

Lund University

Antonios Pontoropoulos

Centre for Languages and Literature

Master Thesis

Greek section

Supervisor: Professor Karin Blomqvist

**REPRESENTATIONS OF TRAGIC THEMES IN PLUTARCH'S
*LIVES: DEMETRIUS AND ANTONY***

Lund 2014

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
1.1 The <i>Lives of Demetrius and Antony</i>	4
1.2 Aim and Method.....	5
1.3 Previous Research.....	7
2. Defining the tragic.....	9
2.1 Preliminary observations: Conceptualizing the tragic.....	9
2.2 Tragedy and the tragic.....	10
2.3 Tragic themes and prose literature.....	13
3. Representations of tragic themes in Plutarch's <i>Lives: Demetrius and Antony</i>	15
3.1 Demetrius' case.....	15
3.2 Demetrius' characterization: Fortune (τύχη), reverse (μεταβολή) and hubris (ὕβρις).....	17
4. Representations of tragic themes and patterns in <i>Antony</i>	21
4.1 Parallels in failure; Plutarch's <i>Life of Antony</i>	21
4.2 Tragic motifs and literary variation in Plutarch's <i>Antony</i>	22
4.3 <i>Antony's</i> political example; tragic representations and political connotations.....	24
Dionysian representations and Herculean characteristics.....	26
5. Conclusions.....	30
6. Bibliography.....	31

1. Introduction

This study is mostly concerned with tragic themes and patterns which occur in the *Parallel Lives of Demetrius and Antony*. Plutarch's biographies as well as philosophical essays contain historical, philosophical, moral interpretations in dramatic terms namely the existence of tragic themes and patterns as a part of his literary stylistics. Regarding his biographies, the pair of *Demetrius and Antony* is full of terms affiliated to tragedy; and tragedy is associated with calamities. One of the major existing tragic themes is the self destruction of tyrants, as well as the study of their nature.¹ The fate of these persons is considered to be tragic, in a rather Aristotelian sense. This means that their great nature is the main factor that causes greater goods, and greater evils. Aristotle's *Poetics* 1453a is concerned with the nature of tragedy: *So, the person is in between these cases. Such a person is someone not preeminent in virtue and justice, and one who falls into adversity not through evil and depravity, but through some kind of error; and one of those persons who enjoy great renown and prosperity, such as Oedipus, Thyestes and eminent men from such lineages.*² This statement would be a point of departure, in order to elucidate the concept of tragic.³

Moreover, there is a wide modern debate about the notion of tragic, which has to be considered: It is a rather wide discussion about the generic and philosophical nature of such a concept, as it drew the philosophers' attention from the classical period onwards. Plutarch's exploitation of tragic themes has then to be considered in terms of such a discussion: Could he use a wide variety of patterns and motifs which were primarily associated with the genre of tragedy, could it be a tragic depiction of characters in prose literature?⁴ From an ethical standpoint, it must be noted that the ancient concept of tragic is not associated only with vicious characters, who fall because of their viciousness, rather than with charismatic natures, which lie somewhere between good and evil. Nevertheless, they are misled by fortune and they become victims of their own selves.

Plutarch's *Demetrius and Antony* does not only depict the fate of the κόλαξ or the side-effects of the corrupted ἔρως, but it is a tragic depiction of brilliant natures who are torn by psychological struggles and led to self destruction: *This book will therefore contain the Lives of Demetrius the City-Besieger and Antony the emperor, men who bore most amply testimony to Plato's saying that great natures exhibit great vices as well as great virtues.*⁵ Their weakness of will, and their submission to the lowest traits of their characters led them to their end. The kind of moralism, which

¹De Lacy (1952) 165.

² Aristotle *Poetics* 1453a ὁ μεταξὺ ἄρα τούτων λοιπός. ἔστι δὲ τοιοῦτος ὁ μήτε ἀρετῇ διαφέρων καὶ δικαιοσύνη μήτε διὰ κακίαν καὶ μοχθηρίαν μεταβάλλων εἰς τὴν δυστυχίαν ἀλλὰ δι' ἀμαρτίαν τινά, τῶν ἐν μεγάλῃ δόξῃ ὄντων καὶ εὐτυχία, οἷον Οἰδίπους καὶ Θυέστης καὶ οἱ ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων γενῶν ἐπιφανεῖς ἄνδρες.

³Duff (2004) 285.

⁴Most (2000) 18-19.

⁵Plutarch *Demetrius* 1, 7 Περιέξει δὴ τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον τὸν Δημητρίου τοῦ Πολιορκητοῦ βίον καὶ Ἀντωνίου τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, ἀνδρῶν μάλιστα δὴ τῷ Πλάτῳ μαρτυρησάντων ὅτι καὶ κακίας μεγάλας, ὥσπερ ἀρετάς, αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις ἐκφέρουσι. Russell (1973) 135.

their description suggests, is that of a sympathetic insight towards human frailty. The set of these two *Lives* is then based on a structure whose patterns are associated with tragedy; a moralism which derives from the consciousness of human frailty and is somehow sympathetic toward it.⁶

To be more specific, self destruction as well as the mutability of human fate is a main motif of ancient Greek tragedies. Tragic heroes are mostly associated with fate, fortune and necessity. *Demetrius' Life* establishes the motif of the tragic fate, as words such as τύχη (chance regarded as an impersonal cause), εὐτυχία (good luck, success) and μεταβολή (mutability) recur several times (seventeen occurrences), as keywords of the narrative.⁷ Fate raises Demetrius and casts him down. His great nature is associated both with his success as well as with his destruction.

As regards Antony, he is portrayed as Demetrius' Roman counterpart: Plutarch presents *Antony* by defining him as a Roman drama: *Now that the Macedonian drama was performed, let us introduce the Roman.*⁸ He expands the existing tragic motifs, which are already found in *Demetrius* in a larger and wider way.⁹ It is a more thorough analysis not only in tragic terms but also from a psychological perspective. Antony is described as a victim of his own simplicity. His tendency to follow flatterers (Cleopatra, the Hellenistic court of Alexandria) will finally lead him towards his destruction, regardless his military and royal grandeur. The main pattern, upon which the main structure is based, is familiar: men with such errors and tragic ostentation will suffer catastrophe. Thus, the fact is that the consequences of his hubristic character shall strike him down.¹⁰

The way that Plutarch exploits motifs such as self destruction as well as the fate of flatterers can point out his moral intentions. He is mostly preoccupied with the character of his figures (ἦθος) and he repeatedly states that; παιδεία and λόγος play also an important role to the formation of his characters.¹¹ Demetrius attitude establishes these themes, which are variously exploited in Antony's case. Hence, it seems that most of themes of this pair of *Lives* are exploited in terms of the subjects' character description.

Furthermore, there are divine assimilations, which have various literary connotations. To be more specific, in the *Life of Demetrius* there is an implicit reference to Dionysus.¹² It is generally treated in terms of his character's low traits. Nevertheless, in *Antony* this theme is well established, as it becomes an important theme regarding his character's low qualities.¹³ Finally, Dionysus marks Antony's self destruction by abandoning him. The theme of Dionysus therefore is an important tragic theme mostly in the *Life of Antony*.

⁶ Pelling (1980) 138.

⁷ Pelling (1988) 24.

⁸ Plutarch *Demetrius* 53, 10 Διηγωνισμένου δὲ τοῦ Μακεδονικοῦ δράματος ὥρα τὸ Ῥωμαϊκὸν ἐπεισαγαγεῖν.

⁹ Note that the *Life of Demetrius* consists of 53 chapters, but the Roman *Life of Antony* consists of 68 chapters.

¹⁰ Pelling (1988) 25.

¹¹ Hamilton (1969) 38.

¹² Plutarch *Demetrius* 2, 3.

¹³ Pelling (2002) 203.

Moreover, there are implicit contemporary connotations which need to be noted: this set of biographies could be read as warning towards Plutarch's contemporary statesmen, men who held Roman administration offices and the historical examples of such figures may seem useful.¹⁴ It could be also an indication of Plutarch's political ideas regarding the institution of the Roman emperor.

Finally, there are existing precursors of such patterns in Plutarch's biographical corpus: A brief overview of such precursors would help to understand the nature as well as the way that tragic themes are represented.¹⁵ Thus, the existing representations of tragic themes in this pair of *Lives* will be the general framework of this study.

1.1 The *Lives of Demetrius and Antony*

Demetrius (337-283 BC) was the son of Antigonus and Stratonice. He belonged to the Antigonid dynasty, and acquired the title of the City-Besieger (Δημήτριος ὁ Πολιορκητής). Plutarch included Demetrius in his library of portraits.¹⁶ He is very keen on stressing the positive aspects of Demetrius' character: his military genius, his magnanimity and his love for his parents (φιλοπάτωρ). Demetrius' generosity is also witnessed by a series of episodes which are associated with Mithridates as well as by his first battles against Ptolemy. His greatest military achievement, which also demonstrates his sense of moral grandeur, is the war for the liberation of Greece as well as the city of Athens. After liberating Athens, Demetrius as well as his father Antigonus acquired the title of kings (βασιλείς) and savior gods (σωτήρας θεούς) by the Athenian assembly.¹⁷ Plutarch underlines this fact as a starting point of Demetrius' decay. This is confirmed by a series of incidents which are considered as evil omens, and point out Demetrius' hubris: *Most of these were marked with the divine displeasure.*¹⁸ His attitude will be a hubristic behavior towards both the divine and human institutions. The consequences of his behavior will be his destruction. Moreover, Plutarch emphasizes Demetrius' love for excessive pleasures, from the time he obtains the royal title and falls prey to his Athenian flatterers. Ultimately, this is going to be the main factor that causes his utter destruction.

Mark Antony was Roman general and politician, who belonged to Caesar's camp. He got involved in a rivalry with Caesar's official heir, Octavian. Plutarch's narrative is not concerned with precise historical events. The struggle between Octavian and Antony is portrayed from a moral perspective. Antony's statesmanship is described in a praiseful way,¹⁹ but his excesses, his autocratic behavior as well as the political consequences of it (proscriptions) are totally stigmatized.²⁰ Moreover, Antony's private life is a constant motif in this *Life*. Antony's simple character is a main factor of his seduction by flatterers, and most especially by Cleopatra: *Such then was the*

¹⁴ Duff (2004) 286.

¹⁵ Russell (1973) 104.

¹⁶ Duff (1999) 47 introduces Demetrius' negative example not only out of variety of writing but in order to provide a criterion of distinguishing between virtue and vice.

¹⁷ Plutarch *Demetrius* 10, 4.

¹⁸ Plutarch *Demetrius* 12, 3 ἐπεσήμηνε δὲ τοῖς πλείστοις τὸ θεῖον.

¹⁹ Plutarch *Antony* 14, 4.

²⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 19, 1-2.

*nature of Antony, where now as a crowning evil his love for Cleopatra supervened.*²¹ In Antony's case, Plutarch is fond of portraying his good as well as his bad qualities as main factors for his destruction. His generosity, his warmth and simplicity is a positive feature regarding his relationship with his soldiers. However, they become the main traits which lead him to Cleopatra's flattery. His generosity becomes a victim of a foreign queen, as he submits Roman dominion to her hands.²² Plutarch's interest for philhellenism is also a reversed feature of Antony's character, as it would expose him to lower eastern tastes.²³ Antony's excesses as well as his tastes totally destroy him. As the narrative goes on, Plutarch portrays his psychological struggle, a struggle between his Roman republican values and his eastern, tyrannical tastes.²⁴ Antony's death is a consequence of this struggle. It also needs to be noticed that the ending chapters of this *Life* belong to Cleopatra.²⁵ Antony's and Cleopatra's fate are considered to be one. Cleopatra is treated with considerable sympathy. The existing tragic patterns of *Demetrius* are expanded in this narrative. Antony is then a fallen tragic hero as he falls prey to Cleopatra's flatteries, and is led to utter destruction.

1.2 Aim and Method

This study then aims to be a critical analysis of themes that are associated with tragedy and occur in this pair of *Lives*. Plutarch seems to encompass themes previously found in classical tragedies and to adapt them in terms of his biographical writing. Any existing historical or biographical precursor of this technique shall be taken under consideration. Plutarch is, after all, a biographer who tries to elucidate the character (ἦθος) of his subject by using specific literary techniques and rhetorical devices.²⁶

Moreover, his use of such patterns may imply contemporary connotations and political criticism. Tragedy, in general, is associated with Athens' democratic past. It seems that the poetic discourse of tragedy would offer a variety of motifs, themes and patterns,²⁷ which could underline Plutarch's political views. Nevertheless, the main focus would be the exploitation of such themes and patterns by Plutarch himself. This complex literary reality has to be treated in terms of wider project which encompasses both traits in a diachronic and a synchronic level, namely any reference to Plutarch's contemporary reality. Thus, any existing political connotation would be discussed in a rather general sense.

²¹ Plutarch *Antony* 25, 1 Τοιοῦτῳ δ'οὖν ὄντι τὴν φύσιν Ἀντωνίῳ τελευταῖον κακὸν ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρως ἐπιγενόμενος.

²² Plutarch *Antony* 36, 3-4, 54, 4-9.

²³ Plutarch *Antony* 23, 2-5, 54, 5-9.

²⁴ Pelling (1988) 15.

²⁵ Plutarch *Antony* 87.

²⁶ Lamberton (2001) 69, Stadter (1999), x.

²⁷ Cairns (2009) 305-320 regarding popular as well as democratic values as attested in classical tragedies. Forsdyke (2009) 226-307 provides an account of one-man's rule historical evolution. The tragic discourse of the 5th century B.C.E provides an account of the existing stock-imagery of tyranny. Blomqvist (1998) 7-53 presents an account of Aristotle's political views on kingship and tyranny. Any association with Plutarchan views on tyranny would provide a result, which could point out the general political framework of this specific pair of *Lives*.

We have to note that the specific pair of *Lives* must be treated as a per se category. It is the only pair of villains.²⁸ Robert Lamberton suggests that Plutarch's villains seem to be much more interesting in comparison to his priggish heroes.²⁹ This would be considered to be an overstatement, as Plutarch's literary description point out a rather different reading: *So, I think, we also would be more eager to observe and imitate the better Lives if we are not left without narratives of the blameworthy and the bad.*³⁰ Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice the fact that Plutarch's villains are described in terms of tragedy, as he employs tragic themes and motifs.

An overview of the conceptualization of tragic in association with the genre of tragedy is required. Albeit, the tragic is a rather wide concept, we should confront ourselves within biographical prose. To be more specific, Plutarch's conceptualization of tragic would point out that tragic representations are not only associated with the genre of tragedy, but they became a kind of literary topos in terms of character description (ἥθος) as well as historiographical accounts in a rather sentimental manner, which involves πάθος.³¹ Thus, the presentation of the characters of Demetrius and Antony offers a wide variety of tragic themes and their literary variations.

From a methodological standpoint, this study will be a qualitative analysis of tragic themes, as represented in this pair of the *Lives*. We will try to underline what constitutes their tragic character in a rather genre specific sense namely in terms of tragic drama itself. There will be primarily an analysis of the existing themes and patterns in these two parallel *Lives*. We will then try to point out the way that Plutarch's biographical writing encompasses themes, which are associated with tragedies. There will therefore be an examination of Plutarch's *Life of Demetrius and Antony*, which will present the representation of tragic themes as part of the genre of biography.

From a theoretical point of view, the existing tragic themes are essential components, which point out the text's complex literary background: it means that the text itself is treated as system, which produces meaning by combining its different features and elements. In terms of our inquiry, a further elaboration needed in order to point out not only the complexity of the text as system, but its association with the text's literary and historical reality. Although this short of analysis turns out to be defined in terms, which are rather descriptive and structural, we will try to underline the fact that the text as a system is associated with its contemporary reality.³² Thus, a rather structural analysis of the way that tragic themes are represented in different levels would provide the basic methodological tools of this study.

As regards the English translation, I have mostly used the LOEB Classical Library editions with specific modifications, where I have deemed necessary.

²⁸ Pelling (1988) 18, Lamberton (2001) 130, Duff (2004) 271.

²⁹ Lamberton (2001) 130.

³⁰ Plutarch *Demetrius* 1, 6 οὕτως μοι δοκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς προθυμότεροι τῶν βελτιόνων ἔσεσθαι καὶ θεαταὶ καὶ μιμηταὶ βίων εἰ μὴδὲ τῶν φαύλων καὶ ψεγομένων ἀνιστορήτως ἔχοιμεν.

³¹ Most (2000) 15-35. Walbank (1960) 216-234.

³² Schmitz (2007) 38-40.

1.3 Previous research

Modern scholarship was very keen on stressing the theatrical features of Plutarch's oeuvre. It was widely suggested that Plutarch exploits theatrical patterns found in classical dramas, in order to stress rather negative features of his subjects. There is also an implicit association with his political criticism. Nonetheless, there has been recently pointed out that tragic patterns provide a rather wider and more sentimental overview, and they are not only negative markers.

De Lacy focuses on the philosophical basis of Plutarch's disapproval of tragedy in general, and analyzes *Demetrius' Life* from a tragic perspective.³³ Wardman sketches Plutarch's exploitation of dramatic patterns and underlines his suspiciousness towards tragedy.³⁴ Pelling, in a series of articles, presents Plutarch's literary methods, as well as his way of exploiting his historical and literary sources.³⁵ Mossman presents Plutarch's exploitation of tragic atmosphere and themes as a counterbalance to epic features, which are found in the *Life of Alexander*.³⁶ Mossman further elucidates her argument on the blending of epic and tragic features, by emphasizing in the *Lives of Alexander and Pyrrhus*.³⁷ In the terms of Mossman's research of tragic features, Zadorojniy investigates the existing tragic patterns that are found in the *Life of Crassus*.³⁸ Harrison also emphasizes in the way Plutarch presents certain political themes, by treating his presentation of statecraft as stagecraft. He underlines the fact that many biographies are set as dramas in accordance to classical drama. This means that the plot is organized as a prologue, followed by acts and an epilogue. According to his evaluation Plutarch's dramatic techniques could be attested in several *Lives*, and *Demetrius and Antony* is one of these.³⁹ Papadi underlines Plutarch's theatrical and tragic imagery, as encountered in the *Moralia*, with an emphasis in the *Life of Pompey*. Her treatment of tragic imagery is linked with the unity of Plutarch's literary program, as she points out that the existing themes in the *Moralia* (tragic-theatrical imagery) occur as well in the *Lives*.⁴⁰ Thus, it seems that tragic and theatrical features, as part of Plutarch's literary oeuvre, have long had a prominent position regarding Plutarch's literary stylistics.

Regarding the specific pair of *Lives*, Sweet presents the existing tragic themes in the *Life of Demetrius*, in terms of its source material.⁴¹ Russell points out the tragic nature of Demetrius and Antony.⁴² Flacelière provides a commented and translated edition, which underlines the tragic and theatrical imagery of this pair of *Lives*.⁴³ Pelling's commentary of the *Life of Antony* provides an account of the represented tragic themes in this specific biography, and further elaborates his presentation by contrasting Plutarch's narrative with Shakespeare's tragedy.⁴⁴ Brenk provides a

³³ DeLacy (1952) 159-171.

³⁴ Wardman (1974) 168-179.

³⁵ Pelling (1979) 74-96. Pelling (1980) 127-140.

³⁶ Mossman (1988) 83-93.

³⁷ Mossman (1992) 90-108.

³⁸ Zadorojniy (1997) 169-182.

³⁹ Harrison (2005) 53-59.

⁴⁰ Papadi (2008) 111-123.

⁴¹ Sweet (1951) 177-181.

⁴² Russell (1973) 135.

⁴³ Flacelière (1977).

⁴⁴ Pelling (1988).

literary and cultural study of the *Life of Antony*, in which he emphasizes on the use of tragic patterns in terms of contemporary connotations.⁴⁵ Stadter associates Plutarch's use of literary patterns and motifs with the moral purpose and the political background of his *Lives*.⁴⁶ Lamberton analyzes Plutarch's villains in terms of his moral program, hence as negative examples.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, he underlines their tragic qualities and tries to point out that any represented tragic motifs were literary topoi of historiographical and biographical writing. Pelling, in an investigation of Dionysian patterns in the *Lives*, underlines the association of the existing patterns with the genre of tragedy, especially Euripides' *Bacchae*, and analyzes these motifs in terms of Plutarch's political and moral presentation of Antony.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Duff's recent study puts the existing representations of tragic themes in a rather Platonic framework, by emphasizing on Plutarch's intended reader.⁴⁹ Alexiou presents the existing tragic themes in terms of Plutarch's characterization of Demetrius and Antony. He mostly focuses on their presentation as negative examples.⁵⁰ Hence, modern scholarship has mostly tried to present Plutarch's exploitation of tragic themes in terms of his own literary oeuvre.

⁴⁵ Brenk (1992) 4348-4469.

⁴⁶ Stadter (1999) ix-xxxii.

⁴⁷ Lamberton (2001) 115-142.

⁴⁸ Pelling (2002).

⁴⁹ Duff (2004) 271-291.

⁵⁰ Alexiou (2007) 235-273.

2. Defining the tragic

2.1. Preliminary observations: conceptualizing the tragic

The genre of tragedy has drawn the attention of literary theorists, as well as philosophers from classical antiquity onwards; during the 4th century Plato and Aristotle treated tragedy in a philosophical sense. Regarding Plato's views, he was the first philosopher who criticized tragedy without any reference to any specific tragic drama of Aeschylus, Sophocles or Euripides. On the other hand, Aristotle refers to specific tragedies, as part of his inquiry regarding the genre of tragedy.⁵¹ This difference between Plato's and Aristotle's treatment of tragedy⁵² may provide some hints about the boundaries posed by the genre itself. It then seems that a rather general concept of tragic divorced from the genre of tragedy itself, namely that it was not associated with specific tragic dramas. Furthermore, philosophical debates about the nature of tragedy and its development provide an example of the kind of confusion produced by essentializing concepts of genre and isolating them from particular historical, social and literary contexts.⁵³ Thus, an independent concept of tragic was created due to philosophical and literary criticism.

It would be essential to draw the limits of our inquiry, as it turns out that a wide overview of concepts such as the tragic and their development would cause further confusion. Moreover, a further clarification of the tragic in genre specific terms would clarify the fact that ancient authors exploited motifs, conventions and patterns associated with classical tragedies in a rather literary sense.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, it stands as a preliminary observation to clarify the fact that concepts such as the tragic, were in a sense divorced from the genre of tragedy, and were hypostasized as independent theoretical categories and could then be found in different contexts.

From a linguistic perspective, the adjective which derives from tragedy, has a wide variety of connotations: literary it may denote everything accustomed to the genre of tragedy, a chorus or an ode. From a metaphorical standpoint though, it denotes a grandiose or splendid literary style. It also contains negative connotations, as it points out a rather ostentatious attitude opposing a plain stylistic variant. Moreover, it is affiliated with fiction and myth opposed to scientific truth. In genre specific terms, this rather negative semiotics may derive from the very nature of tragic theatre, which involves not only suffering, but as well as a spectacular presentation of actions.⁵⁵ It could then be argued that such an adjective is very difficult to be precisely defined.⁵⁶

Nonetheless, our definition of the tragic will be drawn in genre specific terms: Mogyórodi argues that there is an archetype pattern of the tragic, which is attested in Greek tragedies.⁵⁷ The existence of a family curse or a doomed family is its major feature: ἐν μεγάλῃ δόξῃ in a rather Aristotelian language.⁵⁸ This pattern seems to involve one of the features that are imbedded in the genre of tragedy, as it recalls

⁵¹ Kaufmann (1968) 2.

⁵² Lucas (1968) xiv.

⁵³ Most (2000) 19.

⁵⁴ Niefanger (2006).

⁵⁵ Brereton (1970) 6-7. Most (2000) 20-21.

⁵⁶ Brereton (1970) 5. Most (2000) 20.

⁵⁷ Mogyórodi (1996) 358-359.

⁵⁸ Brereton (1970) 17-19.

specific Greek tragedies. It could then be pointed out that a definition of tragic in terms of specific tragic dramas could be possible.⁵⁹

The existence of patterns and motifs, which are associated with classical dramas, could also be found in other literary genres. This would provide a wider knowledge of these patterns: they could be defined as markers or plot variations. They would also demonstrate the way that patterns of a genre could be imbedded in other genres. Any existing interactions between tragedy and other genres could therefore demonstrate a rather literary sense.

2.2 Tragedy and the tragic

It is then demonstrated that the tragic is primarily associated with the genre of tragedy: defining this concept in genre specific terms presupposes the use of certain strategies and techniques, which are imbedded in it. By definition, genres are investigated as systems which share functionalizing features of form and content.⁶⁰ Although, ancient theories could not provide a sufficient analysis of the qualities and the elements that constitute genres in general, there were analyses of specific literary genres. Aristotle's *Poetics* is one of those cases. Moreover, Aristotle's analysis clearly points out that the sense of tragic was accustomed only with the genre of tragedy itself, namely there was no philosophical or any other connotation.⁶¹ He provides a complex overview of tragedy in terms of form as well as content.⁶² Thus, it seems that there is an amount of techniques and strategies, constituting the genre of tragedy, which points out the existence of a primary literary quality known as the tragic.

Aristotle's definition of tragedy points out the first hint of an inquiry regarding the tragic in genre specific terms: *tragedy, then, is mimesis of an action which is elevated, complete, and of magnitude; embellished in language by distinct forms in its sections; employing the mode of enactment, not narrative; and through pity and fear accomplishing the catharsis of such emotions.*⁶³ For him tragedy is a kind of natural species defined formally in terms of the various differences in comparison to the genre as a whole.⁶⁴ The systemic description of tragedy points out its fixed place in the world and provides an overview of its inherent qualities: the notions of φόβος (fear) and ἔλεος (pity) constitute the complex qualities accustomed with tragedy and its purpose in the taxonomy of the world. They also point out further a complex system of inherent qualities of tragedy, which could be defined in terms of the audience's response.

⁵⁹ Niefanger (2006) underlines the fact that the concept of tragic is a response to the ancient reception of tragedy, which is mostly based on Aristotle's *Poetics*.

⁶⁰ Conte and Most (2006) 630-631. Most (2000) 22.

⁶¹ Most (2000) 22-23.

⁶² Conte and Most (2006) 630-631.

⁶³ Aristotle *Poetics* 1449b ἔστιν οὖν τραγωδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ χωρὶς ἐκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι' ἀπαγγελίας, δι' ἑλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.

⁶⁴ Conte and Most (2006) 630-631. Kaufmann (1968) 43. Most (2000) 26.

This analysis provides an active role to the audience of the tragic dramas and it also implies that the theatre, as a cultural phenomenon, is primarily accustomed with a spectacular feature. The fragility of human nature through presentation of large scale disaster is present in such a theatre, which could be defined as awe-inspiring.⁶⁵ Oedipus' fall is a major example of this large scale disaster which result an awe-inspiring feeling.⁶⁶ This implies that such a description is not just a structural but a kind of psychological analysis. Aristotle's account of tragedy is therefore rather teleological as the inherent genre specific qualities are fulfilled in terms of its audience's response.⁶⁷

Such a definition of tragedy could be a point of departure in order to detect the major features which are imbedded in this genre. One of these features is an implied disaster associated with the end of tragedy. The idea of disaster seems to be in the core of tragedy. How could disaster be defined in terms of tragedy? Death could be excluded in a sense, as it is not a prerequisite of tragedy itself, but finality or an irreversible situation is the major feature of a tragic disaster. Nevertheless, the very nature of tragedy seems to prohibit a happy ending in comparison to this witnessed in comedy. It could then be stated that tragedy involves a disaster which cannot be remedied. This descriptive definition provides a primary analysis of one of the major elements of tragedy. However, Aristotle's analysis does not seem to imply a disastrous conclusion.

We could argue that there are some Greek tragedies which do not end with a final catastrophe. Euripides' *Alcestis* is one of these tragedies: *the works of the Gods reveal them in many forms: They bring many things unhopped to accomplishment. And the things that we looked for, they did not bring to an end. Paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods unsealed. So fell this marvelous thing.*⁶⁸ Modern scholarship tried to detect elements which are not associated with tragedy itself.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, this seems to be a complex inquiry which further involves the reception of tragedy.⁷⁰ Thus according to Aristotle's analysis, it seems that a tragedy is tragic because it involves the elements of φόβος and ἔλεος, not in the sense of just a disastrous closure.

Disaster is strongly linked with finality. Furthermore, finality is linked with another factor: failure.⁷¹ Failure seems to be an important element of tragedy in a sense, as it causes a final disaster, in terms of the tragic plot. It would be difficult to avoid mention Aristotle's notion of tragic misjudgment (ἁμαρτία), as it seems that it is a concept which encompasses failure in a rather tragic manner.⁷² To be more specific,

⁶⁵ Lucas (1968) 273-175. Mogyórodi (1996) 358.

⁶⁶ Brereton (1970) 28-29.

⁶⁷ Most (2000) 25.

⁶⁸ Euripides *Alcestis* 1159-1163 πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, πολλὰ δ' ἄελλπτος κραίνουσι θεοί· καὶ τα δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἔτελέσθη, τῶν δ' ἁδοκῆτων πόρον ἤυρε θεός. τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρῶγμα. Kaufmann (1968) 44.

⁶⁹ Most (2000) 22.

⁷⁰ Niefanger (2006).

⁷¹ Brereton (1970) 10-11.

⁷² Kaufmann (1968) 61. Lucas (1967) 299. There is a long-standing debate in modern scholarship about the notion of ἁμαρτία. It seems that it was a rather influential term in modern literatures as well, as it could be easily applied in Shakespeare's tragedies. The usual English rendering is misjudgment, and its German counterpart Schuld, which has the notion of fault in it as well.

Aristotle's notion of ἁμαρτία is a wide concept, so it is difficult to set its precise limits: it seems that it can be affiliated with moral failure, and failure itself is an essential part of tragedy's conception.

In order to provide a precise definition, we must take into account the fact that the ancient notion of tragic misjudgment is different from its modern conception. There is an intellectual element imbedded, as it involves intellectual evaluation of a rather unexpected and misfortunate situation.⁷³ Moreover, Aristotle discusses the term of tragic misjudgment in a chapter which deals primarily with the tragic plot. So, it has to be underlined that it is discussed as a plot pattern in tragedy, and not as a moral marker denoting its ethos. For Aristotle, ἁμαρτία is the great feature of tragedy showing a concentrated exposure of human fallibility. This kind of definition proves that the Aristotelian analysis of tragedy is not just mere moralism. Hence, it seems rather unavoidable to discuss Aristotle's terms regarding tragic patterns imbedded in tragedy, as they seem to provide fruitful results in a discussion involving the tragic sense of tragedy.⁷⁴

Furthermore, the notion of failure points out another component element, the concept of hubris. A modern misconception of the word hubris would lead us to pride. Hence it would be easy to define tragic misjudgment as a consequence of pride, which will definitely lead to final disaster.⁷⁵ However, it seems that hubris falls into a completely different semantic category: it turns out that it is not associated with pride as a personal feeling, rather that it involves action in a manner that disregards the rights of others. In several Greek tragedies we encounter hubris in terms of tragic action, namely as a consequence of a morally wrong evaluation of a situation, which causes not pride as a feeling, but as wrong-doing. Hubris is also contrasted with the notions of δίκη and σωφροσύνη, which involve a complex moral system of values. Nevertheless, it seems that hubris is a turning point of a tragic plot as it involves various associations with the notion of tragic misjudgment, and it denotes a mutual situation due to a moral devaluation.

This kind of misjudgment is considered to be a feature of tragedy leading to a mutability of fortune.⁷⁶ This would probably point out an irreversible situation, which could be defined as a change of fortune from a happier to a rather miserable situation. This fortune mutability could be described as a major component of what is general called a tragic fate. It deals with the arising of feelings such as φόβος and ἔλεος, in an Aristotelian sense.

However, such a description would lack a sufficient component in order to be described as a tragic plot, the tragic hero's status:⁷⁷ a tragic hero is a man who suffered worse. From an Aristotelian point of view the best tragic plots are based in the stories of a few royal houses: those of Alcmeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes and Telephus may provide examples of men of great suffering. Nevertheless, it seems that these heroes, who are seen as great tragic figures whose

⁷³ Lucas (1967) 301.

⁷⁴ Kaufmann (1968) 61.

⁷⁵ Kaufmann (1968) 68.

⁷⁶ Lucas (1968) 302.

⁷⁷ Brereton (1970) 17 also points out the fact that tragedies focus mainly on mythical royal houses. Their status is therefore considered to be a major component of a tragedy.

actions cause their own tragic disaster, are active personas. Thus, Aristotle's analysis points out the fact that their tragic nature lies somewhere on the middle of virtue and vice, causing the feelings that he evaluated as the major components of tragedy.

The tragic drama is then based on a series of variations and innovations which involve literary conventions, but they also allow some sort of innovation, on the basis of a fixed system:⁷⁸ it seems that there is kind of tragic master plot which is constructed in terms of a scheme, which includes three steps: misjudgment and hubris, which consequently leads to disaster. This scheme of master plot could be further elucidated: Euripides' evaluation, as a tragic poet, is an example, which implies the main features of the Aristotelian analysis: *and Euripides, even if he does not arrange other details well, is at least found the most tragic of all poets.*⁷⁹ Euripides is then evaluated in terms of this scheme. Aristotle's approach seems therefore to be a rather normative evaluation of drama in terms of its plot.

The genre of tragedy seems to set the precise limits of the concept of tragic. Tragedy could then be defined as a series of plot patterns, techniques, dramatic procedures which define the tragic in a genre specific terms. Moreover, any existing plot patterns, themes or motifs in other genres such as biography could point out a rather wider development.⁸⁰ Thus, it could be thoroughly argued that a definition of the tragic should be associated with the genre of tragedy itself.

2.3 Tragic themes and prose literature

If there are any existing plot patterns in prose, we could argue that there is a reduction of the tragic plot into a rather simple scheme: great pride causes self destruction. Herodotus was the first to introduce the pattern of tragic misjudgment in the story of Cambyses, which is associated with the tragic plot: Cambyses' misjudgment led him to kill his brother in vain and finally realize his misjudgment.⁸¹ Herodotus treats Cambyses' decision in terms of moral misjudgment, which is considered to be the major pattern of tragedy.⁸² Hence, Herodotus' treatment points out that the main patterns of tragedy could be also found in prose.

Prose itself, namely historiography and biography, would further point out any affiliation with tragic themes.⁸³ To be more specific, Aristotle's treatment of tragedy provided the main components in order to create a tragic history: these were associated with the arousal of pity. So, we could argue that there are existing tragic patterns in historiography, which could be treated in terms of Aristotle's analysis.

⁷⁸ Niefanger (2006).

⁷⁹ Aristotle *Poetics* 1453a καὶ ὁ Εὐριπίδης, εἰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ εὖ οἰκονομεῖ, ἀλλὰ τραγικώτατος γε τῶν ποιητῶν φαίνεται.

⁸⁰ Niefanger (2006).

⁸¹ Herodotus 3. 65. 4 παντὸς δὲ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἔσεσθαι ἁμαρτῶν.

⁸² Lucas (1968) 306-307.

⁸³ Stadter (2007) 528 points out that it is difficult to define the boundaries between historiography and biography.

Tragic history is therefore a term, which points out a vivid, melodramatic presentation of historical events, which is associated with the arousal of φόβος and ἔλεος.⁸⁴

Nonetheless, the existing tragic themes in prose are associated with the treatment of the historical material.⁸⁵ The term εὐρεσις deals with the employed rhetorical strategies and techniques.⁸⁶ To be more specific, there is a wide interest in the way, which the historical events are articulated. This interest reveals a rather complex attitude towards the presentation of historical events. It seems that the tragic themes and patterns are part of the genre of historiography itself. We could therefore consider them as rhetorical strategies, which further elucidate the interpretation of the treated historical events.

Biographical prose could further demonstrate the way that these patterns are developed: Plutarch employs a series of techniques and strategies, which point out the tragic nature of his subjects' narrative. The motifs of fortune, reversal and adventure are part of his biographical writing. Moreover, we could argue that there is a rather wide sense of theatricality, which is associated with these motifs.⁸⁷ The exploitation of such techniques points out a rather vivid literary style. Biographical prose is, after all, a literary work.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the existing tragic patterns and motifs are generally associated with their author's literary intentions. Thus it seems that Plutarch's biographies point out the further development of tragic patterns.

The existing tragic imagery in historiography as well as biography is considered to be associated with the treatment of its material.⁸⁹ The exploitation of tragic patterns, motifs and themes is a much more complex literary phenomenon than a representation of Aristotle's analysis of tragedy. The representation of tragic themes in prose literature seems to encompass a greater number of characteristics. We will therefore try to investigate a series of tragic patterns and themes in the *Lives of Demetrius and Antony*, in order to point out that the existing tragic themes are an essential part of Plutarch's biographical style.

⁸⁴ Walbank (1960) 220.

⁸⁵ Walbank (1960) 221.

⁸⁶ Marincola (2009) 15.

⁸⁷ Rutherford (2007) 513.

⁸⁸ Wardman (1974) 168-169.

⁸⁹ Marincola (2009) 17.

3. Representations of tragic themes in Plutarch's *Lives: Demetrius and Antony*

3.1 Demetrius' case⁹⁰

Plutarch's *Life of Demetrius* is the only extant work on Demetrius' life.⁹¹ He launches the presentation of Demetrius, as an anti-hero example. To be more specific, Plutarch's narrative presents a mixture of heroic and antiheroic features: Demetrius' character is a mixture of great and low features, which provide evidence of his brilliant nature. The narrative invites the reader to consider Demetrius in a much wider scale: he is a representation of a man, who is torn by excess and pride.⁹² According to Alexiou, the main component of the *Life* is the escalating domination of his lower traits.⁹³ His brilliant nature is described in a manner of moral decadence. Plutarch's biographical analysis of Demetrius Poliorcetes is then proven to be a vice story.⁹⁴

The extensive use of imagery associated with tragedy, such as hubris, fortune and reverse suggests a tragic reading of the *Life*: tragedy is associated with decline, calamities and failure.⁹⁵ Moreover, tragic motifs are used as literary techniques in order not only to create varied narrative, but to describe the characters in a deep sense: *Perhaps it will not be much amiss for me to introduce a pair or two of them into my examples of Lives, though not that I may merely divert and amuse my readers by giving variety to my writing.*⁹⁶ Plutarch's characters are then not considered to be static personas, or mere representations of virtue and vice. Hence, the exploitation of tragic themes elucidates the complexity of their character and invites a kind of moral assessment.⁹⁷ Demetrius possesses a *brilliant nature*.⁹⁸ Nonetheless, he becomes a prime example of tragic failure, as moral bankruptcy leads him to utter destruction. Thus the use of tragic drama demonstrates that it is used as a cross image,⁹⁹ as the presentation of Demetrius' character invites further connotations with the genre of tragedy.

Fortune as well as its reverse is the main tragic motif, which plays an important role in Demetrius' description. Fortune seems to be an important feature of tragedy, which defines individual decisions, which consequently lead to destruction:¹⁰⁰ Demetrius' character is equated with his fortune: his great as well as low traits are associated with it. His character's lower features are associated with the reverse of his fortune. This kind of character description points out fortune as the major motif of this *Life*. In general, character change, as presented in biographical prose, is not radical and is a

⁹⁰ Duff (1999) 9-10 uses the term case study in order to point out that Plutarchan biographies are studies on virtue and vice. Hence, he underlines the moralistic tendencies of Plutarch's biography.

⁹¹ Flacelière (1977) 3.

⁹² Duff (1999) 9.

⁹³ Alexiou (2007) 248.

⁹⁴ DeLacy (1952) 168. Flacelière (1977) 14-15. Wardman (1974) 176.

⁹⁵ Duff (2004) 283.

⁹⁶ Plutarch *Demetrius* 1, 5 οὐ χεῖρον ἴσως ἐστὶ συζυγίαν μίαν ἢ δύο παρεμβάλεῖν εἰς τὰ παραδείγματα τῶν βίων, οὐκ ἐφ' ἡδονῇ μὰ Δία καὶ διαγωγῇ τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ποικίλλοντας τὴν γραφήν. Harrison (2005) 54.

⁹⁷ Pelling (2000) 47.

⁹⁸ Plutarch *Demetrius* 4, 5 εὐφυΐας δείγματα.

⁹⁹ Harrison (2005) 54.

¹⁰⁰ Most (2000) 27.

consequence of individual decisions, which are associated with fortune. Thus, fortune is a motif, which deepens Demetrius' portrait.

Demetrius fails in great fashion; his moral failure is combined with his greatness and the reverses he experiences.¹⁰¹ Hence, his hubris is explicitly associated with the reverse of fortune. Nevertheless, he is a ὑβριστής: This adjective denotes his excessive self regard, involving even violence.¹⁰² He is a man, who succeeds and fails in a grand manner. The motif fortune unites his great as well as his low qualities. As the narrative unfolds, he is portrayed as a good man, who is tyrannically corrupted by excesses and tyranny: *With such mockery of adulation they perverted the man's mind, which even before was not wholly sane.*¹⁰³ Although, he manages to retain some of his qualities, he is finally destructed. An allusion to a lost tragedy of Aeschylus suggests fortune to be the main factor of his failure: *For this reason, we are told that in his worst reverses he would apostrophize Fortune in the words of Aeschylus: you raise me and you seem to quench me, too.*¹⁰⁴ This apostrophe then points out that Demetrius' failure is interpreted as a tragic reverse, and not just as a linear moral decline.

Demetrius' presentation in tragic terms suggests a series of political as well as contemporary connotations. The main political problem concerns the nature of the true sovereign. Demetrius' reign was proven to be false, grandiose and vain. Demetrius' main concern, as a sovereign, turned to be a luxurious and extravagant lifestyle, which surpassed even his greatest military success. His given title of City-Besieger is totally criticized by Plutarch: *For Zeus is surnamed City-Guardian or City-Protector; but Demetrius, City-Besieger.*¹⁰⁵ This kind of characterization sums up Demetrius' hubristic and ambitious nature. His reign is contrasted to the virtuous nature of sovereigns, who are guardians of justice.¹⁰⁶ He is proven incapable to tame his lower qualities, in order to become an example of virtuous leader. Thus, he is nothing but a failed monarch. The surname of City-Besieger proves his failure.

Brenk suggests that the presentation of Demetrius is an implicit reference to Nero's reign.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, this may be just one implication, which would be difficultly recognized. In general, there is suspiciousness towards autocratic institutions, which were systematically represented as divine.¹⁰⁸ The Hellenistic monarchies would therefore provide the general historical framework for Plutarch to convey his general discontent for any kind of political excess.

The divine representations of Demetrius' monarchy are generally characterized as false and vain: Demetrius' divine representation and his further adoration points out

¹⁰¹ Flacelière (1977) 3-4.

¹⁰² Duff (2004) 283.

¹⁰³ Plutarch *Demetrius* 13, 3 οὕτω καταμωκόμενοι τοῦ ἀνθρώπου προσδιέφθειραν αὐτόν, οὐδ' ἄλλως ὑγιαίνοντα τὴν διάνοιαν.

¹⁰⁴ Plutarch *Demetrius* 35, 4 διὸ καὶ φασιν αὐτὸν ἐν ταῖς χεῖροσι μεταβολαῖς πρὸς τὴν Τύχην ἀναφθέγγεσθαι τὸ Αἰσχύλειον· σὺ τοί με φύσῃς, σὺ με καταίθεις μοι δοκεῖς.

¹⁰⁵ Plutarch *Demetrius* 42, 6 ὁ μὲν γὰρ Πολιεὺς καὶ Πολιοῦχος, ὁ δὲ Πολιορκητὴς ἐπὶ κλησὶν ἔσχευεν.

¹⁰⁶ Tatum (1993) 428-429.

¹⁰⁷ Brenk (1992) 4348-4363.

¹⁰⁸ Alexiou (2007) 256.

the false nature of his reign.¹⁰⁹ It seems that there is an explicit distrust, which regards not only Demetrius' nature but in general the phenomenon of Hellenistic ruler cult. It is already stated that Hellenistic monarchies elevated the human status to a divine level. It is important to note that Demetrius' assimilation to Dionysus introduces a tragic theme, which reveals the hero's tragic and ostentatious nature. In general, the divine honors, which are attributed to him by the Athenian assembly, cause his utter corruption, as he adopts a violent and hubristic behavior towards the citizens and the divine institutions. A series of prodigies points out the falsehood of these innovations: *Most of these innovations were marked with the divine displeasure.*¹¹⁰

Plutarch evaluates Demetrius' rule, as part of the Hellenistic period. According to Plutarch's statement the Hellenistic monarchies were proven to be just excessive tyrannies aiming only to the pursuit of vague desire and pleasures: *This practice did not mean the addition of a name or a change of fashion merely, but it stripped the spirits of men, lifted their thoughts high and introduced into their lives and dealings with others pomposity and ostentation.*¹¹¹ This statement put Demetrius in his historical framework, and treats him according to its terms: Pomposity and ostentation are the main characteristics of the Hellenistic monarchies, which cause the corruption of the human spirit. His criticism towards such institutions is imbedded in Demetrius' tragic story: A deteriorating hero, who falls due to the decadence of his political and social environment. Hence, Demetrius' presentation is not totally negative, but there is a rather general criticism towards the institutions of the Hellenistic period.

3.2 Demetrius' characterization: Fortune (τύχη), reverse (μεταβολή) and hubris (ὑβρις)

It has to be noted that the words τύχη, εὐτυχία and μεταβολή are found eighteen times in *Demetrius*. This frequency establishes the concept of fortune as a key concept of the *Lives*. It implies an extra human factor, which influences human decisions in a grand scale. Moreover, it involves a complex association with other concepts such as reverse and tragic adventure. According to Aristotle: *Reversal is a change to the opposite direction of events, as already stated, and one in accord, as we insist, with probability or necessity.*¹¹² This definition points out the fact that such patterns are primarily associated with the tragic plot. Nevertheless, they are established as key features of Plutarch's *Demetrius*.

We could also point out the fact that fortune plays an important role as a pattern associated with character change.¹¹³ Demetrius' character does is equated with his fortune. There is no radical change, but rather an association of his character with the extra human factor of fortune. To be more specific, his presentation points out a kind

¹⁰⁹ Plutarch *Demetrius* 12, 1-2.

¹¹⁰ Plutarch *Demetrius* 12, 3 ἐπεσήμηνε δὲ τοῖς πλείστοις τὸ θεῖον.

¹¹¹ Plutarch *Demetrius* 18, 5 τοῦτο δὲ οὐ προσθήκην ὀνόματος καὶ σχήματος ἐξαλλαγὴν εἶχε μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ φρονήματα τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκίνησε καὶ τὰς γνώμας ἐπῆρε, καὶ τοῖς βίοις καὶ ταῖς ὁμιλίαις αὐτῶν ὄγκον ἐνεποίησε καὶ βαρύνηται.

¹¹² Aristotle *Poetics* 1452a ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἢ εἰς τὸ ἐνάντιον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολὴ καθάπερ εἴρηται, καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ὥσπερ λέγομεν κατὰ τὸ εἶκος ἢ ἀναγκαῖον.

¹¹³ DeLacy (1952) 165. Lucas (1968) 292.

of tragic adventure. Hence, it seems that the concept of fortune is an essential plot pattern, which point out Demetrius' tragedy.

From a political standpoint, the representation of fortune combines the patterns of constitutional change with character analysis.¹¹⁴ We could further argue that Demetrius' example is that of a declined monarchy. This statement may conceal either a negative judgment towards Hellenistic monarchy, or a general distrust towards this kind of institutions. Nevertheless, Demetrius' historical example emphasizes on the fact that monarchy is a reverse of fortune. It could be represented in terms of a tragic drama, involving the Hellenistic kings as its main protagonists.¹¹⁵ Hence, this analysis would sufficiently demonstrate Plutarch's conception of the motif of fortune.

From a linguistic point of view, it is difficult to define the semantic domain of fortune. It may mean a divinity (Fortune) or just an irrational or unexpected factor, which is beyond human control. Hence it seems that this concept fluctuates between a personalized and an impersonal force: The existing pattern distributes success or failure in a rather capricious manner.¹¹⁶ Although Plutarch is not very keen on radical character change, he seems to acknowledge some sort of character alteration.¹¹⁷ This is a consequence of political necessity, which definitely causes some sort of alteration by bringing on the surface some lower qualities and leading to hubris.

In Demetrius' case, the tragic representation of fortune is established in a wide way. It has to be noted that the narrative emphasizes on Demetrius' consequent reverses, by establishing both an important plot pattern and a moral marker in terms of character.¹¹⁸ Albeit, his death points out a lack of virtue, we could argue that Demetrius' fine qualities are altered by political circumstances, his moral failure is hence presented as a matter of chance: *But Demetrius, even before he felt the constraints of adversity, kept on liberating Greece and expelling the garrisons from her cities, unlike Antony, who boasted that he had killed in Macedonia the men, who had given liberty to Rome.*¹¹⁹ Johnson underlines the fact that the human character of Demetrius is presented in terms of established patterns:¹²⁰ Fortune is the kind of extra-human factor, which can lead from a simple character alteration to self destruction. Though it seems that primarily there is very little interest in the nature of his character, as the narrative unfolds, presents Demetrius in a rather tragic manner. Fortune is the ultimate factor, which alternates his character. His moral and political failure is therefore presented in terms of a Greek tragedy: he is not able to tame his lower qualities, and he is finally destroyed.¹²¹ Hence the narrative does not provide a purely negative characterization.

¹¹⁴ Scardigli (1995) 8-9.

¹¹⁵ Marincola (2009) 16-18.

¹¹⁶ Walbank (2007) 349-350.

¹¹⁷ Swain (1989) 65. Wardman (1974) 136.

¹¹⁸ Plutarch *Demetrius* 33, 39, 43, 48.

¹¹⁹ Plutarch *Comparison* 2, 2 Δημήτριος δὲ καὶ, πρὶν εἰς τύχας ἐλθεῖν ἀναγκαίας, ἐλευθερῶν τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ τῶν πόλεων ἐξελαύνων τὰς φρουράς διετέλεσεν, οὐχ ὥσπερ Ἀντώνιος, ὅτι τοὺς ἐλευθερωσάντας τὴν Ῥώμην ἀπέκτεινεν ἐν Μακεδονίᾳ σεμνυνόμενος.

¹²⁰ Johnson (1970) 36-37.

¹²¹ Plutarch *Demetrius* 52, 3-4.

The use of the adjective ὑβριστά¹²² has strong negative connotations, implying the tragedy of Demetrius.¹²³ Moreover, the juxtaposition of his outrages with his military achievements underlines the important role that fortune plays in this *Life*.¹²⁴ This juxtaposition establishes the motif in a wider manner; it is fortune, which establishes Demetrius' hubris. It seems that his hubris is not clearly defined, as the Athenian assembly corrupts him. However, his excesses as well as his final death are criticized by Plutarch. Demetrius is indeed a ὑβριστής, who cannot tame his lower qualities. It is important to note that his hubris is not the consequent result of his atrocities.¹²⁵ Nonetheless, his death marks his utter self destruction. Demetrius' tragedy is represented in a grand scale: *His line came down in a succession of kings to Perseus, the last, in whose reign the Romans subdued Macedonia*.¹²⁶ His royal line will be destroyed by terminating the kingdom's political independence. Hence, Demetrius' hubris would consequence a large scale result: the end of Macedon's political independence.

Demetrius' characterization, as a failed monarch, seems to recall the proemion: *For what other end than this can worthless kings seek to attain by their wars and perils? They are indeed wicked and foolish*.¹²⁷ His character lacks of integrity.¹²⁸ His insolence becomes a dominant trait due to the Athenians flatteries. Nevertheless, he is neither good nor bad. Plutarch underlines the fact that his virtuous qualities are incoherent in comparison to his lowest traits. Even his military successes cannot surpass his insolence. Hence his lower traits tame his best qualities. It finally drives him to lose sense of his self. He is led from hubris to self destruction.¹²⁹ Sweet suggests that Demetrius' presentation echoes the Aristotelian definition of tragedy.¹³⁰ Demetrius' characterization does not only focus on his negative traits. His main feature is that he possesses a brilliant nature, which is taken down by his own vices. He is therefore presented in rather a tragic manner.

According to Plutarch's interpretation of Demetrius' character, his finality reveals his main moral concern: the pursuit of extravagance and pleasure. Nonetheless, this is not an overstatement, which just echoes the primary characterization. There is a rather tragic view of the character; Demetrius' reign is proven to be vain: *For they do not even know how to enjoy real pleasure or true luxury*.¹³¹ Thus, Plutarch's *Demetrius* establishes the tragic example of a brilliant, but corrupted nature.¹³²

Demetrius' presentation may also be associated with Plutarch's source material. To be more specific, there are certain historical sources, which present him in a rather

¹²² Plutarch *Demetrius* 1, 8.

¹²³ Duff (2004) 283.

¹²⁴ Plutarch *Demetrius* 23-29.

¹²⁵ Pelling (1988) 24-25.

¹²⁶ Plutarch *Demetrius* 53, 4 κατέβη δὲ ταῖς διαδοχαῖς τὸ γένος αὐτοῦ βασιλεῦον εἰς Περσέα τελευταῖον. ἐφ' οὗ Ῥωμαῖοι Μακεδονίαν ὑπηγάγοντο.

¹²⁷ Plutarch *Demetrius* 52, 4 τι γὰρ ἄλλο τῶν πολέμων καὶ τῶν κινδύνων πέρας ἐστὶ τοῖς φαύλοις βασιλεῦσι, κακῶς καὶ ἀνοήτως διακειμένοις.

¹²⁸ Wardman (1974) 132-133.

¹²⁹ Lamberton (2001) 103.

¹³⁰ Sweet (1951) 179.

¹³¹ Plutarch *Demetrius* 53, 4 ἀλλ' ὅτι μηδὲ ἡδεσθαι μηδὲ τρυφᾶν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἴσασιν.

¹³² Mossman (1992) 92. Pelling (1988) 25.

positive manner. Hieronymus of Cardia is one of these major sources.¹³³ Nonetheless, it is important to note Plutarch's ability provide a narrative, which encompasses his historical material: They would point out a rather positive evaluation of Demetrius' character, which does not fully confirm Demetrius' primary characterization. Nonetheless, his brilliant nature is underlined as his primary feature.¹³⁴ Hence, it seems that Plutarch exploits his sources in order to focus on Demetrius' escalating deterioration. He indeed possesses a brilliant nature, which cannot surpass his character's low qualities.

Moreover, it seems that there is not only a concern on the character of his subject. There is a wider representation of political concerns: Moral decline and political decline is a key motif of *Demetrius*. The existence of such motifs seems to be an inherent genre specific feature of biography. To be more specific, biography's main feature is its political orientation;¹³⁵ the *Life of Demetrius* points out Plutarch's main political concern: a debate on the nature of the true sovereign. Demetrius is fashioned as a contrast: he is the example of a declined monarch.¹³⁶ Plutarch establishes a political motif by the exploitation of specific tragic themes: The *Life of Demetrius* establishes a series of complex themes such as fortune, reverse, and hubris. The main function of these motifs is to elucidate his subject's character. As the narrative unfolds, Demetrius' decline is represented in a tragic manner. The Roman *Life of Antony*, which follows *Demetrius*, will further elaborate the existing motifs. Thus, the pair *Demetrius* shows the exploitation of a series of tragic themes. There is a wider connection between the subject's characterization and various moral, political and literary connotations.

¹³³ Alexiou (2007) 250. Sweet (1951) 178.

¹³⁴ Plutarch *Demetrius* 4.

¹³⁵ Marincola (2009) 17-18.

¹³⁶ Blomqvist (1998) 18-20. DeLacy (1952) 165. Tatum (1993) 431.

4. Representations of tragic themes and patterns in *Antony*

4.1 Parallels in failure; Plutarch's *Life of Antony*

Antony, Demetrius' Roman counterpart, is introduced as the second part of the drama: *Now that the Macedonian dram has been performed, let us introduce the Roman.*¹³⁷ Antony is primarily an example of a failed Life.¹³⁸ The portrait of Antony recalls the established tragic themes in *Demetrius*: success and failure are brought together in order to emphasize on Antony's grand failure. He is, as much as Demetrius was, a tragic hero. Moreover, *Antony* does not only reflect the occurring tragic themes, but there is a further development: Fortune, reverse as well as various Dionysian connotations are expanded in order to show the fragility of Antony's character.¹³⁹ Antony is therefore an explicit reference to Demetrius' representation, which can point out that the varied exploitation of the existing tragic themes.

The representation of Antony's qualities points out that there is a varied exploitation of the established patterns: Antony is an extravagant bon-vivant, but his liberality establishes him amongst the soldiers, as a popular military man.¹⁴⁰ His character's traits resemble Demetrius' character. His great success comes along with his decline: *His liberality and his bestowal of favors upon friends and soldiers with no scant or sparing hand, laid a splendid foundation for his growing start, and when he had become great, lifted his power to yet greater heights, although it was hindered by countless faults besides.*¹⁴¹ His extreme qualities are interpreted in accordance with his mythical ancestor, Hercules: *There was an ancient tradition that the Antonii were Heracleidae, being descendants of Anton, a son of Hercules.*¹⁴² There is therefore an impression that Antony's characteristics are part of his family heritage.¹⁴³ The *Life of Antony* therefore starts with his family's characteristics,¹⁴⁴ and ends with Antony's descendants, who inherit his qualities.¹⁴⁵

Antony's character is associated with archaic qualities: sexual excessiveness, athletics, and murder. All these features are considered to be part of a tragic drama. Antony's pleasures have far more hubristic connotations: we could argue that they are described in a sadistic manner. Antony is even indulged by the show of Cicero's death: *When they were brought to him, he gazed upon them laughing aloud for joy many times; then, when he was satisfied, he ordered them to be placed on the rostra in the forum, just as though he were putting insult upon the dead, and not rather*

¹³⁷ Plutarch *Demetrius* 53, 10 Διηγωνισμένου δὲ τοῦ Μακεδονικοῦ δράματος ὥρα τὸ Ῥωμαϊκὸν ἐπεισαγαγεῖν.

¹³⁸ Brenk (1995) 65-66. Duff (2004) 282.

¹³⁹ Stadter (1999) xxii.

¹⁴⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 4, 1-7.

¹⁴¹ Plutarch *Antony* 4, 3 ἢ δ' ἐλευθεριότης καὶ τὸ μηδὲν ὀλίγη χειρὶ μηδὲ φειδομένη χαρίζεσθαι στρατιώταις καὶ φίλοις ἀρχὴν τε λαμπρὰν ἐπὶ τὸ ἰσχύειν αὐτῷ παρέσχε, καὶ μεγάλου γενομένου τὴν δύναμιν ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἐπῆρεν, ἐκ μυρίων ἄλλων ἀμαρτημάτων ἀνατρεπόμενην.

¹⁴² Plutarch *Antony* 4, 2 ἦν δὲ καὶ λόγος παλαιὸς Ἡρακλείδας εἶναι τοὺς Ἀντωνίους, ἀπ' Ἀντωνος παιδὸς Ἡρακλέους γεγονότας.

¹⁴³ Brenk (1992) 4367-4375. Russell (1973) 136.

¹⁴⁴ Plutarch *Antony* 1, 1-3.

¹⁴⁵ Plutarch *Antony* 87, 1-9.

*making a display of his own insolence in good fortune and abuse of power.*¹⁴⁶ Unlike Demetrius, Antony's excesses are part of his political and military career.¹⁴⁷

Antony is a hero, whose downfall is a result of his character's παιδεία.¹⁴⁸ Plutarch stresses the influence of his political and social environment:¹⁴⁹ Antony's early dealings will be proven destructive, as they totally corrupt his character. His social acquaintances are described as doom: *They say that his intimate friendship to Curio fell upon him like a doom.*¹⁵⁰ His wife Fulvia will establish these patterns in a wider way, as she will be Antony's tutor regarding his sexual affairs: *Therefore Cleopatra was indebted to Fulvia for teaching Antony to endure a woman's sway.*¹⁵¹ Cleopatra is introduced as Antony's final evil, which leads him to his utter destruction.¹⁵² Hence, it seems that Antony's παιδεία is the main cause of his destruction.

4.2 Tragic motifs and literary variation in Plutarch's *Antony*

Plutarch fashions Antony, as Demetrius' counterpart, by exploiting the same patterns and motifs that occurred in the Greek *Life*. One of the most important tragic themes, which functions a unitary pattern, is the representation of fortune: its centrality has an immense impact in their characters' natures.¹⁵³ This implies that there is a factor, which is beyond the limits of human behavior. It seems that there is a factor, which interacts with the human character. Hence, we could argue that a *Life* (βίος) is a summary of a character and its association with fortune.¹⁵⁴ *Demetrius* establishes the tragic theme of fortune: he is a man brought down by it. However, in the case of *Antony*, the main hero is fashioned in a more complex way, as he struggles against it. He reveals a kind of higher quality in the way that he faces fortune, and political circumstances. In the end he is brought down, tamed by his own character. Antony seems to be set against fortune in a sense.¹⁵⁵ Thus, it is pointed out that the tragic theme of fortune is exploited in association with the hero's character.

Fortune is then to be seen as a governing tragic theme, which organizes the narrative in association with Antony's inner qualities.¹⁵⁶ The juxtaposition of Antony's successes with his military, moral and political failures points out that fortune is an

¹⁴⁶ Plutarch *Antony* 20, 4 καὶ κομισθέντων ἐθεᾶτο γεγηθῶς καὶ ἀνακαγχάζων ὑπὸ χαρᾶς πολλάκις· εἴτ' ἐμπλησθεὶς ἐκέλευσεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ βήματος ἐν ἀγορᾷ τεθῆναι, καθάπερ εἰς τὸν νεκρὸν ὑβρίζων, οὐχ αὐτὸν ἐνυβρίζοντα τῇ τύχῃ καὶ καταισχύνοντα τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπιδεικνύμενος.

¹⁴⁷ Lamberton (2001) 135.

¹⁴⁸ Pelling (1988) 25.

¹⁴⁹ Plutarch *Antony* 2, 6.

¹⁵⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 2, 4 τὴν Κουρίωνος φιλίαν καὶ συνήθειαν ὥσπερ τινὰ κῆρα προσπεσεῖν λέγουσιν.

¹⁵¹ Plutarch *Antony* 10, 6 ὥστε Κλεοπάτραν διδασκάλια Φουλβία τῆς Ἀντωνίου γυναικοκρατίας ὀφείλειν.

¹⁵² Russell (1973) 140.

¹⁵³ Stadter (1999) 362-363.

¹⁵⁴ Wardman (1974) 181. Scardigli (1995) 9.

¹⁵⁵ Pelling (1988) 23.

¹⁵⁶ Flacelière (1977) 94.

important factor regarding the distribution of success and failure: Antony's character is proven to be superior in a sense, as he is resilient in adversities. Antony's moral and political excesses are seen as a result of his political achievement: *So Antony went out the senate the most illustrious of men.*¹⁵⁷ This is a turning point, as it is considered the main factor of Antony's private excesses. Later, his private life is fully committed to debauchery, and excesses. However, his finest qualities are contrasted with his fortune's adversity:¹⁵⁸ his military failure at Mutina underlines his positive qualities during the adversities of his fortune. Nonetheless he is not a good man, but he shows traits, which assemble to a good man: *But it was his nature to rise to his highest level in difficult situations, and he was most like a good man when he was unfortunate. For it is a common trait in those whom some difficulty has laid low, that they perceive plainly what virtue is, but all have not the strength in reverses to imitate what they admire and avoid what they find distasteful. Some are more prone to yield to their habits through weakness, and to let their judgment shattered.*¹⁵⁹ The battle of Philippi widens the theme of fortune in a varied manner. Antony treats Brutus' dead corpse with honor in comparison to Cicero's mockery: *but over Brutus he cast his own purple cloak, which was of great value, and ordered one of his freedmen to take care of the burial.*¹⁶⁰ His final failure at Actium points out the variation of the same theme; although he is proven to be set upon fortune, he is finally taken down by fortune.¹⁶¹

Plutarch then exploits an established theme in order to point out his psychological interest.¹⁶² There is no simple tragic motif here, but a complex relationship between the narrative and the description of character. We could also consider Plutarch's primary statement on their character: *Men who bore most ample testimony to the truth of Plato's saying that great natures exhibit great vices as well as great virtues.*¹⁶³ Antony's character is then presented in accordance to these lines: He is fashioned as a tragic hero. In accordance to this statement, he is indeed a brilliant nature.

The motif of fortune is then associated with Antony's character description. It seems that it also bears supernatural connotations, as it interacts with a human interpretation of events. Antony's failure is associated with the capricious manners of fortune. Johnson emphasizes the deterministic feature of Greek thought in terms of human behavior.¹⁶⁴ Nonetheless, it seems that such a concept puts human activities in a large scale level. Hence, the concept of fortune denotes a rather accidental factor, which interacts with human characters.¹⁶⁵ Antony's character is therefore proven to be a

¹⁵⁷ Plutarch *Antony* 14, 4 ἐξήκει δὲ τῆς βουλῆς λαμπρότατος ἀνθρώπων ὁ Ἀντώνιος.

¹⁵⁸ Pelling (1988) 149-150.

¹⁵⁹ Plutarch *Antony* 17, 4 ἀλλὰ φύσει παρὰ τὰς κακοπραγίας ἐγένετο βέλτιστος ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ δυστυχῶν ὁμοιότατος ἦν ἀγαθῷ, κοινῷ μὲν ὄντος τοῦ αἰσθάνεσθαι τῆς ἀρετῆς τοῖς δ' ἀπορίαν τινὰ σφαλλομένοις, οὐ μὴν ἀπάντων ἃ ζηλοῦσι μιμεῖσθαι καὶ φεύγειν ἃ δυσχεραίνουσιν ἐρρωμένων ἐν ταῖς μεταβολαῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ μᾶλλον ἐνίων τοῖς ἔθεσιν ἐνδιδόντων ὑπ' ἀσθενείας καὶ θραυομένων τὸν λογισμόν.

¹⁶⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 22, 7 Βρούτῳ δὲ τὴν αὐτοῦ φοινικίδα πολλῶν χρημάτων ἀξίαν οὖσαν ἐπέρριψε, καὶ τῶν ἀπελεύθερων τινὶ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ προσέταξε τῆς ταφῆς ἐπιμελεσθῆναι.

¹⁶¹ Plutarch *Antony* 67-68.

¹⁶² Brenk (1992) 4413-4414.

¹⁶³ Plutarch *Demetrius* 1, 7 ἀνδρῶν μάλιστα δὴ τῷ Πλάτῳ μαρτυρησάντων, ὅτι καὶ κακίας μεγάλας ὥσπερ ἀρετὰς αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις ἐκφέρουσι.

¹⁶⁴ Johnson (1970) 29.

¹⁶⁵ Rutherford (2006) 512. Walbank (2006) 352.

result of the fortune's intervention: His qualities are juxtaposed in a manner which underlines the important role that fortune plays.

Unlike Demetrius, Antony manages to widen the established theme of fortune in a sense. His story does not only present a failed *Life*: Antony is a rather gentler nature. Demetrius' failure is a rather simple representation of a tragic theme. Fortune and reverse are represented in an individual scale. The *Life of Antony* exploits the established theme in a much wider way: It reflects a more positive way of thinking. Human character can surpass the reverse of fortune. Antony's downfall is more a matter of παιδεία, rather than a consequence of his fortune.¹⁶⁶ Hence, the exploitation of the existing tragic themes is widened,¹⁶⁷ as it focuses character's superior moral qualities. Plutarch therefore manages to exploit the tragic theme of fortune in accordance to his literary purpose.

4.3 Antony's political example; tragic representations and political connotations

Antony is presented as a corrupted nature, driven by his lower traits; fortune, vice and finally hubris lead him to utter destruction. What constitutes Antony's hubris? Antony's success is juxtaposed to his moral and political decline. In general, moral decline is widely associated with political failure. Antony's failure is then presented as both moral and political: his moral decline leads him to a kind of political career, which implies tyrannical traits. Tyranny involves a kind of violence against citizens. Hence it could be defined as hubris. Hubris, after all, involves violence.¹⁶⁸ Tyranny causes violence in a political level.¹⁶⁹ There is therefore a wider exploitation of tragic motifs in a political level.

Plutarch's presentation of Antony presents his hubris in different levels. He implicitly refers to his subject's decline as a matter of political and moral concern: There is a rather wider interest in Antony's brilliant, but failed character. We could also note that there is no direct condemnation; it seems that the tragic themes are organized in order to point out Antony's gradual political and moral decline. His excesses in Rome point out his character's escalating decline, as he subdues to his passions: *And threw himself once more into his old life of pleasure and dissipation as soon as he had shaken off some of his troubles.*¹⁷⁰ This passage seems to prepare Antony's association with Cleopatra;¹⁷¹ this kind of attitude leads him towards eastern tastes and customs: *Since he bestowed the honorable and solemn rites of his native country to the Egyptians for Cleopatra's sake.*¹⁷² He is finally led to self destruction, as he is totally subdued to his character's passions.

¹⁶⁶ Swain (1989) 62-62. Swain (1990) 129-130.

¹⁶⁷ Brenk (1992) 4415.

¹⁶⁸ Duff (2004) 283.

¹⁶⁹ Forsdyke (2009) 238-239.

¹⁷⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 21, 1 εἰς δὲ τὸν βίον ἐκεῖνον αὐθις τὸν ἡδυπαθῆ καὶ ἀκόλαστον, ὡς πρῶτον ἀνεχαίτισε τῶν πραγμάτων, ἐκκεχυμένος.

¹⁷¹ Pelling (1988) 169.

¹⁷² Plutarch *Antony* 50, 7 ὡς τὰ καλὰ καὶ σεμνὰ τῆς πατρίδος Αἰγύπτιους διὰ Κλεοπάτρα χαριζόμενος.

Antony is presented in an escalating manner, as he reaches hubris: his excesses in Rome seem to prepare his eastern habits tastes and habits. Although there is a real psychological interest regarding his character's decline, Plutarch disapproves Antony's excessive attitude. Hence, his hubris is presented in terms of a series of events, which points out his escalating excess. It finally leads him to abandon his Roman habits for the sake of an Egyptian queen.

Antony is then Demetrius' perfect match, as he provides evidence of a deeper development of the already established tragic patterns. Antony's political presentation is a rather interesting case, based on the fact that he is raised in a republican context. His excessive attitude is then presented as a matter of his character's παιδεία. Demetrius' excess is also interpreted as a matter of his character's παιδεία, namely its lack, which causes him to lose self control. His autocratic behavior is interpreted as tragic ignorance, and ignorance is, after all, lineated tragic hubris. He is finally taken down, fashioned as a fragmented tragic figure. From a political standpoint, Demetrius is raised on a royal environment: He is steeped in the traditions of Hellenistic monarchies, and their eastern tastes. The tragedy of his nature regards his lack of his self preservation.

On the contrary, the *Life of Antony* presents a tragic conflict in a multilevel manner. Antony is a political figure of Rome's Late Republic. Hence, he has a sense of political virtue.¹⁷³ However, he adopts an autocratic attitude, which politically defines him as the opposite of a Roman citizen. He is presented as a Roman, who abandons his political virtue. His excessive attitude is then represented in a political manner: He is a hero, who is finally torn apart, as he fluctuates between Rome and Egypt.¹⁷⁴

Antony's extravagance and wantonness is totally revealed in Alexandria. His special association with this city is underlined from the very beginning of the *Life*: *Thus, he left amongst the people of Alexandria a very high reputation, and was thought by the Romans on the expedition to be the most illustrious man.*¹⁷⁵ This city functions as a kind of turning point regarding his political attitude. Antony's excessive traits are then associated with his early association with the city of Alexandria. Antony's inner conflict is then represented in a large scale manner.

From a political point of view, Plutarch's presentation of Antony as an excessive autocrat is based on Aristotle's remarks concerning the nature tyranny.¹⁷⁶ The most characteristic feature of this representation is the fact that the tyrant encompasses all the traits of a per se injustice: He is a murderer, a rapist, as well as an excessive autocrat.¹⁷⁷ The Roman republican tradition was based on the distinction that it was primarily free from such political figures. Hence Antony is presented as a kind of failed Roman, who is associated with tyranny and its various political connotations.

Nevertheless, Antony is described in tragic sense. He is consumed by his excess, which finally leads him to adopt an excessive attitude. He is a ὕβριστής, an

¹⁷³ Adkins (1972) 68.

¹⁷⁴ Pelling (1980) 135. Pelling (1995) 210-211.

¹⁷⁵ Plutarch *Antony* 3, 11 ἐπὶ τούτοις Ἀλεξανδρεῦσί τε πλεῖστον αὐτοῦ λόγον κατέλιπε, καὶ Ῥωμαίων τοῖς στρατευομένοις ἀνὴρ ἔδοξε λαμπρότατος εἶναι.

¹⁷⁶ Blomqvist (1998) 22-24.

¹⁷⁷ Adkins (1972) 73-75.

extravagant and excessive tyrant, but there is a sense of inner struggle. The tragic patterns of Antony's political behavior are also drawn from Plutarch's sources. Pelling emphasizes on the fact that Plutarch's description of Antony's excess is dependent on Cicero's *second Philippic*. It seems that there was a variety of sources, which fashions him as a rather dark figure. He is presented as tyrant and enemy of the Roman Republic.¹⁷⁸ Nonetheless, Antony's story is treated by Plutarch as a tragedy, not just as mere propaganda. We could argue that he integrates his source material in a rather creative manner: Antony's presentation as a tragic figure does not have purely negative connotations. Plutarch, after all, is not interested in presenting historical event in terms of a mainstream interpretation.¹⁷⁹

Although Antony is a failed figure, there is a kind of original tragic insight. Plutarch represents him in a rather positive way.¹⁸⁰ In fact, he seems to be more compassionate and less moralistic than in *Demetrius* case. Antony's tragedy has various moral and political connotations: He is a person torn apart in two different cultures, namely his Roman homeland as well as his beloved Alexandria. This kind of conflict fashions Antony as a real tragic persona. He is not just presented in terms of an escalating excess. It also puts his personal conflict in a large scale climax. From an ideological point of view, the fact that Antony is a Roman, who is put in an eastern framework, presents his escalating excess as a political matter: His gradual change to a Hellenistic monarch points out the effect of his eastern tastes even in a large scale manner. His hubris is politically orientated, as he betrays his own Roman political virtues.¹⁸¹

Plutarch's biographical writing, after all, intends to present a failed nature, not a precise historical narrative.¹⁸² He then represents important features of a character namely his education, his political and military achievements as well as his death.¹⁸³ All these are fashioned in a framework, which associates Antony's character with his attachment to two rather different cultures. Furthermore, there are various political connotations, as he is finally self destroyed by his eastern tastes. His autocratic traits are, after all, interpreted in terms of his association with Alexandria. Hence, in *Antony's* case the exploitation of tragic themes and motifs is further elaborated and presented in a wider political context.

4.4 Dionysian representations and Herculean characteristics

The theme of Dionysus is considered to be a tragic pattern. It primarily exploits Antony's characteristics in a supernatural sense: Tragedy is, after all, associated with a kind of supernatural representation. Moreover, it invites various connotations: Dionysus seems to be a theme, which fashions Antony in multiple levels.¹⁸⁴ Hence, there is a rather wider exploitation of this particular theme.

In general, Antony's tremendous virtue and vice assimilates him with archaic figures: Hercules as well as Dionysus. Plutarch represents Antony in an almost archaic manner: *However, what others thought offensive, namely his jesting and boastfulness,*

¹⁷⁸ Pelling (1979) 89. Pelling (1988) 137-138.

¹⁷⁹ Stadter (1999) 362-363.

¹⁸⁰ Pelling (1988) 28-29.

¹⁸¹ Wiseman (2009) 183-184.

¹⁸² Brenk (1995) 65-66.

¹⁸³ Stadter (2006) 528-530.

¹⁸⁴ Pelling (2002) 197.

his drinking horn in evidence, his sitting by a comrade who was eating, or standing to eat at a soldier's table, it is astonishing how much goodwill and affection for this all this produced in his soldiers. And even his conduct in the field of love was not without its charm, but it actually won for him the favor of many; for he assisted them in their love affairs, and submitted pleasantly to their jests upon his own love affairs.¹⁸⁵ His generosity, as well as his wantonness is fashioned as rather archaic qualities. His ancestry to Hercules seems to invite such connotations. It also establishes Antony's later assimilation to Dionysus.¹⁸⁶ This kind of description may also invite various connotations regarding his vice.¹⁸⁷ To be more specific, his vices are also represented in accordance to this established archaic description. Hence, Antony's presentation seems to denote his assimilation to figures such as Hercules and Dionysus.

From a literary perspective, the representation of Dionysus is exploited in order to present Antony as a tragic hero. Moreover, it may invite connotations regarding Antony's self destruction. Dionysus is therefore the perfect theme in order to represent Antony's character in terms of a tragic conflict. Antony's assimilation to Dionysus points out his multiplicity. Dionysus is a gentle and grace giver deity, but he is also an irrational and undisciplined force.¹⁸⁸ Dionysus' dual nature seems to be in the centre of Plutarch's narrative. Antony's arrival to Ephesus is a conscious assimilation to Dionysus. He is represented as a Νέος Διόνυσος. The traditional adjectives χαριδότης (gracious), μελίχιος (liberating),¹⁸⁹ as well as ὠμηστής (savage) and ἀγριώνιος (wild) are attributed to Antony, as he enters the city: *The people were hailing him as Dionysus gracious and liberating. For he was such, undoubtedly, to some; but to the greater part he was Dionysus savage and wild.*¹⁹⁰ This passage emphasizes on Antony's double nature, as he moves from Asia's agonies to the divine honors, which he obtains. Hence, Dionysus interacts with Antony's character. The duality of his nature is the reason that Plutarch exploits such a motif.

Antony's assimilation to Dionysus could then be a marker of his character: Antony's early assimilation to Hercules points out his archaic qualities, but his association with the cult of Dionysus in Ephesus magnifies them.¹⁹¹ His assimilation to Hercules is distinctively Roman, as he is affiliated with Rome's past. However, Dionysus is a deity mostly associated with the Hellenistic east, and its tastes. Nonetheless, it seems that there are some common features in this kind of blending: *Antony associated*

¹⁸⁵ Plutarch *Antony* 4, 4 οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις φορτικὰ δοκοῦντα, μεγαλαυχία καὶ σκῶμμα καὶ κῶθων ἐμφανής καὶ καθίσει παρὰ τὸν ἐσθίοντα καὶ φαγεῖν ἐπιστάντα τραπέζῃ στρατιωτικῇ, θαυμαστὸν ὅσον εὐνοίας καὶ πόθου πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνεποίει τοῖς στρατιώταις. ἦν δὲ πού καὶ τὸ ἐρωτικὸν οὐκ ἀναφρόδιτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτῳ πολλοὺς ἐδημαγώγει, συμπράττων τε τοῖς ἐρῶσι καὶ σκωπτόμενος οὐκ ἀηδῶς εἰς τοὺς ἰδίους ἔρωτας.

¹⁸⁶ Pelling (1988) 123.

¹⁸⁷ Flacelière (1977) 82-83. Pelling (2002) 204.

¹⁸⁸ Braund (1993) 468-469 focuses on Euripides' *Bacchae*, which provide a literary representation of Dionysus. This kind of representation became a part of the cult of Dionysus.

¹⁸⁹ Brenk (1992a) 164 provides evidence that the adjective μελίχιος characterizes Zeus the protector of the dead.

¹⁹⁰ Plutarch *Antony* 24, 4-5 Διόνυσον αὐτὸν ἀνακαλουμένων Χαριδότην καὶ Μελίχιον. ἦν γὰρ ἀμέλει τοιοῦτος ἐνίοις, τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς Ὠμηστής καὶ Ἀγριώνιος.

¹⁹¹ Pelling (1988) 178-180.

himself with Hercules in lineage, and with Dionysus in the mode of life he adopted, as I have said, and he was called the New Dionysus.¹⁹² To be more specific, Hercules as well as Dionysus presents archaic qualities, which are similar. They both possess an affiliation with wine, superhuman power as well as love. This implies that there is a complex framework of Herculean and Dionysian features, which interact in order to provide a multiple presentation of Antony's character.

The theme of Dionysus may also invite connotations regarding Antony's end.¹⁹³ His archaic qualities are proven to be excessive. His vinous and boastful attitude associated Antony with this particular deity.¹⁹⁴ Dionysus' multiple nature is finally revealed in accordance to Antony's character. He is left abandoned by Dionysus: *Those who sought the meaning of the sign were of the opinion that the god whom Antony always most likened and attached himself was now deserting him.*¹⁹⁵ Dionysus finally reveals his true nature, as he leaves Antony, a fragmented hero.

Moreover, there is an explicit reference to the *Life of Demetrius*, as he is described in accordance to the representation of Hercules. Dionysus is also established as an important theme of the Greek *Life*.¹⁹⁶ However, the *Life of Antony* provides a more elaborate presentation of this motif, as it suggests various and multiple connotations. It is interesting to underline the fact that Antony's Herculean traits are affiliated with his Roman virtue. It could then be argued that there is a sense of historical distinction between the Hellenistic and the Roman: Antony seems to provide a combination of these. Thus, Plutarch exploits a literary motif by combining its literary, cultural as well as historical features.

Antony seems also to exploit the Hellenistic ruler cult of Dionysus in a wider way. He continues the tradition of the divine assimilations, as they are witnessed in *Demetrius*. Although there are similarities in the treatment of Dionysus, it seems that there is a wider distinction, which concerns Antony: Demetrius is born and raised in an environment of kings and royal cults, which Plutarch conceives in terms of this period's main feature, namely flattery.¹⁹⁷ He stresses Demetrius' change of character in association with the various political circumstances. However, Antony is a hero who is not concerned only with the change of character, but with its association with a foreign, eastern culture. Hence, Antony obtains a more tyrannical attitude, as he identifies himself with Dionysus.¹⁹⁸ Albeit his lower qualities, there is a genuine tragic interest in his torture: he is, after all, a failed but fragmented nature. His assimilation to Dionysus stresses his character's incoherence. Unlike Demetrius, his end is fashioned in a more polite way, as his broken nature is not totally condemned.

¹⁹² Plutarch *Antony* 60, 5 προσωκείου δ' ἑαυτὸν Ἀντώνιος Ἡραλεῖ κατὰ γένος καὶ Διονύσῳ κατὰ τὸν τοῦ βίου ζῆλον ὥσπερ εἴρηται, Διόνυσος νέος προσαγορευόμενος.

¹⁹³ Pelling (2002) 204.

¹⁹⁴ Mossman (1988) 91 focuses on the representation of Dionysus in Plutarch's *Alexander*. Regarding Alexander's character, she points out Alexander's vinous attitude as a factor of his self destruction.

¹⁹⁵ Plutarch *Antony* 75, 6 ἐδόκει δὲ τοῖς ἀναλογιζομένοις τὸ σημεῖον ἀπολείπειν ὁ θεὸς Ἀντώνιον, ᾧ μάλιστα συνεξομοίων καὶ συνοικειῶν ἑαυτὸν διετέλεσεν.

¹⁹⁶ Brenk (1995) 65-68.

¹⁹⁷ Pelling (1988) 35.

¹⁹⁸ Lamberton (2001) 136-140.

Plutarch's treatment of this particular theme is slightly dependent on his source material. Some scholars have suggested that Augustan propaganda was keen on reformulating the divinity of Dionysus (Bacchus) as a degenerated and corrupted element.¹⁹⁹ This kind of imagery may be interpreted as a kind of hostility towards Antony and Cleopatra. According to Brenk, this may also imply that there is a series of *topoi* associated with the representation of Antony and Cleopatra in literature.²⁰⁰ Plutarch was well-aware of these representations. Nonetheless, we have to note that Plutarch does not treat the theme of Dionysus in this sense: he is not interested in a negative representation of Antony. He is rather keen in presenting him in a tragic manner. His *Antony* is therefore a failed but brilliant nature, not just a crude tyrant.

From a contemporary perspective, modern scholarship focused on various contemporary connotations, which the theme of Dionysus may invite. To be more specific, Antony's assimilation to Dionysus may implicitly refer to Plutarch's contemporary Roman emperors (Nero, Caligula).²⁰¹ Most especially, there is a strong argument of parallelism, because these emperors styled themselves in association to Dionysus and Hercules. Although these references are also implicitly present in *Demetrius*, Antony's end suggests a stronger association with Nero: *And having adopted her son, gave him the name Nero Germanicus*.²⁰² Brenk was keen on suggesting an interpretation, which underlines Antony's inherited vice.²⁰³ Nonetheless, we could argue that these are mere contemporary connotations. Plutarch is keen on commending on the general nature of an autocratic attitude. Moreover, it seems that there is an interpretation of the Roman autocracy in a sense: *This Nero came to the throne in my time. He killed his mother, and by his folly and madness came near subverting the Roman Empire. He was the fifth in descent from Antony*.²⁰⁴ The theme of Dionysus is then exploited in a manner, which brings together various political and contemporary connotations. Nevertheless, we have to consider them in a rather general level. Hence, we could define in terms of a general attitude towards a kind of declined political behavior.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁹ Brenk (1992a) 164-168.

²⁰⁰ Brenk (1992) 4382-4383.

²⁰¹ Flacelière (1977) 229-231.

²⁰² Plutarch *Antony* 87, 8 καὶ θέμενος τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς Κλαῦδιος Νέρωνα Γερμανικὸν προσωνόμασεν.

²⁰³ Brenk (1992) 4367-4375.

²⁰⁴ Plutarch *Antony* 87, 9 οὗτος ἄρξας ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἀπέκτεινε τὴν μητέρα καὶ μικρὸν ἐδέησεν ὑπ' ἐμπληξίας καὶ παραφροσύνης ἀνατρέψαι τὴν Ρωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν, πέμπτος ἀπ' Ἀντωνίου κατ' ἀριθμὸν διαδοχῆς γενόμενος.

²⁰⁵ Pelling (1988) 323-327.

5. Conclusions

The *Lives of Demetrius and Antony* points out an exploitation of the genre specific features of tragedy, which are encompassed in Plutarch's biographical narrative. It seems that this pair of *Lives* provides evidence, which demonstrate a genre specific association with tragedy, namely the existence of certain tragic patterns and themes. From a methodological perspective, these motifs and patterns are analyzed in terms of Plutarch's biographical narrative. Moreover, Plutarch's exploitation of tragic themes shows that there is a kind of wider association with prose literature. Nonetheless, they are treated as essential features of the biographical narrative.

Plutarch's account of these figures poses primarily the question of human failure. To be more specific, Demetrius as well as his Roman counterpart are styled as failed natures, corrupted by vice and flattery. However, Plutarch is keen on presenting failure in a tragic sense: His heroes are not presented as mere failed figures, but as tragic natures, which possess brilliant as well as low qualities. Nonetheless, they are figures, which cannot surpass their characters' low qualities. Hence, they are self destructed.

They are also various political as well as contemporary connotations, which are associated with the exploitation of tragic themes. Plutarch seems to be mostly concerned in presenting failed natures in a rather political manner. There may also be implicit references to Plutarch's contemporary Roman Emperors. Nonetheless, it seems that there is a rather general political framework concerning the nature of the sovereign. Hence, the tragic themes represent a political theme in a tragic sense: To be more specific, the various exploited themes illustrate the vain nature of an autocratic reign: Demetrius as well as Antony are presented in this manner. Their moral decline is associated with their failure as political figures. Nevertheless, Plutarch presents their political failure as a tragic drama. He does not merely condemn them, but he is fond of presenting their political failure in terms of a character analysis, which presents their brilliant as well as their low traits. Thus, the tragic themes in the *Lives of Demetrius and Antony* imply a general political framework, which may include contemporary connotations.

6. Bibliography

- Adkins
(1972) A. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece*, London 1972.
- Alexiou
(2007) E. Αλεξίου, *Πλουτάρχου Παράλληλοι Βίοι. Η προβληματική των 'θετικών' και 'αρνητικών' παραδειγμάτων*. Thessaloniki 2007.
- Blomqvist
(1997) K. Blomqvist, From Olympias to Aretaphila. Women in Politics in Plutarch, in J. Mossman (ed.), *Plutarch and his Intellectual World. Essays on Plutarch*, London 1997: 73-97.
- Blomqvist
(1998) K. Blomqvist, *The Tyrant in Aristotle's Politics. Theoretical Assumptions and Historical Background*, Lund 1998.
- Braund
(1993) D. Braund, "Dionysiac Tragedy in Plutarch, Crassus", *The Classical Quarterly* 43(2) (1993): 468-474.
- Brenk
(1992) F. Brenk, Plutarch's Life "Markos Antonios": A Literary and Cultural Study, in *ANRW II* 33: 4347-4469.
- Brenk
(1992a) F. Brenk, Antony-Osiris, Cleopatra-Isis. The End of Plutarch's *Antony*, in P. Stadter (ed.), *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition*, London-New York 1992: 159-182.
- Brenk
(1995) F. Brenk, Heroic Anti-Heroes. Ruler Cult and Divine Assimilations in Plutarch's "Lives" of Demetrius and Antonius, in I. Gallo and B. Scardigli (ed.), *Teoria e prassi politica nelle operae di Plutarco. Atti del V Convegno plutarceo (Certosa di Pontignano 7-9 giugno 1993)*, Napoli 1995: 65-82.
- Brereton
(1970) G. Brereton, *Principle of Tragedy. A Rational Examination of the Tragic Concept in Life and Literature*, Great Britain 1970.
- Cairns
(2005) D. Cairns, Values, in Gregory J (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Tragedy*, Malden, Oxford, Victoria 2005: 305-320.
- Conte and Most
(2006) G. Conte and G. Most, Genre in *OCD*, Oxford 2006: 430-431.

- DeLacy
(1952) P. DeLacy, "Biography and Tragedy in Plutarch" *The American Journal of Philology* 73(2) (1952): 159-171.
- Duff
(1999) T. Duff, *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, Oxford 1999.
- Duff
(2004) T. Duff, "Plato, Tragedy, the Ideal Reader and Plutarch's "Demetrius and Antony" *Hermes* 132(3) (2004): 271-291.
- Flacelière
(1977) R. Flacelière, *Plutarque Vies. Tome XIII. Demetrius-Antoine*, Paris 1977.
- Forsdyke
(2009) S. Forsdyke, The Uses and Abuses of Tyranny, in R. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, West Sussex 2009: 231-246.
- Hamilton
(1969) Plutarch, *Alexander*. A commentary. J. Hamilton (ed.), Oxford 1969.
- Harrison
(2005) G. Harrison, Plutarch the Dramaturg: Statecraft as Stagecraft in the *Lives*, in L. De Blois, J. Bons, T. Kessels, D. Schenkeveld (ed.), *The Statesman in Plutarch's Works. Volume II. The Statesman in Plutarch's Greek and Roman Lives*, Leiden-Boston 2005: 53-59.
- Johnson
(1970) V. Johnson, "The Humanism of Plutarch" *The Classical Journal* 66 (1) (1970): 26-37.
- Kaufmann
(1968) W. Kaufmann, *Tragedy and Philosophy*, Princeton 1968.
- Lamberton
(2001) R. Lamberton, *Plutarch*. Foreword by J. Herington, New Haven and London 2001.
- Lucas
(1968) Aristotle. *Poetics*. Introduction, commentary and appendixes. D. Lucas (ed.), Oxford; New York 1968.

- Marincola
(2006) J. Marincola, Historiography in A. Erskine (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient History*, West Sussex 2006: 13-22.
- Mogyórodi
(1996) E. Mogyórodi, Tragic Freedom and Fate in Sophocles' *Antigone*: Notes on the Role of the "Ancient Evils", in "the Tragic" in M. Silk (ed.), *Tragedy and the Tragic: Greek Theatre and Beyond*, Oxford 1996: 358-376.
- Mossman
(1988) J. Mossman, "Tragedy and Epic in Plutarch's Alexander" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 108 (1988): 83-93.
- Mossman
(1992) J. Mossman, Plutarch, Pyrrhus, and Alexander, in P. Stadter (ed.), *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition*, London-New York 1992: 90-108.
- Most
(2000) G. Most, Generating Genres: The Idea of the Tragic, in M. Depew and D. Obbink (ed.), *Matrices of Genre. Authors, Canons and Society*, Cambridge, Massachusetts-London 2000: 15-35.
- Niefanger
(2006) D. Niefanger, Theory of Tragedy in Cancik H, Schneider H (ed.) *Brill's New Pauly*. Antiquity Volumes. Brill Online 2006. Lund University.
- Papadi
(2008) D. Papadi, *Moralia* in the *Lives*: Tragedy and Theatrical Imagery in Plutarch's *Pompey* in A. Nikolaidis (ed.), *The Unity of Plutarch's Work "Moralia" Themes in the "Lives", Features of the "Lives" in the "Moralia"*, Berlin-New York 2008: 111-123.
- Pelling
(1979) C. Pelling, "Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 99 (1979): 74-96.
- Pelling
(1980) C. Pelling, "Plutarch's Adaptation of His Source-Material" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 100 (1980): 127-140.
- Pelling
(1988) Plutarch. *Life of Antony*. C. Pelling (ed.), Cambridge 1988.
- Pelling
(1995) C. Pelling, The Moralism of Plutarch's *Lives* in D. Innes, H. Hine, C. Pelling (ed.), *Ethics and Rhetoric*. Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday, Oxford 1995: 205-220.

- Pelling
(2002) C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History. Eighteen studies*. London 2002.
- Russell
(1973) D. Russell, *Plutarch*, London 1972.
- Rutherford
(2007) R. Rutherford, Tragedy and History in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography. Volume II*, Malden-Oxford-Victoria 2007: 504-514.
- Scardigli
(1995) B. Scardigli, Introduction in B. Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch's Lives*, Oxford 1995: 1-45.
- Schmitz
(2007) T. Schmitz, *Modern Literary theory and Ancient Texts*. Translation by T. Schmitz, Malden-Oxford-Victoria 2007.
- Stadter
(1999) Plutarch, *Roman Lives. A selection of eight Roman Lives*. Translated by R. Waterfield, with Introductions and Notes by P. Stadter, Oxford 1999.
- Stadter
(2007) P. Stadter, Biography and History in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography. Volume II*, Malden-Oxford-Victoria 2007: 528-540.
- Swain
(1989) S. Swain, "Character Change in Plutarch" *Phoenix* 43(1) (1989): 62-68.
- Swain
(1990) S. Swain, "Hellenic Culture and the Roman Heroes of Plutarch" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 110 (1990): 126-145.
- Sweet
(1951) W. Sweet, "The Sources of Plutarch's Demetrius" *The Classical Weekly* 44(12) (1951): 177-181.
- Tatum
(1993) J. Tatum, "The Regal Image in Plutarch's Lives" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 116 (1996): 131-151.

- Walbank
(1960) F. Walbank, "History and Tragedy" *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 9(2) (1960): 216-234.
- Walbank
(2007) F. Walbank, Fortune (tychē) in Polybius in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography. Volume II*, Malden-Oxford-Victoria 2007: 349-355.
- Wardman
(1974) A. Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives*, London 1976.
- Wiseman
(2009) T. Wiseman, *Remembering the Roman People. Essays on Late-Republican Politics and Literature*, Oxford 2009.
- Zadorojniy
(1997) A. Zadorojniy, "Tragedy and Epic in Plutarch's 'Crassus'" *Hermes* 125 (2) (1997): 169-182.

