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THE SPEECH OF GREEK AND ROMAN WOMEN IN PLUTARCH'S *LIVES*

BRADLEY BUSZARD

Taken together, Plutarch's depictions of women in his *Lives* and *Moralia* compose the most extensive analysis of female character by any ancient author, and have received increasing attention as scholarly interest in the women of antiquity has grown. Much of the work has concentrated upon the four works in the *Moralia* that are devoted to women's lives and issues: *Amatorius*, *Mulierum virtutes*, *Coniugalia praecepta*, and *Consolatio ad uxorem* (hereafter *Amat.*, *Mul. virt.*, *Con. prae.*, and *Cons.* respectively).¹ One might suspect that similar work would be more difficult in the *Lives*, where evidence on women is more abundant and diverse than in the four relevant essays in the *Moralia*.² And indeed, studies that have attempted to survey the *Lives* in their entirety have produced limited results.³ The one

My thanks to Jeffrey Beneker, David Pollio, Jana Adamitis, the anonymous readers at *CP*, and to Luc Van der Stockt for his suggestions at an early stage of this project.

1. See Aguilar 1990–91 for a cursory discussion of all four works. *Amat.* and *Con. prae.* have been studied the most, thanks in large part to Pomeroy's 1999 edition (reviewed in Whitmarsh 2002) with its companion essays (Pomeroy 1999a): Swain contributes a discussion of the cultural background and the importance of domestic life for civic training; McNamara considers the consequences for Plutarch's female audience; Hawley emphasizes Plutarch's traditionalism and compares Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*; Foxhall compares Plutarch's depiction of women to their actual status in the Greece of his day. *Mul. virt.* was the subject of Stadter's careful attention in 1965, one of the earliest analyses of women in Plutarch; McNerney (2003) has more recently contributed an analysis of manly courage (*andreia*) in the work, organizing Plutarch's various *exempla* around the themes of obscenity, concealment, and physical exploitation. Recent studies of *Amat.* have been primarily philosophical: Stadter (1999) addresses the depiction of women's intellectual and social capacities in *Amat.* and *Con. prae.*; Crawford (1999) sees the essay as a defense of marriage against pederastic writers like Protogenes and, simultaneously, as a rejection of marriage's anti-erotic defenders; Billault (1999) compares *Amat.* to Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*, emphasizing Plutarch's resistance to Plato's generalizing tendencies; Rist (2001) builds off of both Crawford and Billault, but considers the primary influence of *Amat.* to be *Phaedrus* alone.

2. The composition and dissemination of the fifty extant *Lives* spans well over twenty years. Jones suggested in 1966 (see under Jones 1995) that Plutarch composed his extant works between 68 C.E. and 117 C.E., and the subsequent work of Van der Valk (1982), Delvaux (1995), and Nikolaidis (2005) has not shortened this span. His *terminus post quem* of 68 C.E. is as inclusive as possible; perhaps it might be moved up into the 90s. Not further, though: Plutarch's imperial biographies do not include the Flavians and were, therefore, likely composed before Domitian's death in 96 C.E.

3. Le Corsu's imposing collection of evidence on women from the *Lives* (1981) is so ambitious that her analysis (primarily 270–74) cannot encompass the mass of data that she has gathered. Gössler's dissertation (1962) on marriage in the *Lives* is somewhat more focused because of its restricted scope, but her topic is still sufficiently broad that she must compensate by arbitrarily restricting her analysis to evidence from the *Moralia* (pp. 15–70), *Lycurgus* (pp. 71–92), *Solon* (pp. 92–119), and *Dion-Brutus* (pp. 120–42). Similar is Walcot's 1999 article, which adduces only the evidence from the *Lives* and *Moralia* that supports his negative reading of Plutarch's views on women. Blomqvist's 1997 article on Plutarchan women in politics

wholly satisfying comparative study, and an important precursor to this article, is Luigi Salvioni's 1982 analysis of the Plutarchan women who choose to remain widowed and raise their sons alone. Salvioni's argument encompasses several pairs (*Coriolanus*, *Antony*, *Agis/Cleom.*), but is convincing because the women he discusses are of similar stature and in similar situations. His work shows that we need not fear too much Plutarch's shifting emphases when studying women in the *Lives*. Because women are never the primary subject, as they sometimes are in the *Moralia*, Plutarch's depiction of similar women need not change from pair to pair. If we restrict the scope of our analyses as Salvioni has done, we can proceed with conviction.

Female speeches in the *Lives*, the subject of this study, offer this necessary consistency of status and circumstance. There are eleven Greek and Roman women who give speeches in the *Lives*, spanning eight different pairs: the Spartan Chilonis, the Syracusans Aristomache and Theste, and the Romans Porcia, Licinia, Cornelia, Octavia, Julia, Hersilia, Valeria, and Volumnia.⁴ All of them are members of the elite; all are moved to speak by personal and public crises;⁵ all are portrayed as admirable figures.

The most striking aspect of the female speeches, however, and the primary reason they deserve our attention, is their narrative importance. Direct speeches often occur at significant moments in the *Lives*: well-known examples include Otho's speech to his troops before committing suicide (*Otho* 15.4–8), Aemilius Paullus' speech after the death of his son (*Aem.* 36.2–9), Ap. Claudius Caecus' speech against Pyrrhus in the Roman senate (*Pyrrh.* 19.1–4), and Aristides' speech before the battle at Plataea (*Arist.* 12.1–3).⁶ The speeches by women likewise occupy significant watershed moments in the narrative, including Dion's return to Syracuse, C. Gracchus' departure for the forum, and Coriolanus' final march on Rome. Many of the female speeches are also quite long. Several occupy the majority of a Teubner page, and the speech of Volumnia occupies two, the longest speech of any kind in

does state its selection criteria openly (p. 74) and produces a very useful classification of women according to their motives, but is still too sweeping, and consequently reaches the unsupportable conclusion that women in the *Lives* "should be inactive and subordinate at all times . . ." (p. 75). Less ambitious work on the *Lives* has been more illuminating. Individual *Lives* offer a consistent perspective, so Pelling's examination of Volumnia in *Coriolanus* (2002) and Pérez Jiménez' article examining Volumnia's speech to her son (2000) are hermeneutically impeccable.

4. I exclude the speeches by barbarian women because they are substantially different in circumstance, motivation, and character from those of Greek and Roman women. They belong to Plutarch's discussions of Hellenism and barbarism and his ongoing attempts to define Hellenic identity for himself and his readers; see Whitmarsh 2001; Schmidt 1999; Blomqvist 1997, 81–82; and Swain 1997, 1996, 135–86, 1990a, and 1990b. Blomqvist's emphasis on motivation (pp. 76–77) is important: Greek and Roman women speak out for their husbands and relatives; barbarian women speak for themselves.

5. Important female action rarely passes without a speech. Cloelia's brave leadership in the Roman women's escape from Porsenna (*Publ.* 19) and Terentia's jealous manipulation of Cicero in the trial of Clodius (*Cic.* 29) are the only exceptions I have found. The speeches of Chilonis, Cratesicleia, and Agesistrata in *Agis/Cleom.* perhaps compensate for the silence of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, in the paired *Life*. Incidental persons, on the other hand, are at most given brief anecdotes. Such anecdotes typically reveal more about the main character than about the speaker. When, for instance, Demetrius rebuffs an old woman's entreaties, claiming he has no time for her, she yells at him: "Then do not rule!" (*Demetr.* 42.7). Stung by her response, he spends the next several days receiving anyone who wishes to see him.

6. All citations of the *Lives* in this article are from the most recent Teubner volumes of Ziegler and Gärtner; the translations are my own.

the *Lives*.⁷ Most importantly, all of the speeches would have demanded the close attention of Plutarch's original readers. Greek authors employed speech to reveal the character of the speaker, a rhetorical practice called *ethopoeia*.⁸ Plutarch's audience was well-schooled in *ethopoeia*, and he would have expected his direct speeches to receive their careful scrutiny.⁹ The passages featuring female discourse would therefore be the same passages in which he took the greatest pains to depict female character.

For all their prominence, female speeches in Plutarch have not yet been subjected to systematic study. The only comparative analysis I have found is a paper offered by M. Galaz at the Fourth International Congress of the International Plutarch Society, which discusses very briefly the speeches of Porcia and Volumnia in the *Lives* of Brutus and Coriolanus (2000, 205) and suggests the possibility of a "*gynaikos logos*" in Plutarch. The idea of a distinct mode of female rhetoric has been much discussed in other genres of Greek literature—for example, in Laura McClure's analysis of female speech in Athenian tragedy (1999) and in Andreas Willi's linguistic and sociological work on comedy (2003, 157–97)—but no one has yet surveyed the passages of direct discourse that Plutarch composed for women in his *Lives*. This article will do so, considering first the four speeches from the *Lives* given by wives to their husbands, then the speeches given by women to male relatives, including the speeches that Plutarch gives to Hersilia and Volumnia, for which we have earlier versions in Dionysius and Livy. It concludes by attempting to reconcile Plutarch's depiction of these active elite women with his depictions of other women elsewhere in the *Lives*.

WIVES SPEAK: THE PRECEDENT OF HOMER AND ANDROMACHE

Four of the female speeches in the *Lives* are modeled on Andromache's address to Hector in *Iliad* 6.407–39: Porcia's plea to share in the troubles

7. The next longest stream of *oratio recta*, the dialogue between Cleomenes and Therycion in *Agis/Cleom.* 52(31).2–11, requires only a page and a half.

8. The speeches in epic always reveal the character of the speaker, e.g., those of Achilles at Hom. *Il.* 1.148–71 and Nestor at 1.254–84 (see Kennedy 1999, 10, and Carey 1994, 35, respectively). There are numerous examples from various genres, e.g., Pind. *Ol.* 1.111 and *Nem.* 7.61 (also noted by Carey [1994, 35]), the highly individualized *personae* of Sappho and Alcaeus, Clytemnestra's masculine speech in the *Oresteia* (Aesch. Ag. 1401–6, *Cho.* 887–91), and the *parabaseis* in Aristophanes (*Eq.* 507–36, *Nub.* 518–626). *Ethopoeia* was not immediately adopted by orators—see Carey 1994, 40 on the limited representation of *ethos* in Gorgias, Protagoras (in Pl. *Prr.* 320d–22d), Prodicus (in Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.34), and Antiphon—but from Lysias onward they adopted the practice and molded their speeches to depict sympathetic aspects of a speaker's character. On Lysias, see Carey 1994, 40–42; Kennedy 1963, 135–38; and Süß 1910, 10–12 and 71–73. Carey's and Kennedy's high estimation of Lysias' ability in this regard echoes the assessment of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Lys.* 7, 8, and 19). For *ethos* in Lysias' successors, cf. Isoc. *Aegineticus* (see Kennedy 1963, 140); Antisthenes *Ajax* and *Odysseus* (see Kennedy 1963, 170–72); Dem. 54 (see Carey 1994, 42–43); and Arist. *Rh.* 1377b, where Aristotle lists *ethos* as one of the three possible modes of persuasion, the other two being *pathos* and *logos* (see Kennedy 1999, 32, and Russell 1990, 202 and 212). Historians adopted *ethopoeia* in turn, as evidenced by the laconic *apophthegmata* of Cleomenes and his daughter in Herodotus 5.50–51, the speech of Alcibiades in Thucydides 6.16–18, the speeches by Xenophon himself in the *Anabasis* (especially the first at 3.1), and perhaps even some speeches in Polybius (e.g., the debate between Hannibal and Scipio before Zama at 15.6–8; see Walbank 1972, 43–46).

9. There are 13 instances of the root *ethopoe-* in his work: *Lyc.* 21.1, *Numa* 16.6, *Them.* 2.3, *Per.* 2.4, *Dion* 9.1, *De virt. mor.* 450 F 7, *De frat. amor.* 490 E 10, *Quaest. conu.* 660 B 11, *Praec. ger. rep.* 799 B 6, 799 C 1, and 814 B 1, *De stoic. rep.* 1053 D 5, frag. 143.12 Sandbach. On Plutarch's rhetorical training, which is never directly attested, see Jones 1971, 14; and Ziegler 1964, 17.

of her husband, Brutus (*Brut.* 13.6–10); Licinia's speech to her husband, C. Gracchus, as he departs for the forum and certain death (*Gracch.* 36(15).2–4); Cornelia's speech to her husband, Pompey, after his defeat at Pharsalus (*Pomp.* 74.4–6); and Aristomache's intercession between her brother, Dion, and his estranged wife (*Dion* 51.1–5). For Aristomache and Licinia, Plutarch creates the parallel with Andromache entirely within the passage containing their speeches; for Porcia and Cornelia, he also reinforces the parallel elsewhere in his narrative. In each case, he employs *ethopoeia* to depict women who are less selfish and more aware of civic concerns than Hector's wife.

The Iliadic precursor is justly famous for its poignancy and its sensitive portrayal of Andromache's character. Disheartened by the exploits of Diomedes in Book 5, Hector is advised by his brother Helenus to visit their mother and to ask her to propitiate Athena (6.77–101). He does so, then visits Paris and Helen and his own home (6.313–68). He does not find Andromache there, but learns from a servant that she is at the Scaean gate (6.369–89), to which he then departs. His wife meets him there, accompanied by a maid carrying Astyanax (6.399–402). Andromache stands near Hector, weeping, grasps his hand, and begs him not to return to battle, suggesting instead that he remain behind and defend a weak point in the city walls (6.407–39). Moved to tears, Hector nonetheless refuses her plea, appealing to his honor and his responsibility to the city (6.440–65). He sends her back home, urging her not to concern herself with military affairs, and returns to the fight (6.482–529).

The Homeric precedent is perhaps most obvious in Porcia's plea to her husband, Brutus.¹⁰ I will consider Porcia's speech itself in a moment, but should first address the supporting passage that follows ten chapters later, in which Plutarch makes the parallel between Porcia and Andromache explicit (*Brut.* 23.2–7). As Brutus prepares to leave Italy for Athens, Porcia attempts to conceal her distress at her husband's departure, but is "betrayed" (προῦδωκε) by a painting of Hector and Andromache. She recognizes in the scene an image of her own misfortune and returns frequently to view it, though it brings her to tears. A certain Acilius, who notices Porcia crying, flatters Brutus by quoting a couplet from Andromache's speech: "You are my father and honored mother, Hector, and my brother; you are my youthful husband" (*Brut.* 23.5 = *Il.* 6.429–30).¹¹ Acilius' quotation earns a smile from Brutus, but also a retort: "I need not address Porcia in the words of Hector—'Go home and look to your own affairs, the loom and the distaff, and command your handmaids'—for though she lacks by nature the body for equally brave deeds, in mind she will be as noble on the fatherland's behalf as we will" (*Brut.* 23.6–7, quoting *Il.* 6.490–92). Plutarch has subverted the parallel. Brutus' wife is distinguished by her moral courage and civic responsibility, while Andromache can only see the consequences for herself and her son.

The virtues that Brutus admires are demonstrated by Porcia's own speech ten chapters earlier. Plutarch prepares the speech with a brief encomium

10. The fullest discussion of the women in *Dion-Brutus* is in Gössler 1962, 120–30 (*Dion*) and 130–42 (*Brutus*). Gössler's interest is not female character per se, but the depiction of marriage in the pair.

11. This Acilius is perhaps M. Acilius Caninus, proconsul in Achaëa until after Caesar's death; see Broughton 1951–84, 2:286, 308, and 326.

noting Porcia's noble lineage, her youth, her former marriage, her young son, her generally affectionate nature, her particular love for Brutus, and (in the rhetorically emphatic final position) her intelligence (*Brut.* 13.4).¹² Such is the woman who recognizes her husband's distress and wishes to share his burden. Doubting her own resolve, she first tests herself by inflicting a deep gash in her own thigh. The wound festers and she grows ill, causing Brutus much consternation, but also satisfying Porcia of her own nobility. When her husband comes to see her, she argues forcefully that she deserves his trust (*Brut.* 13.6–10):

I am Cato's daughter, Brutus, and was not entrusted to your household as concubines are, merely to share your bed and board, but to be your partner in good times and in distress. For your part, our marriage is entirely blameless; yet what proof or favor is there on my part if I share neither your secret ordeal nor a concern that requires trust? I know that female nature seems to lack the strength to endure secret counsel. Surely, Brutus, noble rearing and admirable company contribute something to a strong character. I am both the daughter of Cato and the wife of Brutus. Before I had less trust in these things, but now know that I too am proof against suffering.

Porcia's speech has two goals. First, she seeks to define her relationship with Brutus (i.e., her right to share his troubles); second, she seeks to establish her nobility (i.e., her capacity to share his troubles). She accomplishes the first through an antithesis: she is her husband's partner (κοινωνός), not his concubine (αἱ παλλακευόμεναι); her proper role in his family transcends erotic love. The distinction she makes is in a certain sense flattering to Brutus: men who keep concubines are often abused in Plutarch as decadent easterners, slaves to both their passions and their women.¹³ At the same time, the very fact that Porcia must remind Brutus of the distinction is itself a reproach. He should not require it. Plutarch twice elsewhere relates an anecdote concerning Persian men that illuminates Porcia's point here: the Persians take their meals with their wives, but send them away and instead call in musicians and concubines when they turn to drunken revelry.¹⁴ Such debaucheries and such women should be anathema to Plutarch's Brutus, so his attitude toward Porcia (as she describes it) not only devalues her, but is inconsistent with his own noble character.

Porcia's subsequent praise, beginning when she finds Brutus' behavior "blameless" (ἄμεμπτα), serves as the transition into the second part of her argument and as her primary rhetorical tactic within it. In order to establish her ability to share in Brutus' troubles, she must confront the presumption that female nature is weak. Brutus' admiration of her strength has not yet

12. Aguilar (1990–91, 322–23) sees in Porcia the realization of the goals set forth by Plutarch in the *Moralia*: "En cuanto a Porcia, ella es . . . la personificación de la mujer ideal, cultivada, con una formación filosófica, tal como aparece su prototipo en el *Amatorius* o en los *Coniugalia praecepta*" (323).

13. E.g., the Persians (*Them.* 26.5, 31.2, *Artax.* 26.5–27.3), Parthians (*Crass.* 21.7, 32.5), Assyrians (*Amat.* 753D), and Mithridates (*Pomp.* 36.3, *Luc.* 7.6). Concubines themselves are rarely discussed. Plutarch makes exceptions for the two Aspasiae (*Per.* 24.2–12, *Artax.* 26.5–27.2), Hypsicrateia (*Pomp.* 32.14), and Stratonice (*Pomp.* 36.4), all of whom rise above the normal role of a concubine. Best known and most impressive is the Milesian Aspasia, who is Pericles' wife in all but name (*Per.* 24.8; see González Almenara 2001 and Blomqvist 1997, 77–78).

14. *Quaest. conv.* 613A, *Con. praec.* 140B.

been established at this point in the *Life*, and may not yet exist, so Porcia does not confront this presumption directly. She undermines it instead by praising him and her father Cato, attributing her ability to exceed the presumed limits of female nature to their virtue. So wonderful are Brutus and Cato that their combined nobility compensates for her own innate frailty.¹⁵ She apparently knows her husband well, since this argument convinces him immediately: "Stunned, he stretched up his hands and prayed that the gods might grant him success in his endeavor, that he might seem a husband worthy of Porcia" (*Brut.* 13.11). Read in its proper narrative order, Brutus' defense of Porcia to Acilius ten chapters later is the direct result of her rhetorical performance here.¹⁶

Porcia's speech reveals her to be more than merely intelligent. She possesses a keen understanding of Brutus' nature and sufficient rhetorical skill to manipulate him, yet she does not exploit her skill to restrict his dangerous activities. She demands only that she be a full partner in his troubles, even if that partnership leads to personal suffering. This is strong evidence of her generous character and civic awareness. She recognizes the impact of political affairs upon her home, but unlike Andromache does not try to limit her husband's actions in defense of the state.

Plutarch mimics the circumstantial details of the Homeric precedent even more closely in Licinia's address to her husband, Gaius (*Gracch.* 36(15).2–4). Like Andromache, Licinia greets her husband as he leaves home, very possibly for the last time; the verb she employs to describe this action (προπέμνω, 36(15).3) is the same one Plutarch uses in *Brutus* to describe the meeting of Andromache and Hector at the Scaean gate (προπεμπόμενος, *Brut.* 23.3); as Andromache had brought Astyanax, so also does Licinia bring her young son with her; both speak of others they have lost (Andromache of her parents and brothers, Licinia of Tiberius); both describe their future despair and suffering without their husbands. Plutarch also alters details of the parallel to enhance their poignancy. When Andromache meets Hector, she only holds his hand; Licinia addresses Gaius at the door of their home and embraces him. A servant holds Astyanax; Licinia herself clutches her son in one arm, her husband in the other. Andromache sheds a tear; Licinia collapses insensate and must be carried away.

The circumstantial similarities between the two women only serve to highlight the fundamental differences between them. Andromache speaks almost exclusively of herself and her own family; despite her own difficult personal situation, Licinia's outlook is relentlessly civic. Andromache recounts the deaths of her father, mother, and brothers, and twice uses Astyanax as an emotional lever against her husband (*Il.* 6.408, 6.432). Though Licinia holds her son, she never mentions him. The only family member she names is Tiberius, and then only to warn Gaius of assassination (*Gracch.* 36(15).3)

15. The pseudo-Plutarchan *De lib. ed.* 3a also allows for the possibility that education can compensate for a defective nature; see Gill 1983, 473; Martin 1960, 71–72; and D'Agostino 1957, 191.

16. Porcia's virtue is also mentioned in Valerius Maximus (3.2.15, 4.6.5) and Cassius Dio (44.13–14), but as Gössler (1962, 133) notes, the former admires her for her heroic endurance, the latter for her determination and curiosity, neither for her civic virtue or rhetorical *élan*.

and decry the injustice rampant in Rome.¹⁷ For Andromache, the loss of Hector will deprive her of comfort (*Il.* 6.412); Licinia mourns instead the pointlessness of Gaius' death (*Gracch.* 36(15).3) and her inability to grieve with honor (*Gracch.* 36(15).3). Andromache addresses her personal ties to Hector (*Il.* 6.429–31); Licinia describes her husband's services to Rome as tribune and lawgiver (*Gracch.* 36(15).3). Plutarch's alterations match Licinia's very different intent. Andromache seeks to prevent Hector's departure, heedless of the consequences to his honor and their city; Licinia never suggests that Gaius should stay behind, and even praises his decision to go to the forum unarmed (*Gracch.* 36(15).3). She seems to have already given him up for dead and berates, instead, the public corruption that dooms him to an ignoble end: "Baser things have now gained the upper hand; they effect their judgments by violence and by iron" (*Gracch.* 36(15).4). She is supportive and brave in the face of death, more concerned with her city's welfare than her own. These are not sentiments dictated by her gender.

The Andromache parallel for Cornelia's lament to her husband Pompey Magnus, as for Porcia's speech, is established by supporting passages.¹⁸ One precedes her speech (*Pomp.* 74.4–5); a second, describing the couple's final separation, follows it (*Pomp.* 78.7). Both passages recall the narrative preceding Licinia's speech. When Cornelia first hears of her husband's defeat, she, like Licinia, falls to the ground unconscious (*Pomp.* 74.4); when she recovers herself and joins Pompey on the coast she collapses again, this time into her husband's arms (*Pomp.* 74.5); like Licinia (and unlike Andromache), she addresses Pompey's public losses instead of her own private woe and mourns her husband as if he were already dead, with his son present (*Pomp.* 78.7).¹⁹

Cornelia's speech also introduces a new element, a strong sense of personal responsibility. Where Licinia blames corruption at Rome for her husband's downfall, Cornelia instead blames her own malevolent fate: "I see you, my husband, cast upon one boat, you who before your marriage to Cornelia sailed around this sea in five hundred ships. This is not the work of your own fortune, but of mine" (*Pomp.* 74.5). Already the widow of P. Crassus (*RE* 63), who was killed in his father's Parthian campaign and now having survived the ruin of a second husband, she considers herself a jinx and regrets her failure to commit suicide after Crassus' death (*Pomp.* 74.6). Her claim, superstitious though it may seem at first, should be taken seriously. Pompey himself certainly does so. And although he does not agree that the fault lies in Cornelia, he acknowledges the influence of fate without question (*Pomp.* 75.1).²⁰ Cornelia's self-recrimination also has public ramifications. The luck of a (formerly) *fortunatus dux* like Pompey is shared by

17. "You subject yourself to the murderers of Tiberius. . . . Why is there any faith in laws or gods after the murder of Tiberius?" (36(15).3–4).

18. Plutarch's positive depiction of Cornelia is introduced by praise of her beauty, intelligence, and restraint at *Pomp.* 55.1–3.

19. This son is by Pompey's former wife Mucia, a distinction Plutarch does not mention.

20. Le Corsu (1981, 121–24) has argued that in Plutarch's *Lives*, widows like Cornelia exert a stronger political influence over their husbands than virgin brides because of their greater age and experience.

his army. In claiming that she has ruined her husband's fortune, Cornelia effectively assumes personal responsibility for the entire Pharsalian disaster. From a modern perspective, her lament may appear more personal than Licinia's invective against corrupt politics, but it is equally civic in its proper Roman context.²¹

The fourth and final passage modeled on *Iliad* 6, Aristomache's speech in *Dion* 51.1–5, is in two respects unlike the passages we have so far considered. First, the familial connections are more convoluted: the appeal is not made by Dion's wife (and niece), Arete, but by her mother (Dion's sister), Aristomache, on Arete's behalf. Second, the crisis prompting Aristomache's speech is actually a happy occasion, the triumphant return of Dion to Syracuse, and so quite unlike Andromache's dilemma at Troy. The Iliadic precedent is nonetheless clear in Plutarch's description of the scene. Most obviously, and perhaps least significantly, the names Andromache and Aristomache are very similar. Narrative parallels are more telling: as Andromache speaks to Hector at the Scaean gate (*Il.* 6.390–493), so do Aristomache and her sister run out to meet Dion at the gates of the Syracusan acropolis (*Dion* 51.1); like Andromache, Arete is in tears (δακρύουσα, *Dion* 51.1; δάκρυ χέουσα, *Il.* 6.405); and as Andromache's maid brings Astyanax, so too does Aristomache herself lead Dion's son.

Against these circumstantial similarities Aristomache's civic perspective stands out in sharp relief. Homer's Andromache strives to subordinate the public sphere to the private. Bereft of mother, father, and brothers, she sees in Hector the last remnant of her *oikos*. Because she cannot see that he is Troy's best hope of prolonged survival or understand his pursuit of glory in a hopeless cause, she seeks to subordinate public to private: "Madman! You will destroy yourself, and have no pity for your infant son or for me, the ill-fated (wife) who will soon be your widow" (*Il.* 6.407–9).²² Plutarch's Aristomache, on the other hand, seeks to persuade Dion by uniting public and private: "We fared badly when you were in exile, Dion. Now that you have come and conquered, you have relieved us all of our gloom. All, that is, but this one woman, whom I in my misery saw compelled to join with another while you yet lived" (*Dion* 51.2). Aristomache opens her plea with vague first-person plurals (ἡτυχοῦμεν, ἡμῶν πάντων) that can apply to all citizens of Syracuse, imparting a civic register to her words that is absent in the Homeric model. She is speaking not only for Arete and her son, but for her fellow citizens, who are also present to welcome Dion home. In doing so, she constructs rhetorically a Dion who is merciful and just.

Having established his public persona in a public forum, Aristomache subtly shifts her attention to the singular nature of Arete's suffering, which

21. Plutarch's treatment of fortune and fate (τύχη) elsewhere suggests that both Cornelia and Pompey understand its influence imperfectly (cf. *Aemilius-Timoleon*). Fortune in Plutarch seems to operate on a cosmic scale and is prevalent in Roman history only because Rome is such a dominant political and military force; see Swain 1989, 315–16.

22. Hector's perspective is different, but no more civic than that of his wife. He realizes that the city must fall, but defends his doomed actions as the honorable quest for personal glory (*Il.* 6.440–49).

is the subject of the rest of her speech. Her transition from public to private is the crux of her argument: it implies that her own relief should be both public, because she is a Syracusan woman, and private, because she is Dion's sister. The conflict between her sorrow over Arete's distress and her joy that Dion has rescued Syracuse from Dionysius' oppression is unacceptable. If Dion is truly just, he should not be a savior to all Syracuse and yet an unforgiving man in private; he cannot reject his wife and remain true to his own character. Aristomache's ability to make this argument is predicated upon her impressive political acumen. She herself recognizes that Dion's prominence places her in a special position bridging *polis* and *oikos*, and exploits that position publicly to heal her family.

Licina, Cornelia, Porcia, and Aristomache are all prominent women, and their speeches all demonstrate a high level of civic awareness. By constructing them on the pattern of the Andromache episode in *Iliad* 6, Plutarch draws the reader's attention to the public aspect of their character. His positive depiction of these four women implies, moreover, a certain disdain for politically naïve women like Andromache, a stance made explicit by an anecdote he relates in the *Life* of his fellow Theban Pelopidas. When the great general and statesman is admonished by his wife to be careful as he departs for Leuctra, Pelopidas responds sternly: "Such, my wife, is the advice that should be given to private individuals. Those in power must be advised to save others" (*Pel.* 20.2).

FAMILIAL AND CIVIC INTERCESSIONS

There are six more speeches by women in the *Lives*, but they concern parents, children, and siblings, not husbands, and the Iliadic precedent is less relevant. These include the speeches of the Syracusan Theste, sister to Dionysius I, of Chilonis, daughter and wife of Spartan kings, of Octavia, the sister of the *triumvir* Octavian, and of Julia, the mother of the *triumvir* M. Antonius. In two others, the speeches of Hersilia and of Volumnia, analysis is complicated by historiographical precedent, so I will first consider the four speeches that Plutarch appears to have created independently.

The twenty-first chapter of *Dion* prepares the speech by Aristomache in *Dion* 51. The earlier passage tells how the tyrant Dionysius II of Syracuse forced Arete to remarry while her husband Dion was in exile; the latter describes how Aristomache convinced Dion to receive Arete back. The earlier passage also contains a story about the preceding generation, in which Theste rebukes her brother, Dionysius I, as a tyrant and defends her husband on political grounds. This story and the speech it contains are linked to Aristomache's speech implicitly by the narrative frame in which it appears, and explicitly by the comparison of the elder and younger Dionysius that introduces it.²³ Both passages, moreover, address the interplay of marital responsibilities, blood ties, and politics. Together, they offer the reader an imposing portrayal of female nobility in the face of tyranny.

23. "And so he [Dionysius I] gave Arete against her will to one of his friends, Timocrates, having failed to imitate his father's fairness, at least in this regard" (*Dion* 21.6).

Theste's husband, Polyxenus, was a political adversary of Dionysius I who fled secretly into exile.²⁴ In Plutarch, Polyxenus' escape earns Theste an angry reproach from her brother, who accuses her of complicity. Theste replies calmly, unimpressed by her brother's rebuke:²⁵ "Do you think I have become so base and unmanly [*ἄνανδρος*] a wife, Dionysius, that I would not have sailed away with my husband and shared the same fate if I had foreknowledge of his flight?" (*Dion* 21.8). The epithet she rejects for herself, *ἄνανδρος*, allows for two complementary interpretations, depending on one's understanding of the stem. If one construes *-ανδρος* as "husband," the negating *ἀν-* prefix denotes an unmarried woman, either a virgin or a widow. This is the primary meaning in tragedy (LSJ I.2). If one takes *-ανδρος* to mean simply "man," the adjective denotes a coward, the usual meaning in historiography and Plato (*LSJ* II.1). The former interpretation emphasizes Theste's loyalty to her husband and subordinates her blood ties to her responsibilities as Polyxenus' wife; the latter subverts gender roles and recasts her behavior outside feminine constraints. The ambiguity of the term enables her to appropriate male attributes in the very act of defending her marital fidelity.

Theste's rhetorical question prepares the main thrust of her speech, in which she subordinates her private responsibilities, the female domain Plutarch emphasizes in *Coniugalia praecepta*, to her public duty as a citizen of Syracuse. Her main point is driven home in her concluding *sententia*: "It would have been better for me to be called the wife of an exile like Polyxenus than the sister of a tyrant like you" (*Dion* 21.8).²⁶ Plutarch makes Theste's denunciation of tyranny the crux of her defense. Whatever her tangled loyalties to her husband and brother, both are overshadowed by her civic role. Though a woman, she is not so preoccupied with private concerns that she cannot recognize the threat her brother represents to her fellow citizens. By declaring her preference for the hardship of exile over the stain of tyranny, she can claim a position as both a faithful wife and loyal citizen, and counter her brother's personal claim on her by rejecting his illegal usurpation of power.

Her rebuke, like Aristomache's plea to Dion, is delivered in public. It therefore not only wins the admiration of her brother—who is thus shown to be more noble than his successor—but of the Syracusan people, who are so impressed with her virtue that they grant her royal honors after the tyranny is dissolved and a splendid funeral procession at public expense after her death.

24. Diodorus Siculus (13.96.3) identifies Polyxenus as brother of the former wife of Hermocrates, the prominent Syracusan statesman and general who successfully opposed the Athenian expedition during the Peloponnesian war. He was banished in 410/09 (Thuc. 8.85.3) and killed two years later while attempting to force his return (Diod. Sic. 13.75.8).

25. Her response is described in *Dion* 21.8 as unmoved (*ἀνεκπλήκτως*) and unafraid (*ἀφόβως*). Plutarch employs the same formula only once elsewhere for a woman, the Thracian Timocleia (*ἀνεκπλήκτως καὶ ἄδεως*, *Alex.* 12.4). All other instances are virtuous males: Dion (*Dion* 42.3), Cato Minor (*Cat. Min.* 2.5), Romulus and Remus (*Rom.* 6.3), and Sertorius (*Sert.* 10.2). Plutarch elsewhere identifies a stable (*ἀνέκπληκτος*) character as a sign of moral progress (*De profectibus in uirtute* 78B). Stability is consequently lacking in his morally defective subjects: cf. Marius, whose *ἀνεκπληξία* deserts him in civic politics (*Mar.* 28.2), and Coriolanus, who seems *ἀνέκπληκτος* but is not (*Cor.* 21.1); see also Duff 1999, 213–15.

26. I have translated this clause as the apodosis of a past contrafactual; the *ἄν* is implied from the preceding clause (Smyth 1956, §1767).

Neither her brother, nor her husband, nor her nephew Dionysius II receive comparable tribute. Lisette Gössler understands the Theste digression as a justification for Dion's opposition, but her interpretation is too restrictive.²⁷ It also establishes an important precedent for Arete later in the *Life* and for Porcia in the paired *Brutus*.

Plutarch's narrative preparation for Chilonis' intercession at *Agis/Cleomenes* 17.4–10 is more elaborate than for Theste. The speaker is the daughter of the king, Leonidas, a member of the Agiad line at Sparta, and a prominent actor in the *Life*. Her behavior is consistently admirable, a striking exception to the domineering and overly political women at Sparta who have made Leonidas their pawn (*Agis/Cleom.* 7.5–8, and 58(37).12).²⁸ When her father is forced from power by the ephor, Lysander, and supplanted by her husband, Cleombrotus, Chilonis joins him as a suppliant at the temple of Athena *Chalkioikos*.²⁹ When Leonidas returns to power two years later and Cleombrotus is forced in turn to seek refuge in the temple of Poseidon, Chilonis performs the same service for her husband, joining him at the altar and interceding with her father on his behalf, which occasions her speech at *Agis/Cleomenes* 17.4–10.

There is no logical basis upon which she can defend her husband's actions, so Chilonis must appeal to her father's emotions. Her strategy is the opposite of that adopted by Theste and Aristomache: she must subordinate her husband's political offense to her own private misery. Her prominence makes this strategy possible. As a member of the Agiad line, her private world is necessarily enmeshed in Spartan politics. Public affairs are, moreover, wholly responsible for her current dilemma. Her speech seeks not to delineate public and private but to further confuse them, and then turn that confusion to her advantage.

The central element of her plea to her father is an open threat. If her appeal fails, she will kill herself: "[My husband] will suffer a harsher penalty for his wicked plans than you yourself wish, looking on while I, his dearest, die before him" (17.7). Everything that precedes in her speech—the sorrow of her children (Leonidas' grandchildren), the contrast between her sorrow and her father's renewed good fortune, her loyalty during Leonidas' exile, her current misery and wretched appearance—establishes sympathy for her and prepares the way for this threat. The complaints that follow—her despair and shame that she could not arouse pity in her father or husband, her re-cremations, her conflation of the two men and their ambition—carry greater impact because they may lead to her suicide. Everything is delivered in a tone of emotional outrage that emphasizes the seriousness of her extremity (τοιαῦτα ποτνωμένη, 18.1). Leonidas is forced to view the political situation through a private lens because his actions will determine his daughter's fate.

27. Gössler 1962, 124.

28. Spartan women were often depicted in the literature of other Greeks as aggressive and greedy. McClure (1999, 164–68) observes the same prejudice in her discussion of Hermione's speech in Eur. *Andr.*, adducing Pl. *Resp.* 549c–e and 551a, and Arist. *Pol.* 1269b25 and 1270a1–8 in support of her interpretation. On the other hand, she also notes the respect for education (παιδείας) that Plato attributed to Spartan women (*Prt.* 342d).

29. *Agis/Cleom.* 11.6–9. Leonidas was deposed in 243 B.C.E. (see Walbank 1984, 252–55).

Having foregrounded her private tragedy and having fixed clearly in Leonidas' mind the private consequences of his son-in-law's death, Chilonis may at the end of her speech allow public affairs to intrude: "Indeed, if there even was some fitting defense for this man, I destroyed it when I joined ranks with you and bore witness against the things he had done. But you will make his crime easy to defend, revealing that rule is a thing so great, an object so eagerly contested, that it is just for its sake to murder sons-in-law and to disregard children" (*Agis/Cleom.* 17.9–10). Chilonis can acknowledge the influence of political ambition in their family struggles because she has devalued it rhetorically. No public achievement, not even a Spartan throne, can justify the betrayal and murder of one's own family. Her literal accusation, that her father is willing to murder his son-in-law for the sake of power, is itself quite harsh. Her implication is far worse: by gaining political vengeance Leonidas will murder his own daughter.³⁰

Not content with rhetorical pressure, Chilonis also employs nonverbal means to marshal the support of other Spartans, many of whom are present.³¹ Leonidas is not an admirable man and his capitulation to her plea is not a forgone conclusion, so Chilonis strengthens her case by engaging the sympathies of her entire audience. She strikes a pathetic pose, with her head resting on her husband, and casts her gaze, "destroyed and dissolved by grief" (*Agis/Cleom.* 18.1), upon those around her, drawing her fellow Spartans into her private crisis and forcing Leonidas to resolve the family dispute in public.³² Cleombrotus has already been forced from power, so Leonidas need only restrain himself from revenge to save his daughter and demonstrate his superiority to his son-in-law.

Leonidas is helpless in the face of his daughter's rhetorical pressure and immediately relents, allowing Cleombrotus to depart into exile. He begs Chilonis not to leave with her husband, but she refuses. She may be adept in civic affairs, but her private responsibilities to her family are still her primary concern. In Plutarch's depiction, her attitude is entirely admirable, and he concludes the episode with an encomium: "If Cleombrotus had not been destroyed by empty ambition, he would have reckoned his exile to be a greater thing than the throne, because of his wife" (*Agis/Cleom.* 18.3).³³

In her moment of crisis, Plutarch's Chilonis becomes a liminal character in three different senses. First, as a member of Spartan royalty her life is

30. Chilonis' recasting of the crisis mirrors Haemon's appeal to Cleon in Sophocles' *Antigone*, but with the gender roles and the relationship between public and private inverted. In Sophocles, Cleon condemns his future daughter-in-law to death, and his son speaks in her defense (683–765); Haemon, who also threatens suicide, tries to defend Antigone by recasting the debate with his father in public terms (i.e., civic unrest). The ties between Chilonis' speech and *Antigone* are not as insistent as Plutarch's repeated invocations of *Iliad* 6, but the parallel suggests to me at least the possibility that Sophocles' play influenced Plutarch's narrative.

31. Sympathetic witnesses are mentioned when Chilonis first joins her husband at the altar (Θαυμαζόντων δὲ πάντων καὶ δακρυόντων, *Agis/Cleom.* 17.4). To them we may add the soldiers that Leonidas brings to the temple of Poseidon (*Agis/Cleom.* 16.7) and the friends he consults (*Agis/Cleom.* 18.2).

32. Gössler (1962, 126) also notes the importance of this larger audience, though she perhaps goes too far in considering their opinion the decisive factor in Leonidas' decision.

33. Cf. also Plutarch's interest in the conciliatory effect of a good marriage in *Demetr.* 31.5–32.3 and *Pyrrh.* 4.3–7. The frequent marriages and divorces of the polygamous *diadochi*, on the other hand, could engender strife (*Pyrrh.* 10.6–7 and *Demetr.* 38.1–12).

necessarily an uneasy compromise between public and private. Second, her marriage to Cleombrotus makes her the natural focus of the conflict between him and her father. Third, once that conflict has become violent and her husband has taken refuge at Poseidon's altar, she must negotiate her family's safe transition from the sacred to the profane. Chilonis' recognition and exploitation of this position in her speech is most impressive. She negotiates skillfully between private and public, marshalling pity, religious sentiment, and love to her side, forcing her father's hand by imposing a high private cost (her suicide) on his public actions, and drawing upon popular pressure to enforce his decision. She is immune to the enticements of ambition that motivate her father and husband, employing her talent instead to resolve the dispute between them and proving herself a wiser and more effective statesman than either of the men in her life.

Chilonis' expertise in manipulating public and private is best understood in conjunction with the other female speech in *Agis/Cleomenes*, which is addressed to Cleomenes by his mother, the Spartan queen Cratesicleia. Cratesicleia is introduced when her son launches his social and political reforms with a campaign against the Achaean league. She takes no overt interest in the campaign itself—her interests do not extend to military affairs—but assists her son eagerly in his attempts to court favor at home, even marrying a leading Spartan man for the sole purpose of garnering his political support (*Agis/Cleom.* 27(6).1–2). Plutarch crafts her speech in response to an offer of aid by Ptolemy III Euergetes.³⁴ In return for his assistance, Cleomenes' children and mother are to be handed over as hostages (*Agis/Cleom.* 43(22).4). Cleomenes is ashamed to mention the exchange to his mother and only does so after much hesitation. She is much more the Spartan citizen than he realizes, however, and makes light of the situation, even laughing aloud: “So *this* is what you kept hesitating to say? Hurry up, then, put me in the boat and send me wherever you think this body will be most useful to Sparta, before it is ruined by old age, sitting around here” (*Agis/Cleom.* 43(22).5). Though her son acquiesces he is visibly disturbed on the day of her departure, so she draws him aside into the temple of Poseidon—the very place where Chilonis made her speech to Leonidas—to stiffen his resolve: “Come now, king of the Lacedaemonians. When we go outside, let no one see us weeping or doing anything unworthy of Sparta. For this alone is within our power; our fortunes are as destiny ordains” (*Agis/Cleom.* 43(22).7).

At first blush, Cratesicleia's character and civic awareness are surprising. No other noble woman in the *Lives* expresses sentiments so thoroughly public in nature. And her vehemence suggests that she can exert a powerful influence on the political activities of her son. She even rebukes Cleomenes for his emotional display, inverting the gender roles more common in other *Lives* and in the *Moralia* (e.g., *Pel.* 20.2 and *Cons.* 609b–c). Plutarch's

34. Her “speech,” as I have dubbed it, actually comprises two smaller speeches: one expressing her willingness to serve as a political hostage, the other urging her son to comport himself as a true Spartan. The two passages come in rapid succession, with only four lines intervening, and their effect on the reader is much the same as one longer address on two related topics.

depiction could be explained in part by his decision to pair the Spartan kings with the Gracchi, and thus to create a Spartan match for the noble and civic-minded Cornelia.³⁵ But this is inadequate. For Plutarch to conceive of the parallel, the idea of a politically effective Spartan woman, a Spartan stateswoman, must first be plausible.

A more satisfactory explanation is found within Plutarch's conception of the Spartan *agoge*, a system he discusses at some length in the *synkrisis* of *Lycurgus-Numa*. He argues there that although the training of Spartan women made them the targets of abuse by the poets, it also made them more capable mothers. They married in full maturity, "so that their intercourse, now that their nature desired it, would be the beginning of a graceful friendship . . . and their bodies would have the strength to endure conception and childbirth" (*Lyc.-Numa synk.* 4.1). While inferior for the development of character to the Roman system, the Spartan *agoge* is better for the production of children (*Lyc.-Numa synk.* 4.3). The freedom that Spartan women enjoy encourages greater decadence, but also allows them greater influence. This dichotomy informs Plutarch's portrayal of all the Spartan women in *Agis/Cleomenes*. When Agis' mother Agesistrata joins him in seeking to undo the corruption of wealth in Sparta, she is strongly opposed by the other Spartan women, who possess the majority of the wealth in the city and are unwilling to lose their luxury, honor, and power (*Agis/Cleom.* 6.6–7). Yet it is this very independence that enables Agesistrata, Chilonis, and Cratesicleia to act so nobly on Sparta's behalf. *Agis/Cleomenes* and the *synkrisis* of *Lycurgus-Numa* are not *encomia* of Spartan women, but neither are they critical. They are serious attempts to understand a highly individual system of political governance in which both the positive and negative aspects of female independence could be expressed.³⁶ Read in this context, the political sagacity and civic perspective revealed by Cratesicleia's speech are not surprising. They are the natural counterpart to the feminine greed and luxury Plutarch decries earlier in the *Life*.

Plutarch's Roman women enjoy freedom and influence comparable to Spartan women and intercede rather frequently in the political affairs of their male relatives. Of these women, Octavia, the wife of Antony and sister of the future Augustus, wields perhaps the greatest influence. She is also a virtuous foil for Cleopatra in *Antony*, and Plutarch's narrative support for her intercession at *Antony* 35.3–5 is accordingly more elaborate than for the other speeches we have considered thus far. Plutarch introduces her as a marvelous specimen of a woman possessing great beauty and intelligence (*Ant.* 31.2–4) and repeatedly expounds on her loyalty to her husband and devotion to their children (*Ant.* 53.2–4, 54.1–4, 87.1). Unlike Cleopatra, her

35. Cf. *Gracch.* 1.6–7, 8.7, and 34(13).2. The parallel between Cratesicleia and Cornelia also allows Plutarch to offer a richer analysis of moderation in grief at *Agis/Cleom.* 59(38).2–12 and *Gracch.* 40(19).1–4.

36. A thoughtful analysis of the Spartan system, including the *agoge*, would be of particular interest to Plutarch's contemporaries, who could still observe the rites at the temple of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, ostensibly practiced as they had been since the time of Lycurgus; see Kennell 1995, 5–6.

public role is not of her own creation but is generated by the expectations of others: her marriage to Antony leads everyone (ἅπαντες) to hope that she will be their savior (αὐτοῖς σωτηρίαν, *Ant.* 31.4).³⁷ By emphasizing the political dimension of Octavia's influence through imprecise adjectives (ἅπαντες and αὐτοῖς) that could easily refer to the populace at large, the same technique employed in Aristomache's speech to Dion, Plutarch makes Octavia the hub of Octavian and Antony's fragile alliance. Her fellow Romans consider her their insurance against civil war.

Like Porcia, Theste, and Andromache, Octavia understands the power of her special position. She successfully exploits it in her embassy to her brother in *Ant.* 35.3–5. In Plutarch's account, unlike that of Appian, she is solely responsible for the reconciliation of Octavian and Antony at Tarentum in 37 B.C.E.³⁸ Neither dynast intends any such meeting at first. Octavian has been spreading politically motivated slanders, and Antony is so infuriated by them that he lands at Tarentum with 300 ships, bent on fighting. But Octavia imposes herself upon the political process, requesting on her own initiative that Antony send her to treat with her brother (*Ant.* 35.2). She brings with her two of Octavian's closest friends, Agrippa and Maecenas, but neither man plays any role in Plutarch's version of the embassy. The reconciliation is effected by her alone (*Ant.* 35.3–4):

She repeatedly cried out in horror and begged that [Octavian] not overlook her as she was transformed from the most fortunate woman to the most wretched, since now all [ἅπαντας] admired her as the wife of one *autokrator* and the sister of another. "But if worse things should conquer," she said, "and there should be war, it is unclear which of you is fated to conquer or be conquered; yet for me, there will be troubles either way."³⁹

The success or failure of Octavia's speech depends entirely upon her ability to impose her perspective on her brother. Although her dilemma involves essentially the same family relationships that Aristomache exploited, she cannot employ Aristomache's strategy because her brother is not Dion, whom Plutarch portrays as a man devoted to the welfare of his people. Plutarch's Octavian is a power-hungry dynast, concerned more for himself than for his city. Yet he loves his sister deeply (*Ant.* 31.2), and is therefore susceptible to a personal appeal. So when Octavia speaks of military and political affairs, she emphasizes their impact on her personally. She invokes the *populus Romanus* as ἅπαντας, echoing the hopes of ἅπαντες in *Ant.* 31.4, but only to draw her brother's attention to the magnitude of her own misery. She denounces civil war, using the very same words that Licinia employs for the

37. Dynastic marriages could also lead to conflict; cf. Julia's marriage to Marius, which Plutarch credits for Caesar's later antagonism toward Sulla (*Caes.* 1.2).

38. Plutarch's narrative of the meeting, as of the slanders that prompt it, portrays the relationship between Octavian and Antony more negatively than does App. *B. Civ.* 5.93–95. Doing so allows Plutarch to ignore the role of Sex. Pompey and to enhance that of Octavia. For synthetic analysis of the surviving accounts, see Pelling 1996, 24–27 and 1988, 213–14.

39. The speech Plutarch crafts for her comprises both indirect and direct discourse; the former (35.3) gives way to the latter (35.4) as her speech reaches its emotional climax. Plutarch employs the same crescendo of *oratio obliqua* to *oratio recta* elsewhere, e.g., *Cor.* 6.3–5, *Luc.* 34.4–5, *Galb.* 14.2–5.

turmoil of 121 B.C.E., but only to emphasize how much worse the prospect of civil war is for her than for her husband and brother.⁴⁰ Men may hope to seize control of the state, but she can only suffer. Like Chilonis, she exploits her personal suffering to effect a public rapprochement.

Octavia succeeds, and the parley at Tarentum follows immediately after (*Ant.* 35.5–7). Plutarch is not done with her, however, and appends a secondary incident to the meeting that further attests her political ability. After the main tenets of the agreement have been settled by others, Octavia negotiates her own exchange of troops and matériel: Antony is to give Octavian twenty light raiders and receive a thousand soldiers in return (*Ant.* 35.7). A similar event also occurs later in the *Life*, after Antony's Parthian disaster, when Octavia brings her husband two thousand select recruits (*Ant.* 53.3). Plutarch does not describe the diplomacy that leads to either transaction—Octavia's virtuoso performance in *Ant.* 35.3–4 obviates the need—but by mentioning them he shows that Octavia's initial diplomatic success is no isolated incident. She three times demonstrates her capacity to negotiate political, even military affairs, and justifies the faith that the Roman people place in her.

This opinion is shared by Cleopatra, who goes to extravagant lengths to keep Antony away from his wife (53.5–11, 56.4–5). In Plutarch's account, the machinations of Cleopatra are primarily responsible for defeating Octavia's positive influence. Antony's passivity is a defining attribute of his character, so the conflict between these two women determines in large part the outcome of his career.⁴¹ Both are brilliant and beautiful, but where the Roman matron employs her considerable talent and energy on behalf of her husband and family, the Hellenistic queen acts on her own behalf, for her own aggrandizement. Whether because her selfishness is itself an advantage or because of other enticements, Cleopatra wins, and Antony's disregard for his wife grows ever more offensive with time and distance. By the time Octavia makes her final plea to her brother on Rome's behalf, it is too late (*Ant.* 54.2). Antony's negligence has created a situation too difficult for her to combat, and Octavian and Antony commence hostilities soon after.

Despite her eventual inability to preserve the peace, the Octavia whom Plutarch portrays throughout the *Life* is precisely the admirable woman she reveals herself to be through her own speech. And her ultimate failure, which is the product of her husband's passivity and her brother's ambition, is countered at the end of *Antony* by Plutarch's account of her long and prosperous life.⁴² Like Chilonis, Octavia proves herself superior to the men she seeks to reconcile. She is a better politician than her husband, a better negotiator than her brother, and a nobler Roman than either.

40. τὰ χεῖρω κρατήσκειν (*Ant.* 35.4); κερράτηκεν ἥδη τὰ χεῖρω (*Gracch.* 36(15).4).

41. See *Ant.* 1 on the passivity of Antony's father, *Ant.* 25–28 on Antony's submission to Cleopatra, and *Ant.* 10.4–10 on his marriage to Fulvia and his γυναικοκρασία (thus per the codices, which are retained by Ziegler; Pelling prefers γυναικοκρατία, an emendation he attributes to Dindorf); see Ziegler and Gärtner 1993–2000, 3: 1, ad loc.; Pelling 1988, ad loc. (141–42) and 183–85. Demetrius is likewise unable to recognize the value of women in the parallel *Life* (*Demetr.* 14, 16.5–7, 19.4–10, 27).

42. *Ant.* 87; cf. *Marc.* 30.10, where Plutarch praises Octavia's dedication of a library to her son, M. Claudius Marcellus.

Just as Cleopatra's negative influence on Antony is prepared by the domination of his first wife Fulvia (*Ant.* 10.6), so is Octavia's positive influence upon Antony preceded by the example of his mother Julia, to whom Plutarch also grants a brief speech in *Antony*. As he does for Octavia, Plutarch establishes Julia's virtues, her frugality, nobility, wisdom, and good character, well in advance, ranking her among the noblest and wisest women of her day (*Ant.* 2.1).⁴³ He also notes with approval that she conducts her affairs through private channels whenever possible.⁴⁴ Her subsequent intercession and speech in defense of her brother's life, which are compelled by circumstances, reinforce her private virtues while providing a rare example of bravery among the various triumviral predations in Plutarch's narrative.

The crisis that forces Julia to act is her son's doing. In the pitiless bartering among the triumvirs, Antony exchanges the life of his uncle L. Caesar for Octavian's permission to murder Cicero, an act that draws Plutarch's ire (*Ant.* 19.3–4). On the run, Lucius seeks refuge from his would-be assassins at his sister's house. Julia confronts these men at her doorway and cries out: "You will not kill Lucius Caesar unless you first kill me, the one who bore your dictator!"⁴⁵

Like Chilonis and Octavia, Julia confronts her antagonists with an appeal that is at once personal (through her tie to Antony) and political (through Antony's position as *triumvir rei publicae constituendae*). As elsewhere, Plutarch situates female political speech at the figurative *limen* between public and private. Here, he makes this principle concrete by having Julia speak from the actual *limen* of her house.⁴⁶ Her position is essential to Plutarch's characterization. Her private plight makes her intercession necessary; her civic status makes it effective. Like Chilonis, Julia also reinforces her appeal with threats of violence. But where her Spartan predecessor can only threaten to harm herself, Julia's death contains an additional threat for her assailants. If they dare to strike her down, Antony will surely learn their identity from others who witness the act—she makes her appeal loudly (ἐβόα) and repeatedly (πολλάκις)—and will seek revenge. By identifying herself so forcefully

43. Her readiness to torture the household slaves over a missing silver *skyphos* in chapter 1 is not incongruous. In some cases, Roman law did not even acknowledge the testimony of slaves without torture (*Dig.* 22.5.21).

44. When her husband is executed as a Catilinarian conspirator, Julia appeals to Cicero's wife for his body (*Ant.* 2.2); cf. the speech of Hortensia before the triumvirs in App. *B. Civ.* 4.32–34: "We sought help from your wives, as was appropriate for women like ourselves who wished something from you, but the treatment we received from Fulvia was not appropriate, and we have been forced into the forum by her."

45. *Ant.* 20.5. I have translated αὐτοκράτορα literally as "dictator," though *triumvir* would be more historically accurate; cf. *Sull.* 33.1, *Fab.* 3.7, and *Marc.* 10–13; and see Broughton 1951–84, 2.337–38.

46. Women of the late Republic were in a state of perpetual *tutela*, and were therefore legally incapable of owning property (see Gai. *Inst.* 3.43; and Nicholas 1962, 91–96). It is perhaps this legalistic argument that has led English translators of Julia's speech to render δωματίον as "bedchamber" or "room," an unnecessary reading, which makes little sense in the context of this passage. The genitive in the phrase δωματίον αὐτῆς need not indicate ownership; it could merely indicate the house in which Julia lived (cf. οἰκεῖος, Smyth 1956, §1414). Even if one prefers a strictly possessive genitive, perpetual *tutela* was moribund by the second century C.E. (Gai. *Inst.* 1.190), and Plutarch may have simply depicted the legal practice of his own time (cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.40.1). We should construe δωματίον here as the diminutive of δῶμα (LSJ I).

and abruptly Julia frightens her attackers, throwing their own lives suddenly into the balance.⁴⁷ They must relent, and the life of L. Caesar is spared.

Two Roman intercessions remain, those by Hersilia, the Sabine queen and spokeswoman for the Sabine women (*Rom.* 19.4–7), and by Valeria and Volumnia, the two women instrumental in repelling the invasion of Cn. Marcius Coriolanus (*Cor.* 33–36). Their speeches deserve particularly careful analysis not only because of their greater length, but because they offer the opportunity to compare Plutarch's treatment to the earlier versions in Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.⁴⁸ Hersilia speaks in Livy 1.13.1–3 and Dionysius *Antiquitates Romanae* 2.45–46, Valeria and Volumnia in Livy 2.40.1–9 and Dionysius *Antiquitates Romanae* 8.39–42. For each intercession we can be certain that Plutarch consulted Dionysius, whom he cites at *Romulus* 16.7 and in the *synkrisis* of *Coriolanus-Alcibiades* (41(2).4). We can also be reasonably confident that Plutarch knew Livy's account: though he does not cite Livy in either *Life*, he adduces the Roman historian's work explicitly in nine other pairs. There are also numerous stylistic and organizational parallels in *Coriolanus* that suggest the influence of Livy's narrative.⁴⁹ Our comparison of these earlier versions will not only produce a better understanding of the ways in which Plutarch adapts his speeches to his own moral program, it may also allow us to observe Plutarch differentiating his own work from its antecedents.

I begin with the shorter of the two speeches, that of Hersilia and the Sabine women.⁵⁰ Livy's version of the speech in 1.13 says nothing of Hersilia herself, nor does he mention her in his narrative of the Sabine rape in 1.9. He notes her marriage to Romulus and her intercession with him on behalf of the Antemnates' daughters at 1.11.1–4, but makes no connection between her and the Sabines. The speech that he recounts in 1.13 is instead spoken in the collective voice of all the Sabine women. It is preceded in the narrative by only a very brief description of female distress: the hair of the women is disheveled, their clothing rent; they are afraid, but their womanly fear is overcome by their misery (1.13.1). The speech itself begins with a religious argument, which Livy relates in indirect discourse (1.13.2): "They pleaded

47. Plutarch conveys their surprise by focalizing his narrative through them. He withholds Julia's identity in this episode until the last possible moment, identifying her before her speech only as the sister of Antony's uncle. Plutarch's readers and Julia's assailants thus learn her full identity in the same instant.

48. The versions of these incidents in Valerius Maximus 2.4.4, 5.2.1a and 5.4.1 are not germane. Valerius ignores the speech of the Sabine women altogether, and his Coriolanus relents immediately, making Volumnia's speech unnecessary.

49. Flacelière and Chambry (1964, 166–67) revisit some of Peter's *Quellenforschungen* (1865, 8–9) and conclude, like Peter, that Plutarch must have used Livy. On Dionysius, see Pérez Jiménez 2000, 346; Ampolo and Manfredini 1988, xlii–lv; and Russell 1963, 21. As is typical, though, many of Plutarch's sources for these *Lives* have been lost. In the case of *Romulus*, for instance, he also cites the accounts of Fabius Maximus (*Rom.* 14.1), Valerius Antias (*Rom.* 14.7), C. Sulpicius Galba (*Rom.* 17.5), Juba (*Rom.* 14.7, 15.4, 17.5), Zenodotus of Troezen (*Rom.* 14.8), numerous poetic and philosophical authors, and the oral report of a Carthaginian named Sextius Sulla (*Rom.* 15.3).

50. Castellani (2002, 149–51) also attempts a brief comparison of this episode in Livy, Dionysius, and Plutarch, and then argues that Plutarch's version strips Hersilia of all *virtus* and deliberation (p. 155). I do not agree. True, Plutarch's women are different from his men, and Hersilia does not act as a man would, but her speech is nonetheless rhetorically effective and her contribution great.

with their fathers on one side, their husbands on the other, begging them not to spatter themselves with the obscene blood of their fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, not to pollute with murder their own descendants, the offspring of one side's grandsons and of the other side's sons."⁵¹ Though these women were raped, not properly married, their situation and consequent argument are not dissimilar to those of Chilonis and Octavia in Plutarch. The passage of time and the births of their children have generated the same emotional ties and empowered them with the same moral authority. These advantages allow them to shift from their religious argument to a personal appeal, a shift Livy marks by switching to the first person and direct discourse (1.13.3): "If the relationship between you, our marriage, grieves you, then turn your rage against us. We are the reason for this war, for the wounds and death for our husbands and fathers. It will be better if we die than if we live on, bereft of either of you."⁵² Their rhetorical strategy recalls Chilonis' threat to her father in *Agis* 17.7: the penalty for the Sabine men's revenge will fall primarily upon their own daughters. By attributing this speech to all of the Sabine women, however, Livy produces an entirely different effect. The primary narrative purpose of Chilonis' speech is to demonstrate her own noble character, and its *ethopoeia* is therefore crucial. Livy does not link the evident skill and passion of the Sabine women to any individual, so the virtues he portrays can only redound to their general credit.

Dionysius' account of the same incident at *Antiquitates Romanae* 2.45–46 lacks Livy's excitement and emotional engagement. Livy describes the intercession of the Sabine women as violent: they expose themselves to the spears of their husbands and kin on the battlefield itself (1.13.1). Dionysius halts the battle with each side frozen in consternation, creating a calmer narrative setting in which negotiations can occur. His Sabine women exploit the cessation of hostilities to gather separately and discuss their options at length, an impossibility in Livy's more hectic version. He also gives them a leader, Hersilia, who in his version is a Sabine matron of noble character, with no connection to Romulus (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.2). On her advice, the women request the senate's permission to approach the Sabine army and sue for peace (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.4). When they do so, it is she who addresses the Sabine councilors and king.

Given Dionysius' extensive preparation in this episode, Hersilia's speech is anticlimactic. We are given only a brief description of its content in indirect discourse (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.6): "Hersilia . . . delivered a long and pitiful plea, begging them to gratify those begging for peace on their husbands' behalf, those on whose behalf, she pointed out, the war was being prosecuted. As for the terms of the peace, she said that the leaders themselves could come together and reach an agreement with each other, observing their common

51. Livy's narrative is more favorable to the women than that of Cicero (*Rep.* 2.12; see Matthes 2000, 42–43; and Ogilvie 1965, 65). Ogilvie suspects the influence of epic, perhaps Virgil or Ennius, in this passage, especially in the hexameter fragment *inter tela volantia* (1965, 78).

52. Their rape and resulting self-recriminations here may be yet another Iliadic echo; cf. Helen's twin references to herself as a bitch, κύων, in her dialogue with Hector at Hom. *Il.* 6.344 and 6.356.

advantage.” Dionysius’ description strips all passion from Hersilia’s appeal.⁵³ He claims that it was pitiful (συμπάθῃ), but his report of it is coldly rational. In Livy, the Sabine women rend their clothes and speak of blood, murder, and pollution; their words crescendo from indirect to direct discourse, culminating in a plea that they themselves die rather than see their husbands or fathers killed. In Dionysius, Hersilia is inscrutable. At the end of her speech, where we should expect a rhetorical climax, she is most frigid, dispassionately recommending that the specifics of the treaty be discussed later by parties qualified to argue the finer points in detail.

Her cool display is in sharp contrast to the scene that follows, in which the Sabine women prostrate themselves before their fathers and brothers (*Ant. Rom.* 2.46.1): “Having spoken such words, they all fell before the knees of the king, together with their children, and remained downcast until the men present raised them up, promising to do all they reasonably could.” Dionysius’ transition from speech to action elides the disjunction somewhat. By casting the participle “having spoken” in the plural (εἰποῦσαι) instead of the more natural singular participle in a genitive absolute (e.g., τοιαῦτα αὐτῆς εἰπούσης), he conflates Hersilia’s speech with the subsequent actions of all the Sabine women. Her speech becomes theirs, just as their pathetic gesture becomes hers. Yet in terms of *ethopoeia* this passage is at best an opportunity lost. Dionysius provides nothing beyond the plural participle that might help integrate the physical prostration of the women with the calculating speech that precedes it. Little insight is gained into Hersilia’s character.

Plutarch’s *Romulus* follows Dionysius in making Hersilia a Sabine and granting her a central role in the intercession of the Sabine women. He also retains Dionysius’ characterization of Hersilia as noble. But where Dionysius treats her nobility merely as a matter of her family’s prominence, Plutarch expands upon it as an essential element of her character. His analysis is divided among three ostensibly tangential anecdotes that are actually central. The first concerns the motives prompting the rape of the Sabine women; the second considers the identity of Hersilia’s husband; the third examines the origins of an obscure aspect of Roman marriage.

Hersilia is introduced in the same passage that contains Plutarch’s defense of the infamous rape (*Rom.* 14.7): “[The Romans] took only one married woman, Hersilia, and that only by accident, since they did not approach the rape with injustice and hubris, clearly, but intending to unite the two peoples by the greatest necessities.” Plutarch does not yet characterize Hersilia; she is merely a passive victim. The centripetal role of the Sabine women is foreshadowed, but her role as their representative is not.⁵⁴ If the reader did not already know the story, her appearance here would at first appear gratuitous. Yet in retrospect her introduction can be recognized as an admirable example of narrative economy. It allows Plutarch simultaneously to defend one

53. Cf. the comments of Manfredini (Ampolo and Manfredini 1988, 321) at *Rom.* 19.4: “È netto invece il contrasto di Plutarco con la versione macchinosa e letterariamente fredda di Dionisio. . . .”

54. Dionysius, in contrast, does not name Hersilia until the intercession of the Sabine women occurs (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.2).

of Romulus' most notorious acts, to emphasize the unifying force of the Sabine rape, and to introduce the woman who will recognize and exploit that force through speech.⁵⁵

The second and third anecdotes further develop Hersilia's character and social status. The second discusses the identity of the Roman who married Hersilia. By some accounts, she was claimed by one Hostilius, "a Roman of great distinction";⁵⁶ by another, she was married to Romulus himself (*Rom.* 14.8). The essential point is that Romulus and Hostilius are both noble. The third passage, which considers various explanations for the Roman wedding cry *Talasio*, extends the same nobility to Hersilia. Plutarch informs his readers that the *Talasio* tradition may derive from an incident that occurs during the Sabine rape, in which a group of undistinguished men seize an especially tall and beautiful Sabine woman. Challenged by another group of Roman men, they defend their actions by saying that they are bringing her to a famous youth of good character named Talasius (hence *Talasio*, "for Talasius").⁵⁷ Their defense earns them applause, commendation, and even an escort because their challengers believe such an imposing woman should be married to an equally imposing husband. Hostilius and Romulus are even more noble than Talasius, so Hersilia must by the same token be an even more imposing and noble woman.⁵⁸

Plutarch's narrative immediately preceding Hersilia's speech and some elements of the speech itself have much in common with Livy's account. Both authors depict the women interrupting the battle.⁵⁹ Both invoke the gods on the women's behalf.⁶⁰ Both shift mid-oration from indirect to direct discourse. Both employ anaphora.⁶¹ Plutarch also adopts Livy's *pathos*, and even surpasses it by introducing the women's infant sons into the scene (in yet another recurrence of the Andromache model).⁶² The speech he composes for Hersilia nonetheless gives a very different impression (*Rom.* 19.4–6):

55. The explanation Plutarch adopts for Hersilia's presence is rejected by Dionysius as implausible (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.2). Dionysius' preferred explanation, in which Hersilia is unwilling to abandon her daughter, would have weakened Plutarch's defense of Romulus' motives, since Hersilia could not then be mistaken for a virgin.

56. Plutarch reveals in *Rom.* 18.6 that this Hostilius, who is killed in battle against the Sabines, is the grandfather of Tullus Hostilius, who succeeds to the Roman throne after Numa; cf. Livy 1.22.1.

57. *Rom.* 15.1. Plutarch also recounts the *Talasio* story in *Pomp.* 4.6–10, but there employs it to emphasize the political influence Pompey allegedly gained through marriage.

58. The equation of external beauty (τῷ τε κάλλει . . . καὶ τῷ μεγέθει, *Rom.* 15.1) with good character (εὐδοκίμῳ δὲ καὶ χρηστῷ, *Rom.* 15.2) is not peculiarly Roman or Plutarchan. It went back at least as far as Homer (*Il.* 2.216), and was enshrined in the dual nature of the adjectives αἰσχροῦς (cf. LSJ II.1 and II.2) and καλός (cf. LSJ I and III). Notable exceptions like the infamously homely Socrates required explanation, e.g., Alcibiades' Silenus joke in Pl. *Symp.* 215a. See the comments of Jaeger (1939, 1.416 n. 4) on καλός and the phrase καλὸς καγαθός.

59. *ausae se inter tela volantis inferre* (1.13.1); cf. διὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν φερόμεναι καὶ τῶν νεκρῶν (*Rom.* 19.2) and διέσχον αὐταῖς ἐν μέσῳ καταστῆναι τῆς παρατάξεως (*Rom.* 19.3).

60. Livy invokes religion indirectly through his choice of vocabulary (*sanguine infando; parricidio*, 1.13.2); Plutarch does so directly, describing the women as if divinely inspired (ὥσπερ ἐκ θεοῦ κάτοχοι, *Rom.* 19.2).

61. Livy: *hinc patres, hinc viros orantes* (1.13.2); Plutarch: πρὸς τε τοὺς ἄνδρας αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς πατέρας (*Rom.* 19.2), and ποτὲ μὲν τοὺς Σαβίνους ποτὲ δὲ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους (*Rom.* 19.2).

62. αἱ μὲν παῖδια κομίζουσαι νήπια πρὸς ταῖς ἀγκάλαις . . . (*Rom.* 19.2), a detail Dionysius records at *Ant. Rom.* 2.45.5. Plutarch's continuation . . . αἱ δὲ τὴν κόμην προῖσχόμεναι λελυμένην (*Rom.* 19.2) echoes Livy's *crinibus passis* (1.13.1).

What terrible or grievous thing have we done to you that we have already suffered, and still suffer, harsh misfortunes? We were violently and illegally taken by those who now hold us; but having been taken, we were disregarded by our brothers, fathers, and relatives for so long that we were joined by the greatest necessities with what we hated, and are now made to fear for these rapists and outlaws as they fight, and weep for them as they die. For you did not come to take vengeance upon the unjust for our sake when we were young women. But now that we are wives you tear us from our husbands. Now that we are mothers, you tear us from our children, bringing help to us in our misery that is more lamentable than your disregard and betrayal. This is the way you love us! This is the way you pity us!⁶³

This speech is distinguished from Dionysius' version by its emotion and from Livy's account by the individualized *ethos* that Plutarch gives Hersilia. Dionysius' Hersilia is an automaton; Livy's women are a piteous collective; Plutarch's Hersilia an imposing personality capable of decisive action. She speaks in first-person plurals, but the elaborate narrative preparation in *Rom.* 14–15 permits her individual nobility to shine through.

The same emphasis on *ethos* is evident in Plutarch's account of Coriolanus' invasion, which culminates in the speech of Coriolanus' mother, Volumnia. As with Hersilia we may begin by considering the version in Livy. The intercession of Coriolanus' mother, whom Livy names Veturia, is abrupt, with no preceding description of her character or her relationship with her son.⁶⁴ When she confronts him in the Volscian camp, accompanied by an army of women (*ingens mulierum agmen*), her daughter-in-law Volumnia, and her two infant grandsons, Veturia is entirely unknown to the reader. Her initial actions are precisely those of the other women present—all employ tearful entreaty (2.40.2)—and do nothing to distinguish her. It is only by exceeding her fellows in sorrow that she draws the attention of Coriolanus' friends, who point her out to him (2.40.4). Coriolanus is greatly disturbed by her presence (2.40.5), but the reader lacks sufficient context to infer anything about their relationship.

So when Veturia speaks, bold, angry, and vicious, her vehemence comes as a shock to the reader. When he advances to embrace her, she rebuffs him angrily and launches into a tirade against his impious offense (2.40.5). Coriolanus clearly did not expect such treatment, and the absence of character preparation before Veturia's speech imposes his surprised perspective upon the reader as well. The phrasing of her diatribe, rich in second-person singulars, contributes to the same effect (2.40.5–7):

Before I accept your embrace, pray tell me whether I have come before an enemy or my son; whether I am in your camp as your mother or your captive. Have long life and unhappy old age drawn me to the point where I should see you an exile and then an enemy? Were you able to ravage this land that bore and nourished you? Granted you had

63. Hersilia's phrase "by the greatest necessities" (ταῖς μεγίσταις ἀνάγκαις) matches precisely Plutarch's description of Romulus' original intent in 14.7.

64. Livy and Dionysius both give Veturia as the name of Coriolanus' mother and Volumnia as the name of his wife; Plutarch names the former Volumnia and the latter Vergilia. His usage is consistent and serves no clear literary purpose, and so probably derives from some other lost account (see Albini 1996, 174 n. 38; and Flacelière and Chambry 1964, 168).

come here with a hostile and threatening mind; still, did your rage not give way when you crossed her borders? Did it not occur to you when Rome came into view that your house and *penates* were within those walls? Your mother, your wife, and your children?

The power behind Veturia's speech is derived from her relationship with her son. The heart of her argument is the phrase "that bore and nourished you" (*quae te genuit atque aluit*). Veturia seeks to impose a new perspective upon Coriolanus, to make him regard Rome as his mother, first by assimilating herself and Rome, then by assimilating Rome's doom with her own. Her strategy is a species of *prosopopoeia*, the rhetorical attribution of speech to an inanimate subject. The technique requires some affinity between the speaker and the persona assumed. Cicero, for example, is able to employ it against Catiline because as consul he can claim to represent Rome (*Cat.* 1.27–29). It is an ideal tactic for Veturia. Yet from the reader's perspective it also strips her of her individuality. Her personality does not exist outside of her speech, and her entire speech is devoted to the assimilation of herself and her native city, so she effectively becomes Rome personified.

Dionysius' version of these events is far more elaborate than Livy's. The Roman historian devotes less than one chapter to an incident that in Dionysius fills sixteen chapters and generates eight speeches by four different speakers. And this is even without reckoning the *oratio obliqua* debate in the senate (*Ant. Rom.* 8.43), various interjections and *apothegmata* (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.3, 8.40.2), and the speech of Coriolanus that is incorporated within Veturia's speech to Valeria (*Ant. Rom.* 8.41.3). Some of the expansions are rhetorical elaboration of events that Livy describes more simply, others are entirely new episodes, with characters that Livy never mentions.

Dionysius' narrative differs most from Livy's in the initial decision by the Roman women to approach the senate. Livy compresses the episode into one sentence (2.40.1); Dionysius grants it five chapters and three speeches. Valeria, the sister of P. Valerius Publicola, whom Livy ignores, is the central character.⁶⁵ Inspired by the gods while sacrificing on the Capitolium, she urges the women around her to join her in appealing to Veturia and Volumnia (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39), then wins Veturia's aid through a second speech at Veturia's house (*Ant. Rom.* 8.40). Dionysius employs in both cases the same peculiar combination of pathetic behavior and dispassionate oratory that he did in describing Hersilia's intercession.⁶⁶ The Roman women on the Capitolium lament and prostrate themselves before the statues (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.1); the precinct is filled with their groaning and supplications (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.1). Yet Valeria's speech is coldly rational, even as she argues for the judicious application of emotional leverage.

Valeria herself advocates this dichotomy between speech and action: their weapons, she argues, will be twofold: "goodwill and rational speech"

65. Livy depicts the women's appeal to Veturia as a collective act: *id publicum consilium an muliebris timor fuerit, parum invenio* (2.40.1). Ogilvie (1965, 334) argues plausibly that Livy does so to avoid distracting the reader's attention with unnecessary details.

66. The parallel with Hersilia is further strengthened by Valeria's mention of the Sabine women in her subsequent speech to Veturia (*Ant. Rom.* 8.40.4); see Nogger 2000, 254 and n. 41.

(εὐνοίας καὶ λόγου, *Ant. Rom.* 8.39.3). The term εὐνοία, as her subsequent argument shows, is metonymy for πάθος, substituting cause for effect, and refers to nonverbal persuasion. Their own disheveled appearance and the presence of their young children will win Veturia's aid, and Coriolanus will in turn be unable to resist the sight of his mother, "rolling on the ground before him" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.3–5). The term λόγος comprises in its definitions reason and speech, both of which are effectively demonstrated by Valeria herself as she calmly concludes her appeal: "Let us go to the house of Veturia, mother of Marcius, wearing this squalid and shabby dress, and taking along the other women, and bringing the children. Let us place the children before her knees and beg her with tears to pity us . . . and the state" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.4).

Valeria's plea to Veturia and the latter's response contain the same dichotomy, this time artfully arranged into a narrative *chiasmus*: words-action / action-words. Valeria's speech comes first. She assures Veturia of success, promises future glory for her actions, and compares her situation favorably to that of the Sabine women. Only afterward, when she lapses into silence and pours forth many tears (*Ant. Rom.* 8.40.1), does her emotion become apparent. Veturia's reply inverts the pattern. First come hesitation and weeping (*Ant. Rom.* 8.40.1), then a speech as carefully organized and implausibly rational as Valeria's. Veturia even reenacts her last encounter with her son through *prosopopoeia*, but this is not the passionate *prosopopoeia* of Livy's Veturia; even in an embedded narrative Dionysius keeps emotion and discourse separate. She describes the sight of herself and her daughter-in-law clutching Coriolanus' children on their knees and wailing piteously (*Ant. Rom.* 8.41.2), but coldly declaims Coriolanus' rebuff (*Ant. Rom.* 8.41.3–4). This is a very controlled performance for a woman supposedly distraught with emotion.

Veturia is eventually won over by the emotional appeals of the other Roman women and goes out to confront her son, the climactic scene that culminates all the preceding speeches and contains the sharpest dichotomy between rational speech and pathetic action. Veturia herself is a sorry sight: "clothed in mourning garb, her eyes melted by tears, greatly piteous" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.45.1); she gathers her daughter-in-law and her grandchildren to her side and stares at the ground weeping for a long time before speaking (*Ant. Rom.* 8.46.1); Coriolanus is suitably distraught, wracked with tears, "no longer able to hold to his decisions" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.45.1). Yet in the debate that ensues, which comprises several well-reasoned arguments and seven rather dreary chapters, *pathos* vanishes. Veturia employs the occasional emotional hook in the first half of her speech (Μάρκιε τέκνον, *Ant. Rom.* 8.48.5; ὦ Μάρκιε, *Ant. Rom.* 8.49.6), but she does not address her own suffering until after several pages of preliminary argument. And despite the emotional subject matter of the closing sections, in which she asserts her claim to her son's loyalty and love (*Ant. Rom.* 8.51), recounts her own past and present suffering (*Ant. Rom.* 8.52), and threatens her own suicide (*Ant. Rom.* 8.53.2), she admits that her appeal will fail if Coriolanus cannot suspend his anger: "My speech [λόγος] is strong if you judge it by reason (λογισμῷ), weak if you do so in passion (μετ' ὀργῆς)" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.49.4).

Her arguments are of slight importance in the end. For all her calculated rhetoric it is her actions—throwing herself at her son's feet and kissing them—that decide the matter. The reader is given no sign that her words have any effect. Coriolanus' past behavior (*Ant. Rom.* 8.41.3–4) and initial response here (*Ant. Rom.* 8.47) suggest the opposite. Veturia's self-abasement, however, is a sight that neither he nor the Volscians can endure (*Ant. Rom.* 8.54.1), just as Valeria had predicted.

As with Hersilia, Plutarch's treatment of Valeria and Volumnia's speeches (I revert here to Plutarch's names) includes certain elements from both Livy and Dionysius. Volumnia's angry tone and her assimilation of herself and Rome, for instance, are common to Plutarch and Livy;⁶⁷ the inclusion of Valeria's speech to Volumnia recalls Dionysius. Plutarch's account is distinguished from those of his predecessors, however, by his more careful integration of third-person narrative and direct discourse, and by his correspondingly richer portrait of Volumnia.⁶⁸ He devotes more time than either Livy or Dionysius to developing her character and her relationship with her son and fully exploits his careful preparation within her address. This interweaving of narrative and speech is a natural extension of the *ethopoeia* we have observed elsewhere; it is more prominent here because the crisis Volumnia resolves is the defining moment in Coriolanus' career and the climactic historical event in the *Life*. As a result, though the speeches in *Cor.* 33–36 comprise the longest stream of direct discourse anywhere in the *Lives*, they do not strike one as disproportionate.

Just as he does for Porcia, Octavia, Cratesicleia, and Hersilia, Plutarch establishes Volumnia's character before she speaks. In Volumnia's case, however, the characterization is developed through the eyes of her son. Coriolanus' father dies early in his life, so he is raised primarily by his mother (*Cor.* 1.2), and lavishes upon her all the devotion that his father would otherwise have received (*Cor.* 4.7).⁶⁹ So deferential is he that Volumnia selects his wife for him (*Cor.* 4.7) and continues to live under the same roof with him after her daughter-in-law has borne children.⁷⁰ Plutarch even pauses in his narrative of Coriolanus' exile to observe that the great general's last act before leaving the city is to visit his wife and mother (*Cor.* 21.3).

Volumnia is described favorably throughout, and her influence over her son seems wholly positive, but an imbalance is all the while festering within him: "For other men glory was the goal of virtue; for him, the goal of glory was his mother's happiness."⁷¹ Plutarch's expression is so cryptic as to be almost Thucydidean, but clearly implies that Coriolanus misapprehends the

67. Cf. Livy's speech above with *Cor.* 35.5.

68. In comparing Plutarch and Dionysius, Flacelière (Flacelière and Chambry 1964, 211) notes with approval Plutarch's greater concision; Salvioni (1982, 91) observes Plutarch's greater concern with the relationship between Coriolanus and his mother. To my knowledge, however, no one has yet discussed Plutarch's interest in *ethopoeia* or his careful integration of speech and narrative.

69. Albini (1997, 66) attributes the violent character of Plutarch's Coriolanus to the absence of a father figure.

70. Plutarch emphasizes the peculiarity of this arrangement with a concessive genitive absolute: καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν ὅκει γενομένων παιδῶν ὁμοῦ μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς (*Cor.* 4.7).

71. ἦν δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἡ δόξα τῆς ἀρετῆς τέλος, ἐκείνῳ δὲ τῆς δόξης ἡ τῆς μητρὸς εὐφροσύνη (*Cor.* 4.5–7).

proper relationship between his mother, virtue, and glory (δόξα). Notably absent from this equation are Coriolanus' fellow citizens and Rome herself, those whose esteem (also δόξα) a Roman senator should naturally pursue.⁷² In their place Coriolanus has substituted Volumnia. The dangers inherent in this transposition remain latent while her interests and those of Rome are aligned, but once he has been driven from Rome and can no longer please his mother by performing his civic duty, his ties to Rome are severed.

At the height of Rome's crisis, the gods, through Valeria, intervene. Dionysius considers the gods' influence only very briefly when Valeria is first moved to act (*Ant. Rom.* 8.39.2) and elaborates instead upon Valeria's speech on the Capitoline. Plutarch does the opposite. He eschews Valeria's first speech and expands divine influence into an elaborate digression, replete with Homeric citations (*Cor.* 32.4–8).⁷³ Homer is not to be understood as depriving humanity of free will, he argues, but as allowing for divine impetus in extraordinary events. The gods do not force the unwilling to act, but supply the impetus for the willing. By situating this digression here, Plutarch explicitly compares Homeric heroism with the noble deeds of the Roman matrons that are to follow. We are to see in Valeria the same divine inspiration that moves Achilles and Odysseus. And as in Homer, the gods' influence does not detract from Valeria's heroic nature, but arouses her innate abilities and inspires her to courageous action (*Cor.* 32.8).⁷⁴

Valeria's character and actions are reminiscent of Hersilia in *Romulus*. Like Hersilia, Valeria is noble—she is one of the women sacrificing to Jupiter Capitolinus, whom Plutarch marks as members of the Roman elite (*Cor.* 33.1)—and her character matches her lineage (*Cor.* 33.2).⁷⁵ Like Hersilia, she speaks on behalf of many other women, who accompany her to visit Volumnia and add their voices to hers (*Cor.* 33.7). The parallel is not exact: Hersilia's roles as instigator and representative are shared between Valeria and Volumnia. Like Dionysius, however, Plutarch considers the Hersilia precedent important enough to warrant explicit mention in Valeria's plea: "If you are persuaded, this deliverance will bring you greater glory than that possessed by the daughters of the Sabines, who brought their fathers and husbands together from warring into peace" (*Cor.* 33.5).

Valeria is a secondary character in this episode, so her speech does little to define her own personality; Plutarch instead uses her address to prepare

72. Coriolanus' fellow senators can therefore successfully resist the impulse to pursue glory during a grain crisis when he cannot (*Cor.* 16.4–7, 17.7).

73. Four of the quotations, *Il.* 1.188–89, *Il.* 6.161–62, *Od.* 9.339, and *Od.* 21.1, are unproblematic. The fifth, *Cor.* 31.5, is absent from our codices. Plutarch also cites this passage in *De aud. poet.* 26F, where he claims that Aristarchus excised it "through fear." Munro and Allen in the OCT consign these lines to the *apparatus criticus*; West's Teubner edition retains them, obelized and indented, at *Il.* 9.458–61.

74. Plutarch's argument requires that the reader reject Epicurean views of divine noninterference. See Canfora 1994, 135–37 on the important discussion of Epicureanism at *Pyrrh.* 20.6–7; and Frazier 1996, 201–2 on Plutarch's analyses of courage elsewhere.

75. Cf. also the Argive poet Telesilla in the *Mul. virt.*, who receives a similar divine call when her country is invaded by Cleomenes and is likewise a member of the elite (*Mul. virt.* 245c; and Stadter 1965, 45–53).

Volumnia's encounter with her son.⁷⁶ Valeria first isolates herself and her appeal from the normal channels of politics (*Cor.* 33.5), an unnecessary step in this context but a crucial precondition for Volumnia's speech to Coriolanus, who has already rebuffed three political embassies (*Cor.* 30.2–8, 31.6–7, 32.1–3). She then speaks on behalf of the fatherland, obscuring the distinction between herself and Rome in a *prosopopoeia* strongly reminiscent of Veturia's speech in Livy. "Bear true and just witness for your fatherland [τῇ πατρίδι] that although she has suffered many wrongs, she has neither committed nor planned any terrible thing concerning you out of anger, but is instead giving you up to that man, even if she is likely to receive nothing suitable in exchange" (*Cor.* 33.6).

Valeria's use of the term πατρίς adds strength to her *prosopopoeia*. While etymologically related to father (πατήρ), the noun πατρίς does not denote the land that is one's father, but rather the land occupied by one's fathers; it is feminine, not masculine.⁷⁷ Joseph Farrell has discussed the possible implications of Latin's *patrius sermo* as opposed to the English "mother tongue" (2001, 52–53), and similar large-scale forces may perhaps be at work here. Be that as it may, Plutarch's Valeria is also exploiting the gender of πατρίς in a more concrete way. Because the noun is feminine, any feminine pronoun in Valeria's speech could as easily refer to herself as to Rome, a grammatical ambiguity she uses to assimilate herself and her homeland.⁷⁸ Volumnia will do the same in her speech to Coriolanus, using the term πατρίς three times in her brief reply to Valeria and seven times in her address to her son. The device is even more effective for Volumnia because it is well prepared by the depiction of Coriolanus' excessive devotion to her in the preceding narrative.⁷⁹ The early chapters of the *Life* establish the confusion in his parental loyalties; Volumnia can exploit this confusion rhetorically because Rome is a grammatically feminine fatherland.

Valeria is answered by Volumnia/Veturia in both Plutarch and Dionysius, but the two passages bear only a superficial resemblance. Both women express regrets, but Dionysius' Veturia mourns primarily her own impotence; Volumnia regrets more the decrepitude of her native country.⁸⁰ Both doubt

76. Plutarch keeps the reader focused on Volumnia and her confrontation with Coriolanus, unlike Dionysius, who not only grants Valeria two speeches but expands her encounter with Veturia (i.e., Volumnia) into a full debate.

77. The feminine gender derives from adjectival uses of πατρίς, e.g., πατρίδα γαῖαν (*Il.* 2.140) and πατρίς ἄρουρα (*Od.* 1.407).

78. She is nonetheless independent of Roman political machinery and factions. Both Livy and Dionysius involve the senate in their accounts (*Livy* 2.40.1 and *Ant. Rom.* 8.43.3–7), so their Veturia speaks for the senate. Plutarch never mentions the senatorial action preceding the embassy, and Volumnia's speech to Coriolanus ignores the *stasis* that forced Coriolanus into exile (vs. *Ant. Rom.* 8.49.4); cf. the independent intervention of the women who pay Camillus' vow to Apollo in *Cam.* 8.3–5.

79. Neither Dionysius nor Livy is interested in Veturia's dominance of Coriolanus; neither employs this device in Valeria's or Veturia's speeches. The one potential ambiguity in Livy, a relative pronoun, is averted by the proximity of the pronoun's antecedent: *potuisti populari hanc terram quae te tenuit atque aluit?* (2.40.6).

80. The two authors employ similar vocabulary for different effect: "In seeking aid from us wretched women, Valeria, you have taken refuge in a feeble [ἀσθενῆ] and slender hope [ἐλπίδα]" (*Ant. Rom.* 2.41.1); "The greatest misfortune for us is that the state has become so weak [ἐξησθῆναι] that it holds its hopes [τὰς ἐλπίδας] in us" (*Cor.* 33.8).

their ability to convince Coriolanus, but where Veturia uses that excuse to withhold her aid, Volumnia readily volunteers, even if the attempt will result in her own death.⁸¹ Plutarch does not need to assimilate Volumnia and Rome as he did Valeria; the latter woman's speech makes that connection clear enough. Instead, he seeks to establish Volumnia's nobility and her willingness to subjugate her own interests to those of the state.

The climactic speech, Volumnia's appeal to Coriolanus, is broken into two halves by her son's pregnant silence.⁸² The former half, *Cor.* 35.2–9, comprises two elements, a plea for pity and an attempt to transfer that pity from herself to Rome. The plea is a straightforward *captatio benevolentiae*, facilitated by Coriolanus' fondness for her: "My son, even if we ourselves were silent, you could judge by our clothing and the appearance of our wretched bodies what misery your exile has inflicted on us."⁸³ Volumnia's second task, convincing her son to spare his native city, is more difficult. She begins rather generically, describing the misery that his invasion would cause and the benefits that would follow if he should relent, impersonal arguments that could be made by anyone on Rome's behalf. Coriolanus has three times rejected such appeals, so their effect on him is slight. But Volumnia also has a more personal argument, the same one that Chilonis employs against her father. Her son's treason has divided her allegiances, she claims, but cannot sever the link between her own fate and that of their native city. In effect, his revenge is her disaster, and his invasion must be answered by her suicide (*Cor.* 35.5):

I will not wait for war to decide this chance for me while I live. If I should not convince you to prefer friendship and harmony to strife and troubles, to become the benefactor of both parties instead of the despoiler of one, you must prepare yourself and know that you cannot engage your fatherland [πατρίς] without treading upon the corpse of the one who bore you.

Despite Plutarch's extensive narrative preparation and Volumnia's strong delivery, Coriolanus is not yet won over. He does not defend himself or counter his mother's arguments, but he does not relent. At this point, Volumnia becomes angry (*Cor.* 36.2–3):

Why are you quiet, my son? Is it good to give in to every rage and grudge but not to gratify your mother when she pleads about such matters? Or is it the duty of a great man to remember what he has suffered but not the task of a great and noble man to revere and honor the benefactions that children receive from their parents? Surely no one should have greater regard for a favor than you, who attack ingratitude so viciously. And yet,

81. "Do not force us, you women, to ask of him things that are neither right among men nor just before the gods, but leave us to lie wretched in our misery" (*Ant. Rom.* 8.42.2). "All the same, use us, bring us before him, even if we are able to do nothing more than die in supplication on behalf of the fatherland" (*Cor.* 33.10).

82. Pérez Jiménez (2000, 341–53) contrasts Coriolanus' silence in this passage with his vigorous self-defense in Dionysius, arguing that his silence demonstrates his defective character and is therefore the key to understanding the entire *Life* (342).

83. *Cor.* 35.2. Volumnia employs tragic vocabulary. For the adjective "wretched" (ἄθλιος), cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 779 ἄθλιον γάμων; Eur. *Med.* 818 ἄθλιωτάτη γυνή and *Tro.* 777 ἄθλιον δέμας. For the noun "misery" (οἰκουρία), cf. Soph. *Trach.* 542 οἰκουρί' ἀντέπεμψε and Eur. *HF* 1373 ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας.

though you have now exacted great penalties from your fatherland, you have not repaid even one favor to your mother.

No more the clever rhetorician, Volumnia is now much more the outraged parent depicted in Livy. She attacks her son in personal terms, disparaging his disrespect and ingratitude, and closing (as in Livy) with a flurry of second-person verbs and pronouns. Her vocabulary is repetitive: mother, children, parents, mother again. And her last barb, rhetorical exaggeration and all, is surely one employed by parents from time immemorial. Volumnia's barrage is immediately decisive, and Coriolanus breaks his silence with a cry that resonates far beyond the immediate crisis: "What have you done to me, mother?" (*Cor.* 36.5).

As in the speech of Hersilia, Plutarch has integrated narrative and direct discourse more extensively than Livy and Dionysius. He spends more narrative time establishing character and composes a speech that better conveys the character he has created. Livy is more interested in creating ideal representatives, not individuals. The speeches he gives Hersilia and Veturia are not ethically integrated because the two women speak primarily for others. His Veturia rebukes her son angrily, but because he does not establish her personality beforehand her anger neither reveals her own character nor has any particular relevance for his depiction of Coriolanus. Dionysius' speeches are less satisfying than either Plutarch's or Livy's. They are well constructed and rational, but dispassionate and imperfectly matched to the characters and motivations of their respective speakers.⁸⁴ He not only maintains an artificial dichotomy between pathetic action and rational speech throughout both episodes, he twice places rhetorical instructions commending this approach into the mouths of his speakers (Valeria in *Ant. Rom.* 8.39.3; Veturia in *Ant. Rom.* 8.49.4). He achieves thereby a certain rhetorical stateliness and clarity, but his *ethopoeia* is less effective than that of Plutarch, and his female characters are less vivid and convincing.

CONCLUSION

The women whom Plutarch characterizes through *ethopoeia* all demonstrate impressive rhetorical ability and a surprising capacity for public action when necessary. Even the four women who speak privately to their husbands demonstrate their sharp intellect and predominantly civic perspective. More striking yet are the six speeches addressed to male relatives, in which Plutarch commends female interference in a male arena. Julia, Chilonis, and Aristomache intercede in politics; Octavia, Hersilia, and Volumnia interpose themselves in the preeminently masculine world of military conflict. Their startling behavior sometimes leads Plutarch to invoke divine inspiration—Valeria on the Capitoline is filled with divine purpose (*Cor.* 33.3); the Sabine women behave as if possessed by god (*Rom.* 19.2)—but the credit still falls to the

84. Gärtner (1989, 219–21) discusses a similar mismatch of rhetoric and reality in Dionysius' version of M. Horatius Barbatus' speech (*Ant. Rom.* 11.5.2–4). He compares the more realistic version of Barbatus' speech in Livy 3.39.3–10 and concludes that Dionysius has sacrificed realism for rhetorical effect (223–24).

women themselves, whose actions are compared favorably to the exploits of Homeric epic.

Yet the progressive Plutarch that we might reconstruct from these passages would be inconsistent with the view of him generated by earlier studies. Matthew Crawford and Cynthia Patterson admire Plutarch as a creative and independent thinker, but certainly not as a revolutionary feminist.⁸⁵ Others give Plutarch less credit: Jo Ann McNamara and Sarah Pomeroy employ him as a mirror of female progress in the first and second centuries C.E., less an active participant himself than a barometer of the social changes of his day;⁸⁶ and to Lin Foxhall, Richard Hawley, and Peter Walcot, he is a cultural conservative, preserving antiquated notions of female propriety long after women had escaped the constraints of the Classical period.⁸⁷ How are the more reactionary versions of Plutarch generated by these scholars to be reconciled with the more sympathetic Plutarch apparent in the speeches?

Character and context must be borne carefully in mind. Plutarch does allow for a remarkable degree of brilliance and independence in women, but only for certain women, and only in certain situations.⁸⁸ The women for whom he writes his speeches have three traits in common that allow us to narrow the scope of his feminist sentiments considerably. First, the motives of these women are uniformly unselfish: they never speak for themselves, but on behalf of their husbands, fathers, brothers, and children.⁸⁹ Second, all are members of the elite, the daughters of eminent families, the wives of prominent statesmen, even queens. Because their husbands, fathers, and sons are public figures, their families' needs necessarily impinge upon civic matters. Third, all are beset by extraordinary dangers. Their remarkable behavior is necessitated and excused by the horrific situations threatening them, their families, and their communities. Foxhall and McNamara have noted that active women in the *Moralia* receive Plutarch's praise in two situations only: either when acting within their proper private milieu, or when the males in their lives somehow fail to act appropriately.⁹⁰ The former scenario is rare in the speeches; even those of Porcia and Aristomache touch upon civic affairs.⁹¹ The latter, how-

85. Crawford (1999, 287–97) contrasts Plutarch's erotic analysis of marriage in *Amatorius* with the frigidity of earlier marriage advocates and the misogyny of pederastic writers. Patterson (1999, 131–32) notes Plutarch's creative amalgamation of philosophy and marriage. She is preceded in this by Gössler (1962, 112), who seeks precedents for Plutarch's attitude toward women in Homer and Menander.

86. See McNamara (1999, 151–52), who compares Plutarch and Paul; and Pomeroy (1999b, 36–40), who contrasts Plutarch and Xenophon.

87. See Foxhall 1999, 150; and Hawley 1999, 119–20. Walcot (1999, 167–73 and 182) is equally critical, but considers Plutarch a typical male representative of his time.

88. Cf. Alexander's sharp comment upon learning that his mother had left Macedon to her daughter-in-law and departed for Epirus: "[he] said that his mother had made the better choice, since Macedonians would not endure being ruled by a woman" (*Alex.* 68.5).

89. Noggler (2000, 253) has observed the same pattern in Dionysius: "[Tanaquil] betritt die Öffentlichkeit aber—in Dionysios' Sinne—für ihr Vaterland, ihren Mann, ihre Familie—und besonders für ihre Kinder. . . . Diese Motive sind für Dionysios in jedem Fall ehrbar und rechtfertigen damit offenbar die Mittel, die Tanaquil ergreift, nämlich die Überschreitung des informellen Rahmens weiblicher Wirksamkeit." This is one of the main distinctions separating the speeches of Greek and Roman women in Plutarch from those of semi-barbarians like Cleopatra, Olympias, and Stateira.

90. Foxhall 1999, 147–49; McNamara 1999, 153.

91. Plutarch does portray the private lives of women in the *Lives*, but not through direct discourse (e.g., *Aem.* 5.1–3 = *Con. praec.* 22 (141a), *Alc.* 8.2–6, *Cat. Min.* 25.1–13, and *Dion* 3.3–5).

ever, matches well the congruence between extraordinary situations and female intercession that we have observed. Theseus's brother behaves tyrannically; Chilonis' father wishes to murder her husband; Octavia's brother and husband are preparing for civil war; the fathers, brothers, and husbands of the Sabine women are on the verge of killing one another; Volumnia's son leads a foreign army against Rome. In each case, the men in society have failed to resolve their differences, and the women must act to prevent bloodshed.

Plutarch is not a social revolutionary, then, but a traditionalist. He is willing to admire female initiative, but only when the speaker is a member of the elite, driven to extremity by some personal or public crisis, and acting on behalf of her male relatives, who have either caused the crisis or have somehow failed to resolve it as they should. He no doubt recognized the potential for independent female action in the more autonomous women of his day, but remained sufficiently conservative to restrict its proper expression to the domestic sphere except in certain very specific and uncommon circumstances.⁹² Women's normal lives were still subordinate to the needs and ambitions of their husbands and male relatives. Plutarch expresses this attitude succinctly in *Phocion*, when the subject's second wife rebukes an acquaintance for excessive pride in her gold and jewels: "My adornment," she says, "is Phocion, who for the twentieth year now is general for the Athenians" (*Phoc.* 19.4).

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92. Foxhall 1999, 142–45.

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