

PLUTARCH AND THE FIRST CONSULSHIP OF POMPEIUS AND CRASSUS

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PLUTARCH'S *LIVES* OF POMPEIUS AND CRASSUS exemplify the biographer's different methods of approaching his subjects. The *Pompeius* contains a more detailed historical and political analysis than the anecdotal and politically schematic *Crassus*.¹ Such different approaches are of course possible because Plutarch, though much interested in history, is more interested in character and its role in life and history.² For the historian, therefore, comparison will be salutary when both *Lives* narrate the same events, in this case the consulship of Pompeius and Crassus in 70. By better understanding Plutarch's methods and the importance of the year 70, as he sees it, for Pompeius and Crassus, the historian will be able to use this source more profitably to reconstruct the events of that year.³

Recently, however, T. W. Hilliard (19–20) has argued that concern with Plutarch's methods and moral purpose are the responsibility of the historian only if "significant alteration of material" is suspected, and that this is seldom the case. Plutarch, Hilliard also writes, "greet[s] each hero in turn . . . living and communing with each until he had learnt what had to be learnt" (20–21).⁴ Such a method, however, almost inevitably leads Plutarch, *volens*

¹On this aspect of the *Crassus*, see C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch and Roman Politics," in I. S. Moxon, J. D. Stuart, A. J. Woodman (eds.), *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge 1986) 159–187, at 161–163 (hereafter Pelling). The following works will be cited by the author's surname only: T. W. Hilliard, "Plutarch's Late Republican Lives: Between the Lines," *Antichthon* 21 (1987) 19–48; C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford 1972); B. Maurenbrecher, *C. Sallusti Crispi Historiarum Reliquiae*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart 1891–93, repr. 1966); H. Peter, *Die Quellen Plutarchs in den Biographien der Römer* (Halle 1865, repr. 1965); A. E. Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1974).

²See Wardman 1–48, *passim*; F. J. Frost, "Plutarch and Clio," in S. M. Burstein and L. A. Okin (eds.), *Panhellenica. Essays in Ancient History and Historiography in Honor of Truesdell S. Brown* (Lawrence, Kansas 1980) 155–170, esp. at 164–166.

³Cf. the remarks of Frost (above, n. 2) 166: "... it is annoying to have to subject every passage of Plutarch used as historical evidence to the most searching analysis—and still not be sure one is right. But it is to Plutarch the historian we turn—not to the biographer, the teacher, the moralist—and if one is to use Plutarch as a historian, one is committed to just such analysis. History herself has left us no alternative."

⁴To be fair, Hilliard is here arguing against Pelling's thesis that many of the late Republican Lives were composed together. To Hilliard, this "underplay[s] the critical importance of [Plutarch's approach to each hero individually] for the late-republican Lives." Pelling, however, concerns himself with Plutarch's composition of *Lives*, not his approach to each subject's life. See C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch's Method of Work in

nolens, to alter common material significantly in every *Life* that shares it, in order that he may properly focus on each new hero. On this view the historian must for the sake of accuracy be concerned with Plutarch's methods and purpose, especially when individual *Lives* narrate the same events, as is the case in this instance.

Superficially, the accounts in the *Pompeius* and the *Crassus* are much alike. Each is composed of three basic parts: (1) the electoral campaign of Pompeius and Crassus (*Pomp.* 22.1–2; *Crassus* 12.1–2); (2) their consulship and falling out (*Pomp.* 22.3–4; *Crassus* 12.3); (3) their reconciliation at year's end (*Pomp.* 23.1–2; *Crassus* 12.4–6). But here the similarities end. For the *Pompeius* has two additional sections, (a) 22.4–9, which suggests a connection between Pompeius' popularity as general and his political power and (b) 23.3–6, which comments on the precariousness of civilian political life for generals. The additional sections of the *Pompeius* and the different perspectives of both these *Lives* produce substantially divergent accounts in each.

In *Pomp.* 22.1 Crassus is described as follows:

ἀνὴρ τῶν τότε πολιτευομένων πλουσιώτατος καὶ δεινότατος εἰπεῖν καὶ μέγιστος, αὐτόν τε Πομπηίων ὑπερφρονῶν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντας, οὐκ ἐθάρρῃσεν ὑπατεῖαν μετιέναι πρότερον ἢ Πομπηίου δεηθῆναι.

The richest man of those then in public affairs as well as the most eloquent and influential, who looked down upon Pompeius and everyone else, did not have the confidence to seek the consulship before asking Pompeius.

In *Crassus* 12.1, however, Plutarch holds that "though Crassus expected that he would be [Pompeius'] colleague, he nevertheless did not disdain to ask him" (ἐλπίδας ἔχων ὁ Κράσσος συνάρξειν, ὅμως οὐκ ὤκνησε τοῦ Πομπηίου δεηθῆναι). In the former passage Plutarch is explaining Pompeius' greatness at this time. His stress on the superlative wealth, eloquence, importance, and pride of the yet undaring Crassus magnifies Pompeius.⁵ The implicit comparison of Crassus and Pompeius affords Plutarch a contemporary proof of Pompeius' distinction (τεκμήριον τῆς λαμπρότητος, *Pomp.* 22.1).⁶

the Roman Lives," *JHS* 99 (1979) 74–96, and "Plutarch's Adaptation of His Source-Material," *JHS* 100 (1980) 127–140.

⁵It also distorts reality. Crassus had every reason to expect election with or without the aid of Pompeius, as Plutarch, to judge from *Crassus* 12.1, seems to know. For other instances of similar historical distortion, see *Pomp.* 1.1–4, 3.5, 4.1–3 (Pompeius and Strabo); 3.1, 4.3–9, 5.1–5 (Pompeius and Cinna); 7.6, 8.5–6 (Pompeius and Metellus Pius); 16.1–9 (Pompeius and Catulus). In each case other sources serve as correctives.

⁶Σύγκρισις (comparison) frequently occurs within the *Lives*, not just at their end, and allows Plutarch to define further the character of his hero. See D. A. Russell, "On Reading Plutarch's *Lives*," *G&R* 13 (1966) 139–154, esp. at 150–151; Hilliard 34–36; Wardman 27–36. The passages cited above (n. 5) furnish other examples of this within the *Pompeius*.

In the *Crassus*, however, Plutarch is not constrained to praise Pompeius. Here Crassus does not turn down a profitable political association. This fits Plutarch's portrayal of Crassus as being more politically adept, flexible, and ready to trade favors than the high-handed yet politically inferior Pompeius who seldom helps others (*Crassus* 7.2-3).⁷ Furthermore, the more personal analysis of the *Crassus* stresses the obligation that Pompeius seeks to put Crassus under by helping him (*Crassus* 12.8).⁸ The contrast between this help—given willingly (προθύμως)—and Pompeius' general practice in this *Life* of helping not very willingly (μὴ πάνυ προθύμως) is noteworthy (*Crassus* 7.3); for Plutarch's attention to it emphasizes the personal character of the *Life*. By contrast, the *Pompeius* dwells rather less on Pompeius' darker personal motives. There he is naturally inclined to grant favors (*Pomp.* 1.4), and so his motives, though still selfish, are much less important than Crassus' request for assistance which provides the necessary proof of distinction (*Pomp.* 22.2).⁹

The accounts of the consulship of Pompeius and Crassus in 70 further illustrate these differences. In *Crassus* 12.3 the quarreling of the consuls is the central event that renders their consulship "unstatesmanlike and impotent" (ἀπολίτευτος καὶ ἄπρακτος).¹⁰ Crassus' feast for the Roman People and his distribution to them of three months' supply of grain at his own expense is the sole noteworthy exception (*Crassus* 12.3). Inspection of the *Pompeius* makes clear how narrow and distorted a historical analysis of the consulship of 70 Plutarch's personal-political approach has produced in the *Crassus*. For in the *Pompeius* (22.3-4) the discord only introduces a larger, political point:

⁷See *Crassus* 3.4-5, 6.9, 7.1-8, 12.4-6. On Pompeius as ever self-serving, see *Pomp.* 82.6.

⁸This detail Plutarch seems to have taken from Sallust: [*Crassum*] *collegam minorem et sui cultorem exspectans* [Pompeius] (Sall. *H.* 4.48). Maurenbrecher thinks that Sall. *H.* 4.50 (*quod in praesens modo satis cautum*) also refers to the *amicitia* of Pompeius and Crassus. See his comments *ad loc.* Plutarch (see below, 136-137) used Sallust's *Historiae* extensively for this period, and was much influenced by them, though he reinterpreted what he found there. See Maurenbrecher 1.9-10, 17-18, 27-32, 41-42, 48-54, who follows Peter 60, 61-65, 106-108, 109, 112-113, 144. See also B. Scardigli, *Die Römerbiographien Plutarchs* (Munich 1979) 121. A Greek translation of the *Historiae* also appeared early in the second century, perhaps early enough for Plutarch's use: *Suda* Z 73 Adler.

⁹The explanation for these differences in Pompeius' motives from the one *Life* to the other is twofold: Plutarch tends to portray his heroes more favorably in their own biographies, while characterizing their actions differently elsewhere; and he uses the defects of others as a foil for the character of his subject. See Jones 73-74, 80, 88, 99, 102; Wardman 154; Hilliard 28-34; C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch and Catiline," *Hermes* 113 (1985) 311-329, at 324-325.

¹⁰Sallust seems to be the source for this quarrel: *Crassus obtrectans potius collegae, quam boni aut mali publici gnaros aestimator* (*H.* 4.51). See below, 136-137.

οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ἀποδειχθέντες ὕπατοι, διεφέροντο πάντα καὶ προσέκρουον ἀλλήλοις· καὶ ἐν μὲν τῇ βουλῇ μᾶλλον ἴσχυεν ὁ Κράσσος, ἐν δὲ τῷ δήμῳ μέγα τὸ τοῦ Πομπηίου κράτος ἦν. καὶ γὰρ ἀπέδωκε τὴν δημαρχίαν αὐτῷ, καὶ τὰς δίκας περιεῖδεν αὐτὸς εἰς τοὺς ἱππέας νόμῳ μεταφερομένας.

Nevertheless once elected consuls, they began to differ over everything and to clash with each other; in the Senate Crassus had more strength, and great was the might of Pompeius with the People. For he both gave the tribunate back to the People and allowed the courts to be transferred back to the Equites by the passage of a law.

Here the quarrel seems more a product of Pompeius' greater strength with the People (δῆμος)—which in part arises from his allegedly sole responsibility for restoring the tribunate and reforming the courts—and of Crassus' with the Senate (βουλή).¹¹ By contrast, in the *Crassus*, Pompeius is supported by the wise and the sound, not the δῆμος, and Crassus is the versatile politician who accepts help from any quarter (*Crassus* 7.7). Thus in 70 he does not despise Pompeius' help (12.1), or omit to court the favor of the Plebs (12.3). Hence the *Lives* provide a number of contradictory assessments which the historian must carefully weigh before using.

The exaggerated antithesis between the Senate (βουλή) and the People (δῆμος) introduced at *Pomp.* 22.3–4 recurs, moreover, throughout the Roman *Lives*. It informs (and oversimplifies) Plutarch's political analysis in the *Lives*, as Pelling (166) has shown. Pelling has also sought to explain the role of the demagogue within this scheme and cites this passage in support; *Pomp.* 22.3–4, however, is not strictly relevant here, since Plutarch does not portray Pompeius as a demagogue, as he does the Gracchi, Marius, and Caesar.¹² To take a most pertinent example, Plutarch merely reports without narration that Pompeius restored the tribunate, the great demagogic act feared (he claims) by Pompeius' detractors (*Pomp.* 21.7–8). Plutarch, although he includes many direct quotations in this section, has Pompeius address the People but once: to announce his good fortune in having Crassus for a running mate.¹³ The restoration of the tribunate is a *fait*

¹¹The source of Crassus' strength, though unmentioned, may be inferred from *Pomp.* 22.1, but here Plutarch focuses on Pompeius, just as he does on Crassus in *Crassus* 12.3. With regard to the tribunate and the courts, Plutarch saw Pompeius as solely responsible, a view explicit in the *Pompeius* and implicit in the *Crassus*, whatever the truth.

¹²Pelling's citation, as I read it, no more than documents Plutarch's widespread use of the βουλή-δῆμος analysis. The context, however, might (wrongly) lead one to infer more. For the Gracchi, Marius, and Caesar, see Pelling 159–160, 163–175. Nor are these demagogues of whole cloth. Marius is uncomfortable before the People (*Mar.* 28.1–2); and Plutarch denies that C. Gracchus is a pure demagogue (ἄκρατος δημαγωγός, *C. Gracch.* 1.5). On the figure of the demagogue in Plutarch, see also Wardman 49–57.

¹³*Pomp.* 22.2, 6 (Pompeius, twice); 22.6 (one of the censors of 70); 23.2 (Crassus).

accompli that explains Pompeius' strength with the δῆμος, but discloses no demagoguery (*Pomp.* 22.4).

Yet speeches of the Gracchi to the People are several times portrayed in their *Lives*.¹⁴ And Marius and Caesar are repeatedly shown addressing and dealing directly with the People.¹⁵ And in the matter of the tribunate, Pompeius did in fact address the People, a fact Plutarch very likely knew.¹⁶ *Pomp.* 8.4 further suggests that Plutarch also knew about, but ignored, Pompeius' speech to the People on the *lex Gabinia* in 67.¹⁷ If Plutarch was portraying Pompeius as a demagogue, why did he omit reference to his speeches or direct dealings with the People?¹⁸

In addition, in his comparisons (*synkriseis*) between Pompeius and Agelaos on the one hand and between the Gracchi and Agis and Kleomenes on the other, Plutarch discusses Pompeius in almost exclusively military terms, while his remarks on the Gracchi are almost entirely political.¹⁹ Further, when he reviews Pompeius' political career, he stresses how he was greatly influenced by others, sometimes for the good, but mostly for ill.²⁰ There is no hint of demagoguery. Rather, Pompeius is the general at a loss in politics. And this is borne out by the text. For Pompeius, when politics are involved, so far from being a demagogue himself, is generally portrayed as being in the hands of others, either Optimates or demagogues. In the 80s and 70s, for example, despite his great popularity, he works through and for the Senate; there his interests are advanced by the powerful: Sulla, Philippus, Lucullus.²¹ After 70, once again it is other hands, largely tribunes of the Plebs, who further Pompeius' career and attain his

¹⁴ *Ti. Gracch.* 9.5 (on the agrarian law), 15.2–6 (on the procedure against Octavius); *C. Gracch.* 3.3–4 (repeatedly, reproaching the People with Tiberius' death).

¹⁵ *Mar.* 1.1–5, 8.5–9.4, 14.7, 28.1–6, 30.1; *Caes.* 4.4–9, 5.8–9, 14.2–6.

¹⁶ The speech: *Cic. Verr.* 1.15.45; *Sall. H.* 4.44–45 (with the comments of Maurenbrecher *ad loc.*). *Plut. Pomp.* 21.7, 22.2–3 (cf. *Crassus* 12.2–3) clearly draw on *Sall. H.* 4.42, 48, 50–51. It is hard to believe that Plutarch knew these passages without also knowing the speech. See also below, 136–137.

¹⁷ Compare *Pomp.* 8.4 (Sulla both stood up in respect for Pompeius when he approached and uncovered his head, which he was not seen to do lightly for another, although there were many respectable men around him) to *Sall. H.* 5.20 (*quibus de causis Sullam dictatorem uni sibi [sc. Pompeio] descendere equo, assurgere, sella, caput aperire solitum*). Though *Val. Max.* 5.2.9 also preserves this story, we know that Plutarch used Sallust for his account of urban affairs in 67. See Maurenbrecher 1.74–75.

¹⁸ To be sure, not every omission by Plutarch is purposeful. If, however, he did not see Pompeius as a demagogue or wish to portray him so, as I believe the evidence shows, the omission of speeches to the People is predictable and consistent. Conversely, the inclusion of such speeches, real or manufactured, was one way of identifying demagogues.

¹⁹ Military: *Pomp.* 81.2, 83.1–84.8. Our lack of the comparisons for the *Lives* of Caesar and Marius, of course, prevents further exploration.

²⁰ Others: *Pomp.* 81.5–7, 82.3, 84.9–11. For susceptibility to bad influence, see *Demetr.* 1.6; *Ant.* 25.1, 62.1; and Jones 75.

²¹ *Plut. Pomp.* 9.1–2; 10.1–2; 11.1; 13.1–7; 14.1–5, 8–10; 17.3–4; 20.1–2. Indeed Sulla (14.1–5) and Lucullus (20.1–2), though personally reluctant, nevertheless assist

ends.²² To Plutarch tribunes hardly differ from demagogues; and consuls like Caesar, too, can play the tribune before the mob (*Pomp.* 47.5; cf. *Caes.* 14.2).²³ In fact, Pompeius' dependence upon, and manipulation by, demagogues increases throughout this *Life* (see below, 133).

On this showing, the account of the consulship of 70 is quite important for the portrayal of Pompeius. For he undertakes independent political action within the βουλή-δῆμος scheme. No Philippus intercedes with the Senate as earlier, no Gabinius as later with the Plebs. His fate is in his own hands. Only in 78 did this happen before, when, Plutarch tells us, Pompeius had canvassed for Lepidus in his bid for the consulship and had procured for him the support of the People (*Pomp.* 15.1–2). But Pompeius' successful efforts on Lepidus' behalf in 78 were counter-productive. In utilizing his popularity, he had empowered one who would prove an enemy. This holds true of his pacts with Crassus in 71 and Caesar in 60; and of his restoration of the tribunate in 70, which reestablished the demagogic office from which he would suffer in the end.²⁴ These independent political actions also help to alienate Pompeius from past supporters. Sulla, already displeased with the growth of Pompeius' power and repute, becomes completely estranged from him when he supports Lepidus (*Pomp.* 15.1–4; cf. 14.1–5). The Senate, too, which had previously voted Pompeius honors and commands, sides with Crassus after Pompeius has quarreled with him and restored the tribunate (*Pomp.* 22.3–4).

In these events Plutarch seems to observe a pattern of counter-productive independent political action by Pompeius: immediate gain proves long-term loss. The consulship of 70 sets this pattern, and prefigures the great event in it: the establishment of friendship with Caesar in 60.²⁵ On this showing, the alleged remark of Sulla to Pompeius in 78 becomes an almost thematic comment:

ὥρα μέντοι σοι μὴ καθεύδειν, ἀλλὰ προσέχειν τοῖς πράγμασιν· ἰσχυρότερον γὰρ τὸν ἀνταγωνίστην σεαυτῷ κατασκευάσας. (*Pomp.* 15.2)

It is time, however, for you not to sleep, but to pay heed to your affairs; for you have set up a stronger opponent for yourself.

Pompeius. On Plutarch's portrayal of Pompeius and Lucullus in the 70s, see T. P. Hillman, "The Alleged *inimicitiae* of Pompeius and Lucullus: 78–74," *CP* 86 (1991) 315–318.

²²Plut. *Pomp.* 25.2–13; 26.3; 30.1–8; 46.8; 47.6–7; 48.8–12; 49.10; 51.1, 6; 52.4; 53.6; 54.3; 58.4–10; 59.3–4.

²³Caesar's first appearance, where he is already the demagogue, supporting and manipulating Pompeius for his own ends, foreshadows the rest of their relationship (*Pomp.* 25.8).

²⁴One might object that Pompeius and Crassus were already enemies. Whatever the truth, Plutarch does not say so in the *Pompeius* before 23.1 (διαφορά; cf. 22.3 διεφέροντο). Indeed in the *Crassus* (6.5, 7.1–3), he remarks upon their ἄμύλλα and φιλοτιμία, but not their ἐχθρά or διαφορά, his words for *inimicitiae*. On these words, see Hillman (above, n. 21) 316, with nn. 8–10.

²⁵See *Pomp.* 47.4. On the relationship between 70 and 60 in Plutarch's thought, see below, 137.

I would argue, moreover, that this pattern is also a part of Pompeius' discomfiture as a general in civilian life. For at *Pomp.* 22.5–9, a section not paralleled in the *Crassus*, Plutarch reports Pompeius' appearance before the censors of 70 at a *transvectio equitum*. There, in full consular regalia, though humbly leading his own horse, he was asked if he had completed all the campaigns required of an *eques*; he answered that he had, and under his own command, too. Thrilled, the People roared their approval and joined the censors in escorting Pompeius home. The passage begins: ἥδιστον δὲ θέαμα τῷ δήμῳ παρέσχεν αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν τὴν στρατείαν παραιτούμενος ("But when he personally requested his discharge from military service he provided the sweetest sight to the People," *Pomp.* 22.4). The δέ here does not just signal additional evidence of Pompeius' strength with the People; it also contrasts that sweet relationship to the bitterness of Pompeius' political dealings with Crassus in 22.3–4. Most importantly, by the very length and detail of this section, almost five times as long as the political one before it, Plutarch suggests that Pompeius' popularity and political strength rest far more on his generalship than on his statesmanship.²⁶

The very staged nature of this scene, moreover, in which Pompeius puts on a show before the People, but does not interact with them, is significant. Pompeius in Plutarch is very good at putting on shows.²⁷ Confronted, however, with the need to act spontaneously before the People, he is at a loss, as the final section of Plutarch's account of the year 70 in both *Lives* clearly shows. For when an opportunity to reconcile their quarrel arises, Crassus seizes it, and, taking Pompeius by the hand, praises him to the People; Pompeius, however, simply stands by in silence.²⁸ This is no portrait of a demagogue. Rather, Plutarch depicts an inexperienced Pompeius, as often, in the hands of a superior politician, whose very remarks also stress the military foundations of Pompeius' standing with the People.²⁹ The contrast and the connection with 22.5–9 are clear. Martial glory, not

²⁶*Pomp.* 22.3–4 occupies five lines of Teubner text, 22.5–9 twenty-four lines. On the contrast between generalship and statesmanship, compare the remarks of Wardman (56): "[the 'political'] is in a sense opposed to the general Most of Plutarch's heroes are military men and he does commemorate their soldierly virtues and their talents as commanders; but his attention is often directed to a study of what use they make of victory or defeat." "Political" is Wardman's rendering of πολιτικός.

²⁷See *Pomp.* 4.5–9; 8.1–3; 14.6–9, 11; 15.4; 21.6–7; 22.1–2; 23.3–4; 43.1–5; 45.1–7; 47.6–8; 50.2; 51.6–8; 52.5; 54.1. The number of public displays by Pompeius declines in the second half of this *Life* (after 46).

²⁸*Pomp.* 23.1–2; *Crassus* 12.5. On the historical aspects of this reconciliation, see R. Seager, *Pompey: A Political Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1979) 27; A. Ward, *Marcus Crassus and the Late Roman Republic* (Columbia, Missouri 1977) 109, with n. 39.

²⁹This scene may profitably be compared to that in 52.6–8, where Pompeius and Crassus are questioned by a tribune before an assembly of the People. Pompeius' reply is lame, but Crassus' is πολιτικώτερον.

political dexterity, secures Pompeius' popularity and power at home. In the end his reliance on this popularity makes him overconfident when war with Caesar approaches (57.1-9). In fact, Plutarch avers, nothing was more responsible for war than this (57.5).

The sequel to the reconciliation of 70 in the *Pompeius* (for the account of the *Crassus* ends here) only reinforces this point. Though Crassus continues in politics, Pompeius withdraws, appearing in public only rarely and with a large retinue (23.3-4). He does this, we are told, because civilian life is hazardous to the reputation of great generals who are unsuited for the democratic equality of civilian politics (πρὸς ἰσότητα δημοτικὴν ἀσυμμέτροις, 23.5-6). Yet despite, or rather because of, his inaccessibility and political withdrawal, Pompeius' popularity, status, and power with the People are increased (23.4-6); and to support this point, Plutarch adduces the plebiscite of 67 which gave Pompeius the command against the pirates (23.6). Unsuitable to civilian political life, Pompeius can never stop being "the general." Political involvement for him, Plutarch implies, risks the loss of his popularity, the envy of his peers, and unremitting conflict most of all.³⁰ The reference to the year 67 at the chapter's end both affirms the particular application of these remarks on generals to Pompeius and emphasizes the importance of the larger context of these accounts.³¹ In each *Life* the consulship of 70 establishes patterns or prefigures later developments. As one might expect, the account in the *Pompeius* is again more politically developed and less schematic than that in the *Crassus*. Let us now turn to these.

In the *Crassus*, the year 70 at first seems memorable only for the quarreling and reconciliation of the consuls. Plutarch, however, has prefaced the event leading Crassus to the consulship, i.e., Spartacus' revolt, with a description, anachronistic and albeit overdrawn, of the tripartite division of Rome by Pompeius, Caesar, and Crassus (7.1-8). Thus, although the political implications are not more fully elaborated, the year 70 is of more than just personal significance for Crassus, since the enmity and reconciliation of 70 prefigure those of 60, and are essential to the coalition formed

³⁰Wardman 70: "Probably the commonest form of envy described in the *Lives* is the envy felt by an individual or group which feels that it is the social and political equal of the eminent man." Wardman (71) also asserts that the envious often fear tyranny from the eminent man. See *Pomp.* 25.9 and 30.3 for accusations of tyranny made against Pompeius after his return to public affairs. The command proposed for him in 67 is described at 25.9 as seeming "greater than envy and worthy of fear" (μεῖζον μὲν φθόνου, φόβου δὲ ἄξιον) to his peers.

³¹Wardman (95-96), though recognizing the importance of 23.3-6, fails to see that Plutarch is there suggesting that conflict and difficulty will be the inevitable result for Pompeius—as had been the case in 70 and would soon be again in 67 and 66—if Pompeius does not withdraw from political life. Much of the conflict of the rest of the *Pompeius* is thus predicted and explained.

then. This is reinforced by the rapid transition to 60, when Caesar reconciles Pompeius and Crassus, and the domination forecast in Chapter 7 is realized. Furthermore, at 11.10–11 Pompeius both contrives to steal the glory for Crassus' defeat of Spartacus and celebrates a magnificent triumph for his Spanish victory, while Crassus does not even venture to request one. Pompeius' treatment of Crassus as an inferior and their quarreling follows directly (12.1–3). In connection with Plutarch's premature political description of Rome at 7.1–8, this helps to establish Crassus' resentment at being reputed third behind Pompeius and Caesar, a resentment that will in the end harm Rome and destroy him (27.6).³²

In the *Pompeius*, the year 70 is revealed as a turning point. For Chapters 21–23 form an important interlude for Pompeius between the Sertorian War and the wars against the pirates and Mithridates. Here for the first time Pompeius the general confronts the problems of civilian political life that will bedevil him hereafter, and his relationships with the Senate, the People, and individual politicians begin to change. In *Pomp.* 21.6–8 Pompeius must first dispel the fear that he will seize power by force of arms. Again we see his political and military roles linked.³³ He must also contend with the suspicion

ὅτι τῷ δήμῳ προσνεμεῖ μάλλον ἑαυτὸν ἢ τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τὸ τῆς δημαρχίας ἀξίωμα ... ἔγνωκεν ἀνίστασθαι καὶ χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς πολλοῖς· ὅπερ ἦν ἀληθές.³⁴

that he would devote himself to the People rather than to the Senate, and that he had determined to restore the position of the tribunate ... and to gratify the many: this was the truth.

In view of this "truth," Plutarch's stress on the importance of the δῆμος to Pompeius in 70 comes as no surprise: Pompeius announces to the People his *coitio* with Crassus (22.1–2); their dissension is linked to Pompeius' popularity with the People as a renewer of the tribunate (22.3–4); Pompeius' appearance at the *transvectio equitum* is a sight most sweet to the People (22.4–9); at their reconciliation Crassus praises Pompeius to the People (23.1–2). Plutarch clearly portrays Pompeius as following in 70 the opportunistic course that men had feared in 71 (21.7–8). This apostasy from Senate to People is further revealed by the sequel to his consulship.

³²Compare the remarks of Wardman (43) on this passage, though his point is slightly different: "No one who has read so far in the *Crassus*, will suppose that only now is he enlightened about the moral significance of Crassus' career." The emphasis is his.

³³Pompeius must again face this fear in 62: "reports of all kinds about Pompeius reached Rome beforehand, and there was much uproar on the suspicion that he would advance straightaway against the city, and a permanent monarchy would come to be" (*Pomp.* 43.1).

³⁴With this we may compare Sall. *H.* 4.42: *multisque suspicionibus volentia plebi facturum habebatur*. See below, 136–137.

For Pompeius' withdrawal from the forum and political life preserves his power and dignity from the dangers of familiarity, while yet impressing the People (23.4-6). As a result, the People soon award Pompeius the command against the pirates (23.6).

But this is not all. Plutarch is about something subtler here. No sooner does Pompeius turn from the Senate to the People than he begins to stand aloof from the latter (23.3-4).³⁵ To Plutarch this is as much a part of the general's bemusement in civilian life as the inability to work through the Senate. For, though Pompeius has long been popular (14.6, 15.1-2), he is now "one great from military exploits and unsuited for the democratic equality of civilian politics" (23.5). So, despite his conversion to *levitas popularis*, Pompeius stands among the People but not of them. Plutarch thus suggests that in 70 Pompeius' relations with the People changed as well. His inaccessibility and inability to manipulate the People directly will in future leave him in the hands of tribunes and demagogues. Pompeius' staged display at the *transvectio equitum* in 70 and Crassus' political finesse at their reconciliation in 70, while Pompeius stood silent as a stone, first suggest this. But it begins in earnest in 67 with Gabinius and, more importantly, with Caesar, who gives him his support, "thinking least of all of Pompeius, but insinuating himself into the favor of the People and acquiring them for himself from the beginning" (25.8; cf. 47.3). Significantly, when awarded the command his popularity has won him, Pompeius leaves Rome by stealth, avoiding the People that voted for it (26.1). In the second half of the *Pompeius*, beginning with Chapter 46 (at which point Plutarch remarks that Pompeius would have been more fortunate if he had died then [46.1-4]), Pompeius is constantly outmaneuvered and manipulated by tribunes and demagogues more in touch with the People: Caesar, Clodius, Caninius Gallus, Curio, and Antonius, among others.³⁶ Clodius' contempt and abuse of Pompeius merely underscore the latter's helplessness in civilian life (46.8, 48.8-12). Though needing the tribunes and demagogues because of his remoteness, though driven to employ them by his adoption of *popularis* politics and his alienation of the Optimates (48.7), Pompeius is undone by their superior skill with the Plebs (cf. 46.3-4).

Furthermore the consulship of 70 is shown also to be a turning point for Pompeius in his treatment of individuals. From his first encounter with Sulla onward Pompeius has been much concerned with glory (δόξα), and as military success promotes the growth of his power and reputation, it also causes a thirst for more of the same. This results in a steady deterioration

³⁵Might the source of Pompeius' discomfort with the People be the horrible memory of his father Strabo's funeral? See Plut. *Pomp.* 1.2; Vell. Pat. 2.21.4; Gran. Licin. 35.42-45.

³⁶See, e.g., *Pomp.* 46.8; 47.6-7; 48.8-12; 49.10; 51.1, 6; 52.4; 53.6; 54.3; 58.4-10; 59.3-4.

in the respect he accords others until, with the formation of the *coitio* with Crassus at 22.1–2, he succeeds in treating an equal as an inferior, a not uncommon habit of generals (cf. 23.4–6). In the beginning Pompeius had been all deference to his superiors, such as Sulla and Metellus Pius (6.2, 8.1–3, 5–6). Once acclaimed Magnus, however, he cheekily demands a triumph from Sulla (14.15), endorses Lepidus for consul against Sulla's wishes (15.1–2), and prevaricates when Catulus bids him demobilize his army in 77 (17.3–4). In Spain he treats Metellus Pius, his senior colleague, with the proper respect only after Pius has rescued him from his own rash attempt to win all the glory by defeating Sertorius singlehandedly (19.1–11). Thus it is no surprise that, when chance allows him to stamp out the last embers of the servile war, which has already been won by Crassus, he first attempts to steal the credit (21.3), and then treats Crassus as an inferior (22.1–3). Indeed Plutarch remarks that men took proud Crassus' humble political overtures to Pompeius as a sign of the latter's distinction (λαμπρότης, 22.1–2).³⁷

This development, when Pompeius begins to treat his peers as inferiors and to steal their glory, does not just prepare the reader for Pompeius' theft of the glory of Metellus Creticus and Lucullus in 67 and 66, and for the driving, misguided ambition (φιλοτιμία) for sole glory that becomes apparent in those actions, and by implication in earlier actions as well (cf. 31.11–13).³⁸ It also paves the way for the almost universal censure of Pompeius found in these passages—by the Senate, by his friends, and, most significantly, by the biographer himself—and for Lucullus' damning characterization of Pompeius as a carrion bird that scavenges glory from the carcasses of other men's wars.³⁹ This obsession of Pompeius with glory, as well as his mistaken reliance on popular favor, will help to cause and to lose the war with Caesar.⁴⁰ When, moreover, this new behavior is aggressively combined with his apostasy from Senate to People, the suspicions of Sullan ambitions, dismissed with such ease by Pompeius in 71 (21.5–7), become

³⁷ On the close connection of λαμπρότης/λαμπρός/λαμπρῶς, usually linked to military distinction in this *Life*, to δόξα, see *Pomp.* 8.1, 5; 14.10; 17.2 (cf. 8.5); 20.2; 22.1; 23.4; 36.9; 39.1; 40.5; 42.5, 11–12; 57.4; 58.9; 65.8; 68.2; 71.2.

³⁸ *Pomp.* 29.1–7, 30.3–5, 8, 31.1–13. Ambition directed to the end of glory rather than of virtue is excessive and destructive. See *Agis* 1–2.3. See also Wardman 115–124; Françoise Frazier, "À Propos de la *philotimia* dans les *Vies*: Quelques jalons dans l'histoire d'une notion," *RevPhil* 62 (1988) 109–127.

³⁹ B. X. DeWet, "Aspects of Plutarch's Portrayal of Pompey," *Acta Classica* 24 (1981) 119–132, at 125–128, 129, is right to point out that in these passages on Metellus Creticus and Lucullus Plutarch is revealing an important weakness of Pompeius, but he fails to see that Plutarch has been leading up to this long since, as I argue above. Lucullus' famous attack on Pompeius at 31.11–13 also, by reminding the reader of Crassus, surely invokes the remarks at 21.3–4 on Pompeius and Crassus.

⁴⁰ *Pomp.* 57.7–8, 66.6, 67.7–9, 68.3, 70.6.

the sure beliefs and open accusations of *regnum* voiced in 67 and 66 (25.9, 30.3–5).

Plutarch's narration of Pompeius' first consulship and first civilian interlude thus lays the foundation for understanding much of the rest of the *Life*. For the biographer sees in the *Life of Pompeius* a clear example of the general "great from military exploits and unsuited for the democratic equality of civilian politics" (23.5). As such, Pompeius differs from the other political types described by Plutarch: the demagogue, the statesman, and the tyrant.⁴¹ So Plutarch uses the occasion of Pompeius' first civilian political experience to create a literary portrait of Pompeius that will render immediately intelligible his initial successes after 70, his later failures, and the reactions of others to him. In light of all this, we can better appreciate the irony of Plutarch's final comment on Pompeius and the People, especially since it occurs during a military episode. On the night before Pharsalus:

τῆς δὲ νυκτὸς ἔδοξε κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους Πομπήιος εἰς τὸ θέατρον εἰσιόντος αὐτοῦ κροτεῖν τὸν δῆμον, αὐτὸς δὲ κοσμεῖν ἱερὸν Ἀφροδίτης νικηφόρου πολλοῖς λαφύροις. καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐθάρρει, τὰ δὲ ὑπέθραττεν αὐτὸν ἡ ὄψις, δεδοικóta μὴ τῷ γένει τοῦ Καίσαρος εἰς Ἀφροδίτην ἀνῆκοντι δόξα καὶ λαμπρότης ἀπ' αὐτοῦ γέννηται. (68.2)

In a dream during the night Pompeius thought that the People were applauding as he entered the theater, and that he was adorning the shrine of Venus Victrix with many spoils of war. In some respects the dream was encouraging, but in others it troubled him, since he feared that glory and distinction were coming from him to the family of Caesar, which was connected to Venus.

Plutarch's Pompeius is so removed from the People that only in dreams can he approach them; and even then he fears for his glory, that not he, but Caesar is the real object of the applause. Even in his dreams the civilian and the military meet uncomfortably, and he is being outmaneuvered and manipulated (he fears) by a more clever politician.

It is significant, moreover, that in this dream Pompeius' sole concern is his reputation and the possible loss of it, while the People are merely his audience. Read in the context of a civil war fought over glory (70.6), this dream reminds the reader once again that such distinction has ever been Pompeius' aim. Indeed Plutarch points out in his comparison of Pompeius and Agesilaos that Pompeius' deeds made him great first of all, and only secondarily benefited the state (82.6). And Plutarch most frequently, most pointedly criticizes Pompeius for putting personal needs—his own and those of his friends—before the public good.⁴² Thus an aspect of Pompeius' character that was at first commended to us, namely, his amenability to

⁴¹ It is essential, however, to avoid schematism. Plutarch's Marius, for example, would be well described by the words at 23.3–6, though he engaged in demagoguery. On these types, see Pelling 159–160, 163–175; Wardman 49–57, 93–100.

⁴² 81.5, 7; 82.3; 83.6–7; 84.4–5, 9–10.

approach and readiness to grant favors (1.4), is in the end destructive to him and to his country because his endless, selfish thirst for distinction and his political ineptitude reduce him to forming political friendships with, and granting favors to, demagogues like Caesar (46.3–47.10). Plutarch's repetition, therefore, of Cato's famous remark, that it was not so much the enmity of Pompeius and Caesar as their friendship that proved destructive to the Republic (47.4), reinforces his own characterization of Pompeius as much as it bears witness to Cato's insight into the causes of the civil war. With the consulship of 70 Plutarch brings together for the first time in this *Life* the closely commingled elements of Pompeius' political/military career and character both to illustrate a personal and historical turning point, and to construct a literary portrait that will inform our understanding of the historical and ethical implications of this *Life* as it unfolds.

Nor is Plutarch quite done. Pelling has pointed out that we learn the most about Plutarch's historical understanding from the passages "where we can see him imposing his own views and . . . reinterpreting what his sources offered."⁴³ I would suggest that Plutarch does so here, and that Sallust is his source. That Plutarch knew and used the *Historiae* extensively for the 70s and early 60s has long been clear.⁴⁴ Of the *Pompeius*, Chapters 16–20 are founded upon Sallust, and 24–28 disclose his influence for their account of urban affairs.⁴⁵ Most important for us is, as noted above, the close resemblance of *Pomp.* 21.7 and 22.1–3 to *H.* 4.42, 48, and 50–51; if this and Plutarch's extensive use of Sallust elsewhere are any guide at all, Sallust's account of the consulship of 70 lies behind Plutarch's.⁴⁶ In addition, the Senate-People analysis so congenial to Plutarch is also favored by Sallust. To be sure, seeing Sallust as Plutarch's source for this basic approach, so common in Roman historians, would be unwise; yet few others pursue this analysis with the same faulty determination.⁴⁷ Emphasis, moreover, on the enmity of Pompeius and Crassus and on their relative strengths with the People and the Senate, so clearly portrayed in the *Pompeius*, also seems prominent in the *Historiae*. It may be traced in the fragments, and is present, already fully developed, in the earlier *Bellum Catilinae*.⁴⁸

Yet the biographer either minimizes or omits details of import to the historian. Nothing, for example, remains either of the speech in which

⁴³Pelling 165; cf. 160. The emphasis is his. See also Scardigli (above, n. 8) 120–24, for Plutarch's approach to his sources.

⁴⁴See Maurenbrecher and Peter, as cited above, n. 8.

⁴⁵See Maurenbrecher 1.18, 31–32, 74–75; Peter 112–113 (cf. 61–65).

⁴⁶See above, 126, with nn. 8 and 10; 128, with nn. 16–17; 132, with n. 34; Peter 114.

⁴⁷Sall. *Cat.* 37–38; *Iug.* 41; *H.* 1.6–13. Hilliard (20, n. 5) warns against Plutarch's use of "his own, disturbingly simplistic, analysis of Roman politics," though he seems unaware that it does not originate with him, but is widespread among Roman historians.

⁴⁸Enmity: *H.* 4.48, 50–51; *Cat.* 17.7, 19.1. Strength: *Cat.* 19.1, 39.1, 48.5, 7–8.

Pompeius promised the People restoration of the tribunate and judicial reform, or of the political maneuvering towards these goals, which Sallust surely described (above, 128, notes 16–17). Plutarch no more than glosses the realization of these goals. For his interest in them is limited to their ability to explain Pompeius' strength with the People and his weakness with the Senate, and to confirm once for all the fear that he would turn from Senate to People.⁴⁹ Thus Plutarch reinterprets what he found in Sallust. In so doing he strengthens his portrait of Pompeius as the politically awkward general whose dependence upon and remoteness from popular support grew simultaneously; and he stresses how these combined to make the consulship of 70 a turning point in Pompeius' relations with the Senate, the People, and individual politicians.

The year 70, then, is important to Plutarch in its own right, and not merely in so far as it prefigures what comes later. On this view, I would argue that Plutarch considers 70 and 60 of equal importance to the career of Pompeius and the fate of the Republic, which is entirely in harmony with, and in fact supported by, the view of the *Pompeius* elaborated above. If so, Plutarch reinterprets and adapts not only Sallust's judgement on 70, but also Asinius Pollio's on the importance of 60 and the coalition of Pompeius, Crassus, and Caesar.⁵⁰ By coherently relating the two, Plutarch imposes his own view on the *Pompeius*. Plutarch's accounts of the consulship of 70 are integral to his larger purposes in the *Pompeius* and the *Crassus*. As such, each account contributes more to the understanding of the whole than it would have done as a mere serial narration of historical events. Conversely, a proper estimate of Plutarch's evidence for 70 can only be made by first grasping the relationship of each *Life's* evidence to the *Life* as a whole, and of the *Lives* to each other. On this basis we shall then be better able to reconstruct the first consulship of Pompeius and Crassus.

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⁴⁹In the *Crassus*, by contrast, it is as if these events never happened. For there Plutarch interests himself in explaining not Pompeius' or Crassus' political strength, but their personal relationship. Their consulship is ἀπολίτευτος καὶ ἀπρακτος (*Crassus* 12.3).

⁵⁰On Pollio and Plutarch, see C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives," *JHS* 99 (1979) 74–96, at 75–80, 83–85.