revel in Carmania in ch. 67. We are not here concerned with its historical credentials: its function in the scheme of Plutarch's narrative is, I think, to introduce a darker phase of the *Life*. Dionysus, as we have seen, is scarcely a propitious deity for Alexander in Plutarch's account: it is ominous, therefore, to hear at 67.6:

> τῶι δὲ ἀτάκτωι καὶ πεπλανημένωι τῆς πορείας παρείπετο καὶ παιδιὰ βακχικῆς ὕβρεως, ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρόντος αὐτοῦ καὶ συμπαραπέμποντος τὸν κῶμον.

Note ἀτάκτωι and πεπλανημένωι pointing the contrast between this and the usual military discipline and swiftness with which Alexander moves.

Further, his public display of affection towards Bagoas, which we must be meant to contrast unfavourably with his earlier σωφροσύνη and his outrage in ch. 22 when Philoxenus and Hagnon offer him boys, occurs when he is drunk: 67.8 λέγεται δὲ μεθύοντα αὐτὸν θεωρεῖν ἀγῶνας χορῶν . . .

Alexander's difficulties multiply in the next chapter: he has ignored the advice of the Gymnosophist Calanus in 65[20] and spread his realm too far, and rebellion is rife (68.2–3). Troubles at Macedon, Oxyartes' death by Alexander's own hand, Abuletes' punishment (all in

[19] Homer, *Il.* xix 375 ff.:

> ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἐκ πόντοιο σέλας ναύτῃσι φανήῃ
> καιομένοιο πυρὸς, τό τε καίεται ὑψόθ' ὄρεσφι
> σταθμῶι ἐν οἰοπόλωι· τοὺς δ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντας ἄελλαι
> πόντον ἐπ' ἰχθυόεντα φίλων ἀπάνευθε φέρουσιν·
> ὣς ἀπ' 'Αχιλλῆος σάκεος σέλας αἰθέρ' ἵκανε
> καλοῦ δαιδαλέου· περὶ δὲ τρυφάλειαν ἀείρας
> κρατὶ θέτο βριαρὴν· ἡ δ' ἀστὴρ ὣς ἀπέλαμπεν
> ἵππουρις τρυφάλεια, περισσείοντο δ ἔθειραι
> χρύσεαι, ἃς Ἥφαιστος ἵει λόφον ἀμφὶ θαμείας.

[20] The Calanus-incident, and Alexander subsequently ignoring his advice, is typical of a *topos* which goes back to Herodotus and (for example) Croesus' encounter with Solon (Hdt. i 29–32); on the other hand, despite Alexander's heedlessness of Calanus' counsel, Plutarch obviously does wish to portray him as being well-disposed towards philosophers, as we see from 7–8, 14 and 64. There are certainly traces of Onesicritus in 64–5: Alexander *philosophus* is being hinted at here, and it is Onesicritus who visits the sophists in 65.

ch. 68) are succeeded by the episode of Cyrus' tomb, whose inscription ἐμπαθῆ σφόδρα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐποίησεν, ἐν νῶι λαβόντα τὴν ἀδηλότητα καὶ μεταβολήν: a distinctively tragic theme. Calanus' death and funeral, with its disastrous aftermath, follow: his prophecy that he would soon see the king at Babylon and the deaths from drinking at the funeral continue the feeling of impending doom. Even Alexander's marriage to Stateira scarcely lightens the tone; and the misunderstanding with the Macedonian veterans at 71.1 ff., though it is resolved, is an unhappy incident. Arrian, we should note, gives the Macedonians less reason to complain by omitting the thirty thousand boys who in Plutarch are the cause of the trouble: vii 8–11.

The death of Hephaestion (ch. 72) after eating casseroled fowl and drinking ψυκτῆρα μέγαν οἴνου while his physician was at the theatre and Alexander's mourning for him follow. Here we are irresistibly reminded of Achilles mourning for Patroclus: the destruction of the Cossaeans is an ἐναγισμός for Hephaestion's shade (72.4), recalling Achilles' human sacrifice in *Il.* xxiii 175–7. Here, it might be said, we have an example of an epic reminiscence being used to develop the darker side of Alexander's character. This is an exception, however, which proves a rule: Achilles in his mourning for Patroclus is very much a forerunner of the great tragic heroes, as Rutherford (*art. cit.* [n. 11] 145–6) has pointed out: we have a reference here to the most tragic part of epic. At the same time it is appropriate that here the ethos is not purely tragic: for Alexander's mourning for Hephaestion is not part of the self-destructive side of his nature in the same way that the murder of Cleitus is.

The portents of Alexander's own death follow immediately on from this (contrasting bitterly with Stasicrates' elaborate plans for Mount Athos). The effect of the portents on Alexander is traumatic: 74.1 αὐτὸς δὲ ἠθύμει καὶ δύσελπις ἦν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἤδη καὶ πρὸς τοὺς φίλους ὕποπτος. This was the man who drank Philip of Acarnania's medicine προθύμως καὶ ἀνυπόπτως! Suspicion, fear and excessive belief in prodigies possess him: 75.1–2. The trusting man is paranoid, the brave man a prey to fear, the man who created his own portents (24.6–7) sees omens in the tiniest occurrence. The calamities of tragedy sometimes bring about similar collapses: Creon the 'hard man' crumbles quickly into submission in the *Antigone*; the strong man Heracles must be led away like a child, as he once led his own children, by Theseus; under the influence of the god Pentheus' puritanism gives way to the streak of prurience which was always in him.

And it is Dionysus, once again, who dominates Alexander's death. 75.5, where Plutarch rejects some of the more romantic versions of Alexander's end (notably that found in Diodorus) is interesting (and very typical of the style of his criticism of tragic history elsewhere: *cf.* note 6): he says: ταῦτά τινες ᾤοντο δεῖν γράφειν ὥσπερ δράματος μεγάλου τραγικὸν ἐξόδιον καὶ περιπαθὲς πλάσαντες. We shall have reason to mention the 'tragic historians' involved in a moment. The point of Plutarch's criticism of his sources here is not, I think, that they saw Alexander's life as a δρᾶμα μέγα and he did not: Plutarch himself, as I have tried to show, thought it appropriate to illustrate Alexander's life by means of sustained dramatic patterning, as well as seeing matter for straightforward dramatic spectacle in it, for example in the Philip of Acarnania scene. The emphasis, I think, must be on πλάσαντες: there was no need to fabricate a pathetic end to Alexander's life, says Plutarch: and he substitutes for the absurdities of the 'tragic' historians an account which far exceeds theirs in pathos and which has the additional merit of being true—or at least culled from the royal journals. The unforgettable picture of the soldiers filing past Alexander's couch far surpasses the fictions of the sources Plutarch has rejected.

One should not pass from the description of Alexander's death without mentioning a very striking parallel from the end of the *Demetrius*, a life whose whole structure, as de Lacy notes, seems to be conceived in terms of a tragedy: at Demetrius' death we are told that the Macedonian δρᾶμα is at an end. The more oblique link between Alexander and δρᾶμα reflects the less schematised, more complex play which Plutarch makes with tragedy in this *Life*.

For one cannot say simply that tragic colouring means automatically that Plutarch is 'attacking' Alexander. It very often means that Alexander's darker side is to the fore, but the

theatrical imagery in the episode of Philip of Acarnania is used to pack some of Alexander's best qualities into one memorable scene. I use the word 'scene' advisedly, for as I hope has become clear, there are scenes in the *Alexander*: great set-pieces told with tremendous ἐναργεία which more than anything else constitute the ingredients of the εἰδοποιία described in chapter 1.

We must now consider tragic history, and whether we should be surprised to find Plutarch, its arch-enemy, apparently succumbing to its charms. The answer to this question, it seems to me, is that put forward by Walbank in his articles on the origins of tragic history:[21] 'tragic' history constitutes no more than a souping-up of the facts for a cheap thrill; although it sometimes made use of theatrical imagery, it has nothing to do with sustained tragic patterning in the sense in which it may be observed in the *Alexander*, the *Demetrius*, or the *Antony*, where it is also extremely important. There is no inconsistency in Plutarch's despising this debased genre and adopting the techniques we have observed perfectly deliberately in his own work for a serious artistic purpose. It is also possible that Plutarch considered that biography, with its greater concentration on individuals, was a more suitable *genre* in which to set up such patterning than history; hence his remarks at 1.2–3.

Plutarch is sparing in this use of such tragic frameworks, however: he does not, for example, use it in the *Caesar*,[22] which seems surprising: the tragic colouring in the *Demetrius* continues into the *Antony*. It seems clear that something about Alexander's career suggested that it would be a fruitful approach to take, and that Caesar's did not: Alexander was a patron of the arts and a lover of literature (4.6) and Caesar was not: and Alexander saw himself in epic terms and Caesar did not (the nearest he comes is *Caesar* 11.2). But perhaps the most decisive reason was that tragic patterning could not fit in to Plutarch's conception of Caesar's downfall: for Plutarch, external factors destroyed Caesar, whereas internal forces worked on Alexander, as they did on Demetrius and Antony; Plutarch evidently felt it more appropriate to explain Caesar's end in terms of historical causation and politics, and Alexander's vicissitudes in terms of tragedy, epic, and divine wrath. Onesicritus gave Plutarch the epic strand and the general literary ethos of Alexander's life; the interweaving and balancing of epic and tragic is Plutarch's own original contribution to the tradition: individual versions of incidents are combined, where they exist, to produce the desired result: the elements may spring from others but the product is Plutarch's own.

Possibly, too, Plutarch was inclined towards working with these tragic overtones by Herodotus' account of the Persian Wars, in which there are many tragic elements. The works cover some of the same geographical area, and in many ways Alexander's conquest of Persia is seen as a reversal of, and a reply to, the Persian attempts on Greece: hence Demaratus the Corinthian's remarks at 37.7. There are a number of Herodotean elements in the *Life*: the relationship of Amyntas and Darius recalls a number of wise but disregarded Greek councillors in Herodotus, for instance, and both works show careful Oriental colouring when dealing with Persian affairs. Above all, there is the episode with the statue of Xerxes at 37.5, where Alexander, seeing a fallen statue of Xerxes, deposed by looting soldiers, debates whether to set it up again:

> 'πότερόν σε' εἶπε 'διὰ τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἕλληνας στρατείαν κείμενον παρέλθωμεν, ἢ διὰ τὴν ἄλλην μεγαλοφροσύνην καὶ ἀρετὴν ἐγείρωμεν;' τέλος δὲ πολὺν χρόνον πρὸς ἑαυτῶι γενόμενος καὶ σιωπήσας, παρῆλθε.

[21] *Cf.* F. Walbank, 'Tragic history: a reconsideration', *BICS* ii (1955), 4–14; 'Tragedy and History', *Historia* ix (1960) 216–34, repr. *Selected Papers* ch. 15, 224–41; C. B. R. Pelling, 'Plutarch's Adaptation of his Source-Material', *JHS* c (1980) 127–40, esp. 132 n. 26; and D. A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London 1972) 123.

[22] For Caesar destroyed by external factors, *cf.* Pelling, *art. cit.* 136–7. He also notes how material on Caesar's personal (especially sexual) habits, extensively used elsewhere, is largely suppressed in the *Life*. There is a strong atmosphere of divine threat in the last chapters of the *Caesar* (the many omens, the accounts of how Caesar is *nearly* warned more than once of the conspiracy, culminating in Pompey's statue as it were presiding over his death), which could be seen as comparable to the handling of the Cleitus incident in the *Alexander*; but this is never pinned down as tragic in the same manner: an important difference, I think.

Xerxes, the tragic king who wept at the ephemeral nature of his great army in Herodotus (vii 46), is presented in an encounter with Alexander, who, just as he later empathises with Cyrus (ch. 69), silently ponders the fate of Xerxes. The episodes both form part of the large theme of the contact and conflict between Greek and Persian which Plutarch, like Herodotus before him, found fascinating. I do not find the idea that Plutarch had Herodotus in mind and wanted to elaborate and expand the intimations of tragedy in that author incongruous; as Russell has pointed out (*op. cit.* [n. 21] 60 ff.), Plutarch's indignation against Herodotus in the *de malignitate Herodoti* is distinctly artificial, and surely assumed for rhetorical purposes.[23]

In no other prose author,[24] though, are the poetic genres, tragedy and epic, used in so sophisticated and refined a way to illuminate the tensions within a character. This illustrates not only the different preoccupations of history and biography (Plutarch is concerned with Alexander's internal development more than with his external career, as he makes clear from the beginning) but also just how good Plutarch is at what he does: using the genres in this way Plutarch can produce an account of Alexander, that most complex of characters, which is one of the most memorable he ever wrote, rich in ambiguity, contradiction and irony and thus magnificently real.

J. M. Mossman

Corpus Christi College, Oxford

[23] The handling of the material in the *Themistocles* perhaps supports this.

[24] With the possible exception of Heliodorus, whose use of stage-terms is extensive and complex. On this *cf.* J. W. H. Walden, 'Stage-terms in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*' *HSCP* v (1894) 1–43.