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Becoming Mark Antony: A Metabiographical Study of Characterization and Reception

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Classics

by

Alexander James Lessie

2015

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Becoming Mark Antony: A Metabiographical Study of Characterization and Reception

by

Alexander James Lessie

Doctor of Philosophy in Classics

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Amy Richlin, Chair

The subject of this dissertation is the nexus of Greek and Latin texts that feature Mark Antony. Cicero's *Philippics* and Plutarch's *Life of Antony* are the key components of this *corpus*, but this dissertation also encompasses writings about Antony by authors ranging from Propertius to Cassius Dio and covers the reception of this material in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Each chapter uses a metabiographical approach to examine a particular stylized persona that these authors project onto Antony. Chapter 1 investigates why authors invest Mark Antony with the attributes of a stage actor with a frequency rivaled only by similar treatments of later emperors like Caligula and Nero. Chapters 2 and 3 analyze the representation of Antony as a tyrant in Latin-language authors and Greek-language authors, respectively. Chapter 4 delineates the different ways that authors conceive of Antony's love for Cleopatra as a type of madness. Chapter 5 uses Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* as a test case for applying the metabiographical methodology to a post-classical literary text and focuses on Shakespeare's innovative deployment of Antony as a paragon of eloquence.

By analyzing the manifestations these personae in different authors, I uncover new ways of understanding why competing portrayals of Antony take shape across time and across genre, and I map out the evolution of the idea of Mark Antony as it is manufactured over time in literature. I argue that the distortion of Antony that takes place in our sources is less an artifact of his rivals' propaganda than a product of the historio-biographical process itself. I show how recurring biographical motifs exhibit subtle variations from author to author that signal alignments with particular rhetorical traditions, highlight key themes, or encode commentary upon the authors' own cultural milieux.

The principal contribution my project makes to our understanding of Greco-Roman literature is to demonstrate how Mark Antony is exploited as a malleable cultural touchstone. Recent work in metabiography has illuminated how Julius Caesar and Cleopatra perform this role as well, but our understanding of the processes that produced icons like these remains incomplete without a comparable study of Mark Antony. This dissertation fills this gap.

The dissertation of Alexander James Lessie is approved.

Robert Gurval

Ronald Mellor

Mario Telò

Amy Richlin, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

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----- (January, 2015) A Body of Text: Incorporating Mark Antony
into the *Second Philippic*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
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Introduction

ANTONY

Eros, thou yet behold'st me?

EROS

Ay, noble lord.

ANTONY

Sometimes we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A towered citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air. Thou has seen these
Signs –
They are black vesper's pageants.

EROS

Ay, my lord.

ANTONY

That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct,
As water is in water.

EROS

It does, my lord.

ANTONY

My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body: here I am Antony:
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.¹

– Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 4.15.1-14

Of the many thousands of treatments of the tragic end of the Roman general and statesman Mark Antony written over the past two millennia, there is perhaps no more poignant evocation of his downfall than this acknowledgment of impending self-annihilation.

Shakespeare's Antony, brooding with his servant Eros upon the deceptiveness inherent in the stable appearance of identity, suggests that those elements of his identity that define him as Mark Antony are slipping away from him. The loss of his soldiers, friends, family, and, above all,

¹ The text here printed is taken from Michael Neill's (1994) edition for the Oxford Shakespeare series.

Cleopatra has left Antony as insubstantial as a cloud, and as the shapes of clouds are subject to individual fancy, so too does this fictive Antony anticipate how he, like the imaginary horse he puts forward as an example, will become blurred and indistinct. Henceforth, he will exist only in the subjective impressions of a crowd of observers who will possess full discretion to see him as distinctly, or as distortedly, as they choose.

Any historical or biographical treatment of Mark Antony must inevitably fail to capture the substance of its subject. The historian or biographer can only hope to access the echoes and reflections of his life preserved in a fragmentary source tradition. For figures like Julius Caesar or Augustus our sources at least preserve kernels of self-fashioned ideology and propaganda that allow scholars to reconstruct, at least partially, how these individuals wished their identities to be understood by their contemporaries, if not posterity. However tendentiously self-serving these manufactured selves may be, there is still something substantial for historians and biographers to grapple with when they confront products of their subjects' own making. Mark Antony, in contrast, has left behind no enduring *testimonia* of his own self-fashioned identity beyond his coinage, a few letters and epistolary fragments preserved in the works of Cicero and Suetonius, and a smattering of inscriptions and statuary that Augustus's program of erasure failed to eradicate.² The extended treatments of Antony in ancient Greek and Latin literature consist of texts that are invariably written by authors who were hostile to Antony themselves or who relied heavily upon the work of these hostile authors as sources. The writings of Cicero, the Augustan poets, Nicolaus of Damascus, Seneca the Elder, Velleius Paterculus, Josephus, Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio are all colored by a veneer of anti-Antonian bias that makes the recovery of

² Cf. Plutarch, *Cic.* 49.4 for Augustus's Senate sponsored program of removing the statues and revoking the honors of Antony after his death. The definitive treatment of Antony's coinage is by Theodore Buttrey (1953). On Antony's literary remnants and inscriptions, see Huzar (1982).

reliable information about Antony and his self-representation from these sources a difficult endeavor.

Contemporary biographical treatments of Antony's life and career have all sought to strip away this veneer of distortions, exaggerations, and outright lies in order to produce a portrait of Antony that approximates – to the extent the sources make possible – the “historical” or “real” Antony. The full-scale modern biographies of Mark Antony – by Arthur Weigall (1931), Jack Lindsay (1936), Hermann Bengston (1977), Eleanor Huzar (1978), François Chamoux (1986), Alan Roberts (1988), Helmut Halfmann (2011), Patricia Southern (2012), and Paolo De Ruggiero (2013) – all apply the conventional methodology of disentangling underlying facts from the ancient sources' web of misrepresentation.³ Even focused studies of the propaganda deployed against Mark Antony tend to approach the material with positivist goals in mind. The source material has generally either been synthesized by scholars to delineate the contours of a monolithic propaganda campaign,⁴ or it has been examined in order to determine the mixture of historical truth and malicious slander in ancient accounts of Antony's last will and testament,⁵ his marriage to Cleopatra,⁶ and his drunkenness.⁷

³ Ronald Syme's (1939) treatment of Antony's career is also a decisive influence on modern biographical approaches to Antony. Syme's description of Octavian's propaganda and Cicero's *Philippics* can stand as a representative illustration of the posture that modern critical inquiry generally observes towards the ancient sources for Antony's life: “The memory of Antonius has suffered damage multiple and irreparable. The policy which he adopted in the East and his association with the Queen of Egypt were vulnerable to the moral and patriotic propaganda of his rival. Most of that will be coolly discounted. From the influence of Cicero it is less easy to escape. The *Philippics*, the series of speeches in which he assailed an absent enemy, are an eternal monument of eloquence, of rancour, of misrepresentation. Many of the charges leveled against the character of Antonius – such as unnatural vice or flagrant cowardice – are trivial, ridiculous, or conventional” (104).

⁴ Scott (1929 and 1933) and Freyburger-Galland (2009).

⁵ The scholarly debate over Antony's will is a particularly good illustration of the intensity of focus that has been brought to bear on separating fact from fiction in our sources. See Syme (1939: 282), Crook (1956 and 1989), Johnson (1978), Sirianni (1984), and Champlin (1991: 9-20).

⁶ Huzar (1986) and Ager (2013).

⁷ Marasco (1992).

Let us unpack Antony's drunkenness as an example. Since all our sources are virtually unanimous in claiming that Antony had a habit of drinking to excess, we can reasonably conclude that the historical Antony was, at the very least, not a teetotaler. But the "fact" of Antony's fondness for wine and revelry conceals a range of heuristically significant variations in how Antony's drunkenness is portrayed in our sources. Two representations of Antony's drunkenness in ancient literature can serve as a preliminary test case; first, a short description from one of Seneca the Younger's *Epistulae Morales* (83.25) of the drunken Antony during the Proscriptions:

M. Antonium, magnum virum et ingeni nobilis, quae alia res perdidit et in externos mores ac vitia non Romana traiecit quam ebrietas nec minor vino Cleopatrae amor? haec illum res hostem rei publicae, haec hostibus suis inparem reddidit; haec crudelem fecit, cum capita principum civitatis cenanti referrentur, cum inter apparatusissimas epulas luxusque regales ora ac manus proscriptorum recognosceret, cum vino gravis sitiret tamen sanguinem.

What else besides drunkenness and – no less than wine – the love of Cleopatra impelled Mark Antony, a great man and a man of noble talent, into foreign ways and non-Roman vices and destroyed all that he had? Drunkenness rendered him an enemy of the Republic and no match for his enemies. Drunkenness made him cruel, when the heads of the leading men of the state were brought to him as he was dining, when among the very well-laden tables and royal extravagance he recognized the faces and hands of the proscribed, when, though heavy with wine, he nevertheless thirsted after blood.⁸

In Seneca's anecdote, Antony's drunkenness fuels his bloodlust and whets his thirst for the blood of his enemies. Next, let us consider a passage from Cassius Dio's *Historia Romana* on the same topic and set slightly later in time, around 41 BC (48.27.1-2):

Ἀντώνιος δὲ ἐπυθάνετο μὲν καὶ ταῦτα ὡσπερ ποὺ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ δρώμενα (οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν τὸ παράπαν ἠγνόει) οὐ μέντοι καὶ κατὰ καιρὸν οὐδετέροις ἤμυθεν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τε τοῦ ἔρωτος καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς μέθης οὔτε τῶν συμμάχων τι οὔτε τῶν πολεμίων ἐφρόντισε. τέως μὲν γὰρ κάτω τε ἐτέτακτο καὶ τῶν πρωτείων ἐφίετο, ἐντόνως τοῖς πράγμασι προσεῖχεν· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐν τῷ κράτει ἐγένετο, οὐκέτ' οὐδενὸς αὐτῶν ἀκριβῶς

⁸ All translations from the Latin and the Greek in this dissertation are my own, unless otherwise noted. The text of Seneca is taken from Reynolds's OCT edition.

ἐπεμελήθη, ἀλλὰ τῇ τε Κλεοπάτρα καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Αἰγυπτίοις συνετρόφα, μέχρις οὗ παντελῶς κατελύθη.⁹

Antony kept abreast of these matters [i.e. the Parthian war] as well as what was happening in Italy (indeed, he was not at all ignorant of these things), but in neither case did he take defensive countermeasures in time. Instead, on account of his love and his drunkenness he did not give a thought to his allies or his enemies. In point of fact, as long as he was in a subordinate position and was striving after preeminence he devoted himself eagerly to political affairs, but after he came into supreme power he no longer cared a fig for them. Instead, he devoted himself to hedonistic pursuits with Cleopatra and the rest of the Egyptians until he was completely debauched.

In Dio's account, Antony's drunkenness is an enervating influence. Coupled with *eros*, it makes Antony less keen on inflicting cruel violence on his enemies and leads him instead to pursue a life devoted to pleasure.

There are many possible explanations that account for the differences in how Seneca and Dio characterize Antony's drunkenness: a reliance on different source traditions, a difference of opinion on the matter of what effects drunkenness produces, or the momentary goals of each author, both given to dramatizing. My own hypothesis is that the bloodthirsty Antony depicted by Seneca and the languorous Antony depicted by Dio are two radically different versions of Mark Antony, each fundamentally a fictionalized distortion of the underlying historical figure. One is an insatiable, cruel tyrant; the other is a love-crazed hedonist. Moreover, I would propose that these versions of Antony are not simply the idiosyncratic literary creations of either Seneca or Dio. A survey of the ancient sources for his life reveals that these distinct versions of Antony recur with enough frequency that it is possible to delineate a separate biographical tradition for each one, along with other similarly well-defined personae that these ancient sources customarily project onto Antony. Tracing these fictive lives would suggest why Seneca, Dio, and other ancient authors characterize Antony so differently, and this is what this dissertation aims to accomplish.

⁹ All Greek texts in this dissertation are taken from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, apart from instances where an alternative reading has been preferred.

The subject of this dissertation is therefore not Mark Antony himself as a real historical figure and biographical subject. Nor is its subject precisely the distorted representations of Antony that we encounter throughout ancient literature. Rather, this dissertation is fundamentally an inquiry into what these figments of Antony can tell us about the rhetorical strategies, thematic aims, and political-cultural alignments of the authors who fashion them. However, the writing of lives such as these falls outside the scope of conventional biography and its methodologies for recovering the historical subject. To write the lives of these fictive versions of Antony, a different theoretical approach is needed. I have therefore structured my inquiry around the theoretical framework of metabiography, a methodological approach whose development owes less to any specific theoretician than to its practitioners. Nicolaas A. Rupke, the author of a major metabiography of the natural scientist Alexander von Humboldt, defines metabiography as “a hermeneutic of biography that interprets the biographee as a composite construct of different memory cultures and so recognizes the essential instability of historical lives” (2008: 140). In other words, metabiography is the study of the process by which a biographical subject’s life becomes refashioned in such a way as to absorb the preoccupation, biases, and *zeitgeist* of the cultural milieu in which a biographer works. Metabiography can encompass multiple examples of life-writing and life-writers from a particular milieu (as Rupke’s does), or it can confine the scope of its analysis to particular biographers of a single subject.

A. J. A. Symons’s 1934 metabiography of the English novelist Baron Corvo¹⁰ is the classic example of the latter approach. Symons’s metabiography works on two levels. On the one hand, he pioneers a method of juxtaposing source material – letters, articles, personal reminiscences, and other documentary evidence – and allowing his reader to appreciate the contradictions within this material as the inevitable consequence of the sources’ different,

¹⁰ A pseudonym of Frederick Rolfe.

incomplete perspectives on the biographical subject. The customary biographical impulses to evaluate the relative validity of these sources and to synthesize them into a seamless fabric of facts are, for the most part, deferred in Symons's project. The artificiality of a coherent portrait of the biographical subject is rejected in favor of exhibiting the ambiguous reality and irreconcilability of biographical sources. The overall effect that Symons produces is an illustration of biography's limitations as a method of capturing the essence of a biographical subject. Symons also demonstrates how biographical subjects can be used as a lens through which to examine the characters of the individuals who write about them. The disinterested objectivity of writers who profess to be revealing the truth is frequently shown to be as tenuous as the elusive biographical subject himself. Nor does Symons conceive of himself as an impartial critic standing above this fray. This is the second level on which Symons's metabiography works, encompassing his own biographical work on Baron Corvo within the scope of his critique. Symons self-consciously describes the process by which he accumulated his source material and shaped it into a narrative form, and through this self-disclosure he reveals that he himself is not immune to the limitations that subjectivity imposes on the biographer.

Even if the conventions of academic writing prevent me from performing the kind of sustained self-reflection that Symons practices, I should acknowledge here at the outset that the Antony who will emerge from my analysis will be indelibly colored by my training in literary criticism and the discipline of classical philology (as opposed to historiography, archaeology, numismatics) and by the particular temporal/cultural context in which I am writing. An important component of the latter is a recent proliferation in biographical works that employ metabiography as a methodological framework. As a literary genre, biography has always been the shared province of journalists, novelists, and other writers who are not necessarily trained as

historians and literary scholars. I must therefore acknowledge the methodological influence on my own thinking exerted by biographers whose work has not emerged from a philological background and is often geared towards a more popular audience. In the field of biographies of classical-era figures, the recent contributions of metabiographies of Cleopatra by Lucy Hughes-Hallett (1990) and Pontius Pilate by Ann Wroe (1999) have provided models for organizing metabiographical projects by examining distinct personae that authors project onto their subjects. Of the scholarly metabiographies produced in the fields of History and Classics, Jaroslav Pelikan's (1985) study of the continuous re-fashioning of Jesus of Nazareth over the past two millennia and Maria Wyke's (2008) work on Julius Caesar are models of synthesizing a wide range of temporally and culturally heterogeneous source material into metabiographical projects with a manageable scope and scale. Wyke (2008: 19) defines metabiography as "not an exploration of a life at its time of living but of key resonances of that life in subsequent periods" and characterizes it as a project in the study of reception. I subscribe to this definition as well. The ancient authors who will be covered in this dissertation all refashion Mark Antony, a figure from the past, into a form that suits the needs of the present moment.

I also follow the precedent of these earlier metabiographers in structuring my chapters by devoting each one to a role/persona that is projected onto Antony. These roles – theatrical performer, tyrant, insane lover, master of oratorical eloquence – each carry with them specific character traits and archetypal features. These features invoke conventional paradigms of characterization in order to make Antony's characterization resonate with particular literary, historical, philosophical, and oratorical traditions. Small-scale studies of how Antony's characterization has been patterned after literary archetypes have been undertaken by Lewis A. Sussman (1994), who argues that Antony is endowed by Cicero in the *Second Philippic* with the

conventional attributes of the comedic *miles gloriosus*, and by Tom Stevenson (2009), who demonstrates how Antony's characterization in the *First Philippic* owes a great deal to traditional Greco-Roman ideas about how a boilerplate tyrant behaves. The most wide-ranging work of scholarship on Mark Antony as a dynamic cultural icon is Rachael Kelly's 2014 monograph on the representation of Mark Antony in modern cinema. Kelly shows how Mark Antony functions in both modern films and ancient literature as a cultural *locus* for exploring gender anxieties, and her inquiry is likewise built on the premise that Antony the historical figure and Antony the pop culture icon are fundamentally two different people with two different lives. Kelly's monograph constitutes a biography of the Mark Antony whose characterization's defining feature is its embodiment of both hegemonic masculinity and its deconstruction. What is still lacking in scholarship on the representation of Mark Antony is a treatment of the other character-defining roles that Antony plays in ancient literature. Such a treatment would identify thematically significant variations in how ancient authors construct the key personae that they project onto Antony – revealing the places in the texts where authors have refashioned a particular persona and a particular version of Antony in order to advance an idiosyncratic purpose. Such a study would constitute a history of the evolution of the idea of Mark Antony as it is manufactured over time in literature.

I conceive of this dissertation not as the work that will fill this *lacuna* in scholarship in full, but only as an initial installment of what must be an ongoing and collaborative project. The extant material from classical antiquity relating to Mark Antony and his characterization is comparable in scale and diffuseness to that of a figure like Alexander the Great, with multiple extended narratives of his exploits preserved and hundreds of evocative anecdotes and references scattered across dozens of authors. I have narrowed the scope of my inquiry by imposing the

following limits, all of which have been adopted to achieve the most comprehensive coverage of the existing material while keeping the number of authors – and the attendant research into their individual thematic programs and cultural contexts – to a manageable enough quantity to ensure that no author/text is treated too superficially. First, I have chosen to examine personae that are pervasive enough and typologically well-defined enough in our major narrative sources (i.e. Cicero's *Philippics*, Josephus's *Bellum Judaicum* and *Antiquitates Judaicae*, Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, Appian's *Bella Civilia*, and Cassius Dio's *Historia Romana*) that deep comparative analyses of these texts' varying purposes for deploying these personae are possible. Moreover, because each chapter proceeds through the source material in chronological order, developmental arcs across the tradition may be traced out. Chapter 1 examines how and why ancient authors invest Mark Antony with the attributes of a stage actor, and do so with a frequency and thematic intensity rivaled only by similar treatments of later emperors like Caligula and Nero. Chapters 2 and 3 analyze the representation of Antony as a cruel, predatory tyrant in Latin-language authors and Greek-language authors, respectively. Chapter 4 delineates the different ways that Greco-Roman authors conceive of Antony's love for Cleopatra as a type of madness and Antony himself as an insane lover, and it teases out the poetic antecedents and philosophical discourse that these authors use to conceptualize love-induced madness. Chapter 5 uses Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* as a test case for applying the metabiographical methodology to a post-classical literary text and focuses on Shakespeare's innovative deployment of Antony as a paragon of eloquence

Personae that are less commonly projected onto Antony – such as the *miles gloriosus* – are discussed only as they intersect with primary personae under discussion. I have also largely excluded authors from my treatment who write about Antony only anecdotally or in an otherwise

very limited way. The work of such authors (e.g. Nicolaus of Damascus, Socrates of Rhodes, the author of the Livian *Periochae*, Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius, Florus) is adduced when an anecdote can shed light on one of the primary authors under discussion or when several authors who write about Antony anecdotally can be discussed as a distinct group (e.g. the Augustan poets, imperial-era Latin authors trained through the study of Cicero's rhetorical works). Finally, I have weighted my analysis towards covering the less trodden ground of Antony's career prior to his becoming involved with Cleopatra.

The range and diversity of the sources that I cover renders this dissertation as much a series of case studies as a single extended analysis with a central thread of argumentation running throughout. Argumentative aims and conclusions that pertain only to individual personae will therefore be detailed in the chapter introductions rather than here. However, when considered together, the five chapters of this dissertation do yield an overarching thesis that emerges from the discrete analyses undertaken of these multiple personae and authors. This thesis is that the defining feature of Mark Antony's character, the one that makes his chameleon-like malleability possible, is a signal lack of control over his own body. Antony is typically represented as a man who inadvertently expresses more of his real character through his appearance and actions than through his speech and writings. Moreover, the meaning that Antony's fictive body conveys often functions to put Antony in a more unfavorable light next to his rivals (e.g. Cicero and Octavian) or to align Antony with other exemplary Roman political villains (e.g. Caligula and Nero). Regardless of which persona is being projected onto Antony in our sources, it is usually the case that characterizing Mark Antony is ultimately accomplished through configuring his physical appearance, his dress, and his deportment so that it embodies a given persona within the textual space. Mark Antony's marked corporeality is a fundamental

feature of many of the fictive lives that ancient authors write for him. As an inheritor of this ancient tradition, Shakespeare understands this, and I will argue that Shakespeare's portrayal of Antony as a paragon of eloquence in *Julius Caesar* represents a deliberate inversion of his sources' general approach to characterizing Antony.

Chapter 1: The Staging of Mark Antony's Body

terra marique victus hostis punico
lugubre mutavit sagum:
aut ille centum nobilem Cretam urbibus,
ventis iturus non suis,
exercitatas aut petit Syrtes Noto
aut fertur incerto mari.

The enemy who was defeated on land and sea
has changed for his purple a cloak of mourning:
Either he is on his way to Crete, famous for
its hundred cities, sailing on winds not his own,
or he seeks the Syrtes made stormy by the South Wind,
or he is carried on an uncertain sea.

– Horace, *Epode* 9.27-32

This description of Mark Antony in the moments after his defeat at the Battle of Actium is the only direct reference in Horace's post-Actium poetry to the ruined triumvir.¹¹ As fleeting as this image is, Horace still manages to paint a portrait that embodies several prominent features of the broader historio-biographical tradition. Here, Antony is the quintessential *hostis* of the Roman Republic, as he had already been in Cicero's *Philippics* and will be again in the post-Actium historiography written under Augustus's aegis. He is a Roman of aristocratic lineage who is nevertheless drawn to the Greek east, who goes there even when the winds are far from favorable for him to do so. Finally, Antony is, as David Mankin (1995: *ad Ep.* 9.27-8) remarks in his commentary on this passage, a man who "seems to have been given to gestures involving his clothing." Indeed, Horace might have been hard pressed to find words of lamentation to put in his Antony's mouth that would make a more pathetic statement than the silent gesture he envisions in line 28. Antony removes his purple "general's cloak" (*paludamentum*) – the sign of his military authority and his social prestige – and dons instead a coarse, black common soldier's cloak. Although the Antony of *Epode* 9 is uncertain about where he should go next, his eloquent

¹¹ There is a passing reference to Antony at *Sat.* 1.5.33.

sartorial gesture leaves no doubt that he at least has no delusions about what his defeat at Actium means: he is no longer a man who can command the armies of Rome.

It may well be the case that the historical Antony was actually given to gestures involving his clothing, but the evidence that Mankin cites – this poem and a series of notices in Plutarch’s *Life of Antony* – is slightly misleading. These *testimonia* would make for compelling evidence of the historical Antony’s use of clothing to make meaningful gestures if these sources agreed on the type of clothing that he used to make them and on when, where, and under what circumstances it was worn. However, when the notices in Horace and Plutarch are compared to the other major ancient treatments of Mark Antony that consistently feature his clothing in a marked way (Cicero’s *Philippics* and Appian’s *Bella Civilia*) what emerges from the comparison is inconsistency. The versions of Antony in these texts are all indeed given to gestures involving clothing. Yet the kinds of clothing that Antony dons, the circumstances under which he wears it, and the significance that these authors draw from it are all radically different. It is therefore more accurate to say that this material is evidence that Antony is conventionally *represented* as a man given to gestures involving clothing. The authors who represent Antony this way view his appearance as a malleable factor that they can alter at will; Antony’s signal sartorial gestures are not an immutable element of the historio-biographical tradition. Instead, I will argue that our authors feature Antony’s physical appearance because it resonates with their broader thematic programs, and that they fashion Antony to suit the function that he performs for them.

An examination of our source texts will reveal, however, that Antony’s clothing and gestures are only one aspect of a deeper engagement these authors undertake in representing Antony’s physical appearance. Cicero, Plutarch, and Appian all configure Antony as a negative *exemplum*, and I will propose that the sartorial versatility that their versions of Antony display is

part of a larger program of assimilating Antony to the charismatic but unsavory, unstable figure of the actor.¹² In these authors' hands, Antony becomes a theatrical performer whose predilection for wearing unconventional costumes undercuts his dignity as a Roman magistrate and general. However, Antony's theatricality goes deeper than his clothing. Antony's body – his physique, deportment, and actions – is also featured by these authors as a *locus* for revealing character traits as well as otherwise hidden motivations for his behavior. In effect, our authors all make a case for regarding Antony's physical appearance as the most accurate index of his true character and intentions. The rhetorical objectives that Cicero, Plutarch, and Appian have in making this case all differ, of course, and the particular role that the theatrical Antony performs in each author's broader thematic program will have to be delineated. We will see that the image of Antony as a chameleon-like figure who can inhabit different personae resonates with each of these authors, but in different ways. This makes Antony's portrayal as an actor-like figure a prime candidate for metabiographical analysis. It also makes an appropriate subject for my first chapter because our authors' projections of other personae onto Antony (such as the tyrant and the insane lover) are often conditioned upon Antony's characterization as a man who shifts easily between different identities.

Part One: Cicero

My decision to begin a study of the reception of the life of Mark Antony with the *Philippics* might at first glance appear paradoxical, given that the *Philippics* are putatively engaging with a real, contemporary Antony in real time. Yet, as we shall see, the Antony we

¹² Duncan (2006: 124-59) collects and discusses the evidence for the status of actors in republican Roman society, both in terms of civil status under the law and social status. Actors occupied a legal and social position akin to that of prostitutes. Each of our authors displays their own distinct attitude towards actors and theatricality, however, that will have to be unpacked and correlated with these general social attitudes.

encounter in the *Philippics* is already quite literally a figment of Cicero's literary imagination. Moreover, Cicero's approach anticipates how many later authors will fashion a fictive Antony, reconstruct a biography for his life, and exploit him as a negative *exemplum*. To illustrate how completely the Antony represented in the *Philippics* is subject to Cicero's authorial control, I will begin my treatment of Cicero's rhetorical manipulation of Antony's physical appearance by looking closely at a series of three occasions in the *Second Philippic* where Cicero interrupts his speech to gaze upon his adversary, the consul Mark Antony, and then describes Antony's physical reactions to the rhetorical attack that Cicero has just made. These three occasions can reveal Cicero's authorial approach to Antony's physical appearance because these encounters between Cicero and Antony never happened in real life. The *Second Philippic* was never delivered as a live performance, so they are entirely Cicero's invention. I will show how these occasions help both to establish Antony's negative characterization in the speech and to teach Cicero's audience to privilege Antony's body and physical appearance as the indicators of his true character and intentions.

The rhetorical gesture of addressing one's adversary is certainly not without precedent in other Ciceronian orations. For example, at one point in Cicero's *Pro Ligario* (9), a speech delivered in 46 BC before the Dictator Julius Caesar, Cicero addresses his antagonist Tubero, a young Caesarian who is attempting to prevent Ligarius from receiving a pardon from Caesar for actions in support of the Pompeians in Africa:

Sed hoc quaero: Quis putat esse crimen fuisse in Africa? Nempe is, qui et ipse in eadem provincia esse voluit et prohibitum se a Ligario queritur, et certe contra ipsum Caesarem est congressus armatus. Quid enim, Tubero, tuus ille destructus in acie Pharsalica gladius agebat? cuius latus ille mucro petebat? qui sensus erat armorum tuorum? quae tua mens, oculi, manus, ardor animi? quid cupiebas, quid optabas? Nimis urgeo; commoveri videtur adulescens. Ad me revertar. Isdem in armis fui.¹³

¹³ The Latin text of Cicero's *Philippics* used throughout this dissertation is that of Clark's OCT edition unless otherwise noted.

But I ask this: Who thinks that it is an offense to have been in Africa? This man [i.e. Tubero], obviously, who even himself wished to be in this very province and complains that he was kept away from it by Ligarius, and who certainly, while in arms, fought against Caesar himself. Indeed, Tubero, what was that sword of yours unsheathed in the Battle of Pharsalia doing? Whose flank was that sword point seeking? What was the inclination of your weapons? What of your mindset, your eyes, your hands, the ardent desire of your mind? What were you desirous of? What were you wishing for? I press him too much; the young man seems to be unsettled. I will return to myself. I too bore arms in the same cause.

The phrase *commoveri videtur adulescens*, “the young man seems to be unsettled.” From this disclosure, implies either that Tubero experienced righteous indignation at being slandered, or that Cicero has hit on an uncomfortable truth that Tubero would rather remain hidden. Cicero, I am sure, intends for the readers of the published speech to draw the second conclusion. In this way, Cicero utilizes the evidence provided by Tubero’s physical reaction to corroborate the truths implied by the rhetorical questions he directs at the young man. These rhetorical questions themselves draw attention to Tubero’s body: his eyes, his hands, the ardent desire of his mind. Cicero even puts himself forward as a corroborating witness. He was “in the same arms” (*isdem in armis*) and can thus vouch for the fact, evidently, that Tubero also fought against Caesar at one point, just like Ligarius.

One might be tempted to think that Cicero had invented the detail of Tubero’s physical disturbance and inserted it into the published version of the speech, given how well the existence of this detail plays to Cicero’s advantage. Yet the studied ambiguity of the verb *commoveri* could support a reasonable inference that Cicero is preserving the ambiguity of an outburst by Tubero that actually happened during the original delivery of the speech. In other words, Cicero writes that Tubero “was unsettled” at this point in the speech because he *was* unsettled, for motives open to interpretation, in real life. We cannot be certain, in the case of the *Pro Ligario*, of the extent to which Cicero practices authorial invention in how he represents the physical reactions

of other people in the courtroom. We can, however, be certain about this in the case of the *Second Philippic*.

Cicero frames the *Second Philippic* as a direct response to an invective that Mark Antony leveled against him in a meeting of the Senate at the Temple of Concord on September 19th, 44 BC. Cicero loads this speech with details of the physical space of the meeting and of its attendees that give every indication that Cicero actually delivered the *Second Philippic* at that time and place. We know from Cicero's letters and the later *Philippics*, however, that Cicero was not in fact present in the Senate meeting on the 19th of September and that the *Second Philippic* was composed over a number of months afterwards and was for a long time – perhaps even for the rest of Cicero's lifetime – only circulated among Cicero's close friends and associates.¹⁴ When Antony's physical presence and his body are incorporated into the *Second Philippic*, we can be certain that Cicero has invented this detail, and that the three occasions on which he invokes Antony's body are composed according to Cicero's full authorial discretion. For this reason, we are in a position to interrogate why Cicero *chooses* to depict Antony's physical reactions at the moments and in the contexts and in the ways that he does.

Commentators (e.g. Peskett 1887; Ramsey 2003) have customarily explained these occasions as three among many physical and temporal details of the Senate meeting of September 19th that Cicero inserts in order to enhance the realism of the speech; to make his readers feel that this speech is more than just a rhetorical exercise. I agree that this is part of the function of these three invocations, but I would like to push further – drawing inspiration from Ann Vasaly's (1993) work on Cicero's exploitation of the semiotics of place and space in his rhetorical program – and suggest that Cicero invokes Antony's body (as he invokes Tubero's in

¹⁴ Ramsey (2003: 155-60).

the passage from *Pro Ligario* above) in order to create a corroborating witness to vouch for the truth of accusations that would otherwise appear particularly open to challenge and rebuttal.

The first time that Cicero alludes to Antony's reaction to something that he has said is in the context of discussing two plots against the life of Caesar: one in 46 or 45 BC that Cicero explicitly accuses Antony of being a part of, and the other the one that resulted in Caesar's assassination. At *Phil.* 2.36.9-16, Cicero writes of Antony:

Etenim quae res egestati et aeri alieno tuo praeter mortem Caesaris subvenire potuisset? Nescio quid conturbatus esse videris: num quid subtimes ne ad te hoc crimen pertinere videatur? Libero te metu: nemo credet umquam; non est tuum de re publica bene mereri; habet istius pulcherrimi facti clarissimos viros res publica auctores; ego te tantum gaudere dico, fecisse non arguo.

Truly, what event besides the death of Caesar could have alleviated your poverty and indebtedness? You seem to be a little bit disturbed. Is it because you are afraid that this accusation might appear to have something to do with you? Let me free you from fear: No one will ever believe it. It is not your way to acquit yourself well where the Republic is concerned. The Republic has exceedingly brilliant men as authors of that most splendid deed. I assert only that you were happy about it; I do not accuse you of having done it.

As Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.36) notes, the word used to describe Antony's reaction here, *conturbatus*, is defined by Cicero in his *Topica* (52) as the display of paleness, blushing, and unsteadiness of the feet (*pallor, rubor, titubatio*). All of these visual manifestations of emotion might be reasonably interpreted as outward signs of the fear from which Cicero says he will free Antony in the middle of this passage. Cicero is explicit and specific in defining the motivation behind Antony's reaction: Antony is disturbed by the plausibility of his own complicity in Caesar's death. But this raises the question of what Cicero gains by establishing that it was merely plausible that Antony stood to gain from Caesar's death. I think that this section is less about the accusations themselves, which are unattested in any source independent of Cicero,¹⁵ than about establishing for Cicero's readers how Cicero and Antony each express truth. Cicero demonstrates (or at least gives the appearance of demonstrating) that he will remain faithful to

¹⁵ Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.36).

logic in his spoken discourse. Cicero shows that he will not go outside the bounds of plausibility by claiming that Antony is complicit in Caesar's death. This is an accusation that, on its face, no one in Rome would actually believe. Cicero knows that he would be overreaching to try to implicate Antony in Caesar's assassination. But having Antony himself react as if there were some truth to this accusation makes it appear that maybe Cicero *is* onto something with this line of attack. Cicero effectively uses Antony's physical reaction to make it seem that an admittedly far-fetched accusation has unexpectedly hit home. This maneuver makes Cicero's putative good-faith appear more plausible; it is Antony after all who, through his body language, implicitly insists on the truth of the accusation, not Cicero. In addition, this maneuver teaches the reader to look to Antony's body as a *locus* where truth can be legibly observed. This is a lesson that Cicero reiterates throughout the speech and, in particular, during the other two occasions where he invokes Antony's physical body.

At *Phil.* 2.76.7-17, Cicero makes the following comment on the clothing Antony chose to wear on a trip to and from Gaul in 46 or 45 BC:

Nam, quod quaerebas, quo modo redissem, primum luce, non tenebris; deinde cum calceis et toga, nullis nec Gallicis nec lacerna. At etiam aspicias me et quidem, ut videris, iratus. Ne tu iam mecum in gratiam redeas, si scias quam me pudeat nequitiae tuae, cuius te ipsum non pudet. Ex omnium omnibus flagitiis nullum turpius vidi, nullum audiui. Qui magister equitum fuisse tibi viderere, in proximum annum consulatum peteres vel potius rogares, per municipia coloniasque Galliae, a qua nos tum, cum consulatus petebatur, non rogabatur, petere consulatum solebamus, cum Gallicis et lacerna cucurristi.

As for the thing you were asking about earlier, namely, the way I returned [to Rome], first of all I did so in broad daylight, not in darkness; moreover, I did so wearing Roman shoes and a toga, not in Gallic footwear and a traveling cloak. But I see the look you are giving me, and it certainly seems to be an angry one. Indeed, you and I would be in each other's good graces by now if you knew how ashamed I am of your bad behavior, of which you feel no shame at all. Of all the misdeeds done by anybody, I have seen and heard nothing more appalling. You who regarded yourself as a former Master of the Horse, who stood for – or rather asked [Caesar] for – the consulship of the following year, ran about through the communities and colonies of Gaul – the place from which we were accustomed to seek the consulship when it was stood for and not asked for – with Gallic footwear and a traveling cloak.

In this passage, Cicero makes a direct link between the expression on Antony's face and the criticism of Antony's appearance. Not just his choice of clothing, but the fact that Antony ran about (*cucurristi*) in this costume also signifies a kind of servility and lack of *dignitas*, especially since *curro* effectively stands in for *ambio*, the more conventional verb of electoral canvassing. Running around, as we gather from Plautus (*Poen.* 522), Quintilian (*Inst.* 2.3.112), and other discussions of deportment in Latin literature, is a markedly servile gesture. Free men walk slowly and stately while slaves run from place to place, and the fact that Antony runs about Gaul while essentially dressed in costume reinforces his assimilation to a theatrical, servile paradigm in this passage.

In general, untraditional clothing choices are a prominent *topos* of Roman invective, and recent research by Edmondson (2008), Christenson (2004), Dyck (2001), and Corbeill (1996) into the role that physical appearance plays in Ciceronian invective has uncovered an elaborate semiotics of clothing, anatomical features, and gesture that links particular visual cues to underlying character traits and emotional states. However, it would be overstating things to say that the meaning of such visual signs is rigidly fixed. Julia Heskel (1994: 135-6), for example, notes how in the *Verrines* (5.137) Cicero attacks Verres for wearing Greek attire when Cicero is performing the role of accuser, but that in *Pro C. Rabirio Postumo* (25-27) Cicero defends Rabirius's practice of wearing Greek attire when Cicero is performing the role of advocate. This inconsistency is probably not attributable to a change in Cicero's fashion sense, but rather to the exigencies of Cicero's side of the case. Therefore, when an article of clothing like Gallic footwear or a "traveling cloak" (*lacerna*) is attacked as decadent or indecorous, as they are in the passage under discussion, it is worthwhile to investigate just how much of an objective faux pas it was to wear such an article in actual fact.

In the case of the *lacerna*, a Roman social taboo against wearing it has been posited on the basis of a remark by Suetonius (*Aug.* 40) that Augustus banned them in the Forum, but it is difficult to say whether such a social taboo was fully operative in 44 BC given that this passage, again as Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.76.7) notes, contains the very first references to both Gallic footwear and a *lacerna* in extant Latin literature. It is reasonable to infer, then, that the *Gallicis-lacerna* ensemble could represent a new fashion trend in Rome, and for this reason it is to Cicero's advantage to have a corroborating witness who can attest its inappropriateness for a high Roman official. There is no better witness than Antony to confirm that Cicero is right to think that dressing in this way belongs among the worst of Antony's misdeeds. But, just as in the case of Cicero's earlier invocation of Antony's body at *Phil.* 2.36, Cicero makes it seem here as well that he has been caught off guard by Antony's reaction. Fictive-Cicero's reproach that Antony has no shame for his bad behavior does not square with fictive-Antony's anger at being criticized for wearing Gallic footwear and a *lacerna*. Cicero thus writes a scene in which the reaction of fictive-Antony exceeds the knowledge of fictive-Cicero, configuring Antony's body into a signifier of more truth than even Cicero in his persona as speaker seems to be fully aware of.

The third occasion where Cicero invokes Antony's physical reaction at *Phil.* 2.84.13-19 is the richest of the series and concerns Antony's behavior at the infamous Lupercalia of February, 44 BC, when Cicero claims that he offered to crown Julius Caesar with a diadem:

Sed ne forte ex multis rebus gestis M. Antoni rem unam pulcherrimam transiliat oratio, ad Lupercalia veniamus. Non dissimulat, patres conscripti: apparet esse commotum; sudat, pallet. Quidlibet, modo ne faciat quod in porticu Minucia fecit. Quae potest esse turpitudinis tantae defensio?

But in order that my speech not chance to pass over that one most splendid feat of all the many deeds of Mark Antony, let us come to the Lupercalia. He does not dissemble, Members of the Senate. He appears to be unsettled. He sweats. He grows pale. Well, let

him do anything, as long as he does not do what he did in the Colonnade of Minucius [i.e. vomit]. What possible defense is there for such atrociousness?

Cicero chooses to disclose Antony's physical reaction before he actually describes the details of what Antony did that was so shameful at the Lupercalia. The placement of Antony's guilty expression proleptically corroborates every unflattering interpretation that Cicero will make of his behavior that day over the next few lines of his speech. Antony's disturbance, sweating, and paleness preclude Cicero's readers from thinking that Antony's offer of a diadem to Caesar was an elaborately staged pantomime designed to demonstrate Caesar's rejection of kingly authority. The signs on Antony's body admit that even he thinks that there was something shame-worthy and immoral about his offer to Caesar, and also that there was something shame-worthy about giving a speech, as consul, virtually nude as Lupercus.

There is a potential inconsistency, however, in Cicero's attitude towards the Luperci given that his own nephew Quintus participated in the Lupercalia of 46 BC without Cicero heaping upon him the same kind of abuse that he directs at Antony at *Phil.* 2.84.¹⁶ Furthermore, as J. A. North (2008) has shown, many elements of the Lupercalia of 44 BC were innovative and highly unusual, including the participation of the almost 40 year old consul Antony as the leader of the new *sodalitas* ("company"), the Juliani – formerly, there were only two *sodalitates*, the Fabiani and the Quinctiani, which would be composed of young equestrians – and the presence of the dictator Julius Caesar in the kingly *toga purpurea* recently bestowed by the Senate.¹⁷ There is no precedent or standard for consular protocol at the Lupercalia to which Cicero might hold Antony accountable in 44 BC. When Cicero describes the Lupercalia episode in the

¹⁶ See *Att.* 12.5.1 and North and McLynn (2008) for discussion of the same. Cicero does not find young Quintus's participation laudable, but it is telling that Cicero's brother Quintus was very pleased at the news.

¹⁷ Cassius Dio 44.6.1. Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.85.9) observes that the *toga purpurea* is distinct from the *vestis triumphalis* (i.e. the *toga picta*). Caesar's right to wear the latter at festival occasions was conferred by the senate in 45 BC, as Cassius Dio 43.43.1 and 44.4.2 reports.

Philippics, he dwells on Antony's appearance: his nudity, his drunkenness, and the unguents with which the consul adorned himself.¹⁸ Yet without a clear precedent for how a consul should look and act when participating in the Lupercalia, it is far from a foregone conclusion that Cicero's readers/audience would have regarded Antony's appearance at this festival as inherently shameful and transgressive. However, because a fictive Antony is present in the text reacting with visible expressions of shame to Cicero's disclosure, the immorality of this action is no longer in doubt. Antony's body becomes its own cipher, visibly affirming its own past misdeeds.

Cicero's thematic preoccupation in his orations – and especially in the *Second Philippic* – with writing has been delineated by Shane Butler (2002). Cicero's rhetorical strategy is to demonstrate to his audience/readership his own mastery of eloquence, both written and spoken, and to discredit Antony's pretensions to the same level of oratorical ability. The *Thirteenth Philippic*, which features a *tour de force*, line-by-line close reading of a letter sent by Antony to the consul Hirtius and Octavian (13.22-50), is the longest demonstration Cicero undertakes of deconstructing a specimen of Antony's prose. Charges leveled elsewhere in the *Philippics* that attempt to demolish Antony's credibility as a speaker and writer include 1) Antony's corrupt use of Caesar's unpublished memoranda to justify a slew of dodgy appointments, decrees, and executive actions,¹⁹ 2) Antony's employment of a professional rhetorician, Sextus Clodius, to guide him in composing his orations,²⁰ and 3) Antony's refusal to observe conventional etiquette

¹⁸ At *Phil.* 13.31 Cicero reiterates all these criticisms of Antony's appearance but makes only a curiously oblique reference to Antony's offer of a diadem to Caesar: "Does [Antony] dare make mention of the Lupercalia and not shudder in horror at the remembrance of that day on which he dared commend slavery to the groaning Roman people when he was soured with wine, smeared with unguents, and naked?" (*Lupercorum mentionem facere audet neque illius diei memoriam perhorrescit quo ausus est obrutus vino, unguentis oblitus, nudus gementem populum Romanum servitutem cohortari?*). At *Phil.* 5.38, Cicero mentions the offer of the diadem without referring to Antony's personal appearance, although the focus of this allusion to the Lupercalia is the reaction of Lepidus to Antony's offer. Of Lepidus, Cicero writes: "[Lepidus] turned away and declared with a groan and a gloomy aspect how much he hated slavery" (*se avertit gemituque et maestitia declaravit quantum haberet odium servitutis*). The message conveyed by personal appearance is again the focus in Cicero's account.

¹⁹ *Phil.* 1.16, 2.6, and 10.16.

in the composition and exchange of letters. At *Phil.* 2.7-10, Cicero offers an illustration of Antony's epistolary habits in action, asserting that Antony had performed an egregiously tasteless action the previous day by reading out loud in the Senate a private letter that Cicero had written to Antony some time before. In this letter, Cicero agreed to the recall of Sextus Cloelius, one of Clodius's henchman.²¹ Cicero protests that Antony's reading the letter publicly goes against social decorum and precedent, but from a perusal of this letter, which has come down to us as *Att.* 14.13b,²² we can see why the historical Antony might have run a risk of appearing tactless by reading it. The content of the letter consists of unctuous praise for Antony coupled with fulsome affirmations of friendship. Antony therefore exhibits a high degree of cunning both in having retained this letter and in producing it in the Senate as a *prima facie* exhibit of Cicero's potential for insincerity, two-facedness, and cravenness. We are thus in a position to apprehend the disingenuousness of Cicero's attack in this instance. Despite Cicero's attempts to shift attention from the content of the letter to Antony's gauche exploitation of it, we can also infer that the historical Antony who is Cicero's actual opponent (as opposed to the straw-man Antony whom Cicero is fashioning) is a much more adept and credible manipulator of documentary evidence than Cicero would have us believe. For this reason, it makes sense that Cicero would expend every rhetorical effort to craft a body and a mode of behavior for Antony that work together to undercut anything that the real Antony has said or might say to confound Cicero's rhetoric. Cicero configures Antony's physical appearance in the speeches as a series of signs that articulate a meaning that is at once unflattering to Antony and more convincing than that of the real Antony's own written and spoken discourse.

²⁰ *Phil.* 2.8.34, 2.42.31-4, and 2.84.8. See also Ramsey (2003: 4).

²¹ *Phil.* 2.7.

²² We also have Antony's original letter (*Att.* 14.13a) asking Cicero to acquiesce to Cloelius's recall.

The three occasions where Cicero fabricates Antony's physical reactions show his readers how to read Antony's body as if it were a legible text. The other occasions in the *Philippics* when Cicero retrospectively invokes Antony's body, clothing, and demeanor can also be subjected to the interpretation of the reader – if they have not already been interpreted by Cicero himself – in order to produce a reading of Antony's character and behavior that discredits the claims that Antony makes about himself in his own speeches and writings. I will argue that Cicero's fashioning of Antony's textual body produces two distinct yet mutually reinforcing readings. One reading, which I will cover in the next chapter, figures Antony as a quintessential tyrant. The other, which I will spend the remainder of this section unpacking, figures Antony as a performer of the theatre and of the arena, assimilating him to the *infamis* status of the actor and the gladiator.

The chief work of scholarship examining Cicero's use of theatrical personae to characterize Antony in the *Philippics* is an article by Lewis Sussman (1994). Sussman identifies a number of features of Cicero's characterization of Antony in the *Second Philippic* that he argues map well onto the comedic stock character of the *miles gloriosus*. These include a certain element of boastfulness in Cicero's *prosopopoeia* for Antony at *Phil.* 2.72; the comparison of Antony to a mime figure who evokes the "rags to riches" character arc of the *miles* Bias in Menander's *Kolax* at *Phil.* 2.65;²³ and Antony's low-class marriage association with the family of a freedman at *Phil.* 2.3. Cicero's comment at *Phil.* 2.65 that Antony behaved like a "character out of a mime" (*persona de mimo*) when he acquired Pompey's property certainly reveals that Cicero is attempting to assimilate Antony into the guise of a theatrical performer, but I think that

²³ *Phil.* 2.65: "Therefore, having suddenly plunged himself into the wealth of this man, he jumped for joy; he was a character in a mime: 'once poor, now suddenly rich.' But, as it is said by some poet or other, 'Ill-gotten goods will be ill spent'" (*In eius igitur viri copias cum se subito ingurgitasset, exultabat gaudio, persona de mimo, 'modo egens, repente dives.'* *Sed, ut est apud poetam [Naevius] nescio quem, 'male parta male dilabuntur'*).

it is taking it too far to presume that Cicero's audience/readership would take a passing reference to mime and read through it to a specific Menandrian subtext featuring a *miles gloriosus*. "Rags to riches" character arcs are hardly confined to *milites* in extant Roman comedy, and there are other passages in the *Philippics* that problematize the view that consistently identifying Antony with the *miles gloriosus* is one of Cicero's rhetorical goals. Discussing these passages in light of the proposed identification of Cicero's Antony with the *miles* will show that the characterization Cicero builds for Antony is actually as a chameleon-like theatrical performer who shifts between many unsavory identities.

In his speech to the Senate on 19 September 44 BC, Antony had made fun of Cicero's poetry, and in particular the line "Let arms yield to the toga" (*cedant arma togae*).²⁴ Cicero responds to this mockery with the remark, "What? Did they not yield at that time? But afterwards the toga yielded to your arms" (*Quid? Tum nonne cesserunt? At postea tuis armis cessit toga*). Sussman (1994: 59-60) argues that Cicero is drawing an absolute distinction between his own civilian decorum and a boastful Roman soldiery represented by Antony. Sussman would have Cicero's critique of Antony as a boastful soldier extend to the Roman army as a whole, given that Antony is often accompanied by an armed bodyguard. Indeed, on several other occasions in the *Philippics*, Cicero makes pointed, critical references to Antony's policy as consul of convening the Senate accompanied by an armed bodyguard.²⁵ Cicero views this as an especially galling indication of Antony's tyrannical pretensions. The visual spectacle of an armed consul with an armed bodyguard produces a chilling effect on spoken discourse, trumping it as a means of persuasion. Yet the arms in question belong to Ituraean mercenaries rather than

²⁴ See *Phil.* 2.20 on Antony's joking about Cicero's poetry, and Ramsey (2003: 155-7) for an overview of the delivery and content of Antony's speech.

²⁵ Cf. *Phil.* 1.16, 1.27, 2.8, 2.15, 2.19, 2.46, 2.100, 2.108, 2.112, 3.30, 5.18, and 13.18.

Roman *militēs* as such, and the idea that Cicero would deliberately cast Roman soldiers in a villainous role here seems unlikely given how Cicero makes a point of abandoning his toga and aligning himself sartorially with Roman soldiers in the *Eighth Philippic* (8.32):

Equidem, patres conscripti, quamquam hoc honore usi togati solent esse cum est in sagis civitas, statui tamen a vobis ceterisque civibus in tanta atrocitate temporis tantaque perturbatione rei publicae non differre vestitu. Non enim ita gerimus nos hoc bello consulares ut aequo animo populus Romanus visurus sit nostri honoris insignia, cum partim e nobis ita timidi sint ut omnem populi Romani beneficiorum memoriam abiecerint, partim ita a re publica aversi ut se hosti favere prae se ferant, legatos nostros ab Antonio despectos et irrisos facile patiantur, legatum Antoni sublevatum velint.

At any rate, members of the Senate, although those of us consulars who wear the toga are accustomed to retain this honor when the community wears military cloaks, nevertheless I have decided not to dress differently from you and the rest of the citizens in such a horrific time and in so great a disturbance for the Republic. For in this war we consulars have not carried ourselves so that the Roman people might look upon the insignia of our rank with equanimity, since some of us are so cowardly that they have cast away all memory of the benefits conferred by the Roman people, and others are so estranged from the Republic that they put themselves forward as partisans of the enemy, easily endure seeing our envoys despised and ridiculed by Antony, and wish to smooth the way for Antony's envoy.

Here, Cicero acknowledges the potent symbolism of *toga* and *sagum* and even claims to have broken tradition in his own costume in order to enhance his rapport with the non-consular members of the Senate. The contrast between *sagum* and *toga* (that is, between war and peace) is a binary tension that Cicero works in other places in the *Philippics* where the orator vociferously advocates for a military response to Antony's attempt to wrest Cisalpine Gaul from Decimus Brutus in 43 BC.²⁶ The only other time, apart from the *lacerna* anecdote at *Phil.* 2.76, that we are given a glimpse of Antony's cloak in the *Philippics* is at *Phil.* 13.19, where Cicero remarks that Antony has run from the Senate dressed in a *paludamentum*,²⁷ the fine purple cloak worn by Roman *imperatores* in the field. The way Cicero formulates the allusion to this article of clothing

²⁶ Cicero refers to the donning of *saga* by the Roman populace at *Phil.* 7.21, 8.6, 10.19, 12.12, 12.16.

²⁷ *Phil.* 13.19: “[Antony] left [Rome] wearing a general's cloak not by the main road but by the by-paths” (*egressus est non viis, sed tramitibus paludatus*).

indicates that Antony donned the *paludamentum* when he left Rome, implying that he had been wearing the *toga praetexta* (as consul) while he sat in the Senate, and not the *sagum*.

Envisioning Antony's clothing thus undercuts the idea that Cicero is consistently associating him with the *miles gloriosus* figure, who customarily appears in Roman comedy with his distinctive "military cloak" (*chlamys*) and "short sword" (*machaera*).²⁸ A better candidate for a stereotypically negative character invoked by Cicero's portrayal of Antony as a swaggering, drunken, low-class lout is the gladiator, a figure that Cicero explicitly invokes through another pointed reading of Antony's body (2.63.25-8):

Tu istis faucibus, istis lateribus, ista gladiatoria totius corporis firmitate tantum vini in Hippiae nuptiis exhauseras ut tibi necesse esset in populi Romani conspectu vomere postridie.

You, with that gullet, with that barrel chest, with that massive all-round physique befitting a gladiator, had gulped down so much wine at Hippias's wedding that the next day it became necessary for you to vomit in full view of the Roman people.

"Gladiator" is Cicero's favorite slur to cast at Antony,²⁹ and it is an appealing target of censure: an *infamis* and servile figure, popular but vulgar, and tinged with associations of depredation and slaughter, which Cicero brings to the fore in *Phil.* 4.15 and 13.22 by comparing Antony with the gladiator turned slave-revolt leader Spartacus. Cicero attempts to transform Antony's bluntness, *bonhomie*, and impressive physique from attractive assets into unsavory liabilities. Antony's persona is redefined. Moreover, Cicero buttresses his identification of Antony as a *gladiator* by asserting that the cultivation of gladiatorial attire, physiques, and behavior is a family affair; he claims that Antony's brother Lucius took up the armor and accoutrements of a *murmillio* and killed a man outfitted as a *thrax* while in Asia Minor (*Phil.* 3.31, 5.20, 6.10, 7.17-18, and 12.20).

²⁸ Cf. Plautus, *Curc.* 631-3; *Epid.* 435-6; *Mil.* 1422-3; and *Pseud.* 734-5.

²⁹ See Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.7.13), who follows Denniston (1926) in calling *gladiator* Cicero's veritable nickname for Antony. cf. *Phil.* 2.7, 2.63, 2.74, 3.18, 5.32, and 13.25, as well as *Fam.* 12.2.1 and 12.22.1.

Cicero stresses the performative aspect of Antony's constructed body inasmuch as the disgraceful behavior that Cicero describes frequently has a distinct audience and becomes a spectacle to be witnessed. In the passage quoted above, Antony's hungover vomiting is especially worthy of censure because it happens "in full view of the Roman people" (*in populi Romani conspectu*). Cicero had earlier prepared the way for his portrait of Antony as a performer in gladiatorial spectacles by relating an anecdote about how Antony had once "chased [Clodius] in the Forum with a sword while the Roman people watched" (*illum in foro inspectante populo Romano gladio insecutus, Phil. 2.21*). Antony's accusation that Cicero had instigated the killing of Clodius is thus shown (fictively of course) to be a case of Antony projecting his own intentions and actions onto his rivals, with the Roman people being brought forward as a witness to the spectacle of Antony transforming the Forum into a veritable arena.

For all that Cicero stresses Antony's violent, loutish qualities, it would be an overstatement to claim that the *Second Philippic* – or the *Philippics* in general – present Cicero's audience/readership with a consistent characterization of Antony as a single type of performer. Antony's hulking physique, drunkenness, violent tendencies, and willingness to deploy armed mercenaries to enforce his consular decrees do invoke archetypal representations of gladiators and, as we shall see in greater detail in the next chapter, tyrants. However, there are other moments in the speech where Antony and his body are depicted in such a way as to undercut the idea that Antony maintains an active control over his body and his masculinity. Cicero creates an impression that he is exposing a weakness and passivity in Antony that he and his audience can then exploit in order to neutralize the threat posed by Antony's power to inflict violence in his roles of consul, gladiator, soldier, and tyrant.

We have already seen Cicero's visions of Antony running around the province of Gaul wearing Gallic footwear and a *lacerna* as well as Antony parading around the Lupercalia festival virtually in the nude, but arguably the most conspicuous instance of Cicero citing Antony's physical appearance as a way of diminishing him occurs at *Phil.* 2.44-5. Here, Cicero asks Antony, "Would you like us to take a look at you from your boyhood?" (*Visne igitur te inspiciamus a puero?*) and proceeds to craft an account of a bankrupt, youthful Antony selling his body first as a common prostitute (*primo vulgare scortum*) and then as the stable, submissive partner of the emerging politician Curio. Such scurrilous gossip is a commonplace of Roman invective and has no basis in fact,³⁰ but even compared to similar charges laid against Julius Caesar, Octavian, and others, it is exceptional that Cicero illustrates Antony's passive, feminine role in the relationship by characterizing his clothing as the *toga muliebris* and, when Antony enters into an exclusive relationship with Curio, the *stola*.³¹ Cicero speaks about both of these items of clothing metaphorically, although in the case of the *toga muliebris* there is no evidence that there was any difference in appearance between this garment and the *toga virilis*, apart from the gender of the wearer.³² The idea of a young man of Antony's lineage and social rank engaging in such behavior would strike the readers of Cicero's oration as patently disgraceful,

³⁰ Cf. Pseudo-Sallust, *In Cic.* 2.1, where Cicero is accused of having acquired his oratorical skills from Marcus Piso at the cost of his "sexual purity" (*pudicitia*).

³¹ *Phil.* 2.44.24-9: "You put on the toga of manhood and immediately transformed it into the uniform of a *meretrix*. At first you were a common whore. The price of your sexual transgression was fixed, and it was not small. But soon enough Curio intervened, he who took you out of the whoring trade and, as if he had given you a married lady's robe, put you into stable and steady wedlock" (*Sumpsisti virilem, quam statim muliebrem togam reddisti. Primo vulgare scortum; certa flagiti merces nec ea parva; sed cito Curio intervenit, qui te a meretricio quaestu abduxit et, tamquam stolam dedisset, in matrimonio stabili et certo collocavit*). Ramsey (2003: ad loc.) notes that similar charges were leveled against Marcus Caelius Rufus (Cicero, *Pro Cael.* 6), Julius Caesar (Suet., *Jul.* 49), and Octavian (Suet., *Aug.* 68). Notably, in no other case besides Antony's is the criticism couched in terms of the target's clothing.

³² For a detailed discussion of the evidence and symbolism of the *toga muliebris* as it pertains to prostitutes and women who commit adultery, see Olson (2006).

even if Cicero leaves many of the details to the imagination.³³ In this way, Antony is assimilated to another kind of *infamis* figure besides the gladiator, but there is still a performative aspect to this other role as well given that Antony is envisioned donning, even if metaphorically, a woman's costume and living the life of a common prostitute in which "the price of [his] sexual transgression was fixed, and it was not small" (*certa flagitii merces, nec ea parva, Phil. 2.44.26*).

Cicero's account of Antony's youthful sexual exploits characterizes him as a parasite and a kept man. There is a certain element of similarity between the position that Cicero's Antony occupied in his youth and the position that Antony's mistress, the mime-actress Cytheris, occupies in Antony's life in the present. Antony's close association with the social milieu of actors, actresses, and quintessentially low-life characters is a recurrent theme in the *Second Philippic*,³⁴ and a key component of Cicero's critique is that Antony makes a spectacle of himself by being seen in their company. We see this in Cicero's description (2.58) of a procession through Italy that Antony undertook as tribune of the plebs with *propraetorian imperium* in 49 BC:³⁵

Vehebatur in essedo tribunus plebis; lictores laureati antecedeabant, inter quos aperta lectica mima portabatur, quam ex oppidis municipales homines honesti, obviam necessario prodeuntes, non noto illo et mimico nomine, sed Volumniam consulabant. Sequebatur raeda cum lenonibus, comites nequissimi; reiecta mater amicam impuri filii tamquam nurum sequebatur.

A tribune of the plebs was driven about in a two-wheeled chariot. Laurel-garlanded lictors preceded it, in the midst of whom a mime-actress was carried in an open litter. Honorable citizens from the Italian towns, coming out under duress to meet her, saluted her not by that famous stage-name of hers, but as Volumnia. A wagon full of pimps followed, a most low-life set of companions. A mother, set in the back, followed the girlfriend of her vile son as if she were her daughter-in-law.

³³ See Richlin (1983: 14-16, 101-102, and 220-226) for an analysis of how Cicero's construction of Antony's youthful sexual exploits fits into the larger context of Roman attitudes towards sexuality.

³⁴ Sussman (1994: 77-80) collects and discusses the various types of hangers-on and parasites whom Cicero cites as satellites of Antony. They include gamblers (2.56, 67, 100), drunkards (2.42, 67, 104-7), slaves (2.67, 91) pimps (2.58), prostitutes (2.69, 105), thieves (2.62, 87), and Greeks (2.62, 106).

³⁵ On the circumstances of this procession and the career of Cytheris, see Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.58).

There is an unsubtle irony in the emphasis that Cicero lays on Cytheris's profession in this passage. In endeavoring to act as Antony's wife, Cytheris is represented as performing an obvious and degrading piece of playacting. Her "open" litter ensures that she will be visible and unconcealed to the audience, the respectable Italian townsfolk who are themselves compelled against their will to enact a scene of greeting. Antony, Cytheris, and their pimp-companions are treated as if they formed a conventional and legitimate procession by a Roman magistrate and his retainers. As a *coup de grâce*, Antony's own mother is cast in the role of mother-in-law to Antony's paramour. The overall effect produced by Cicero's treatment of the scene is to set up Antony as a focal point around which a parody of magisterial ceremony is enacted. This parody is staged through the inversion of the participants' true roles. Cytheris, although addressed by the more respectable name of Volumnia, is so much more identifiable with her mime-actress persona that to call her by any name but her stage-name becomes an appropriate target of ridicule. The Italian townsfolk, although ostensibly passive spectators, are impressed into service as actors themselves, playing the role of compliant observers of protocol even though the particular magistrate and procession in front of them is patently unworthy of their respect. Finally, there is a profound incongruity between Antony's mother, a member of the noble Julian *gens*, and the woman of the under-class whom she effectively must treat as her *nurus*.

All of these parodic elements expose Cicero's fictive Antony as a man who abuses the authority of his office and the threat of force he commands (in this case, his lictors) in order to constrain those who observe him into pretending that the parody being enacted before their eyes is a real and legitimate staging of magisterial ceremony. There is a parallel to be drawn between this anecdote and Antony's deployment of an armed bodyguard to accompany him to Senate meetings. Cicero alludes to the presence of Antony's mercenaries repeatedly throughout the

speech, and the implication that Cicero wishes his readers to draw is that these Ituraeans' ostensible role as Antony's protectors belies their real function as a means of exerting pressure on the Senate through the imminent threat of force. By representing Antony in such a way as to induce his audience/readership to see Antony's actions as a performative spectacle staged to conceal abuses of power and serious character defects, Cicero attempts to establish a *prima facie* justification for opposing Antony and his policies despite the latter's consular authority. Moreover, by characterizing Antony as someone who is incapable of keeping his appetites for wine, wealth, and women within appropriate bounds, Cicero renders the Antony whom he would have his fellow senators oppose into a less daunting threat. Cicero's Antony is simultaneously a violent tyrant who represents a real danger to the Roman state and a frivolous hedonist who could be easily neutralized and managed if Cicero's colleagues could recognize the inherent falseness of Antony's pretensions to statesmanship and the inherent weakness of his character.

No anecdote that Cicero relates in the *Second Philippic* characterizes Antony as a *poseur* and performer more than the account (*Phil.* 2.77)³⁶ of a lighthearted prank that Antony is portrayed playing on his wife Fulvia when he returned from a trip to Gaul in 45 BC:

At videte levitatem hominis. Cum hora diei decima fere ad Saxa Rubra venisset, delituit in quadam cauponula atque ibi se occultans perpotavit ad vesperam; inde cisio celeriter ad urbem advectus domum venit capite obvoluto. Ianitor: 'Quis tu?' 'A Marco tabellarius.' Confestim ad eam cuius causa venerat, eique epistulam tradidit. Quam cum illa legeret flens – erat enim scripta amatorie; caput autem litterarum sibi cum illa mima posthac nihil futurum; omnem se amorem abiecissem illi atque hanc transfudissem – cum mulier fleret uberius, homo misericors ferre non potuit, caput aperuit, in collum invasit. O hominem nequam! Quid enim aliud dicam? Magis proprie nihil possum dicere. Ergo, ut te catamitum, nec opinato cum te ostendisses, praeter spem mulier aspiceret, idcirco urbem terrore nocturno, Italiam multorum dierum metu perturbasti?

But consider the frivolity of the man. When he had arrived at Saxa Rubra at almost the tenth hour of the day, he ensconced himself in a certain little tavern and, concealing himself there, drank prodigiously until evening. From thence, having been swiftly brought to the city in a two-wheeled carriage, he came to his house with his head

³⁶ An account that is entirely Cicero's invention. See Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.77).

covered.³⁷ Doorman: ‘Who are you?’ ‘A courier from Marcus.’ Quickly he went to the lady for whose sake he had come and handed over a letter to her, and when she started reading it and weeping – for it was a love letter, and moreover its chief point was that there would no longer be anything between himself and that mime actress, that he had cast away all love of that woman and transferred over to her – when his wife wept even more copiously, the soft-hearted man was not able to endure it, he revealed his face, he put his arms around her neck. O worthless man! What else should I say of him? I can say nothing more fitting than that! So, in order that your wife might see you, her catamite, unexpectedly and beyond expectation when you showed yourself, for this you shook up the city with night terrors and Italy with fear for many days?

This anecdote finds its way into Plutarch’s narrative as well,³⁸ although there it has been divested of all the venom with which Cicero infuses it. Why Cicero should take such umbrage at Antony’s behavior in dressing up as a *tabellarius*, a courier-slave, is a question whose answer Cicero himself leaves somewhat vague. Antony’s drunkenness, his temporary disappearance, his sexually passive role (*catamitus*) in his relationship with Fulvia, and his filling of Italy with fear are all *prima facie* objectionable acts, but the focus of the vignette is Antony’s donning of a costume and his amorousness. As with Cicero’s attacks earlier in the speech on Antony’s Gallic dress and impersonation of Lupercus, some interpretive work needs to be done before the basis of Cicero’s criticism can be uncovered.

I would argue that what Cicero is primarily criticizing in this vignette is Antony’s willingness to adopt the persona of a slave-actor. Cicero begins the anecdote by priming the reader to expect an illustration of Antony’s *levitas*, a word that is perhaps best defined by setting it next to its opposite, namely, *gravitas*.³⁹ Cicero is going to relate a story that shows how Antony failed to live up to the weightiness and responsibility of his political office (former Master of Horse and prospective consul) and social position. The structure of the vignette and

³⁷ With the *lacerna* mentioned in *Phil.* 2.76, presumably. See Ramsey (2003 *ad Phil.* 2.77).

³⁸ Plutarch, *Ant.* 10.7-10.

³⁹ See Oxford Latin Dictionary, *s.v.* *gravitas*, II.B.

many of the plot elements it includes – disguise, a love letter, recognition, a furtive lover’s tryst – have affinities with the conventional *topoi* of Roman elegy and comedy, as Griffin (1977), Ramsey (2003: *ad loc.*), and particularly Sussman (1994: 53-6) have shown. The theatricality of the vignette is palpable. However, Antony is not figured as any of the disreputable stock characters of comedy – the *miles gloriosus*, the *leno*, or the *parasitus* – but rather as the lovelorn *adulescens*, a character whom the audience is conditioned to root for, as Cicero himself illustrates to such great effect in the *Pro Caelio*.⁴⁰ Moreover, the vignette depicts Antony performing the laudable action of forswearing his mistress in order to return to his wife. The disclosure of this act hardly seems designed to call down opprobrium on Antony. The locus of Antony’s *levitas* and Cicero’s criticism must lie elsewhere than the stock character Antony impersonates and his behavior in loving and swearing fidelity to Fulvia.

Rather than focusing on the role Antony adopts as a comedic *adulescens* as the trigger for Cicero’s criticism, I would propose that Antony’s decision to mimic the person of a courier-slave and Antony’s adoption through mimicry of the *infamis* profession of the actor are what emerge as the key manifestations of Antony’s *levitas*. The mention of Antony’s mistress Cytheris the mime-actress situates Antony in the milieu of actors and offers a ready explanation for how Antony became adept enough at disguise and impersonation to fool his wife. At *Phil.* 2.20, Cicero had already suggested that Antony had learned a thing or two about wit from his *mima uxor*. The implication follows easily from this initial gibe that Antony could have also picked up acting skills from her and the troupe of actors who constitute Antony’s boon companions.

But even if Cicero had not stressed Antony’s intimate relations with actors in this vignette and throughout the *Philippics*, the impropriety of Antony’s performing the traditionally

⁴⁰On Cicero’s use of comedic archetypes to characterize Caelius and Clodia in the *Pro Caelio*, see Geffcken (1973) and Leigh (2004).

servile roles of courier and actor would have been apparent to Cicero's original readership. Antony shows that he is willing to divest himself of the insignia of senatorial rank, Roman citizen status, and free personhood. In the context of his time, this is unusual. The 60s to 40s BC, as Edmondson (2008: 34) notes, were a period of remarkable innovation where clothing was concerned – both in the sense that non-traditional clothing choices were increasingly used as ammunition for invective and also in the sense that new and unprecedented political honors were increasingly represented through clothing. In particular, the consular *toga praetexta*, long a symbol of high power, prestige, and political achievement at Rome, was superseded beginning in 63 BC by the conferral of the honor on Pompey the Great of being allowed to wear triumphal dress at all *ludi*.⁴¹ Julius Caesar received this same signal honor in 45 BC, and both Octavian and Antony received it in 40 BC.⁴² In addition to these striking garments, all Roman statesmen could be expected to have a retinue of retainers and lictors who augmented the display of power projected by the garments these individuals wore in Rome, in Italy, or in the provinces. To be stripped of these garments or of the *paludamentum* (if the wearer was an *imperator* on campaign), either to take on the disguise of a slave under duress or even merely to put on the garb of a private citizen under compulsion, was a sign of dishonor.

The evidence for stories of Roman citizens donning such disguises is collected and discussed by George (2002), who argues that in the absence of compelling evidence for a distinctive and uniform style of dress for Roman slaves, the adoption of a slave disguise by a free Roman man or woman refers less to the donning of a particular type of costume than a divestment of the distinctive clothing, insignia, and behaviors that would mark them out as free Roman men and women or Roman office holders. The most comprehensive ancient collection of

⁴¹ Cassius Dio 37.21.3-4.

⁴² Cassius Dio 43.43.1, 48.31.3.

these stories is preserved in the account of the second-century AD historian Appian of the Proscriptions of 43 BC.⁴³ Appian recounts a series of attempts by proscribed men to escape death by disguising themselves as slaves and manual laborers.⁴⁴ The threat of death is a powerful motive for compelling Roman citizens to abandon, if only temporarily, the markers of their privileged identity, and Antony himself is reported by Plutarch to have adopted a slave disguise for similar reasons in the immediate aftermath of Caesar's assassination.⁴⁵ Antony's motive in the vignette of *Phil.* 2.77 is of a different order altogether, but it is not just Antony's motive for donning the costume of a *tabellarius* that sets his conduct apart from the victims of the Proscriptions.

All the occurrences of slave-disguise that Appian recounts in *BC* 4.4.17-56 have another feature in common beyond motive: all the proscribed men who don a slave or manual laborer disguise intend to conceal their identities fully. They never have any intention of revealing their identities until they reach a refuge, usually Sextus Pompey in Sicily. The same holds true in other stories of Roman citizens who adopt slave disguises that do not involve proscriptions. The most widely disseminated example of such a story is an anecdote told of Julius Caesar in Val. Max. 9.8.2 and Plutarch *Caes.* 38 and *Moralia* 319B-C.⁴⁶ The general contours of the anecdote are similar across these authors. Julius Caesar, in the run-up to the final confrontation with Pompey in Greece in 48 BC, desired to sail across the Adriatic Sea from the city of Apollonia in order to

⁴³ *BC* 4.4.17-56.

⁴⁴ Examples include Rufus and his slave at *BC* 4.4.29, the wife of Lentulus at *BC* 4.6.39, Rheginus at *BC* 4.6.40, Lucretius at *BC* 4.6.44, and Marcus Lollius at *BC* 4.6.49.

⁴⁵ Plutarch *Ant.* 14.1.

⁴⁶ George (2002: 52) collects all the *testimonia* for this anecdote. In addition to the three mentioned above, which specify that Caesar put on the disguise of a slave, there are other versions of the story where the nature of the disguise is not specified. These include Appian *BC* 2.7.56-8, Dio Cassius 41.46.2-4, Lucan *BC* 5.497-677, and Suetonius *Caes.* 58.2.

ascertain why reinforcements had not yet arrived from Brundisium. Wishing to pass across the sea unnoticed, Caesar disguised himself as a slave and remained concealed until the captain of the small boat, unwilling to force the passage against a very strong wind, ordered the boat to turn around and return to the city. At this point, Caesar revealed his identity in order to persuade the captain to continue the journey. Like the subjects of Appian's Proscription anecdotes, Julius Caesar only reveals his identity under duress when there is no other way to force the captain to maintain his course. The climactic moment of recognition in the narratives about Caesar is the source of their dramatic power, but if Caesar had had his way, there is every reason to suppose that he would not have revealed his identity until he was safely at his destination.

The disclosure of Antony's identity in *Phil.* 2.77 is, in Cicero's telling, made entirely at Antony's own discretion, and unlike any of the other slave-disguise narratives we have referenced so far, this story invents Antony's slave-disguise as a means to effect a moment of recognition in which Fulvia discerns Antony underneath his costume. In other words, Antony's purpose in donning the slave-disguise is to heighten Fulvia's longing for Antony and thus enhance her joy and satisfaction when his identity is disclosed. Temporary concealment is only a means to create the circumstances that make the visual spectacle of revelation possible. Because Roman statesmen only remove the insignia of office, honor, citizenship, and free personhood under extreme duress, to do so willingly could be construed as something perverse, given that it involved aligning oneself, if only temporarily, with a lower civil and social status. Antony's playful motive in donning the slave costume to produce a dramatic revelation of his identity rather than to effect its concealment defy conventional notions of why a Roman citizen would assume the identity of a slave.

This narrative also offers another example of Cicero laying a greater emphasis on the communicative effect of Antony's visual spectacle (i.e. the revelation of his identity) than on Antony's written discourse (i.e. his love letter to Fulvia). In this sense too, this anecdote is emblematic of the rhetorical strategy deployed by Cicero in the *Second Philippic*, a text that explicitly constructs a detailed biography for Antony in order to display evidence of his tyrannical ambitions and serious defects of character. The thematization of Antony's body is more appropriate in this speech, which presupposes Antony's physical presence at the fictive site of the oration, than in any of the later *Philippics*, which engage with a real Antony absent on campaign and must focus on exigencies of political policy and diplomacy rather than on Antony's character and career. However, in the *Thirteenth Philippic*, a speech that cannibalizes large sections of the *Second Philippic* and replicates its thematic texture, Cicero resurrects this rhetorical strategy and invites his audience to become authors of Antony's textual body themselves. Of Mark Antony, his brother Lucius, and their retinue, Cicero writes (13.4.20-4):

Ora vobis eorum ponite ante oculos et maxime Antoniorum; incessum, aspectum, voltum, spiritum, latera tegentis alios, alios praegredientes amicos. Quem vini anhelitum, quas contumelias fore censetis minasque verborum!

Put their faces before your eyes, especially those of the Antonii: their gait, appearance, countenance, arrogance, and their friends – some covering their flanks, others walking before them. Just think what an exhalation of wine, abuses, and threatening words there would be!

In this passage, Antony's body speaks for itself even before threatening words are uttered, and it stands, even without Cicero performing an interpretive reading, as an eloquent witness to the depravity and thuggishness of Antony's character. Even when absent, Antony and his supporters can be conjured up to provide a visual spectacle, and Cicero gives equal space and primary position to the physical appearance of Antony and his supporters, even their smell, as he gives to anything they might say in the way of *contumelias* and *minas verborum*. The images of

Antony that Cicero creates in the *Second Philippic* perform a similar function. The armed bodyguard that attends Antony in the Senate, his alleged offer of a diadem to Caesar at the Lupercalia of 44 BC, and his purported willingness as a Roman magistrate to don the clothing and personae of inappropriate roles like prostitute, Lupercus, *gladiator*, and slave – all of these visual poses serve to characterize Antony as a man whose personal appearance and staging of visual spectacles centered on himself are more eloquent indicators of his identity and true intentions than anything he might say.

Unlike Cicero, the historical Antony never disseminated published versions of his speeches, and in doing so Antony followed the example set by his grandfather Marcus Antonius the Orator. It is impossible to say whether we should attribute this similarity in oratorical practice to coincidence or to the deliberate emulation of his famous ancestor, but, in any case, what Cicero says about Marcus Antonius at *Pro Cluentio* 140 allows us to gauge why the decision not to publish could have been advantageous for Mark Antony:

Hominem ingeniosum, M. Antonium, aiunt solitum esse dicere idcirco se nullam umquam orationem scripsisse ut, si quid aliquando non opus esset ab se esse dictum, posset negare dixisse; proinde quasi si quid a nobis dictum aut actum sit, id nisi litteris mandarimus, hominum memoria non comprehendatur.

They say that Marcus Antonius, a clever man, was accustomed to declare that the reason he had never written out any oration at all was so that, if at some point something he said became a liability, he could deny that he had said it. Likewise, if anything should be said or done by us, unless we have entrusted this to writing, it would not be retained in the memory of man.

In this passage, Cicero contrasts the political flexibility to be gained by not publishing with the glory to be gained by committing political discourse to writing. The monumentality that Cicero's *Philippics* embody certainly gained for Cicero the glory he sought in the long term.⁴⁷ As Butler (2002: 103-23) and Amy Richlin (1999) have shown, however, in the short term the

⁴⁷ Cf. Juvenal, *Satire* 10.125-6.

uncompromising and irrevocable stances that Cicero adopts here were a decisive factor in bringing about his death in the Proscriptions of 43 BC at Antony's hands. The immediate influence of Cicero's immortal written texts was superseded by the powerful visual symbolism of Cicero's rotting head and hands affixed to the *rostra*.⁴⁸

There is nothing of the playful hedonist in this picture of Antony performing the Proscriptions. All post-Ciceronian authors who write about Antony are thus faced with a problem: How does one negotiate portraying a figure who can be configured to display comically theatrical *levitas* in certain aspects of his life but who is also capable of inflicting gruesome violence on his enemies? For many of the post-Ciceronian Latin-language authors who describe Antony at length, Antony's theatrical role-playing is airbrushed away to leave only the paradigm of tyrannical excess visible. For this reason, I will defer my discussion of these authors' characterizations of Antony until the next chapter, where I will also more fully illuminate Cicero's reliance on archetypically tyrannical character traits to characterize Antony at various points in the *Philippics*.

Part Two: Plutarch

The Greek biographer Plutarch (c. 46–120 AD) likewise imbues his version of Antony with a mixture of theatrical and tyrannical traits. This section will cover the former and defer discussion of the latter to chapter 3. Plutarch's portrayal of Antony as a theatrical performer and actor-like figure follows Cicero's paradigm for deploying this persona in many key aspects. This is in part a consequence of the fact that Plutarch uses Cicero's *Second Philippic* as a primary source for Antony's life prior to 43 BC.⁴⁹ The general purpose of Plutarch's project in

⁴⁸ Cf. the poem of Cornelius Severus quoted in Seneca the Elder, *Suasoria* 6.26.

assembling paired *Lives* of prominent Greek and Roman statesmen is to provide his readers with character models that they can exploit for personal improvement.⁵⁰ Most of Plutarch's biographical subjects are designed to be emulated, but the Demetrius Poliorcetes/Mark Antony pair are unusual because Plutarch explicitly conceives of them as cautionary *exempla* of how *not* to exercise political power.⁵¹ This negative attitude on Plutarch's part works on several levels and encompasses critiques of Roman policy towards the city-states and peoples of Greece, the nature of the principate and the *princeps*, and run-of-the-mill character flaws – such as chronic susceptibility to flattery – that Antony exemplifies.⁵² It will require several chapters to unpack the various personae that Plutarch projects onto Antony in order to perform this multifaceted critique. What I want to focus on in this section is how Plutarch uses comedic *topoi* and the persona of the theatrical performer/actor both to demonstrate Antony's unsuitability for the role of prospective *princeps* and also to make Antony's character flaws applicable to a general reader. I will argue that Antony's theatricality, as Plutarch configures it, undercuts his pretensions to dynastic and divine majesty by revealing the essential banality of his character. While Plutarch's Antony may pretend to be a larger than life figure, Plutarch shows that he is, in many important respects, a man like any other.

Plutarch's frame of reference for the theatre is very much rooted in the legacy of Athenian drama. Anthony Podlecki (1988) has collected an array of references in Plutarch's

⁴⁹ On Plutarch's sources for the *Life of Antony*, see Pelling (1988: 26-36).

⁵⁰ See Duff (1999:13-73) for an overview of Plutarch's program for the *Lives*, including discussion of the major programmatic statements (*Aem.* 1; *Alex.* 1; *Per.* 2; *Tim. Praef.*) with bibliography.

⁵¹ *Dem.* 1.4-5: "We do not consider the perversion of some to secure the improvements of others either humane or good policy, but when men have behaved ill-advisedly and have become conspicuous for their badness in great offices or in political affairs, it is perhaps not gauche for me to incorporate one or two such pairs into my exemplary series of *Lives*" (ἡμεῖς δὲ τὴν μὲν ἐκ διαστροφῆς ἐτέρων ἐπανόρθωσιν οὐ πάνυ φιλόανθρωπον οὐδὲ πολιτικὴν ἡγούμεθα, τῶν δὲ κεχρημένων ἀσκεπτότερον αὐτοῖς καὶ γεγονότων ἐν ἐξουσίαις καὶ πράγμασι μεγάλοις ἐπιφανῶν εἰς κακίαν οὐ χεῖρον ἴσως ἐστὶ συζυγίαν μίαν ἢ δύο παρεμβαλεῖν εἰς τὰ παραδείγματα τῶν βίων).

⁵²See Richlin (forthcoming).

works that attest to the biographer's deep affinity for classical Athens as a pinnacle of Greek cultural achievement. Plutarch displays an intimate knowledge of Athenian festivals, history, and literature. His Boeotian background notwithstanding, Plutarch participates fully in the Second Sophistic's creation of a common cultural matrix based on the canonical Athenian cultural patrimony of the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Plutarch is unusual, however, in that he mostly eschews his contemporaries' enthusiasm for reviving the rhetorical glories of this earlier epoch.⁵³ Plutarch's Atticism, such as it is, is expressed through his affinities for Academic philosophical discourse and, to a lesser extent, for Athenian drama. Sophia Xenophontos (2012) has shown that Attic comedy of all periods exerts a profound influence on *Lives* both as a source and as a template for developing his subjects' characterizations. The Demetrius/Antony pairing is among the more overtly theatrical. Xenophontos (2012: 607-11) and Christopher Pelling (1988: 18-26) have delineated how the close connection of Plutarch's Demetrius with the milieu of the theatre acts as a *prima facie* marker of his bad character; it associates him with the debauched lifestyle and talent for deception stereotypically practiced by actors. Demetrius is represented by Plutarch donning unusual clothing (cf. *Dem.* 41.6-8) and cultivating a personality that displays a palpable element of theatricality. Plutarch compares Demetrius, his peers, and his associates to actors on a number of separate occasions (cf. *Dem.* 18.5, 25.9, 28.1, 34.4, 41.5, 44.9, 53.1, and 53.10).

Although comedy and tragedy can be a source of ethical wisdom for Plutarch, these assimilations of Demetrius to actors are pejorative. To take the first of these citations (18.5) as an example, Plutarch first describes Alexander's Successors' practice of taking a royal title, and then he proceeds to remark that "This practice...introduced pretension and arrogance into their lives and dealings, just as tragic actors assimilate their gait, voice, posture, and manner of speaking to their costume" (τοῦτο...τοῖς βίοις καὶ ταῖς ὁμιλίαις αὐτῶν ὄγκον ἐνεποίησε καὶ

⁵³ Anderson (1993: 9-11, 114-18).

βαρύτητα, καθάπερ τραγικῶν ὑποκριτῶν ἅμα τῇ σκευῇ συµµεταβαλόντων καὶ βάδισμα καὶ φωνὴν καὶ κατάκλισιν καὶ προσαγόρευσιν). The ease with which newly minted kings are likened to actors is a mark of their degeneration. The *Life of Demetrius* thus attempts to induce the reader to take a dim view of individuals who display qualities that connect them closely to the actor's profession. The *Life of Antony*, as we shall see, maintains continuity with this approach.

The first occasion when Plutarch overtly assimilates Mark Antony to a theatrical performer is placed early on in the *Life* after Antony's first tour of duty as a Roman soldier under the command of Gabinius (cos. 58 BC) and immediately before Antony attaches himself to the party of Caesar and is elected a Tribune of the Plebs in 50 BC.⁵⁴ Plutarch accomplishes this through an extended comparison of Antony's physique and accustomed dress to those of the hero Hercules (*Ant.* 4.1-4):

Προσῆν δὲ καὶ μορφῆς ἐλευθέριον ἀξίωμα, καὶ πώγων τις οὐκ ἀγεννῆς καὶ πλάτος μετώπου καὶ γρυπότης μυκτῆρος ἐδόκει τοῖς γραφομένοις καὶ πλαττομένοις Ἡρακλέους προσώποις ἐµφερὲς ἔχειν τὸ ἀρρενωπόν. ἦν δὲ καὶ λόγος παλαιὸς Ἡρακλείδας εἶναι τοὺς Ἀντωνίους, ἀπ' Ἀντωνος παιδὸς Ἡρακλέους γεγονότας. καὶ τοῦτον ᾤετο τὸν λόγον τῇ τε μορφῇ τοῦ σώματος ὡσπερ εἴρηται καὶ τῇ στολῇ βεβαιούν· ἀεὶ γὰρ ὅτε μέλλοι πλείοσιν ὀρᾶσθαι, χιτῶνα εἰς μηρὸν ἔζωστο καὶ μάχαιρα μεγάλη παρήρητο, καὶ σάγος περιέκειτο τῶν στερεῶν. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις φορικὰ δοκοῦντα, μεγαλαυχία καὶ σκῶμμα καὶ κώθων ἐµφανῆς καὶ καθίσει παρὰ τὸν ἐσθίοντα καὶ φαγεῖν ἐπιστάντα τραπέζῃ στρατιωτικῇ, θαυµαστὸν ὅσον εὐνοίας καὶ πόθου πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνεποίει τοῖς στρατιώταις.

[Antony] possessed a free man's quality of form; and [he had] an exceptionally noble beard, a wide brow, and an aquiline nose that were thought to bear a resemblance to the virility of the face of Hercules as it is represented in paintings and statues. There was even an old story that the Antonii were Heracleidae, having been begotten from Anton the son of Hercules. And [Antony] thought that this story was affirmed by both the shape of his body (as was said) and by his clothing. For always, when he was going to be seen by many, he hitched up his tunic to the level of his thigh, and a large dagger was hung at his side, and a soldier's cloak was wrapped around his chest. However, it was wondrous how much goodwill and yearning even those things that seemed offensive to others – his

⁵⁴ Plutarch elides Antony's political maneuvering in 52 BC, when he first returned from campaigning with Gabinius to stand for the quaestorship, which Linderski and Kaminska-Linderski (1974) have demonstrated Antony held in 51 BC.

bluffness and jokes and conspicuous drinking, and his sitting by a companion who was eating and standing to eat at the soldiers' table – inspired in his soldiers towards him.⁵⁵

Antony's admirable exploits and bright promise as a military commander on campaign with Gabinius had already been described by Plutarch (*Ant.* 3.1-5), but the description of his physical appearance here subtly works to undercut this positive praise if the comedic subtext within it is teased out. Other subjects of Plutarch's biographies are accorded the same kind of establishing shot to fix their physical appearance in the reader's mind; Plutarch describes general physical attributes or focuses on an unusual physical feature, such as a deformity.⁵⁶ Only Antony, however, has his appearance fixed in what amounts to a costume that he wears for an audience; Plutarch's Antony is said always to have dressed in Herculean garb "when he was going to be seen by many." The resonance with Hercules as a character on the Greco-Roman stage is palpable. From the reader's perspective Antony must therefore be envisioned in his Herculean costume for as long as he is interacting with other characters in the narrative or until Antony changes this costume for another. The "military cloak" (σάγος) and "large dagger" (μάχαιρα μεγάλη) are entirely ahistorical. As we saw in our discussion of the *Philippics*, the *sagum* would only be worn during a time of military crisis, and it would not have been worn by senators of Antony's rank except as an exceptional political statement.⁵⁷ Plutarch's costume for Antony is historically inaccurate and objectionable to native Roman sentiments,⁵⁸ but Plutarch's picture of Antony displaying himself as Hercules is not there to achieve strict historical realism; it is there to establish character. This costume actually is a much better visual approximation of

⁵⁵ For the sake of consistency and concision, I use "Hercules" throughout this dissertation to refer to the hero Herakles/Hercules, even in translations from the Greek. In general, I adopt Latinate transliterations for other proper names as well on the same principle.

⁵⁶ E.g. the lameness of Agesilaus (*Ages.* 2.2), and Pericles's unusually shaped head (*Per.* 3.2).

⁵⁷ See above, pp. 28.

⁵⁸ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 4.2).

the *miles gloriosus* than anything Cicero depicts. The military cloak (*sagum/chlamys*) and sword (*machaera*) are the characteristic components of this stock figure's costume in Roman comedy,⁵⁹ and Antony's susceptibility to being duped by flatterers (including Cleopatra as an arch-flatterer) is another characteristic feature of the *miles gloriosus* that Plutarch attributes to Antony at several places in the *Life*.⁶⁰ Plutarch's establishing shot for Antony thus prefigures the character arc his life will follow in Plutarch's narrative.

Later in the *synkrisis* of Antony and Demetrius (3.4), Antony's Herculean persona also provides a ready analogy to illustrate another of his character flaws. Plutarch remarks that Cleopatra compelled Antony to abandon great and necessary undertakings "just as we see Omphale in paintings taking away Hercules' club and stripping off his lion skin" (ὡσπερ ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς ὀρῶμεν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους τὴν Ὀμφάλην ὑφαιροῦσαν τὸ ρόπαλον καὶ τὴν λεοντῆν ἀποδύουσαν). Hercules is a mainstay of the comic stage, and the emasculation of Hercules at Omphale's hands certainly serves as a basis for jokes, particularly in visual representations that depict Hercules in drag working a distaff.⁶¹ Yet the reference to Hercules in the *synkrisis* also takes on a darker significance in light of the pathetic, drawn out death that his love-sick madness for Cleopatra precipitates.⁶² Antony is as much the Hercules of Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and Euripides' *Hercules Furens* as he is the Hercules of comedy and farce. In both of these modes, Hercules and Antony embody a heroic charisma that makes them entertaining and popular

⁵⁹ See above, pg. 29, n. 28.

⁶⁰ Both Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 4.2) and Xenophonos (2012: 612-13) argue that Plutarch turns Antony into a *miles gloriosus* figure, but they do so on the basis of Antony's arrogant behavior and susceptibility to flattery and deception. I am not aware of any scholar who has noted Plutarch's assimilation to the *miles gloriosus* in terms of the visual similarities between their costumes. For an overview of the theme of flattery in the *Life* see Pelling (1988: 16-18).

⁶¹ See Zanker (1988: 58-60).

⁶² In chapter 4, I perform a close reading of this scene and look more closely at Plutarch's portrayal of Antony's *eros*-induced madness as the defining component of another distinct persona: the insane lover.

figures, but the emasculation and self-destruction that they suffer render them unworthy of emulation.

Plutarch's projection of Herculean traits onto Antony is thus especially apt, but it is of course not a comparison that he has invented himself. There is a wealth of numismatic and literary evidence that the historical Antony cultivated an association with Hercules by claiming descent from the Greek hero through his son Anton,⁶³ although I share Olivier Hekster's (2004a) skepticism that every representation of Hercules in late first century BC art and literature would have automatically connoted Antony.⁶⁴ Hercules was a popular Roman cult hero/demigod with whom many prominent Romans established personal associations,⁶⁵ including

⁶³ Antony's self-fashioned association with Hercules is among the most well-trodden topics in scholarship on the triumvir, apart from his relationship with Cleopatra. Of material produced by Antony himself and his allies, there was an issue of coins produced in 42 BC by the moneyer L. Regulus that depicts Antony on the obverse and a seated Hercules on the reverse (Crawford, *RRC* I, no. 494/2a and 494/2b). There is also coinage dating from 42 BC that depicts a lion on the reverse, an image that could allude to Antony's identification with Hercules through the hero's connection to the Nemean Lion (*RCC* I, no. 489/5 and 489/6). Another coin issue from 38 BC likewise depicts Antony on the obverse and a lion on the reverse (*RCC* I, no. 533/1), although a symbolic leap from a lion to Hercules to Antony is hardly a certain one, as Gurval (1995: 92, fn. 15) notes in his discussion of this highly unusual coin type. A cryptic notice in one of Cicero's letters to Atticus (10.13) of May, 49 BC provides evidence that Antony's association with lions predates the triumviral period. In this letter, Cicero gives Atticus the following piece of advice: "You should watch out for Antony's lions. There is nothing more delightful than that man" (*tu Antoni leones pertimescas cave. nihil est illo homine iucundius*). In addition to these coins, Antony is also reported by Plutarch and Pliny to have been a passenger in chariots drawn by lions, the latter even claiming that Antony was the first person to do so at Rome (Plutarch, *Ant.* 9.8 and Pliny, *N.H.* 8.55). However, as Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.58) notes, these accounts in Plutarch and Pliny are likely apocryphal, based perhaps on a defective text for *Phil.* 2.58, where Cicero describes a *raeda cum leonibus* as part of Antony's retinue when he toured Italy in 49 BC after Caesar had departed for Spain. It seems hardly likely that Cicero would make so little of a *raeda cum leonibus* if this was indeed the text as he wrote it. Moreover, even if Antony did ride in a chariot drawn by lions sometime in the 40s BC, there is no reason to suppose that this act would have been immediately associated with the adoption of a Herculean persona. Lion-drawn chariots are also associated with Dionysus and Cybele, and a coin-type of M. Volteius produced ca. 78 BC depicting the latter in a lion-drawn *biga* indicates that these associations were deployed at Rome at the time.

⁶⁴ For an overview of Hercules' appearances and role in Augustan literature, see Galinsky (1972: 126-66) and Hekster (2004: 7-11), who argues that Augustan authors refashioned Hercules into a symbol of Augustus himself (e.g. Horace, *Ode* 3.14, where Augustus is likened to Hercules) and purged the hero of any past associations with Antony. On representations and the role of Hercules in Augustan-era cult practices and building programs, see Schilling (1942) and especially Hekster (2004: 1-7), who emphasizes the continuity of Augustan policy with traditional Roman approaches to Hercules. However, Hekster does concede that some images, particularly the terracotta representation of Hercules fighting Apollo over the Delphic tripod that adorned the Temple of Palatine Apollo, could have evoked Augustus's struggle with Antony. Zanker (1988: 58-60) reads the image of Hercules and Omphale represented on the mold of an Arretine bowl of ca. 30 BC as thinly veiled propaganda against Antony.

Octavian/Augustus. These Roman statesmen used divine associations to increase their personal prestige, but in Plutarch's hands the divine pretensions of his subject perform a different function.

For Plutarch, the Herculean persona is deployed to project Antony's bravado, martial swagger, and self-destructive amorousness through the lens of a well-defined mythological paradigm. The Herculean costume of Plutarch's Antony is not a way of concealing or changing his identity; it is a means of making inner character visible for the reader. This technique of analogizing his Roman biographical subjects to mythological figures in order to illuminate inner character is hardly unique to the *Life of Antony*. David Braund (1993) and A.V. Zadorojnyi (1997) have shown how Plutarch uses Euripides' *Bacchae* as an inspiration for structuring his *Life of Crassus* and for characterizing Crassus himself, assimilating the Roman general to the similarly ill-fated Pentheus. The *Life* culminates in a gruesome display of Crassus's severed head as a prop in a performance of *Bacchae* that was staged for the Parthian king (33.1-4). In this way, Plutarch's Crassus literally plays the role of Pentheus and reenacts the Theban king's hubris in having attempted to penetrate and control a landscape whose presiding ruler was more powerful than he was. Even without the presence of overt mythological parallels, the deaths of Julius Caesar (*Caes.* 66) and Cicero (*Cic.* 48-9) offer scope for similarly climactic spectacles that

⁶⁵ The promotion of Herculean cult in general predates the triumviral period as well. Lucius Cornelius Sulla (cos. 88 and 80 BC), for example, is reported (Plutarch, *Sull.* 35.1) to have given a tenth part of all his wealth to Hercules after resigning his dictatorship. Arthur Keaveney (1983: 67 and 2005) has shown how Sulla's devotion to Hercules extended to the promotion of the hero's cult at Rome in various ways. Holden (1886: *ad Sull.* 35.1) notes that Sulla was hardly exceptional in this regard. Paying a tithe to Hercules as the giver of wealth was a widespread Roman practice. Sulla's and Antony's contemporaries Lucullus and Crassus are also reported to have done it, and Plutarch (*Quaest. Rom.* 18) and Diodorus Siculus (4.21) devote attention to probing the origins of this custom. Plautus also makes a number of references to paying a tithe to Hercules (*Bacc.* 665-6; *Stich.* 232 and 386; *Truc.* 562; and *Mos.* 984). The following contemporaries of Mark Antony also produced coinage that featured depictions of Hercules or Herculean imagery: C. Publicius in 80 BC (Crawford, no. 380/1); M. Volteius in 75 BC (Crawford, *RRC* I, no. 385/2); Pub. Lentulus in 71 BC (no. 397.1); Q. Pomponius Musa in 56 BC (no. 410/1); Faustus Cornelius Sulla in 56 BC (no. 426/2, 426/4a, and 426/4b); Q. Sicinius and C. Coponius in 49 BC (no. 444/1b); C. Antius Restio in 47 BC (no. 455/1a and 455/1b); Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio in 47-46 BC (no. 461/1); and C. Vibius Varus in 42 BC (no. 494/37).

illustrate character.⁶⁶ Antony's death scene (*Ant.* 76-8) is likewise staged by Plutarch as a character-revealing spectacle. However, since the character traits revealed here have more to do with Antony's assimilation to a mad lover than a theatrical performer, I will reserve a close reading of this scene for chapter 4.⁶⁷ Plutarch's assimilation of Antony's character to that of a theatrical performer thus bears some affinities with his treatments of other biographical subjects. Where the *Lives* of Antony and Demetrius Poliorcetes stand apart is in how pervasive this characterization is throughout the narrative and, in Antony's case particularly, how many different theatrical roles Antony is assigned. The visual spectacle of the theatricalized Antony is not confined to a climactic death scene, nor are Hercules and the *miles gloriosus* the only overtly theatrical personae that Plutarch's Antony dons.

Plutarch's assimilations of Antony to Dionysus (*Ant.* 24.3-4, 26.3, and 60.2-3)⁶⁸ and the legendary misanthrope Timon of Athens (*Ant.* 69.6-70.8) offer Plutarch additional scope to exploit well-known literary antecedents to flesh out Antony's unstable and unsavory characterization. Dionysus is, like Hercules, a character who can perform in both tragic (e.g. Euripides' *Bacchae*) and comedic (e.g. Aristophanes' *Frogs*) modes. *Frogs*, with its depiction of Dionysus actually impersonating Hercules, hangs implicitly in the background of Antony's

⁶⁶ For example, Cicero's fortitude in presenting his neck boldly to his assassins (48.5) can be contrasted with Demosthenes' attempt to negotiate with the would-be assassins sent by Antipater to cajole him to leave the temple of Poseidon at Calauria, where he had sought sanctuary (*Dem.* 29-30). Interestingly, as a point of comparison with Plutarch's Antony, Plutarch's Demosthenes only realizes his cause is lost because he has a dream that he participated in a dramatic contest with Archias, a professional actor acting as one of Antipater's emissaries. In the dream, Demosthenes performs his tragic role well, although he loses out on the prize because of his lack of costumes and scenery (29.2). For Demosthenes, the dream signifies that he should not trust Archias's promises, so the orator instead takes his own life (29.3-6). For the reader, the assimilation of the biographical subject to an actor again signals the downward trajectory of the subject's character arc.

⁶⁷ See below, pp. 225-7.

⁶⁸ For other ancient literary treatments of Antony as Dionysus see Cassius Dio 48.39, and Athenaeus 4.148.b-d (= Socrates of Rhodes, *FGrH* 192, fr. 2). The scholarly literature on the role of Dionysus *vis-à-vis* Apollo in the propaganda battles between Antony and Octavian is as vast as the literature that examines Hercules vs. Apollo in the same context. For representative treatments, see Scott (1933), Mannsperger (1973), Zanker (1988: 59-61), Gurval (1995: 93-7), Reed (1998: 399-418), Freyburger-Galland (2009), and Miller (2009: 15-53).

shifting from a Herculean to a Dionysian persona in Plutarch's narrative. Plutarch (*Ant.* 24.3) describes Antony's festive epiphany in the province of Asia as "Dionysus the Joy-Giver and Gracious One" (Διόνυσος Χαριδότης καὶ Μειλίχιος), but Plutarch then remarks that for many he was rather "Dionysus the Cruel and Savage One" (Διόνυσος Ὠμηστής καὶ Ἀγριώνιος) because "he took away the property of fine, upstanding men in order to gratify flatterers and men who deserved a flogging" (ἀφηρεῖτο γὰρ εὐγενεῖς ἀνθρώπους τὰ ὄντα μαστιγίαις καὶ κόλαξι χαριζόμενος, *Ant.* 24.3). The duality that Plutarch envisions in Antony's character – a capacity for extravagant generosity combined with insatiable rapacity – is illustrated for the reader through Antony's assimilation to Dionysus.⁶⁹

In employing Dionysus as a means to clarify the nature of Antony's character, Plutarch is again drawing on earlier associations of Antony with this divinity. Like the historical Antony's alignment with Hercules, his self-association with Dionysus is attested throughout ancient literature and even by a contemporary inscription.⁷⁰ Greco-Macedonian kings in the Near East had identified themselves with Dionysus since the time of Alexander the Great.⁷¹ Alexander, like Dionysus, had undertaken a successful expedition of conquest into India, and the adoption of a Dionysian persona thus drew on the prestige of both Dionysus the divinity and the man who was the paragon of Greek kingship in the Hellenistic period.⁷² The historical Antony's adoption of a Dionysian persona also made the implicit claim that he too sees himself as a successor-king to

⁶⁹ I unpack the implications of Antony's predatory exploitation of his provincial subjects in chapter 3. See below, pp. 158-61.

⁷⁰ An Athenian inscription conventionally dated from 41-38 BC, *IG* 2².1043.22-23, refers to Antony as "New Dionysus."

⁷¹ Cleopatra's father King Ptolemy XII Auletes is attested to have adopted the title of New Dionysus, See Porphyry = Eusebius, *Chronicorum* I, ed. Schoene, pg. 167. For a general overview of Antony's adoption of the identity of Dionysus in the context of Greek and Roman cultural attitudes at the time, see Huzar (1978: 192-9).

⁷² See Whitmarsh (2005: 65-70) on the pivotal ideological role that Alexander the Great played for leading Greek and Roman statesmen from the Hellenistic period well into the Second Sophistic.

Alexander.⁷³ Through this gesture, Antony inserted himself into a long tradition of Roman generals (e.g. Pompey, Julius Caesar, Crassus) who cultivated an association with Alexander as they campaigned in the Near East, aspiring to extend Roman rule to encompass the full confines of Alexander's empire.⁷⁴

Plutarch saps Antony's Dionysian persona of the heroic and kingly ideology with which it was originally invested and uses it instead as a marker of Antony's dissolute character. Speaking of Antony's fondness for drinking and extravagance, Plutarch remarks that he "imitated Dionysus in his mode of life" (προσῳκείου δ' ἑαυτὸν Ἀντώνιος... Διονύσω κατὰ τὸν τοῦ βίου ζῆλον, *Ant.* 60.3). Plutarch's practice of subtly altering the traditional significance of personae associated with the historical Antony is also on display in his assimilation of Antony to the character of Timon of Athens. After Antony's defeat at Actium, Plutarch reports (*Ant.* 69.6-7) that he returned to Alexandria and withdrew to the solitude of a lonely sea-side dwelling. Here, he took up the lifestyle Timon of Athens:

Ἀντώνιος δὲ τὴν πόλιν ἐκλιπὼν καὶ τὰς μετὰ τῶν φίλων διατριβάς, οἴκησιν ἕναλον κατασκεύαζεν αὐτῷ περὶ τὴν Φάρον, εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν χῶμα προβαλὼν· καὶ διῆγεν αὐτόθι φυγὰς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ τὸν Τίμωνος ἀγαπᾶν καὶ ζηλοῦν βίον ἔφασκεν, ὡς δὴ πεπονθὼς ὅμοια· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀδικηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων καὶ ἀχαριστηθεὶς, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἀπιστεῖν καὶ δυσχεραίνειν.

Antony, leaving behind both the city and the companionship of friends, built a sea-side dwelling for himself around Pharos. He projected a mole into the sea to do so. He lived there as an exile from humanity, and he said that he loved and emulated Timon because he had suffered similar things. For his friends too had done him wrong and had treated him ungratefully. On account of this, he distrusted and disliked all people.

⁷³ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 24.3-4).

⁷⁴ Antony's implicit association with Alexander the Great is an important subtext of Plutarch's *Life*. Plutarch pairs his *Life of Alexander* with the *Life of Caesar*, and Antony, effectively a successor to Julius Caesar, is paired with a prominent Greco-Macedonian successor to Alexander: Demetrius Poliorcetes. The large amount of space that Plutarch devotes to Antony's disastrous Parthian expedition (*Ant.* 37-52) also creates an implicit contrast with Alexander that presents Antony as a failed successor to his legacy. I considered including a chapter in this dissertation on ancient representations of Mark Antony as an exemplary general and successor to Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar. A rigorous metabiographical study of this topic, however, would be better left to a military historian who was familiar with the relevant Near Eastern and Egyptian materials.

Plutarch's subsequent digression (*Ant.* 70.1-8) on the life of Timon pointedly identifies the legendary misanthrope as a mainstay of the comedic stage, noting his presence in the plays of Plato the dramatist and Aristophanes.⁷⁵ Antony's adoption of Timon's lifestyle is also attested by the geographer Strabo (c. 64 BC – 24 AD) as a passing reference in his description of the geography of Egypt. A comparison of Strabo's earlier account (17.9) with Plutarch's reveals a flexibility in the historio-biographical tradition that Plutarch exploits:

ὑπέγκειται δὲ τούτου τὸ θέατρον εἶτα τὸ Ποσειδῖον, ἀγκῶν τις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐμπορίου καλουμένου προπεπωκῶς, ἔχων ἱερὸν Ποσειδῶνος· ὃ προσθεὶς χῶμα Ἀντώνιος ἔτι μᾶλλον προνεῦον εἰς μέσον τὸν λιμένα ἐπὶ τῷ ἄκρῳ κατεσκεύασε δῖαιταν βασιλικὴν ἣν Τιμώνιον προσηγόρευσε. τοῦτο δ' ἔπραξε τὸ τελευταῖον, ἠνίκα προλειφθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων ἀπῆρεν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν μετὰ τὴν ἐν Ἀκτίῳ κακοπραγίαν, Τιμώνειον αὐτῷ κρίνας τὸν λοιπὸν βίον, ὃν διάζειν ἔμελλεν ἔρημος τῶν τοσούτων φίλων.

Above [the harbor] lies the theatre; then there is the Poseidium: a kind of elbow projecting from the so-called Emporium that has a temple of Poseidon. To this, Antony added a mole that projected out still farther into the middle of a harbor, and at the very end of it he built a royal dwelling which he called the Timonium. This was his final act, when, having been abandoned by his friends, he retreated to Alexandria after the failure at Actium. He chose to live the rest of his life in the manner of Timon, which he intended to cultivate since he was bereft of so many friends.

In Strabo's treatment, Antony's decision to name his sea-side dwelling the Timonium is linked to the defections of his friends to Octavian at Actium. The name has more of gallows humor about it than it does a serious interest in Timon's misanthropic lifestyle. In Plutarch's hands, in contrast, Antony's decision is cast as a manifestation of Antony's own emotional defection from his friends in Alexandria, and Plutarch stresses that Antony had come, like Timon, to distrust and hate all humanity. What Strabo configures as a sardonic gesture born from external circumstances, Plutarch renders as a serious revelation of Antony's melancholic inner character. In this way, Plutarch fashions his representation of Antony to reflect his own authorial interest in Antony's character as a constantly shifting performance. Antony, at the urging of

⁷⁵ Cf. *Lysistrata* 808-15 and *Birds* 1547-9.

Cleopatra and her retainers, quickly forsakes his Timonium to resume his lifestyle of extravagant partying in Alexandria (*Ant.* 71).⁷⁶ Antony's Timon-esque melancholy would be a poignant end to Antony's career if Antony's commitment to the role were fixed, but the instability of Antony's character instead transforms it into a comic interlude. Again, Antony's assimilation to a theatrical persona is deployed by Plutarch as a revelatory marker of the overriding negative qualities of his character.

There are other relatively incidental events in Plutarch's narrative that help support this rhetorical objective. The earliest example is Antony's use of Caesar's blood-stained, dagger-torn toga to incite a mob of Caesarian supporters to perform a display of violent protest against the actions of the Conspirators (*Ant.* 14.4-8).⁷⁷ While it is indeed true that Plutarch reports that Antony delivered a compelling eulogy at the time, it is the shaking on high (*ἀνασεΐων*) of the bloody toga that Plutarch says marked the climax of the speech and pushed the audience to burn Caesar's body in the Forum.⁷⁸ Antony's deployment of such props is a recurring theme of the *Life*. When Antony comes upon the corpse of Brutus after the Battle of Philippi, he covers it with an exceptionally rich purple garment as a mark of honor (*Ant.* 22.7-8). Later in the narrative, Plutarch reports that at a critical juncture in his Parthian campaign, when Antony and his army had already met with many setbacks, Antony "asked for a dark robe, that he might be seen as more pathetic" (*ἤτησε φαῖδὸν ἱμάτιον, ὡς οἰκτρότερος ὀφθείη*).⁷⁹ However, Antony's counselors

⁷⁶ This return to form is marked again by a comedic assimilation. Plutarch reports (*Ant.* 71.4-5) that Antony and Cleopatra dissolved their "Peerless Lives" drinking club and replaced with one called "Those Who Die Together" (*Συναποθανουμένοι*), which Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 71.4) notes is the title of a play by the Greek comic playwright Diphilus.

⁷⁷ Plutarch, *Ant.* 14.4-8.

⁷⁸ See below, pp. 242ff.

⁷⁹ Plutarch, *Ant.* 44.3.

prevail upon him to wear a *paludamentum*, a decision that makes all the difference, according to Plutarch, in Antony's subsequent speech to rouse the valor of his men.

In Plutarch's view, the infamous ceremony of the Donations of Alexandria (34 BC) is less significant for what Antony might have said in the course of the festivities than what the participants wore and how they appeared. Plutarch declares that Antony was hated at Rome for the distribution of territories to his children with Cleopatra, with the ceremony itself appearing "theatrical, arrogant, and displaying hatred of Rome" (τραγικὴν καὶ ὑπερήφανον καὶ μισορρώμιον φανεῖσαν).⁸⁰ Antony provides thrones for himself, Cleopatra, Caesarion, and his other children, and he dressed his sons Alexander and Ptolemy in Median and Macedonian garb, respectively. Cleopatra wears a distinctive robe that puts her in the guise and role of Isis. Antony's inability to appreciate how the visual symbolism of his clothing and gestures would be perceived at Rome is another character defect that is built into Plutarch's portrayal. Finally, just before the Battle of Actium, a rank-and-file soldier, covered in scars that signify the valor he displayed serving under Antony, begs Antony to let the upcoming battle take place on land rather than at sea. Plutarch presents the decision to fight at sea as the primary cause of Antony's defeat and a prime example of Antony's willingness to gratify Cleopatra at the expense of sound military strategy. Antony's response to his soldier is configured as an eloquent testimony of his awareness of this fatal flaw and as a manifestation of the primacy of visual discourse over oral/written discourse where Antony is concerned. Antony says nothing and instead "with a gesture and with his expression only Antony encouraged the man to be of good courage" (τῇ χειρὶ καὶ τῷ προσώπῳ μόνον οἷον ἐγκελευσάμενος τὸν ἄνδρα θαρρεῖν, *Ant.* 64.4). This is theatrical communication.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 54.5.

All of these examples evince a preoccupation on Plutarch's part with how articles of clothing, looks, and gestures sometimes possess an eloquence that rivals anything that could be written or spoken. There are of course other manifestations in other *Lives* of this preoccupation. Julius Caesar covering his face with his toga as he lies dying is a conspicuous example.⁸¹ But there is an emphasis in the *Life of Antony* on visual spectacle that is without parallel in any other of Plutarch's biographies. Spectacles like Cicero's head and hands nailed to the *rostra* are also defining images of Antony in Plutarch's portrayal (*Ant.* 20.4):

καὶ κομισθέντων ἐθεᾶτο γεγηθῶς καὶ ἀνακαγγάζων ὑπὸ χαρᾶς πολλάκις· εἴτ' ἐμπλησθεὶς ἐκέλευσεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ βήματος ἐν ἀγορᾷ τεθῆναι, καθάπερ εἰς τὸν νεκρὸν ὑβρίζων, οὐχ αὐτὸν ἐνυβρίζοντα τῇ τύχῃ καὶ καταισχύνοντα τὴν ἐξουσίαν (*Ant.* 20.4).

When [Cicero's head and right hand] had been brought to him, he gazed at them in exultation and often laughed for joy, and when he had had his fill, he commanded that they be placed on the *rostra* in the Forum, just as if he were insulting the dead as opposed to what he was really doing: displaying that he had become arrogant in good fortune and bringing shame to the authority of his office.

Here, Plutarch highlights what he views as a disconnect between the visual message Antony intends to convey through the spectacle of Cicero's head and right hand on the *rostra* and what this spectacle signifies. In parsing out these possible meanings for Antony's visual spectacle and linking them closely to the revelation of character, Plutarch again elevates the importance of visual display as an instrument of communication to a level equal to or exceeding that of oral and written discourse. In Plutarch's account of the same spectacle in the *Life of Cicero* (49.2), this point is made even more explicit: “[Antony] ordered the head and hands of [Cicero] to be placed above the ships' beaks on the *rostra*. The spectacle produced a shudder in the Romans; for they thought they saw, not the face of Cicero, but an image of the soul of Antony” (τὴν δὲ κεφαλὴν καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐκέλευσεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐμβόλων ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος θεῖναι, θέαμα Ῥωμαίοις φρικτόν, οὐ τὸ Κικέρωνος ὄραν πρόσωπον οἰομένοις, ἀλλὰ τῆς Ἀντωνίου

⁸¹ Plutarch, *Caes.* 66.12.

ψυχῆς εἰκόνα). Here, Cicero's body, now serving as an extension of Antony's body, allows the observers (and Plutarch's readers) to see Antony's soul, his inner character. This passage thus encapsulates the essence of Plutarch's attitude towards Antony's body and physical appearance. It is the cipher through which true character can be revealed, and, in this sense, Plutarch's characterizing approach to Antony has much in common with Cicero's.

This is not to say, however, that Plutarch is a slavish imitator of his source material (i.e. the *Second Philippic*) or that he invests every instance of Antony donning a costume or adopting a new personae with momentous significance. Plutarch ostentatiously gives an impression of making critical engagements with his material, and this comes across when he tells anecdotes in which Antony adopts the dress and persona of a slave. For example, when Antony flees a hostile Senate to rendezvous with Caesar in Cisalpine Gaul in the lead-up to the outbreak of civil war, he does so on a hired coach wearing servile garb: "Putting on the clothing of a slave and hiring a cart with Quintus Cassius, he set out to join Caesar" (λαβὼν δὲ θεράποντος ἐσθῆτα καὶ μισθωσάμενος μετὰ Κασσίου Κοῖντου ζευγος, ἐξώρμησε πρὸς Καίσαρα, *Ant.* 5.9-10). Antony's appearance before Caesar in the guise of a slave prompts Plutarch to allude to Cicero's pronouncement in the *Second Philippic* that Antony caused the civil war of 49 BC in the same way that Helen had caused the Trojan War:⁸²

Ἐκ τούτου λαβὼν τὴν στρατιάν ὁ Καῖσαρ εἰς Ἰταλίαν ἐνέβαλε. διὸ καὶ Κικέρων ἐν τοῖς Φιλίππικοῖς ἔγραψε, τοῦ μὲν Τρωικοῦ πολέμου τὴν Ἑλένην, τοῦ δ' ἐμφυλίου τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι, περιφανῶς ψευδόμενος. οὐ γὰρ οὕτως εὐχερῆς ἦν οὐδὲ ῥάδιος ὑπ' ὀργῆς ἐκπεσεῖν τῶν λογισμῶν Γάιος Καῖσαρ, ὅστ' εἰ μὴ ταῦτα πάλαι <δι>έγνωστο πρᾶττειν, οὕτως ἂν ἐπὶ καιροῦ τὸν κατὰ τῆς πατρίδος ἐξενεγκεῖν πόλεμον, ὅτι φαύλως ἡμφιεσμένον εἶδεν Ἀντώνιον καὶ Κάσσιον ἐπὶ ζευγος μισθίου πεφευγότας πρὸς αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα πάλαι δεομένῳ προφάσεως σχῆμα καὶ λόγον εὐπρεπῆ τοῦ πολέμου παρέσχεν.

Because of this Caesar took his army and invaded Italy, for which reason Cicero wrote in his *Philippics* that just as Helen was the cause of the Trojan War, so too was Antony the cause of the civil war, although he was patently misrepresenting the facts. Gaius Caesar was not so readily and easily bereft of his reason when he became angry, and this implies

⁸² Cicero, *Phil.* 2.55.

that if he had not already settled long beforehand on this course of action, he would not in this way have brought war upon his country at a moment's notice simply because he saw Antony, meanly dressed, and Cassius fleeing to him on a hired cart. On the contrary, these circumstances offered a kind of pretext and compelling reason for war to one who had long been in need of one.

Plutarch takes issue with Cicero's analysis of the cause of the civil war of 49 BC. In denying that Antony was comparable to Helen of Troy as a *casus belli*, Plutarch rejects Cicero's assertion that Antony's forced donning of servile attire held deep significance for Caesar. Plutarch is not persuaded that Caesar genuinely took umbrage at the degradation of Antony's tribunician dignity. Instead, Plutarch infers that Caesar merely took advantage of Antony's symbolic degradation as a convenient pretext to precipitate an armed conflict. This anecdote reveals a fundamental difference between Cicero's and Plutarch's configurations of the theatrical Antony. Plutarch, as we have discussed, uses this persona as a way to make Antony's inner character traits visible. Cicero does this as well, but for the Roman orator the unconventional elements of Antony's physical appearance are not just indications of objectionable character traits; they are objectionable acts in and of themselves. Whether or not Plutarch is correct about the historical Caesar's real motivations in the passage above, his quick dismissal of Cicero's argument is revealing. Plutarch is not as aware as Cicero and, as we shall see,⁸³ Appian are of how culturally fraught a Roman magistrate's emblems of office and overall physical appearance are in projecting his *dignitas* and social identity. This relative lack of sensitivity to the symbolism of clothing in a Roman cultural context might also explain Plutarch's failure to appreciate how patently objectionable his description (*Ant.* 4) of Antony wearing Herculean garb would have been to Roman sensibilities. There is a profound difference between how a Roman politician like Cicero spins Antony's slave attire in the mid-first century BC and how a provincial Greek intellectual of the second century AD configures its significance. This

⁸³ See below, pp. 61-9.

difference is as much a function of each author's idiosyncratic thematic program as it is of the cultural and temporal distances that separate them.

Plutarch's denial of deep significance in Antony's adoption of the slave persona in one context does not mean that he dismisses it in other contexts, however. Later in Plutarch's narrative (*Ant.* 29.2-4), Cleopatra and Antony don the garb of slaves to enjoy the nightlife of Alexandria *incognito*:

καὶ νύκτωρ προσισταμένω θύραις καὶ θυρίσι δημοτῶν καὶ σκώπτοντι τοὺς ἔνδον συνεπλανᾶτο καὶ συνήλυε, θεραπαινιδίου στολήν λαμβάνουσα. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος οὕτως ἐπειρᾶτο σκευάζειν ἑαυτόν. ὅθεν αἰεὶ σκωμμάτων, πολλάκις δὲ καὶ πληγῶν ἀπολαύσας ἐπανήρχετο· τοῖς δὲ πλείστοις ἦν δι' ὑπονοίας. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ προσέχαιρον αὐτοῦ τῇ βωμολοχίᾳ καὶ συνέπαιζον οὐκ ἀρρῦθμως οὐδ' ἀμούσως οἱ Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, ἀγαπῶντες καὶ λέγοντες ὡς τῷ τραγικῷ πρὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίους χρῆται προσώπῳ, τῷ δὲ κωμικῷ πρὸς αὐτούς.

And at night [Cleopatra] accompanied [Antony] as he stood at the doors and windows of common folk and made fun of those within and participated in his revels, putting on the dress of a slave-girl. Indeed, he also attempted to conceal himself in a similar disguise, because of which he always suffered abuse and often was subjected even to blows. But many people guessed who he was. However, the Alexandrians enjoyed his coarse humor and joined in the revels in their refined and cultivated way, loving him and saying that he made use of a tragic mask when dealing with Romans but wore a comic mask in his dealings with them.

The narrative enacts the classic folktale motif of a king/divine figure moving among his or her subjects in disguise, a motif represented in ancient stories like Ovid's account of Baucis and Philemon in *Metamorphoses* 8 and in more modern ones like *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Aladdin*. Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 29.2-4) offers an alternative explanation for the origin of this story about Antony and Cleopatra, arguing that stories of Nero donning a similar slave-disguise to move unnoticed around Rome (e.g. Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.25 and Suetonius *Nero* 26) have influenced Plutarch's portrayal of Antony.⁸⁴ Frederick Brenk (1992b: 4348-74) has likewise

⁸⁴ See also Shadi Bartsch's (1994: 1-36) reading of a much later account of the disguised Nero's nocturnal forays by the Roman senator and Greek-language author of the *Historia Romana* Cassius Dio (c. 155 – 225 AD). Bartsch's delineation of the assimilation of Nero and the people who observe him in this account (61.8-9) to theatrical performers uncovers a thematic preoccupation in Dio with the strong element of theatricality inherent in Roman politics under the principate. Furthermore, as Maud Gleason (2011) has shown, the section of Dio's history that

argued that Plutarch projects the theatricality of Nero onto his ancestor Antony, citing the emphasis on genealogy at both the beginning and the end of the *Life of Antony* as evidence for Plutarch's interest in thematizing the relationship between Antony and Nero, who is mentioned prominently at *Ant.* 87.8-9 as Antony's descendant. I agree that Plutarch's invocation of Nero is an invitation to the reader to recognize a familial resemblance between these infamous Roman leaders, although I think the resemblance that Plutarch is alluding to has more to do with their political policies than their nocturnal escapades.⁸⁵ The accounts of Nero disguising himself as a commoner are all typified by Nero's cruelty in interacting with his subjects, so it is hard to reconcile a Neronian subtext in the passage above with the genuine love towards Antony that Plutarch attributes to the Alexandrians. Furthermore, Antony's theatrical persona in this anecdote does not need a Neronian subtext to clarify its significance; it is entirely of a piece with Plutarch's portrayal of Antony throughout the *Life*. Plutarch's description of the Alexandrians' attitude towards Antony – that he displayed a tragic mask in his dealings with Romans but a

covers his own time displays a prominent interest in the instability of identity. Dio's personal experience of the political upheaval that marked the end of Commodus's reign and the rise of the Severan dynasty provided much fodder for stories of Romans donning disguises to escape political persecution or surreptitiously move up the social ladder. Furthermore, as Gleason (2011: 38) observes, "The revival of usurpation and *damnatio memoriae* during Dio's lifetime dramatized, in extreme fashion, the instability and constructedness of the imperial role." Given how Dio uses Nero to prefigure, in a sense, certain issues of contemporary relevance for him personally, one might ask if Dio's representation of Antony performs a similar role? Interestingly, Dio's portrayal of Antony lacks the marked elements of theatricality that characterize the versions of Plutarch and Appian. For example, where Plutarch transforms the historical Antony's association with divine figures like Hercules and Dionysus into a recurring motif of Antony actually impersonating and emulating these figures, Dio makes (50.5) a single passing remark that Antony occasionally posed for statues and portraits with Cleopatra representing Osiris/Dionysus while she embodied Isis/Selene. Dio is far more interested in portraying Antony as a tyrant and insane lover, and I will investigate the reasons behind this authorial attitude in chapters 3 and 4. There are any number of reasons why Dio does not characterize Antony as an actor-like figure even though such a portrayal might contribute to his broader thematic objectives, but it would require an extended analysis of a broad swath of the *Historia Romana* to determine which is the most valid one. Such a study far exceeds the scope of my inquiry. It is worthwhile for me to point out, though, that Dio's practice of not representing Antony as an overtly theatrical character illustrates the flexibility of the historio-biographical tradition concerning Antony. Authorial discretion is just as much a matter of not incorporating traditional elements into a particular historical figure's characterization as it is a matter of refashioning these traditional elements.

⁸⁵ See below, pp. 152-3.

comic mask in his dealings with them – is another example of Plutarch using theatrical imagery to highlight the duality of Antony’s character. In this instance, as well, the difference between Antony’s comic and tragic personae will be disastrous for his own political prospects. Antony’s benevolent attitude towards the Alexandrians and, by implication, the peoples of Rome’s other eastern dependencies will not save him when his severe attitude towards Octavian and Rome, manifested in his gifts of various Roman provinces to Cleopatra and her children, prompts a dramatic military intervention. Plutarch’s Antony shifts easily between his Roman and Alexandrian identities, and this fluidity in identity, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, means that Antony proves unable to manifest the substance and solidity of character necessary to resist the impulses of his own tyrannical appetites or counteract the charming influence of Cleopatra.

Part Three: Appian

Unlike Cicero and Plutarch, who have written texts that feature Mark Antony as their obvious protagonist, the Alexandrian-born historian Appian (c. 95 – 165 AD) features Antony as one among many characters in his *Bella Civilia*, a history of the Roman civil wars that begins with the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus.⁸⁶ Unfortunately for our ability to assess Appian’s treatment of Mark Antony, the section of *Bella Civilia* dealing with events after 36 BC is lost. Furthermore, our understanding of Appian’s own biography and thematic aims is less complete than our understanding of Cicero’s and Plutarch’s. Plutarch, for example, discloses an extensive number of autobiographical details just by the sheer volume of his work that survives, and his

⁸⁶This text complements Appian’s series of works, organized ethnographically, on Rome’s wars of conquest.

stature as an important intellectual figure had solidified by Appian's time.⁸⁷ In comparison, Appian is relatively reticent about himself, does not cover the history of his own time, and is only rarely mentioned in contemporary or later literature.⁸⁸ Appian does tell us that he pled cases at Rome before emperors as a lawyer (*Praef.* 15.62), and a letter from the rhetorician Fronto to Antoninus Pius (*Ad Pium* 10.2) survives that contains a request for Appian to be appointed to a procuratorship, which was successful.⁸⁹

Appian spent most of his later life living in Rome, and his friendship with well-placed individuals like Fronto and his appointment in the imperial bureaucracy indicate that he moved comfortably in Roman elite circles. Appian also displays an antipathy towards non-elite social groups in his assessment (2.17.120) of the concessions granted to the Roman plebs by the Liberators after Julius Caesar had been assassinated:⁹⁰

Οὕτω δ' ἔχοντες τὸ Καπιτώλιον σὺν τοῖς μονομάχοις ἀνέθορον. καὶ αὐτοῖς βουλευομένοις ἔδοξεν ἐπὶ τὰ πλήθη μισθώματα περιπέμπειν· ἠλπίζον γάρ, ἀρξαμένων τινῶν ἐπαινεῖν τὰ γεγενημένα, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους συνεπιλήψεσθαι λογισμῶ τε τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ πόθῳ τῆς πολιτείας. ἔτι γὰρ ᾤοντο τὸν δῆμον εἶναι Ῥωμαῖον ἀκριβῶς, οἷον ἐπὶ τοῦ πάλαι Βρούτου τὴν τότε βασιλείαν καθαιροῦντος ἐπυθάνοντο γενέσθαι· καὶ οὐ συνίεσαν δύο τάδε ἀλλήλοις ἐναντία προσδοκῶντες, φιλελευθέρους ὁμοῦ καὶ μισθωτοὺς σφίσιν ἔσεσθαι χρησίμως τοὺς παρόντας. ὣν θάτερον εὐχερέστερον ἦν, διεφθαρμένης ἐκ πολλοῦ τῆς πολιτείας, παμμιγές τε γάρ ἐστιν ἡδὴ τὸ πλῆθος ὑπὸ ξενίας, καὶ ὁ ἐξελύθερος αὐτοῖς ἰσοπολίτης ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ δουλεύων ἔτι τὸ σχῆμα τοῖς δεσπόταις ὁμοίος· χωρὶς γὰρ τῆς βουλευτικῆς ἢ ἄλλῃ στολῇ τοῖς θεράπουσιν ἐστὶν ἐπίκοινος.

In this state [i.e. wary of the Caesarian faction and the plebs], [the Liberators] rushed up to the Capitol with their gladiators. Holding a conference there, they decided to bribe the populace. For they hoped that if some people started to praise their actions, others would join their cause from a reasoned desire for liberty and from a longing for the Republic. They thought that the Roman People were still (as they had been taught) exactly as they were in the days of old when Brutus had abolished the monarchy. They did not

⁸⁷The reference by the North African Latin-language writer Apuleius (c.124-170 AD) to “that famous Plutarch” (*Plutarchus ille inclitus*) at the beginning of his *Metamorphoses* (1.2) is a tribute to the wide cultural diffusion of Plutarch's work.

⁸⁸ On Appian's life and career, see Gowing (1992: 9-18).

⁸⁹ A letter exchange between Fronto and Appian also survives (*Epist. Graec.* 4-5).

⁹⁰ Swain (1996: 250).

understand that they were relying on two entirely incompatible things: that the people could be lovers of liberty and also be amenable to bribes at the same time. The latter class of people was easier to find because the Republic had been long corrupted by this time. For the plebs are now all mixed up with the blood of foreigners, and the freedman has equal citizenship with them and the slave wears the same apparel as the masters. Apart from the senatorial rank, the clothing is the same for slaves [and free people].

Appian's sudden shift to the present tense propels his critique of the venality of the Roman plebs forward into his own time. Appian is appalled by four things: the susceptibility of the common people to demagogic bribes, the miscegenation of native Romans with foreigners, the equal citizenship status of freedmen, and the fact that slaves wear the same clothing as their masters. Interestingly, although he is a native Alexandrian, Appian sets himself up as a champion of maintaining strict distinctions between Romans and non-Romans. His focus on the erasure of sartorial distinctions between slaves and free people is, I will show, especially relevant to his portrayal of Mark Antony. Although Appian's configuration of Antony as an actor-like figure is not as thematically prominent in his narrative as his portrayal of Antony as a tyrant, we will see that part of what makes Antony a villain in Appian's account is that he contributes to this process of blurring the lines between slaves and free people, between Romans and non-Romans, and between elites and non-elites.

Shortly after the Liberators put their plan of buying the loyalty of the plebs into action, Appian's Antony engages in some cunning demagoguery of his own. Antony uses his eulogy for Julius Caesar as opportunity to inspire the people to turn against the Liberators. Antony, however, does not resort to bribery to accomplish this, nor does he rely on argumentation and persuasion. Rather, Appian has Antony stage a theatrical performance that employs grandiose gestures, intense displays of emotion, and props in order to create an emotional rapport between himself and the audience of plebeians. Appian's version of Antony's funeral oration for Julius

Caesar (*BC* 2.20.143-7) is unlike the orations that Appian composes for his characters.⁹¹ While most of these orations consist of uninterrupted speech, Antony's oration is unusually fragmented, making sudden shifts between direct speech, reported speech, and Appian's descriptions of Antony's gestures and physical appearance. Introducing the oration with the remark that Antony "deployed artful cunning and spoke thus" (ἐτέχναζεν αὐθις καὶ ἔλεγεν ὧδε, 2.20.143), Appian first has Antony describe the oaths taken by his fellow senators that Caesar should be sacred and inviolable, and as Antony reads the decrees of the Senate on this matter, he gestures towards the corpse of the murdered Caesar in a way that highlights the incongruity of these oaths and the senators' actions (2.20.144-5). The climax of Appian's account then follows (2.20.146-7):

Τοιάδε εἰπὼν τὴν ἐσθῆτα οἷά τις ἔνθους ἀνεσύρατο, καὶ περιζωσάμενος ἐς τὸ τῶν χειρῶν εὐκόλον, τὸ λέχος ὡς ἐπὶ σκηνῆς περιέστη κατακύπτων τε ἐς αὐτὸ καὶ ἀνίσχων, πρῶτα μὲν ὡς θεὸν οὐράνιον ὕμνει καὶ ἐς πίστιν θεοῦ γενέσεως τὰς χεῖρας ἀνέτεινεν, ἐπιλέγων ὁμοῦ σὺν δρόμῳ φωνῆς πολέμους αὐτοῦ καὶ μάχας καὶ νίκας καὶ ἔθνη, ὅσα προσποιήσεται τῇ πατρίδι, καὶ λάφυρα, ὅσα πέμψειεν, ἐν θαύματι αὐτῶν ἕκαστα ποιούμενος καὶ συνεχῶς ἐπιβοῶν· "μόνος ὁδε ἀήττητος ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐς χεῖρας αὐτῶ συνελθόντων. σὺ δ'," ἔφη, "καὶ μόνος ἐκ τριακοσίων ἐτῶν ὑβρισμένη τῇ πατρίδι ἐπήμυνας, ἄγρια ἔθνη τὰ μόνα ἐς Ῥώμην ἐμβalόντα καὶ μόνα ἐμπρήσαντα αὐτὴν ἐς γόνυ βαλών." πολλὰ τε ἄλλα ἐπιθειάσας τὴν φωνὴν ἐς τὸ θρηνηῶδες ἐκ τοῦ λαμπροτέρου μετεποιεῖ καὶ ὡς φίλον ἄδικα παθόντα ὠδύρετο καὶ ἔκλαιε καὶ ἠρᾶτο τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ἐθέλειν ἀντιδοῦναι τῆς Καίσαρος. Εὐφορώτατα δὲ ἐς τὸ πάθος ἐκφερόμενος τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Καίσαρος ἐγύμνου καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα ἐπὶ κοντοῦ φερομένην ἀνέσειε, λελακισμένην ὑπὸ τῶν πληγῶν καὶ πεφυρμένην αἵματι αὐτοκράτορος. ἐφ' οἷς ὁ δῆμος οἷα χορὸς αὐτῶ πενθιμώτατα συνωδύρετο καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πάθους αὐθις ὀργῆς ἐνεπίμπλατο.

After [Antony] said these things, he gathered up his clothing like a man inspired, and wrapped them around himself so that he could more easily use his hands. Like a man upon a stage he stood in front of the bier bending down to it and then rising up. He first hymned [Caesar] as a heavenly divinity and then stretched his hands to heaven to signify his reverence to [Caesar's] divine birth. At the same time, he spoke rapidly of his wars and battles and victories and the peoples whom he brought under his country's control, as well as the spoils of war that he had sent back. He presented each of [Caesar's] acts as a marvel, continually shouting, 'This man alone emerged undefeated from all the occasions he met his enemies hand to hand in battle. This man alone exacted vengeance for the outrage our country suffered three hundred years ago, bringing to their knees those savage peoples who alone have penetrated into Rome and set it on fire.' Saying many other things in a kind of divine frenzy, Antony modulated his voice from a higher to a more mournful tone, and he lamented and wept as for a friend who had suffered wrongs,

⁹¹ It is also far more elaborate than Plutarch's brief notice about it at *Ant.* 14.3-4. I examine ancient authors' representations of Antony's oratorical abilities below, pp. 240-44.

and he swore that he was willing to give his own life in exchange for Caesar's. Carried away very easily to pathos, he exposed the body of Caesar, and after lifting his robe – pierced by blows and red with the dictator's blood – up on the point of a spear, he shook it vigorously. At this point the people, like a chorus, lamented with him most sorrowfully, and from this sorrow they became filled with anger.

The comparison of Antony to “a man upon a stage” and the comparison of the plebeians to a “chorus” both invite the reader to think about the power of theatrical spectacle to influence an audience's behavior. The emphasis that Antony's performance places on emotive gestures and symbolic clothing primes the reader to ascribe greater thematic significance to subsequent occasions in Appian's account that feature them as well, particularly those places in the narrative that feature Antony. Antony's funeral oration deconstructs the distinction between politics and theatre in Appian's narrative, and Appian takes advantage of this mixture of discourses to present the reader with an Antony who unwarily breaks down distinctions between Roman leaders and Roman subjects, giving those who observe him a glimpse of the man behind the curtain of political power.

Of all the costumes that Antony dons in our sources, there is none that is so simple yet, in the context of when and where it is worn, so radical, as the costume of a private citizen. As we shall see, unlike Sextus Pompey, Lepidus, and any of his other *imperium*-wielding contemporaries, Antony is unique in Appian's narrative because of his willingness to divest himself of all visible insignia of office and, for long periods of time, to adopt completely the dress, lifestyle, and behavior of his non-Roman subjects. In the following passage, Appian provides a description (*BC* 5.8.76) of Antony's life in Athens during the winter of 38 BC:

Ταῦτα διαθέμενος ἐχείμαζεν ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις μετὰ τῆς Ὀκταουίας, καθὰ καὶ ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ μετὰ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας, τὰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν στρατοπέδων ἐπιστελλόμενα ἐφορῶν μόνα, ἀφέλειαν δὲ ἰδιωτικὴν αὐτῆς ἐξ ἡγεμονίας καὶ σχῆμα τετράγωνον ἔχων καὶ ὑπόδημα Ἀττικὸν καὶ θύρας ἡρεμούσας, ἐξοδοὶ τε ἦσαν ὁμοίως ἄνευ σημείων αὐτῶ, σὺν δύο φίλοις καὶ σὺν ἀκολούθοις δύο, ἐς διδασκάλων διατριβὰς ἢ ἀκροάσεις, καὶ τὸ δεῖπνον ἦν Ἑλληνικὸν καὶ μεθ' Ἑλλήνων ἢ γυμνασία πανηγύρεις τε σὺν θυμηδία μετὰ τῆς Ὀκταουίας· πολὺς γὰρ καὶ ἐς τήνδε ἐρρῦη, ταχὺς ὢν ἐς ἔρωτας γυναικῶν. λήγοντος δὲ τοῦ χειμῶνος, ὡσπερ ἐτέρῳ γενομένῳ, ἦ τε ἐσθῆς αὐτῆς καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἐσθῆτος ἢ ὄψις

ἐνηλλάσσετο, καὶ πλῆθος ἦν ἀμφὶ τὰς θύρας αὐτίκα σημείων τε καὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ δορυφόρων, καὶ φόβου πάντα μεστὰ καὶ καταπλήξεως· πρεσβεῖαί τ' ἐσεδέχοντο, αἱ τέως ἡρέμουν κεκελευσμένοι, καὶ δίκαι διεκρίνοντο, καὶ νῆες καθεῖλκοντο, καὶ ἡ ἄλλη παρασκευὴ πᾶσα συνεκινεῖτο.

Having made these arrangements, [Antony] wintered in Athens with Octavia, in the same way as he had done the previous winter in Alexandria with Cleopatra, only glancing at the dispatches sent from the army, and exchanging his military command for the simplicity of private life he wore the square-cut tunic [i.e. *pallium*] and the Attic shoe and had no one thronging at his doors. His trips to the discussions and lectures of public intellectuals were done in like manner with no insignia of office upon him, and with only two friends and two attendants. Even his dinner was in the Greek fashion, and he went to the gymnasium with the Greeks and enjoyed the festivals in the company of Octavia. For he was very much in love with her because he moved fast when it came to loving women. When the winter was over, it was as if he had become someone else, for he changed his attire and with his attire his appearance was changed. Immediately there was a crowd around his door composed of standards, officers, and lictors, all things that were full of fear and awe. Embassies were received that hitherto had been ordered to wait, lawsuits were decided, ships were launched, and every other preparation for the campaigns was made ready.

The level of detail that Appian provides and the almost incredulous tone of some of Appian's assertions ("even his dinner was in the Greek fashion") point to this anecdote's importance for defining Antony's characterization. Plutarch dispenses with Antony's sojourn in Athens and adoption of Greek dress in a mere four lines (*Ant.* 33.4); Appian configures it as a lengthy account of the rejection of the responsibilities of military command and a complete immersion in Athenian life. Antony removes his insignia of office and moves around the city, visible to the populace at the gymnasium and festivals in his new guise of private citizen. His resumption of his Roman dress at the end of the anecdote is a complete transformation. It is as if he has "become someone else," and all the accoutrements of his new appearance – standards, officers, and lictors – inspire "fear and awe." The implication is that Antony's earlier outward appearance as a private Greek citizen did not inspire such feelings in the people who observed him, and this is problematic. The flow of Appian's thought subtly creates a causal link between Antony's putting on his insignia of office and his ability to perform the functions of his office: receiving embassies, settling lawsuits, and making preparations for war. All of these functions

rely on the “fear and awe” that the insignia of office inspire. They project an image of power, but Antony’s display of his essential banality earlier in the anecdote demonstrates that this image is a façade; that it is insubstantial and as easily transferred from person to person as a set of clothes. Appian’s Antony discloses to the Athenians that the power of Rome is a performance, and that the military commanders who put on the spectacle of power are, in the end, mere actors. Antony performs the role of private citizen in Athens willingly, but as his narrative progresses, Appian shows that taking off the insignia of office is often anything but a lifestyle choice.

Two examples taken from later in Appian’s narrative illustrate how it is usually a mark of profound disgrace for a Roman *imperator* to take off his military insignia and adopt the attire of a private citizen. Appian reports (*BC* 5.13.122) the following of Antony’s peer Sextus Pompey after the Battle of Naulochus in 36 BC:

Καὶ ὁ Πομπήιος ἐν ὁδῷ περὶ τῆς μεταγνώμης τοῦ πεζοῦ πυθόμενος τὴν τε ἐσθῆτα ἤλλαξεν ἐς ἰδιώτην ἀπ’ αὐτοκράτορος καὶ προύπεμψεν ἐς Μεσσήνην ἐς τὰς ναῦς ἐντίθεσθαι τὰ δυνατά.

And Pompey, learning about the defection of his infantry on the road, changed his attire from that of an *imperator* to that of a private citizen and sent orders to Messina to put everything possible on the ships.

Earlier (*BC* 5.11.100) Appian had stressed how Pompey communicated his pretensions to divine favor and kinship to Neptune through his wearing of a dark blue robe. The defection of Pompey’s infantry marks the complete reversal of his power and fortunes, and this reversal is likewise expressed through the donning of the simple toga of a private citizen. Antony’s fellow triumvir Lepidus undergoes a similar divestiture shortly after Pompey’s defeat (*BC* 5.13.126):

Οἱ δὲ ἰππέες τελευταῖοι χωροῦντες ἔπεμψάν τινα πεισόμενοι τοῦ Καίσαρος, εἰ κτείνωσι Λέπιδον, οὐκέτι ὄντα αὐτοκράτορα· ὁ δὲ ἀπεῖπεν. οὕτω Λέπιδος, ἀδοκίμῳ πάντων ἀπιστία συμπεσών, ἔρημος ἐκ τύχης τοσῆσδε καὶ στρατοῦ τοσοῦδε ἐγίγνετο ἐν βραχεῖ. καὶ τὸ σχῆμα ἀλλάξας ἔθει πρὸς τὸν Καίσαρα δρόμῳ, συντρεχόντων ὡς ἐπὶ θέα τῶν ὀρώντων. ὁ δὲ Καῖσαρ ὑπανάστη τε αὐτῷ προσθέοντι καὶ προσπεσεῖν ἐθέλοντα κωλύσας ἔπεμψεν ἐς Ῥώμην, ἐφ’ οὐδὲν ἦν σχήματος, ἰδιώτην ἀπ’ αὐτοκράτορος, οὐδὲν ἔτι πλὴν ἱερέα ἧς εἶχεν ἱερωσύνης.

And the cavalry, being the last to change sides, sent a messenger to learn from Caesar [i.e. Octavian] if they should kill Lepidus since he was no longer an *imperator*. Caesar said no. In this way, Lepidus, suffering the unexpected faithlessness of everyone, was bereft of so great a fortune and so great an army in an instant. After changing his attire, he ran to Caesar at a fast clip, and many ran along with him in order to see the spectacle. Caesar rose up as he ran to him and, forbidding him from throwing himself down at his feet (though Lepidus wished to), Caesar sent him to Rome in the clothing he was wearing, having been rendered a private citizen from an *imperator*, being nothing else but a priest of the priesthood which he held.

An important part of Lepidus's supplication to Octavian is the removal of any clothing that signifies military authority. Hurrying to Caesar like a *servus currens* of comedy also serves as a visual confirmation of his loss of status. Lepidus is giving a performance, and Appian explicitly highlights the theatricality of the event, terming it a spectacle (θέα) and providing a large anonymous audience for Lepidus's degradation. By taking off the clothes of an *imperator* and putting on the clothes of a private citizen, Lepidus signals the end of his relevance as a statesman and the loss of his military power. Appian gives every indication that Lepidus only took this step because he despaired of his life. It strikes me as improbable that Appian's Roman readership would have regarded Lepidus's renunciation of his military insignia to save his life as a preferable outcome to dying at Octavian's hands with his *dignitas* as an *imperator* intact.

The cautionary tales of Pompey and Lepidus illustrate how closely political power in Appian's narrative is connected to visible symbols and performative rituals of that power. In this light, the willingness of Antony to divest himself of the insignia of power and live an Athenian lifestyle is an anomaly. By displaying contempt for the insignia of the power of the Roman elite, Antony diminishes them in the eyes of the people who observe him and thereby shows that he is unfit to wear these insignia. It is unfortunate that Appian's account of Antony's own defeat and downfall does not survive. One can only speculate that Appian staged a scene of divestiture comparable to his treatments of Sextus Pompey and Lepidus, and to Horace's representation of the defeated Antony with which I began this chapter. In this way, Appian, writing in Antonine

Rome for an audience of men who bore the responsibility of wearing such insignia, would have offered another in his series of object lessons on the importance of maintaining the dignity of the markers of office.

The versions of Antony that I have covered so far exhibit our authors' thematic preoccupation with deploying Antony's body and personal appearance as the index of his character. Like an actor, Antony is compelled to don costumes and adopt patterns of behavior that correspond to a variety of roles. But of course not every role for which Antony is cast in the ancient sources for his life comes with a specific costume. For example, earlier in this chapter I touched on the role that Antony played during the Proscriptions and the vengeance he took upon Cicero.⁹² Through this grisly display and other similarly savage actions, Antony is frequently assimilated to the traditional stock figure of the tyrant in the works of authors like Cicero, Seneca the Elder, Velleius Paterculus, Josephus, Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio. Tyrants obviously do not have a uniform that distinguishes them from enlightened monarchs and elected magistrates; they have more sinister recognition tokens. In my next two chapters the metabiographical approach that here traces the theatrical Antony within the discourse of his various chroniclers will also serve to uncover the meaningful variations in ancient representations of the tyrannical Antony.

⁹² See above, pp. 56-7.

Chapter 2: The Tyranny of Cicero's Antony

Addressing his correspondent Lucilius on the subject of drunkenness, the philosopher Seneca observes that Alexander the Great had a fatal weakness for wine (*Ep. Mor.* 83.19-24) and then moves on to consider an infamous Roman *exemplum*, of which we have already seen the beginning in my Introduction (*Ep. Mor.* 83.25):

M. Antonium, magnum virum et ingeni nobilis, quae alia res perdidit et in externos mores ac vitia non Romana traiecit quam ebrietas nec minor vino Cleopatrae amor? haec illum res hostem rei publicae, haec hostibus suis inparem reddidit; haec crudelem fecit, cum capita principum civitatis cenanti referrentur, cum inter apparatusissimas epulas luxusque regales ora ac manus proscriptorum recognosceret, cum vino gravis sitiret tamen sanguinem. Intolerabile erat quod ebrius fiebat cum haec faceret: quanto intolerabilius quod haec in ipsa ebrietate faciebat! Fere vinolentiam crudelitas sequitur; vitatur enim exasperaturque sanitas mentis. Quemadmodum <morosos> difficilesque faciunt diutini morbi et ad minimam rabidos offensionem, ita ebrietates continuae efferent animos; nam cum saepe apud se non sint, consuetudo insaniae durat et vitia vino concepta etiam sine illo valent.

What else besides drunkenness and – no less than wine – the love of Cleopatra impelled Mark Antony, a great man and a man of noble talent, into foreign ways and non-Roman vices and destroyed all that he had? Drunkenness rendered him an enemy of the Republic and no match for his enemies. Drunkenness made him cruel, when the heads of the leading men of the state were brought to him as he was dining, when among the very well-laden tables and royal extravagance he recognized the faces and hands of the proscribed, when, though heavy with wine, he nevertheless thirsted after blood. It was unbearable that he became drunk as he did these things: how much more unbearable was it that he did these things in the very state of drunkenness itself! Cruelty usually follows the drinking of wine, for the soundness of mind is corrupted and dulled. Just as lingering and long-lasting illnesses make men enraged at the least vexation, so do constant bouts of drunkenness bestialize minds; for because they are often not themselves, the habit of madness becomes lasting and vices conceived with wine endure even without it.

Wine, foreign ways, non-Roman vices, the love of Cleopatra, downfall; the opening sentence of Seneca's anecdote might give the impression that a pruriently detailed condemnation of the languorous drinking bouts and bohemian pleasures of Antony, playboy of Egypt, is about to follow.⁹³ However, Seneca instead reaches back further in time to a much earlier Antony wearing

⁹³ A recent reading of this passage by Vincent Barletta (2010: 61-3) proceeds as if this were really the case, drawing on Seneca's earlier point about Alexander in order to argue that Seneca intends to draw attention to the corrupting influence of the East in inducing habits of drunkenness and cruelty. In this way, the distinctly Roman/Italian setting

a more formidable guise, and he envisions instead a banquet of blood. The choice to invoke a tyrannical Antony overseeing the Proscriptions in 43 BC is at first glance a puzzling one. The propaganda of Octavian and the anecdotalist tradition concerning Antony's drunken exploits with Cleopatra in the 30s BC are especially well-developed,⁹⁴ and Seneca's initial nod to this tradition with its heady association of wine and lazy amorousness produces a striking *non sequitur* when juxtaposed to the active *crudelitas* of feasting one's eyes on severed hands and heads. Seneca's preoccupation with the Proscriptions of 43 BC, and implicitly with the death and dismemberment of Cicero,⁹⁵ is not in itself surprising. As Matthew Roller (1997), Robert Kaster (1998), Amy Richlin (1999), and Marcus Wilson (2008) have shown, Cicero's death became an iconic cultural touchstone for educated Romans whose rhetorical education involved close study of Ciceronian texts. The question remains, however, why these Roman authors persist in invoking the tyrannical Antony of 43 BC even though such an invocation could recall the complicity of Octavian in Cicero's death, and even though an alternative characterization of a drunken Antony based around his love-mad relationship with Cleopatra was also available.

This chapter will formulate a response to this question through an examination of what I shall call the Antony-as-tyrant motif in the *Philippics* of Cicero and in the works of Latin-language authors writing in the century after Cicero's death. The kernel of my inquiry is an

of the remainder of Seneca's Antony anecdote is elided, and Seneca's straddling of two different locales and two different traditions of characterizing Antony is obscured.

⁹⁴ Cicero is the first of Antony's political enemies that we know to have criticized him for drunkenness (*Phil.* 2.42, 63, 67, 104-5), but the charge that Antony's judgment was critically impaired by his drinking with Cleopatra gained particular traction during Octavian's propaganda campaign in the months leading up to the Battle of Actium, even forcing Antony to circulate a pamphlet *De Mea Ebrietate* responding to Octavian's attacks (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 14.147-8). See Plutarch *Ant.* 28 and 71, Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 9.119-21, and Athenaeus *Deip.* 4.147f-148b for characteristic anecdotes and Marasco (1992) and Scott (1929) for overviews of the representation of Antony's drunkenness in Octavian's propaganda.

⁹⁵ The pervasiveness of the *topos* of the presentation of Cicero's remains to Antony, and the similarity of Seneca's anecdote to other literary accounts of this event (e.g. Plutarch *Cic.* 48-9; Appian *B.C.* 4.18-20; Cassius Dio 47.8, and the texts collected in by Seneca the Elder at *Controv.* 7.2 and *Suas.* 6-7), could hardly fail to evoke Cicero despite Seneca's not naming him explicitly.

attempt to determine why the tyrannical Mark Antony and his execution of Cicero resonated so profoundly with Latin-language authors such as Seneca the Younger, the author of the *Epistulae ad Brutum* 1.16 and 1.17, the works of the declaimers collected by Seneca the Elder in his *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, and Velleius Paterculus. As with my other chapters, my approach in this chapter – and in the following chapter, which covers the reception of the tyrannical Antony by Greek-language authors of the imperial period – is metabiographical. These post-Ciceronian authors resurrect the Antony of 43 BC to have him reenact a gruesome display of state-sanctioned violence, and it is worthwhile to investigate what ramifications this episode in Rome’s republican history has for authors writing under the principate. The analysis of these authors will be undertaken in Part Two of this chapter. Part One, on the other hand, will perform close readings of tyrant-themed passages in Cicero’s *Philippics*. The examination of these speeches is the necessary groundwork for supporting my argument that post-Ciceronian authors have patterned both their tyrannical characterizations of Antony and the rhetorical programs of their writings about Antony on the characterization and rhetorical strategy deployed by Cicero in his *Philippics* to discredit his adversary. What is interesting about Cicero’s tyrannical characterization of Antony is that Antony is characterized as a tyrant often through an explicit comparison to another tyrannical figure. Typical doublets for the tyrannical Antony include Tarquin the Proud, Julius Caesar, Lucius Cornelius Sulla, and a generalized Greek/barbarian tyrant. In all of these comparisons, Antony is figured as the tyrant *par excellence*: worse than any other recognized tyrant and therefore all the more worthy of removal from power.⁹⁶ This comparative approach to the tyrannical Antony is present in the post-Ciceronian authors under discussion as well. I would further propose that their preoccupation with the superlatively

⁹⁶ The deployment in the *Philippics* of unflattering comparisons as a rhetorical instrument to delegitimize Antony has been analyzed briefly by Kathryn Welch (2008: 212-13).

tyrannical Antony operates as a screen against the potential accusation that their often hyperbolic heroizing of Cicero represents a censure of the Julio-Claudian regime. As these authors and Cicero would have it, Antony's tyrannical excesses were so monstrous and unprecedented that all opposition to him was legitimate and any ruling order, including the nascent regime of Octavian, was preferable to his administration.

Another important aspect of Cicero's rhetorical strategy that finds expression in these later receptions of the *Philippics* is the pitting of the act of writing against Antony's tyrannical actions. Ciceronian oratory is of course itself a performative exhibition, but as Shane Butler (2002) has shown, Cicero was a pioneering innovator in his use of documentary evidence and publication to advance the political aims of his oratory. I will argue that a key claim advanced by the rhetoric of the *Philippics* is that Cicero wields much greater dexterity and integrity than Antony when it comes to the production of written discourse. Antony is portrayed as a disingenuous manipulator of words whose true character is revealed through his tyrannical actions. For post-Ciceronian authors who characterize Antony as a quintessential tyrant, the thematization of writing against performance has as its primary goal the vindication of Cicero's writing in the *Philippics*. These authors attempt to use their own writing about Cicero and Antony to reverse the symbolic defeat that Cicero's writing suffered when it proved incapable of preventing Antony from killing Cicero and making a powerful spectacle of his mutilated body.

Part One: Cicero's *Philippics*

This study is possible because of the important work done by Roger Dunkle (1967) and Tom Stevenson (2008 and 2009) to establish the coherence of the tyrant as a stock figure in Roman invective and to demonstrate this figure's special thematic significance in Cicero's

Philippics. The *tyrannus*, along with the related political figures of the *rex* and *dominus*,⁹⁷ is defined by Cicero as a man who already has or aspires to have absolute power and fails to observe the restraints imposed by laws, social conventions, or self-control.⁹⁸ Dunkle (1967) has identified a constellation of recurring terms, imagery, and behaviors that are deployed in Roman political discourse to characterize the stock tyrant. This figure customarily displays some combination of the attributes of *crudelitas*, *libido*, *superbia*, and *vis*, all of which flow from the tyrant's absolute power and lack of restraint. In addition to embodying some or all of these four core attributes, the tyrants of Roman political discourse also frequently exhibit susceptibility to domination by women, flagrant impiety, and voracious appetites for luxuries, food, and wine.⁹⁹ From the perspective of those subjugated to a tyrant, tyranny can also be defined as the nullification of the *libertas* of Roman citizens who are forced to observe a posture of servility in relation to the tyrant.¹⁰⁰

Tom Stevenson (2009) has argued that despite the absence of the word *tyrannus* from the *First Philippic*, there are enough implicit comparisons of Antony's actions to the classic characteristics of tyranny in this speech to suggest that Cicero is tacitly building an identification of Antony with this stock figure.¹⁰¹ Stevenson cites Cicero's references to historical *exempla* of

⁹⁷ Dunkle (1967: 152) assembles a wide selection of Ciceronian usages of these words to illustrate their high degree of interchangeability. For the most part, I accept this reading of the evidence, although there are certainly cases where Cicero's and other Roman authors' usage of one of these words is made on the basis of a particular historical or cultural connotation associated only with that word (e.g. *De Re Publica* 2.49). See also Erskine (1991) and Achard (1981: 173-75, 319-25, and 457-8) for the particular connotations associated with the words *rex* and *dominus* and their interrelationship with the concept of the *tyrannus*.

⁹⁸ See *De Officiis* 1.64, 3.32 and 83; *De Re Publica* 1.64ff., 2.47-49.

⁹⁹ Dunkle (1967: 159 ff.).

¹⁰⁰ For overviews of the ideological deployment of *libertas* as the end-goal for opposing tyrants, see Brunt (1988: 281-350) and Wirszubski (1950: *passim*). Bleicken (1962) rightly calls attention to how *libertas* is often in practice a fundamentally aristocratic prerogative and ideological construct.

Greek and Roman tyranny (*Phil.* 1.13, 32, 34, and 36), Antony's armed bodyguard (*Phil.* 1.16, 25, and 27), the suppression of *libertas* under Antony (*Phil.* 1.12, 13, 27, and 32), threats of death and the use of *vis* (*Phil.* 1.5, 16, 13, 21, 22, 26, and 28), and ignoring the will of the Senate and people (*Phil.* 1.6, 8, 13, and 36). The density of this provocative tyrannical imagery in the *First Philippic* is striking in light of the fact that this speech purports to be a conciliatory exhortation to Antony to alter his political trajectory and become reconciled to a restoration of republican norms.¹⁰² While the *First Philippic* exhibits more restraint in blackening Antony's character with the smear of tyranny than any of the subsequent *Philippics* do, the themes and imagery of Antony's tyrannical behavior are nevertheless well-developed in Cicero's first public foray against him.¹⁰³

Cicero begins this speech with an allusion to the assassination of Julius Caesar, declaring that, at the time, he had hoped that the *res publica* had been at last recalled to the guidance and authority of the Senate. The identification of Julius Caesar with the figure of the tyrant is made transparent two sentences later when Cicero remarks that "on that day when we had been summoned to the Temple of Tellus, I, as much as it was in my power, laid the foundations of peace and reenacted the old *exemplum* of the Athenians; I even appropriated the Greek word of

¹⁰¹ The first two *Philippics* were composed while Antony was still consul in 44 BC. The latter twelve *Philippics* were all written in the context of the crisis that succeeded Antony's failed attempt to take over his proconsular province of Cisalpine Gaul from Decimus Brutus at the end of 44 and beginning of 43. Manuwald (2008) has shown persuasively how the latter twelve *Philippics* constitute a structurally and thematically coherent collection by themselves.

¹⁰² On the tone and intent of the *First Philippic*, see Ramsey (2003: 81-3). Cicero's exhortation to Antony at *Phil.* 1.35-38 begins with the words, "Therefore, alter your course, I beg you, and look to your ancestors, and so steer the Republic that your fellow citizens will rejoice that you have been born" (*Qua re flecte te, quaeso, et maiores tuos respice atque ita gubernare rem publicam ut natum esse te cives tui gaudeant*). However, Cicero's admission at *Fam.* 12.25.4 that he considered the *First Philippic* to be an invective against Antony allows us to see the disingenuousness of Cicero's posture of reconciliation in this speech.

¹⁰³ The relationship between the delivered and published versions of these orations (apart from the *Second Philippic*, which has an unusual revision and publication history – see Ramsey (2003: 158-9)) is uncertain and controversial. The most comprehensive overview of this problem (with bibliography) is Manuwald (2007: 54-90). For another recent treatment that covers much the same ground, see Kelly (2008).

which that commonwealth at that time made use in resolving their civil strife” (*ex eo die quo in aedem Telluris convocati sumus, in quo templo, quantum in me fuit, ieci fundamenta pacis Atheniensiumque renovavi vetus exemplum; Graecum etiam verbum usurpavi quo tum in sedandis discordiis usa erat civitas illa*). Here, Cicero is referring to the aftermath of the overthrow of the Thirty Tyrants at Athens and the general amnesty that was promulgated afterwards.¹⁰⁴ It is significant that Cicero chooses an *exemplum* of tyranny as a *comparandum* that involves the despotic rule of a multitude of individuals. The comparison subtly primes Cicero’s audience to be receptive to the notion that Caesar’s regime was itself composed of a multitude of individuals who displayed tyrannical inclinations, if not outright tyrannical behaviors.¹⁰⁵ As we shall see, over the course of this and subsequent *Philippics*, Cicero develops the argument that, apart from Caesar himself, the chief tyrant among this multitude is Antony.

The major obstacle that Cicero faces in making a compelling case for Antony’s tyrannical character is the historical Antony’s statesman-like behavior in the immediate aftermath of Caesar’s assassination. As a consul, Antony could lay claim to a powerful source of legitimacy and executive authority, and he had played a pivotal role in keeping the peace in the aftermath of Caesar’s assassination.¹⁰⁶ Cicero, either to maintain an opening for reconciliation with Antony or merely to maintain the pretence of such an opening, praises Antony at *Phil.* 1.4 for his motion to

¹⁰⁴ Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 1.1.10).

¹⁰⁵ Cicero’s characterization of Julius Caesar’s regime as tyrannical is probably more than a stance adopted merely for rhetorical effect. It probably represents Cicero’s true feelings. At *Att.* 14.9.2 Cicero writes of Caesar: “Good gods! The tyrant has died, but tyranny lives” (*O di boni! Vivit tyrannis, tyrannus occidit*). However, the question of what really was Cicero’s attitude towards Caesar and towards the memory of his regime is too complex and expansive an issue to address fully within the narrow scope of this chapter, other than to add that shifting political realities tend to effect a corresponding change in the mixture of idealism and pragmatics that is manifested in Cicero’s rhetoric. This holds true where Antony is concerned as well.

¹⁰⁶ Emily Christian (2008) has rightly stressed that another key obstacle that Cicero must overcome in the *Philippics* is the legitimacy (constitutionally speaking) of Antony’s consular power and the illegitimacy of the actions undertaken by Brutus, Cassius, and Octavian against Antony and his allies.

abolish the office of dictator, which had been the legitimizing fig-leaf of the late Julius Caesar's tyrannical authority. Cicero lauds a number of Antony's other actions as well, presenting the audience with an Antony that behaves as a moderate and collegial Roman statesman should.¹⁰⁷ At *Phil.* 1.6, however, Cicero claims that Antony kept up this praiseworthy conduct for only a short time and thereafter began to engage in behavior that signified an illicit seizure of power: ramming legislation through corrupt popular assemblies, threatening to demolish Cicero's house because of his non-attendance at the Senate, and overturning the *leges* of Caesar while cynically proclaiming the inviolability of the *acta* in Caesar's unpublished memoranda.¹⁰⁸

The charge of abolishing established *leges* is a conventional *topos* of tyrannical characterization.¹⁰⁹ However, Cicero's extended meditation (*Phil.* 1.16-26) on Caesar's *leges* and *acta* does more than make Antony into a generalized tyrannical caricature. It is one of the first occurrences of a *Philippics*-wide pattern of highlighting the ways that Antony engages in worse degrees of stereotypically tyrannical behavior than the models – like Julius Caesar – to which Cicero compares him.¹¹⁰ After laying out his case for why Caesar's *acta* ought to be defined as the *leges* he promulgated (or wished to promulgate) rather than any and all notes to be found in his papers, Cicero sums up his personal attitude towards Caesar's *acta*:

Quae quidem ego, patres conscripti, qui illa numquam probavi, tamen ita conservanda concordiae causa arbitratus sum ut non modo, quas vivus leges Caesar tulisset,

¹⁰⁷ See *Phil.* 1.4-5.

¹⁰⁸ *Phil.* 1.12-26.

¹⁰⁹ See the pseudo-Sallustian *In M. Tullium Ciceronem* 3.5, where this characteristic, along with the full panoply of stereotypical tyrannical attributes, is ascribed to Cicero himself and his conduct as consul in 63 BC.

¹¹⁰ A little earlier in the speech (*Phil.* 1.12) Cicero makes a similarly unflattering comparison of Antony's current conduct with past precedent. Referring to Antony's threat to demolish his house, Cicero asks, "Who has ever compelled a Senator [to attend the Senate] with so great a penalty?" (*Quis autem umquam tanto damno senatorem coegit?*). The principle of imposing a *damnum* is not called into question; only Antony's excessiveness in making the *damnum* the loss of home rather than a pledge (*pignus*) or a fine (*multa*).

infirmandas in hoc tempore non putarem, sed ne illas quidem quas post mortem Caesaris prolatas esse et fixas videtis.¹¹¹

Members of the Senate, I, who never approved those [*acta*], nevertheless have arrived at the judgment that they ought to be protected for the sake of concord, so that I think not only those laws which Caesar ratified in his lifetime ought not to be weakened at this time, but even those laws which you see brought forward and promulgated after the death of Caesar.

Cicero makes it clear that although he opposed Caesar's *leges*, he is nevertheless prepared to acknowledge their legitimacy. This is an abrupt shift in attitude from the claims made about Caesar by Cicero earlier in the speech. At *Phil.* 1.9.32, Cicero calls Caesar's assassination "the greatest and most beautiful deed" (*maximum et pulcherrimum factum*), and at *Phil.* 1.15.30, he terms the Senate's relationship to Caesar as "necessary slavery" (*necessaria servitus*) to contrast the coercion practiced on the Senate by Caesar with the voluntary (and thus abrogable) slavery that now characterizes the Senate's relationship to Antony. To recognize the legislation of Caesar's tyrannical regime has all the hallmarks of a difficult compromise, and indeed this is precisely how Cicero characterizes his acquiescence to the settlement of 17 March 44 BC. Julius Caesar, for all that his regime overturned traditional republican norms of consolidating political power, still organized and expressed this power within the parameters of traditional republican forms – at least Cicero is content in the *First Philippic* to let Caesar's regime appear this way.

As the speech moves to its climax Cicero calls Antony's abolition of the title *dictator* his "greatest gift" (*maximum donum*) to the Republic and remarks that this act branded Caesar with "everlasting infamy" (*ignominia sempiterna*).¹¹² Cicero then proceeds to introduce the *exemplum* of Marcus Manlius as a positive point of comparison with Antony's act.¹¹³ By abolishing the

¹¹¹ *Phil.* 1.23-7

¹¹² *Phil.* 1.32.16ff.

¹¹³ Marcus Manlius is a fourth century BC consul who became a by-word for tyrannical aspirations. The fullest ancient account of the career of Marcus Manlius is Livy, *AUC* 6.14-20.

office and title of *dictator*, Cicero argues that Antony has produced an effect similar to the one produced by the Manlii when they forbade any member of the *gens* from bearing the name Marcus. The erasure of names, titles, and their attendant connotations is thus presented as a powerful gesture of anti-tyrannical policy, but Antony's manipulation of Caesar's *acta* represents a similarly potent expression of power in the service of tyrannical aspirations. In Cicero's intimation, Antony's erasure of the distinctions between Caesar's *leges* and his memoranda will bring about the breakdown of *concordia* because it will divest words such as *lex* of any meaningful value. Antony's manipulation of words and writing is in this way configured as an insidious ploy to exercise illegitimate power, and the contrast Cicero draws with his own unwavering respect for the integrity of *leges* implicitly casts Cicero as the champion of reliable written discourse.¹¹⁴

Cicero's exhortation to Antony near the end of the speech to return to the true path of *gloria* – making oneself praiseworthy and estimable to the Republic, governing through approbation rather than through fear (*Phil.* 1.33) – stakes a claim on Cicero's part for the mantle of advocate for moderation, compromise, and reconciliation. Antony, on the contrary, is ranged along the fringe of acceptable conduct as a man who seeks to secure power by relying on fear rather than esteem. Here again, Cicero accompanies an implied charge of quintessentially tyrannical behavior with a pointed *exemplum*, remarking, “Indeed to be feared and hated is execrable, detestable, productive of weakness and vulnerability. And we see even in the play that [this attitude] was ruinous to that character who said, ‘Let them hate me, so long as they fear me’” (*metui vero et in odio esse invidiosum, detestabile, imbecillum, caducum. Quod videmus*

¹¹⁴ Cicero's idealism where *leges* and Senatorial decrees are concerned is hardly a constant, however. As Christian (2008: 164-7) observes, the perennial frustration of Cicero's attempts to persuade the Senate to declare Antony a *hostis* and sanction the actions of Brutus and Cassius does not stop Cicero from advocating and even abetting policies that subvert the legal authority of the Senate in these matters.

*etiam in fabula illi ipsi qui 'oderint, dum metuant' dixerit perniciosum fuisse).*¹¹⁵ This allusion to the eponymous tyrant of Accius's *Atreus* incorporates Antony into a narrative that can have but one dénouement, namely, a complete downfall for the tyrant. This narrative has also been actualized in the career of Julius Caesar, whose assassination Cicero adduces as a cautionary tale in order to bolster his exhortation to Antony to alter his political course.¹¹⁶ Cicero rounds out this exhortation with the observation that the Roman People have offered "many indications" (*iudicia multa*) that they disapprove of Antony's conduct while esteeming that of Brutus and the other tyrannicides. In grasping at sole power, Antony has, according to Cicero, only brought about his own isolation.

In evaluating Cicero's rhetorical strategy in the *First Philippic*, we must be struck by the way that Cicero shifts from identifying Antony with a clique of Thirty-Tyrants-like figures orbiting Julius Caesar to isolating Antony as entirely out of step with the universal consensus and *concordia* of the Roman People. To do this, Cicero has had to downplay the support Antony had received and continued to receive from allies at all levels of Roman society.¹¹⁷ The isolation Cicero posits for his Antony is demonstrably an overstatement of the precariousness of the real Antony's actual position, but the issue of whether Cicero's picture of the political reality at Rome is fabricated or not is beside the point. The rhetorical effectiveness of Cicero's presentation of Antony's position as an isolated and fatal one does not depend on its correspondence to reality but on the willingness of Cicero's audience to take the opportunity to align themselves with the will of the Roman People as Cicero constructs it in that reality.

¹¹⁵ *Phil.* 1.34.1-4.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.35.

¹¹⁷ The Senatorial audiences for Cicero's *Philippics* frequently included prominent Caesarians and partisans of Antony hostile to Cicero's political program. See Hall (2002: 281-3).

The identification of Antony with the figure of the tyrant is a key pillar supporting this strategy. By subtly associating Antony with tyrannical *exempla* from the past like the Thirty Tyrants, Julius Caesar, Marcus Manlius, and Atreus, Cicero authorizes his audience to apply to Antony the penalties that were imposed on these figures. Yet Cicero does not rely on Antony's similarity to these *exempla* as the only justification for inflicting on Antony the traditional penalties for tyrannical behavior. It is Cicero's practice in this speech and in subsequent *Philippics* to demonstrate that Antony's conduct is worse than that of any exemplary tyrannical figure from the past. In this way, Cicero's audience is implicitly presented with a proposition: if our ancestors and our contemporaries were justified in expelling or even killing such-and-such exemplary tyrant, then we are even more justified in imposing the same penalty on Antony, who is so much worse. Constructing a high degree of difference between Antony and the tyrannical *exempla* is a primary goal of Cicero's rhetoric, but the manner by which Antony exceeds his predecessors is also closely enmeshed in the thematic texture of Cicero's speeches. As we have seen, Cicero makes the incongruity between what Antony says and what he does into a key point of attack in the *First Philippic*.

Let us turn to the *Second Philippic*, which like the *First* stands apart from the more cohesive group of *Philippics* 3-14. The invective that Cicero couched in restrained terms in the *First Philippic* is here given full rein. As we discussed, the *First Philippic* maintains at least the pretense of an openness to reconciliation with Antony and advocates for a number of policy changes that could bring this about. *Philippics* 3-14 likewise consist of invective against Antony that is put in the service of achieving specific policy objectives. In contrast, the *Second Philippic* is of a distinctly epideictic character insofar as its primary argumentative objective is to justify praise for one person (Cicero) and blame for another (Antony). The *Second Philippic* affords

Cicero the space and freedom to dwell on those aspects of Antony's character that Cicero found most open to manipulation and censure. Many of these attributes, and the historical *exempla* to which they are compared, are tyrannical in character.

The first comparative *exempla* adduced by Cicero in the opening of the speech – Clodius and Catiline – are not figured as distinctly tyrannical figures in the context of the *Philippics*,¹¹⁸ although a close follower of Cicero's career might be put in mind of *Pro Milone* 35 and 79, where Clodius the tribune is explicitly called a *tyrannus* and Milo is compared favorably to the Athenian tyrannicides. Cicero warns Antony to avoid the violent fates that Clodius and Catiline incurred through their opposition to himself and the Republic, and this warning has significant ramifications for Cicero's representation of Antony as a tyrant when Cicero embarks upon an *apologia* for his own career. In a study that devotes substantial attention to the political feuds Cicero engaged in prior to his contest with Antony, Richard Evans (2008) has uncovered echoes of a recurring charge leveled at Cicero throughout his career: that as consul he tyrannically subjected several of the Catilinarian conspirators to unlawful, arbitrary execution.¹¹⁹ Included among this group was Antony's stepfather Publius Lentulus Sura (cos. 71 BC). Cicero himself expresses some anxiety as early as *In Catilinam* 2.7.14 that his actions in this crisis could be construed not as those of a *diligentissimus consul* but rather a *crudelissimus tyrannus*. Cicero states at *Phil.* 2.12.1 that "My consulship is not pleasing to Antony" (*Non placet M. Antonio consulatus meus*), implying that Antony, in his speech of September 19th, had made some reference to Cicero's executive role in the execution of the conspirators. Cicero's defense

¹¹⁸ *Phil.* 2.1.9-11: "You, although not even insulted in word, in order that you might appear bolder than Catiline and more mad than Clodius, on your own initiative have attacked me with insults" (*Tu ne verbo quidem violatus, ut audacior quam Catilina, furiosor quam Clodius viderere, ultro me maledictis lacessisti*).

¹¹⁹ Cf. the pseudo-Sallustian invective *In M. Tullium Ciceronem*, as well as *Pro Sestio* 109, where Cicero reports that Clodius referred to him as a *tyrannus* and an *ereptor libertatis*.

against Antony's charge is to claim that the imposition of capital punishment on the conspirators was the product of senatorial decree rather than Cicero's executive order. Cicero writes: "For the apprehension of the guilty men was my doing, the punishment was the Senate's" (*Nam comprehensio sontium mea, animadversio senatus fuit*).¹²⁰ Antony's own alleged summary executions of restless soldiers at Brundisium will later allow for a more pointed contrast with Cicero's Senate-sanctioned behavior.¹²¹ Cicero likewise dismisses Antony's assertion that he had fortified the *Clivus Capitolinus* with armed slaves during the Catilinarian crisis (*Phil.* 2.16.1), a denial that is quickly followed up with a reference to Antony's stationing of armed bodyguards in Senate meetings. The universal approbation that Cicero claims for the acts of his consulship also serves as a contrast with the isolation Cicero attributes to Antony in both the *First* and *Second Philippics*.

In devoting so much space (*Phil.* 2.3-43) to the delineation of his own career, Cicero effectively makes himself into a historical *exemplum* to which Antony might be unfavorably compared. A model for the non-tyrannical exercise of high-impact executive power is thus constructed, and Cicero's consulship in 63 BC and Antony's in 44 BC are turned into foils for one another. He treads a very fine line in advocating for this model, however. Cicero, who was acclaimed *pater patriae* for his conduct as consul in 63 BC, acknowledges that Julius Caesar was also accorded the title *parens patriae* by the Senate.¹²² The difference between a genuine mark of esteem and a coerced expression of loyalty, to some extent, must lie in the eye of the beholder, and the force of Cicero's rhetoric depends in large part on whether his readership will buy into

¹²⁰ *Phil.* 2.18.5-6.

¹²¹ See *Phil.* 3.4 and 10; *Phil.* 5.21-3.

¹²² *Phil.* 2.31. On the thematic importance of the consul/dictator as a "father figure" in the *Philippics* and on the manner in which Cicero uses himself as a pointed *exemplum* in this context, see Stevenson (2008: 104-13).

his argument that his actions as consul were approved by the Senate and the Roman People. In any case, by advocating for the doctrine that a Roman magistrate can summarily execute or otherwise impinge upon the traditional privileges of Roman citizens if he has the approval of the Senate and People, Cicero opens up a space in his conception of the Roman constitution for a figure like the “good king” of earlier Greek political theory, who similarly enjoys an expansive prerogative in executive decision-making under the aegis of the popular approval of his administration.¹²³ In her analysis of the rhetoric of *libertas* in the *Philippics*, Eleanor Cowan (2008: 148) writes:

In early speeches in the Senate, [Cicero] argued that he believed that the actions of the Liberators had opened the way for the *res publica* to exist without a leading individual of any kind. He therefore contrasted *libertas* with any impositions from a single individual. By the later speech and in his political pamphlet [i.e. the *Second Philippic*], however, Cicero shifted his approach and argued that the *res publica* could accommodate a leading individual provided such a man was a ‘wise ruler’ (of the kind he had envisaged elsewhere) and not a tyrant.

Ronald Syme (1939: 320-1) likewise detects in Cicero’s later writings and political activities a possible shift by Cicero from the absolutist position expressed in *De Re Publica* 2.43 that *libertas* is totally incompatible with constitutional monarchy to a much more “pliable” posture towards the possibility of such a political order.

Cicero’s argumentation effectively lays some of the theoretical groundwork for the principate, and it is possible even in the *Philippics* to see the self-fashioning rhetoric of benevolent autocracy that Augustus and his successors (and the authors who write about them) will embrace. At the beginning of the *Fourth Philippic*, an address to a popular gathering in the Forum, Cicero declares, “Although I never lacked spirit, the moment of opportunity was lacking. But as soon as there seemed to be an advantageous opportunity, I became the *princeps* of defending your liberty” (*Quamquam animus mihi quidem numquam defuit, tempora defuerunt,*

¹²³ See, for example, Aristotle, *Politics* 3.14ff.

quae simul ac primum aliquid lucis ostendere visa sunt, princeps vestrae libertatis defendendae fui). The unilateral agency Cicero claims for himself in this declaration as the *princeps libertatis defendendae*, notwithstanding its rhetorical dependence on the approval of the People and the collegiality of the Senate, cannot help but convey unsettling undertones of autocratic pretension. Ronald Syme (1939: 311), discussing Cicero's *De Re Publica* 1.68, remarks that "the name [*princeps*] was not always given in praise, for the *princeps* was all too often a political dynast, exerting illicit power, or 'potentia', for personal rule." To claim the status of *princeps* thus entails an attendant claim to a popular mandate to exert individual agency in political decision-making. Again, Cicero elides any senatorial dissent on the question of whether Antony should be termed a *hostis* and effectively manufactures *post facto* universal approval for Antony's expulsion from politics. It is therefore possible from the evidence provided by Cicero's own writings to argue that the difference between Cicero and Antony where their pretensions to executive power are concerned is less of kind than of degree.

After configuring his own exercise of consular authority as an *exemplum* in the *Second Philippic*, Cicero produces an account of Antony's career that appears self-evidently tyrannical in comparison. Cicero reproduces a veritable litany of conventional tyrannical excesses in his comprehensive account of Antony's life (*Phil.* 2.44-114). There are stories of unbridled *libidines* and, as seen in chapter 1, of consorting with actors and actresses (*Phil.* 2.20, 58, 61-2, 67, 69, 101), of plundering the estates of eminent men like Pompey and Varro (*Phil.* 2.103-105) and selling the possessions and honors of Rome for private gain (2.64-66), of religious impiety (*Phil.* 2.81-85), of drunken orgies, extravagant banquets, and hungover vomiting at solemn public ceremonies (*Phil.* 2.42, 50, 62-67, 104), of his employment of an armed bodyguard (*Phil.* 2.6, 19, 89, 108, 112), and of callous demonstrations of force, coercion, and violence (*Phil.* 2.103-

105). All of these tyrannical vices are symptomatic of a character that is beholden to insatiable, irrational appetites for power and pleasure. Although Cicero does not interrupt the flow of his argument to engage in any extended meditations on temporally distant Greek precursors to Antony, there are indications in the text that Cicero has these Greek precedents in mind. Casual references to an otherwise unknown companion of Antony named Hippias, for whose wedding Antony is said to have gone on an especially dissolute bender, has been marked by commentators as an allusion to the tyrannical regime of Peisistratus and his sons Hipparchus and Hippias. As Ramsey (2003: *ad Phil.* 2.63.35) notes, Antony, then the Master of Horse (Greek: Hipparchus), makes too uncanny a pair with a companion named Hippias for the anecdote not to suggest a deliberate pun.

The portrait thus presented of Antony produces a sharp contrast with the supposed rationality that underpins Cicero's devotion to the health and ideals of the Republic. The tyrant is always striving to monopolize power and achieve his own desires; the ideal senator and consul works to secure the well-being of the Republic. Moreover, Cicero also expresses his superiority to Antony through the display of mastery over the learned crafts of oratory and writing. Cicero's eloquence is the product of decades of study and discipline; Antony's has been bought from the rhetorician Sextus Clodius with the proceeds of ill-gotten real estate (*Phil.* 2.43). Cicero's command of legislation and documentary evidence is set against Antony's clumsy and gauche recitation of one of Cicero's letters to the Senate (*Phil.* 2.7-9) and his transparently corrupt manipulation of Julius Caesar's papers (*Phil.* 2.109-11).¹²⁴ In this manner, Cicero calls into question the competence of Antony's engagement with written and spoken discourse.

However, the most valuable weapon in Cicero's rhetorical arsenal, as evidenced by the amount of time he spends deploying it and the prominent place he accords it in the peroration of

¹²⁴ Butler (2002:103-23).

the speech, is the comparison of Antony to the *exemplum* of Julius Caesar. We have already seen this *exemplum* put to work in the *First Philippic*, but in extending the scope of the historical inquiry in the *Second Philippic* to include Antony's early career under Caesar's charge, Cicero allows his readers to see an aspect of tyranny and tyrannical succession that further disqualifies Antony from political respectability: the slavishness that Antony exhibited to the ascendant Julius Caesar.¹²⁵ As Cicero argues (*Phil.* 2.85.14-86.22), Antony's performance as consul and as Lupercus at the Lupercalia of February, 44 BC evinced an unconscionable willingness to assume a position of abject servility *vis-à-vis* a more powerful political patron:

Tu diadema imponebas cum plangore populi; ille cum plausu reiciebat. Tu ergo unus, scelerate, inventus es qui, cum auctor regni esses eumque quem collegam habebas dominum habere velles, idem temptares quid populus Romanus ferre et pati posset. At etiam misericordiam captabas: supplex te ad pedes abiciebas. Quid petens? Ut servires? Tibi uni peteres, qui ita a puero vixeras ut omnia paterere, ut facile servires; a nobis populoque Romano mandatum id certe non habebas.

You were foisting the crown on [Caesar] amid the lamentations of the people. He refused it amid their applause. Therefore you alone, wicked man, were found who – since you wanted to be the author of his kingship and wished to have your colleague be instead your master – would make trial of what the Roman People could tolerate and submit to. And you even seized upon pathos, for you abased yourself as a suppliant at his feet. Seeking what? That you might be a slave? Would that you had sought this for yourself alone, you who had lived this way from boyhood onward, that you might be on the receiving end in all things, that you might contentedly be a slave. From us and from the Roman People you certainly did not have this mandate.

In many respects this excerpt encapsulates Cicero's fundamental rhetorical stance on Antony's tyrannical character. Twice Cicero mentions Antony's total isolation (*tu ergo unus...tibi uni peteres...*) in his posture towards Caesar, and he asserts that this isolation is born from the fact that Antony had received no mandate from any Roman constituency authorizing his presentation of a crown to Caesar.

¹²⁵ The dynamic in question is prefigured in Cicero's scurrilous account of Antony's relationship to the younger Curio (*Phil.* 2.44-46). Antony is said to have submitted himself to Curio's *potestas* in such a way as to take on the feminine role in the relationship and thereby give up any pretensions he had to social respectability. See above, pg. 32, n. 33.

This isolation at first appears somewhat paradoxical given that it is not presented as a consequence of Antony's tyrannical exercise of power (as it had been in the *First Philippic*) but rather as a manifestation of Antony's abject servility, which Cicero's allusion to Antony's misspent boyhood links with the sexual servility Antony displayed towards Curio as a *puer*. This seeming paradox can be explained as an attempt by Cicero to differentiate further the tyrannical character from the temper of a senatorial and consular leader. Cicero claims that, as consul, Antony tried to transform his *collega* into his *dominus*, and the drive that Cicero ascribes to Antony to abolish the traditional terms of power relations in this way is the key to understanding the conception of tyranny that Cicero is constructing here. Essentially, Cicero is making the argument that Antony is a type of person for whom the principle of collegiality is anathema and the *dominus-servus* relationship is the ideal pattern for the political organization of the Roman state. What is truly appalling about Antony, according to Cicero, is that it makes no difference to him whether he is the *dominus* or *servus* in the new political order. In this way, Cicero attempts to exclude from his readers' consideration the potential argument that Antony's tyrannical behavior is merely a manifestation of the traditional ambition of Roman *nobiles* to attain political preeminence. For Cicero, Antony's conduct is entirely at variance with traditional Roman aspirations to achieve *libertas* since Antony is not even working to secure *libertas* for himself. Antony is instead a perfect slave, either to a master like Julius Caesar or to his own appetites.

Cicero rounds off his account of the Lupercalia episode with a rhetorical question packed full of historical *exempla* (2.87.3-6): "Was Lucius Tarquinius expelled, were Spurius Cassius, Spurius Maelius, and Marcus Manlius executed, so that many centuries later Mark Antony should do that which is unspeakable, namely, enthrone a king at Rome? (*Ideone L. Tarquinius exactus, Sp. Cassius, <Sp.> Maelius, M. Manlius necati ut multis post saeculis a M. Antonio,*

quod fas non est, rex Romae constitueretur?).¹²⁶ Situating Julius Caesar and Mark Antony in this long tradition of aspirants to absolute power at Rome, Cicero displays a new ease, compared to his practice in the *First Philippic*, with using the loaded words *rex*, *tyrannus*, and *dominus* to refer to Julius Caesar and Antony. There are a number of incidental occurrences of this phenomenon in the speech. At *Phil.* 2.34.7-10, Cicero disputes his direct involvement in the assassination of Caesar by declaring that “If I had been [a member of the conspiracy], I would not only have removed the king from the Republic but also the kingship, and, if that had been my stilus [composing the narrative], as it is alleged, believe me, I would have completed not just one act, but the entire play” (*si enim fuisset, non solum regem, sed etiam regnum de re publica sustulisset et, si meus stilus ille fuisset, ut dicitur, mihi crede, non solum unum actum, sed totam fabulam confecissem*). Cicero means, of course, that he would have killed Antony along with Caesar if he had been in charge of planning the conspiracy, and it is noteworthy too that Cicero conceives of his potency to effect such acts in terms of written discourse.¹²⁷ Cicero sets the power of his pen against that of Antony’s sword.

At *Phil.* 2.90.1 Cicero remarks that Antony “presided over the tyrant’s funeral” (*funeri tyranni... prae-fuisti*), and at *Phil.* 2.96.13-15, Cicero alludes to Julius Caesar when he writes of Antony’s corrupt dealings with King Deiotarus that “[Deiotarus], a wise man, knew that this principle had always held true: that the things which tyrants plundered could be recovered by those from whom they had been stolen when the tyrants had been killed” (*Sciebat homo sapiens ius semper hoc fuisse ut, quae tyranni eripuissent, ea tyrannis interfectis ii, quibus erepta essent, reciperarent*). Finally, at *Phil.* 2.108.14-19, Cicero describes Antony’s return to Rome in May 44 BC after a tour of Campania in the following terms:

¹²⁶ The Maelii and Marcus Manlius are mentioned again at *Phil.* 2.114.19-20.

¹²⁷ Butler (2002: 120).

Qui vero inde reditus Romam, quae perturbatio totius urbis! Memineramus Cinnam nimis potentem, Sullam postea dominantem, modo Caesarem regnantem videramus. Erant fortasse gladii, sed absconditi nec ita multi. Ista vero quae et quanta barbaria est! Agmine quadrato cum gladiis sequuntur; scutorum lecticas portari videmus.

Then, from [Campania] what a return to Rome, what a hubbub throughout the city! We remembered Cinna exerting too much power and Sulla afterwards exercising domination; just a moment ago, we had seen Caesar ruling as king. Perhaps in those cases there were swords, but they were hidden and were not as numerous. But this quintessential and far-reaching barbarity of yours! Men with swords follow you in battle order; we see litters full of shields carried about.

Cicero situates Antony in a historical procession of tyrannical figures that becomes progressively worse until reaching a nadir with Antony. Cinna had too much power, Sulla achieved the status of *dominus* over the state, Caesar took on the role of a king, but Antony exceeds all of them with his open employment of an armed bodyguard. It is significant that Cicero locates the source of Antony's superlative immorality in the visibility of the emblems of tyrannical power. It was one thing for Cicero to see Julius Caesar exercising absolute power, but it is quite another for Antony to take the instruments of violent oppression that Cinna, Sulla, and Caesar kept hidden and then parade them in battle array and carry them through the streets in litters. The visual evidence of Antony's tyrannical pretensions are *prima facie* justifications, in Cicero's view, for removing Antony from power in the same way that Julius Caesar had been removed. Yet Cicero of course is also eliding the violent atrocities openly committed by all these earlier autocrats in Rome in order to cast Antony in a worse light. This *ad hoc* rehabilitation of tyrannical figures from Rome's past is another important aspect of Cicero's rhetorical strategy, and as we proceed we shall see this strategy take on greater prominence as a means for Cicero to isolate Antony and establish him as the worst tyrant of Rome's history.

Cicero's imagined Antony can only act unilaterally in an efficacious way through visual and physical media, and in this respect he differs not only from Cicero, who thinks of himself as a master of spoken and written discourse, but also from Julius Caesar. Cicero defers to the

peroration his most extended comparison of Antony and Julius Caesar in the *Second Philippic*. A close look at this passage reveals Cicero continuing to use pointed comparisons to cast Antony in the worst possible light:

Quod si non metuis viros fortis egregiosque civis, quod a corpore tuo prohibentur armis, tui te, mihi crede, diutius non ferent. Quae est autem vita dies et noctes timere a suis? Nisi vero aut maioribus habes beneficiis obligatos quam ille quosdam habuit ex eis a quibus est interfectus, aut tu es ulla re cum eo comparandus. Fuit in illo ingenium, ratio, memoria, litterae, cura, cogitatio, diligentia; res bello gesserat, quamvis rei publicae calamitosas, at tamen magnas; multos annos regnare meditatus, magno labore, magnis periculis quod cogitarat effecerat; muneribus, monumentis, congiariis, epulis multitudinem imperitam delenierat; suos praemiis, adversarios clementiae specie devinxerat. Quid multa? Attulerat iam liberae civitati partim metu partim patientia consuetudinem serviendi. Cum illo ego te dominandi cupiditate conferre possum, ceteris vero rebus nullo modo comparandus. Sed ex plurimis malis quae ab illo rei publicae sunt inusta hoc tamen boni est quod didicit iam populus Romanus quantum cuique crederet, quibus se committeret, a quibus caveret. Haec non cogitas, neque intellegis satis esse viris fortibus didicisse quam sit re pulchrum, beneficio gratum, fama gloriosum tyrannum occidere?¹²⁸

But if you do not fear brave men and prominent citizens because they are kept away from your body by arms, believe me, your own allies will not tolerate you for much longer. And what sort of life is that to spend one's days and nights in fear of one's own allies? Unless of course you have bound them to you by greater favors than [Caesar] had in the cases of certain of those men who killed him, or if you can be compared with [Caesar] in any way. He had talent, good sense, a sharp memory, facility with letters, focus, the capacity to reflect, and perseverance. He had accomplished many feats in war, and although they were disastrous for the Republic, still, they were impressive. Having plotted for many years to attain kingly rule, by great exertion and great risks he had brought about what he planned. He had captivated the naive multitude with shows, monuments, gifts, and banquets. He set fetters upon his allies with rewards, his enemies with a pretense of clemency. What more is there to say? He had inflicted already upon a free state a habituation to slavery partly through fear and partly through its passivity. I am able to compare you with [Caesar] with respect to your desire for domination, but in all other things there is no comparison at all. And among the many evils which were branded on the Republic by [Caesar], there is nevertheless one good thing: the Roman People learned how much it should trust in each man, to whom it should entrust itself, of whom it should beware. You do not contemplate these things, nor do you understand that it is enough for brave men to have learned how beautiful a feat it is, how remunerative in benefits it is, how glorious for one's renown it is to kill a tyrant?

Of the praiseworthy qualities Cicero concedes to Caesar, it is significant that a large portion of them directly pertain to Caesar's abilities as an orator, writer, and tactician. Caesar, for all that he aspired to the unpardonable goal of attaining kingly power, nevertheless did so through means

¹²⁸ *Phil.* 2.116-117.

that are more admirable than the ones Antony is currently utilizing. According to Cicero, Caesar cultivated his adversaries and the Roman People by bestowing various *beneficia* upon them, not by relying solely upon force to protect his life, as Antony does with his bodyguard. Yet Cicero claims Caesar's greatest assets in ascending to the heights of supreme power were the ignorance and passivity of the Roman People. Cicero again elides the years of unsuccessful military resistance to Caesar in order to enhance the cogency of his point, and in doing so Cicero puts forward a remarkable argument for the power of ideas to stand as a bulwark against tyranny. The ignorance and passivity of the Roman People have been cured, in Cicero's view, by the edifying spectacle of Caesar's assassination, with the result that Antony cannot count on the Roman People's tacit acquiescence to his own tyrannical behavior. Furthermore, if *beneficia* and eloquence could not save Caesar from his assassins, it is unreasonable for Antony to expect to keep his newly enlightened enemies at bay with force and violence alone.

Cicero's assertion that there is no comparison between Antony and Caesar therefore cuts two distinct ways. On the one hand, Antony has many fewer advantages in terms of the prevailing political climate to secure the kind of power Caesar enjoyed, and, on the other, Antony is far less skilled in terms of his own abilities to replicate the kind of loyalty Caesar inspired. The paradoxical comparison that Cicero draws implies both that Antony is a much greater tyrant than Caesar and that Antony can, at the same time, be more easily neutralized than Caesar ever was. The overall effect of this comparison – and of the *Second Philippic* as a whole – is to paint a portrait of a tyrant who is so extreme in his barbarity and desire for power that he is an existential threat to the Republic, and yet so inept in his oratorical abilities and political acumen that he is ripe for removal from the political landscape in the manner of well-known historical *exempla*.

The historical and political context of *Philippics* 3-14 is radically different from the first two *Philippics*. Antony's departure from Rome on 28 November 44 BC and the subsequent decision by Decimus Junius Brutus to refuse to turn over the province of Cisalpine Gaul to the soon to be ex-consul offered an opening to Cicero to rally the Senate, the Roman People, the sympathetic Caesarian consuls Hirtius and Pansa, and the up-and-coming Octavian to the anti-Antonian cause. The evidence for the publication of the *Second Philippic* is too scanty to draw any firm conclusions about who precisely among the power-brokers at Rome might have read it by 20 December, the date when Cicero delivered the *Third Philippic*, but evidently the number was small enough that Cicero could approach the *Third Philippic* as a clean slate where Antony's characterization as a tyrant is concerned. This was advantageous to Cicero given that the political situation had changed to such an extent that using Julius Caesar as a negative *exemplum* to attack Antony would now be problematic given that Cicero now had to align himself with the Caesarian consuls Hirtius and Pansa and with Caesar's heir in order to invoke military opposition. We would expect, then, that the historical *exempla* of tyrants deployed by Cicero in the *Third* and subsequent *Philippics* would be less overtly anti-Caesarian than those utilized in the first two orations, and this is exactly what we find.

This is not to say that Julius Caesar is absent from *Philippics* 3-14. In fact, the Lupercalia episode is mentioned by Cicero at *Phil.* 3.12, although in its emphasis the account focuses entirely on Antony's delivering a speech naked, oiled, and drunk rather than on Antony's complicity in Caesar's monarchical pretensions. At *Phil.* 3.12, Cicero only remarks of Caesar that he refused the emblem of monarchy when Antony offered it to him, a statement that could be construed at worst as a neutral comment on Caesar's position at that time or at best as a favorable endorsement of Caesar's behavior. It is an open question whether *Phil.* 3.12 is a

deliberate allusion to *Phil.* 2.84-7, but, in any case, this passage represents an occasion where Cicero has been called upon to re-work material he had covered elsewhere in order to make it fit into a new political context. This phenomenon recurs in the *Third Philippic* at 3.8-11, where Cicero compares Antony to Tarquin the Proud, another historical *exemplum* of tyranny from Rome's past. I would argue that this comparison performs the same function that the comparison of Antony to Caesar does in the peroration of the *Second Philippic*. Many of the same *topoi* and strategies that Cicero deploys to assimilate Antony to Julius Caesar and to the stock figure of the tyrant find their way into this passage as well:

Neque enim Tarquinio expulso maioribus nostris tam fuit optata libertas quam est depulso Antonio retinenda nobis. Illi regibus parere iam a condita urbe didicerant: nos post reges exactos servitutis oblivio ceperat. Atque ille Tarquinius quem maiores nostri non tulerunt non crudelis, non impius, sed superbus est habitus et dictus: quod nos vitium in privatis saepe tulimus, id maiores nostri ne in rege quidem ferre potuerunt. L. Brutus regem superbum non tulit: D. Brutus sceleratum atque impium regnare patietur? Quid Tarquinius tale qualia innumerabilia et facit et fecit Antonius? Senatum etiam reges habebant: nec tamen, ut Antonio senatum habente, in consilio regis versabantur barbari armati. Servabant auspicia reges; quae hic consul augurque neglexit, neque solum legibus contra auspicia ferendis sed etiam collega una ferente eo quem ipse ementitis auspiciis vitiosum fecerat. Quis autem rex umquam fuit tam insignite impudens ut haberet omnia commoda, beneficia, iura regni venalia? Quam hic immunitatem, quam civitatem, quod praemium non vel singulis hominibus vel civitatibus vel universis provinciis vendidit? Nihil humile de Tarquinio, nihil sordidum accepimus; at vero huius domi inter quasilla pendebatur aurum, numerabatur pecunia; una in domo omnes quorum intererat totum imperium populi Romani nundinabantur. Supplicia vero in civis Romanos nulla Tarquini accepimus; at hic et Suessae iugulavit eos quos in custodiam dederat et Brundisi ad trecentos fortissimos viros civisque optimos trucidavit. Postremo Tarquinius pro populo Romano bellum gerebat tum cum est expulsus; Antonius contra populum Romanum exercitum adducebat tum cum a legionibus relictus nomen Caesaris exercitumque pertimuit neglectisque sacrificiis sollemnibus ante lucem vota ea quae numquam solveret nuncupavit, et hoc tempore in provinciam populi Romani conatur invadere.

Moreover, the *libertas* which we must preserve now that Antony has been cast out was not desired to the same degree by our ancestors when they expelled Tarquin. *They* had learned to obey kings from the time the city was founded. *We*, on the other hand, forgot what slavery was when the kings were driven out. And that Tarquin whom our ancestors could not tolerate was not considered and called cruel or impious but proud. The vice that we often endure in private men could not even be tolerated by our ancestors in a king. Lucius Brutus did not tolerate a proud king. Will Decimus Brutus suffer a wicked and impious man to rule? What ever did Tarquin do to compare with the innumerable things Antony is doing and has done? The kings also had a Senate. However, armed barbarians did not figure in the council of the king as they do when Antony presides over the Senate.

The kings respected the auspices which this consul and augur has disregarded, not only by passing legislation in utter disregard of the auspices but also by doing so with a colleague whom he himself had made illicit by electing him under false auspices. Furthermore, what king was ever so signally shameless as to make all the privileges, benefits, and rights of his kingdom for sale? What exemption, what right of citizenship, what reward has this man not sold to individuals or communities or entire provinces? Tradition has handed down to us nothing base, nothing sordid about Tarquin; but indeed gold was weighed out, money was counted among the women's wool baskets in [Antony's] house. In a single house all of those who were interested traded in the entire empire of the Roman People. Tradition has handed down to us no account of Tarquin performing arbitrary punishments against Roman citizens; but at Suessa [Antony] murdered those whom he had put under guard and at Brundisium he cut down about three hundred of the bravest men and best citizens. Finally, Tarquin was waging war on behalf of the Roman People at the time when he was expelled, while Antony was leading an army against the Roman People at the time when, abandoned by his soldiers, he feared the name and army of Caesar, and, having neglected the usual sacrifices at first light, he undertook vows which he will never discharge. At this very moment he endeavors to invade a province of the Roman People.

There are a few obvious parallels to note at the outset between this passage and the comparison at *Phil.* 2.116-117. The *viros fortis egregiosque civis* whom Antony did not fear at *Phil.* 2.116.17 are here (3.10.9-10) assimilated to the men arbitrarily killed by Antony at Brundisium and magnified into *fortissimos viros civisque optimos*. The inversion of the chiasmic elements suggests a deliberate varying of the language used in the earlier oration. Additionally, both passages also assert that the Roman People learned (*didicere*) lessons from their experiences of regal/tyrannical power. There is also an emphasis in both passages on the *beneficia* and *praemia* to be dispensed by the tyrannical ruler – although in Antony's case they are explicitly for sale rather than given out in return for loyalty, as was Caesar's practice – and in both passages Antony's armed bodyguard is highlighted as a terrible innovation. At a more thematic level, the comparisons between Antony and Caesar and Antony and Tarquin achieve their rhetorical effect in part by downplaying the more unsavory aspects of the earlier tyrannical regime in order to make Antony's tyranny appear the worse of the two. Cicero's claim that tradition has handed down nothing *humile* and *sordidum* about Tarquin may be true insofar as Tarquin the individual did not ever compromise the dignity of his position with vulgar pleasures

the way that Antony has compromised his, but as a good faith account of why the Romans of the regal period drove out Tarquin, it is patently a misrepresentation to say that Tarquin's *superbia* was the only cause. His son Sextus Tarquinius's rape of Lucretia was part of Cicero's repertoire of *exempla*. He includes an account of the story in his earlier dialogue *De Re Publica* (2.45); in *Phil.* 3.8-11, then, Cicero is suppressing this element of sexual violence in the traditional story about the expulsion of Tarquin's regime. Sexual violence and unrestrained *libido* are classic symptoms of tyranny, and it is to Cicero's advantage to attribute this fault only to Antony here in order to make him appear more worthy of expulsion than Tarquin, whose overthrow was fully justified (as Cicero here argues) by his *superbia* alone. Manuwald (2007: *ad Phil.* 3.10) notes that Cicero also suppresses Tarquin's war on Rome (cf. Livy 6.1-7.4) to achieve an effect similar to the one he produces through the suppression of the Sextus Tarquinius-Lucretia narrative. Cicero is exploiting the flexibility of the exemplary tradition to isolate Antony as a tyrant of unprecedented scope.

In addition to the elements of tyrannical conduct that I have already noted, I would like to draw attention to a few other facets of the character portrait sketched by Cicero in the passage above. Antony is *superbus*, *crudelis*, and *impius*. As consul and augur he made a mockery of the auspices and has left the city with *sacrificiis neglectis*. The reference to the "gold weighed out and money counted out among the women's wool baskets" is a crude accusation that Antony has a tendency to allow a woman (i.e. his wife Fulvia) to exert an undue influence over his and Rome's affairs. Antony inflicts arbitrary punishments upon Roman citizens and even executes them. He is shown to be a coward in the face of Octavian's name and army. All of these characteristics represent stereotypical features associated with the stock figure of the tyrant in Greco-Roman political discourse, but, again, the context in which they are deployed tends to

obfuscate their provenance. By presenting the quintessential Roman tyrant Tarquin as a king whose only real defect was his *superbia*, Cicero prompts his readership/audience to view Antony's tyrannical behavior as if it were unique and unprecedented. In *Phil.* 3.8-11, Cicero shows himself to be a willing manipulator of the historical tradition about the Tarquins, and it is worth asking whether Cicero aims to exert a similar effect on the historical tradition about Antony by publishing the *Philippics*. This is a question that Cicero answers over the course of the remaining speeches.

References to the tyranny of Antony in the remaining *Philippics* tend to reiterate many of the points made by Cicero in the first three orations. The historical *exempla* deployed in these texts (*Phil.* 5.17, 43-44; *Phil.* 8.12; *Phil.* 11.6; and *Phil.* 13.17-18) can therefore quickly be dealt with. The *Fifth Philippic* was delivered on 1 January 43 BC in the context of the debate over whether negotiations should be opened with Antony to effect a diplomatic settlement to the crisis. In this speech, Cicero advocates open war. The usual charges of misconduct, armed intimidation, and corruption are leveled against Antony. At *Phil.* 5.17, Cicero recycles comparisons and language he had first used at *Phil.* 2.108:

An illa non gravissimis ignominiis monumentisque huius ordinis ad posteritatis memoriam sunt notanda, quod unus M. Antonius in hac urbe post conditam urbem palam secum habuerit armatos? Quod neque reges nostri fecerunt neque ei qui regibus exactis regnum occupare voluerunt. Cinnam memini, vidi Sullam, modo Caesarem: hi enim tres post civitatem L. Bruto liberatam plus potuerunt quam universa res publica. Non possum affirmare nullis telis eos stipatos fuisse; hoc dico: nec multis et occultis.

Must not these things be noted in the most severely censorious records of this order for the memory of posterity, namely that in this City and the founding of this City only Mark Antony openly had armed men around him? This is a thing which neither our kings did nor those who wished to take up the kingship when the kings were expelled. I remember Cinna, I saw Sulla, I recently [saw] Caesar: For these three are the men who have exercised more power than the entire Republic since the state was liberated by Lucius Brutus. I cannot affirm that these men were not surrounded by weapons at all. I can say this: [whatever weapons did surround them] were few in number and hidden.

This passage elaborates on *Phil.* 2.108 in a number of significant ways. Antony's exceptionalness and isolation are indicated with the adjective *unus*. The decision to include Cinna, Sulla, and Caesar in the parade of tyrants and to exclude others is justified with the observation that these three were the only men since the founding of Rome to exercise more power than the entire Republic combined, and Cicero implies that Antony is in a position to consolidate a similar monopoly on power. Cicero stresses that it is Antony's unique willingness to parade his armed bodyguard "openly" (*palam*) that is especially dangerous, as it implies a distinct lack of shame and heedless confidence in his own position. At *Phil.* 5.18, Cicero argues that the main effect of Antony's armed gang is to prevent the Senate from engaging in open and unfettered deliberation. Finally, Cicero's marked use of the hendiadys *gravissimis ignominiiis monumentisque* draws attention to the important role written discourse is to play in opposing Antony. Antony's imputed lack of shame at openly surrounding himself with a bodyguard is to be met with a spoken/written monument of censure. As Manuwald (2007: *ad Phil.* 5.17) notes, Cicero probably has most immediately in mind the statues and other physical memorials that he mentions in *Phil.* 9.7 and 9.15. In the latter passage, the *audacia scelerata* of Antony is to be noted on the public tomb of Servius Sulpicius. Yet in the context of a comparison that advertises Cicero's willingness to deploy the history of tyranny in the Republic, the implication cannot be far off that his *Philippics* might themselves be the *monumenta huius ordinis* that will memorialize the infamy of Antony for posterity.

The *Fifth Philippic* also contains another historical *exemplum* that explains away what Cicero's audience might interpret as a disingenuous omission from the parade of tyrants at *Phil.* 5.17. At *Phil.* 5.43, Cicero compares the young Octavian to Pompey the Great in terms of their intrepidity in raising a private army as young men. A neutral observer might reasonably ask why

Pompey, who dominated Roman politics in the 50's BC and held an unprecedented sole consulship in 52 BC, should not merit inclusion among the autocratic figures of the republican past. The answer, I think, can be gleaned from Cicero's decision to cast Octavian and Pompey in similar roles in the overarching historical narrative that hangs over the *Philippics*. Although Pompey and Octavian acted unilaterally in raising private armies (and in much else besides), their radical acts could (and should, in Cicero's estimation) receive retroactive sanction from the Senate and Roman People. At *Phil.* 5.43.21, Cicero says of Pompey that "he helped the Republic" (*subvenit rei publicae*), implying that a senatorial and popular mandate existed for his actions even if that mandate had not yet been expressed by the Senate and People themselves. As seen above, Cicero is willing to take the rhetorical stance that magistrates and even non-magistrates can legitimately exercise autocratic power and ignore traditional restraints on the expression of power if they have a mandate from the Senate and People. The answer to the question of who actually has such a mandate is often not clear-cut. Antony, Cinna, Sulla, and Julius Caesar would certainly all have claimed that by their unilateral, radical actions they also *subvenerunt rei publicae*. Cicero's gambit of aligning Octavian, Pompey, and himself with the cause of the Republic and the consensus of the Senate and People is more of an ideological stance and rhetorical ploy than an objective statement of fact. For this reason, it is important that Cicero's accusations of tyranny against Antony carry with them evidence of Antony's barbarity, corruption, and shamelessness. By attacking Antony's character, Cicero can make the opposition to Antony a moral imperative rather than a political one, and, again, lays the theoretical groundwork for post-Ciceronian authors to heroize Cicero and vilify the tyrannical Antony without calling the legitimacy of the Julio-Claudian regime into question.

A statement that Cicero makes at *Phil.* 8.12 is less of an *exemplum* in its own right than a qualification of the argumentation that Cicero has deployed in previous *exempla*. Delivered on 3 February 43 BC at a meeting of the Senate, the *Eighth Philippic* engages with the building momentum among certain quarters of the Senate to reach a settlement peacefully with Antony, a development that forces Cicero to take a more absolutist tack in advocating war. Cicero addresses Calenus, Antony's chief senatorial ally, in the following terms:

Sed quaeso, Calene, quid tu? Servitutem pacem vocas? Maiores quidem nostri non modo ut liberi essent sed etiam ut imperarent arma capiebant: tu arma abicienda censes ut serviamus? Quae causa iustior est belli gerendi quam servitutis depulsio? In qua etiam si non sit molestus dominus, tamen est miserrimum posse, si velit. Immo aliae causae iustae, haec necessaria est. Nisi forte ad te hoc non putas pertinere quod te socium fore speras dominationis Antoni. In quo bis laboris: primum quod tuas rationes communibus interponis; deinde quod quicquam stabile aut iucundum in regno putas.

But I ask, Calenus, what do you think? Do you call slavery peace? Indeed our ancestors not only took up arms in order to be free but also to rule. Do you suggest that our arms be cast aside so that we should be slaves? What reason for waging war is more just than throwing off servitude? In which state, even if the master is not oppressive, the most wretched thing is that he can be, if he wishes. In fact other reasons [for war] are just, but this one is necessary. Unless you think that perhaps this does not pertain to you because you expect that you will share in the domination of Antony. In this you err twice: first because you interpose your personal concerns on those of the community at large; second because you think that there is anything stable or pleasant in kingship.

Here, Cicero uses the example of the ancestral past to extrapolate the future. *Servitus* that has been cast off in the past can be imposed again if the Senate does not act to oppose it. Here, too, Cicero takes up an absolutist position on autocratic power that problematizes some of his earlier intimations that the unilateral exercise of executive power by consuls should be permissible. Cicero appears to reject the idea that a benevolent autocrat should be tolerated at any time, arguing that even if a particular tyranny is presently benevolent it is inherently unstable and retains the prerogative to engage in oppression at any moment. The portrait of Antony that Cicero has been building throughout the *Philippics* underscores this argument insofar as Antony is presented as a figure who is fundamentally unstable and untrustworthy. Antony defends the

acta of Caesar while working to subvert them; he cannot restrain his appetites, he engages in corrupt financial dealings, he threatens violence. According to Cicero, Antony is beyond rehabilitation and will always put the Republic at risk of tyranny.

Antony is also well on his way to becoming an *exemplum* himself. In the *Eleventh Philippic*, Cicero shifts the focus of his attack to the proconsul Dolabella, the governor-designate of the province of Syria who had just invaded Asia and killed its governor, the tyrannicide Trebonius, in a particularly brutal way. At *Phil.* 11.6.13-22, Cicero makes a remark that offers some insight into how the orator conceptualizes – or perhaps it is better to say how the orator wishes his audience to conceptualize – the origin of tyranny and the relationship of the people of the present to comparable *exempla* from the past:

Cum hoc hoste bellandum est, cuius taeterrima crudelitate omnis barbaria superata est. Quid loquar de caede civium Romanorum, de direptione fanorum? Quis est qui pro rerum atrocitate deplorare tantas calamitates queat? Et nunc tota Asia vagatur, volitat ut rex; nos alio bello distineri putat: quasi vero non idem unumque bellum sit contra hoc iugum impiorum nefarium. Imaginem M. Antoni crudelitatis in Dolabella cernitis: ex hoc illa efficta est; ab hoc Dolabellae scelerum praecepta sunt tradita.

War must be waged with this enemy of the state, by whose most baneful cruelty every kind of barbarism has been surpassed. What shall I say about the slaughter of Roman citizens, about the plundering of shrines? Who is there who could lament such terrible calamities for the horrors they are? Even now all of Asia is laid waste; he flits about it like a king. He thinks that we are occupied by another war, as if it is not the same, single war against this nefarious group of villains. You can discern the image of the cruelty of Mark Antony in Dolabella. Upon him this image has been modeled. From him the precepts of wickedness have been handed down to Dolabella.

Cicero's portrait of Dolabella has the boilerplate picture of tyranny engraved within it. Cicero's erstwhile son-in-law exhibits *crudelitas*, is more barbarous than the barbarians, arbitrarily slaughters Roman citizens, robs temples, lays waste to a Roman province, and acts like a king. Cicero's definition of tyranny here is consistent with what we have seen in previous *Philippics* where Antony's tyrannical behavior is described. Yet in order not to undermine his earlier position that Antony's brand of tyranny is unique and exceptional, Cicero posits a quasi-parental,

student-teacher relationship between Antony and Dolabella – a plausible if fanciful conceit, given that the two had recently been consular colleagues in 44 BC. Again, Cicero’s emphasis is on the visual aspect of tyranny.¹²⁹ It is the mirror image presented by Antony and Dolabella rather than any similarity in political policy or rhetoric that should register in the Senate’s evaluation of the situation. Furthermore, the potentially nebulous concept of tyranny is accorded a more formalized status. Cicero claims that Dolabella’s tyrannical excesses can be reduced to a collection of *praecepta*, with the result that Antony not only can be held responsible for his own behavior but can be attacked as a *praeceptor scelerum* where the tyrannical behavior of others is concerned.

The configuring of Antony as a *praeceptor scelerum* is a significant innovation in Cicero’s portrait of Antony, but Cicero’s final extended meditation in the *Philippics* on Antony and his relationship to other tyrants at *Phil.* 13.17-18 marks a return to his usual form. This is explained in part by the fact that Cicero reworks a noticeable amount of material from the *Second Philippic* into the *Thirteenth* in order to refute, line-by-line, a letter sent by Antony to the consul Hirtius and to Octavian, some 550 words of which are quoted in the speech. Cicero aims to prove that Antony’s words have no substance behind them and that he should be judged rather by his behavior. The recapitulation of the comparison of Antony and Caesar hammers home this point:

Et si eius pueritia pertulerat libidines eorum qui erant in eum tyranni, etiamne in nostros liberos dominum et tyrannum compararet? Itaque illo interfecto qualem in nos eum esse voluit, talis ipse in ceteros exstitit. Qua enim <in> barbaria quisquam tam taeter, tam crudelis tyrannus quam in hac urbe armis barbarorum stipatus Antonius? Caesare dominante veniebamus in senatum, si non libere, at tamen tuto. Hoc archipirata – quid enim dicam tyranno? – haec subsellia ab Ituraeis occupabantur.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ *Phil.* 13.4 illustrates how even when absent Antony and his supporters can be invoked to conjure up a visual spectacle. See above, pg. 40.

¹³⁰ *Phil.* 13.17-18.

Even if in his boyhood [Antony] endured the lusts of those who were tyrants over him, why should he also place a master and tyrant over our children? So, when [Caesar] was killed, [Antony] himself became the kind of man to all and sundry that he wished [Caesar] had become for us. Indeed, in what barbarian realm is there anyone who is so offensive, so cruel a tyrant as Antony is in this city, surrounded as he is by barbarian arms? When Caesar was in control we used to come into the Senate, if not freely, at least in safety! Because of this arch-pirate – for why should I stop at tyrant? – these seats were seized by Ituraeans.

The spectacle of Antony surrounded by his armed Ituraean bodyguard is again contrasted with Caesar's relative unwillingness to make overt displays of force. Sexual subjugation to others (*libidines*) is again linked with a predisposition to devote oneself slavishly to a *dominus* and desire to be a *dominus* oneself. The one signal novelty in Cicero's comparison is that the scope of tyrannical precedents for Antony has now been broadened to include all tyrants everywhere. This hyperbole is in keeping with the over-the-top invective of the rest of the speech. Not only is Antony an *archipirata*, as stated above, but he is a *gladiator* (13.16), a *belua* (13.22), a new Spartacus (13.22), a man to make Catiline appear *tolerabilis* (13.22), a new Hannibal (13.25), a wine-soaked unguent-smearer Lupercus (13.31), and a "born enemy to the Republic" (*rei publicae natus hostis*, 13.32).

The *Second* and *Thirteenth Philippics* are the show-stoppers of the series, and any one of the slurs against Antony listed above could merit individualized attention. However, I have focused on Cicero's representation of Antony as a tyrant because it is in many ways the most fully fleshed out insult among the many that Cicero casts at Antony and also because it is the insult that ultimately will capture the imagination of those Roman authors who write about Antony and Cicero in the years after the latter's death. This appropriation of Cicero's tyrannical portrait of Antony can be attributed in part to Antony's role in Cicero's proscription and death. Antony's execution and dismemberment of Cicero and the display of his head on the *rostra* are all but prefigured in Cicero's warnings about his tyrannical character in the *Philippics*, giving

later writers ample material to work with when discussing Cicero's death. But there is another important factor at play in the pervasive presence of Cicero's tyrannical caricature of Antony in the texts that I will discuss in the next section. Cicero's caricature offers a ready-made characterization of Antony that can fill in for the absence (or suppression) of Antony's own words in the tradition that gives rise to texts like Seneca the Elder's *Suasoriae* or Velleius Paterculus's *Historiae*. In the *Philippics*, Cicero himself downplays the substance of Antony's oral and written discourse and locates the true expression of Antony's character in his visual displays of tyrannical behavior, and later authors who make use of Cicero's works reenact this paradigm. The figure of the tyrant fills the *lacuna* made by the absence of Antony's words.

Part Two: The *Epistulae ad Brutum*, Seneca the Elder, and Velleius Paterculus

In this section, I will examine a number of texts whose characterizations of Antony bear marked affinities to the picture of the tyrannical consul presented by Cicero in his *Philippics*. All of these texts arise in various ways from the schools of declamation that came to prominence under the principate and took up Cicero as their supreme model of Roman eloquence. The main texts to be discussed, the so-called *Epistulae ad Brutum*, the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* of Seneca the Elder, and the Antony-related sections in the *Historiae* of the Tiberian-era historian Velleius Paterculus, offer portraits of a tyrannical Antony that are modeled on that of Cicero. However, whereas Cicero could, with relative *parrhesia*, contrast the regime of Antony with the *libertas* and collegiality that characterized an idealized Republic, these authors had to negotiate a fine line between denouncing the tyranny of Antony and calling into question the legitimacy of the principate. I intend to delineate some of the strategies these authors use to achieve this aim. In so doing, I will show that the figure of the tyrannical Antony was used under the principate to bolster the legitimacy of the new regime. Ironically, the very rhetorical ploys Cicero used to

convince his audience/readership that Antony was dangerous for the Republic will be used to justify the imposition of the new Julio-Claudian political order that succeeded the triumvirate.

The historical contexts of Seneca the Elder and Velleius Paterculus have been established with a great degree of certainty but before turning to these authors I wish to discuss briefly two other texts whose true location in the tradition is more controversial. Within Cicero's correspondence, there are two letters (numbered 1.16 and 1.17 in the collection *Epistulae ad Brutum*) that purport, in the first case, to be a letter written by Brutus to Cicero and, in the second, by Brutus to Atticus. Both letters consist of scathing critiques of Cicero's alliance with Octavian. They accuse Cicero of merely exchanging one tyrant (Antony) for another (Octavian) rather than extirpating tyranny from the Republic once and for all. If genuine, letter 1.16 must be dated to sometime in mid July of 43 BC,¹³¹ and letter 1.17 must be dated to May.¹³² Shackleton Bailey (1980: 10-14) dismisses the authenticity of these letters on the grounds that there are some anomalies in their transmission in the manuscript tradition, some striking divergences in style from the other Brutus-letters in the collection, an unusual claim in 1.17 that Cicero referred to Casca, an assassin of Caesar, by the derogatory epithet *sicarius*,¹³³ the designation of Octavian as "Octavius" rather than the expected "Caesar," and the observation that certain passages in the letters appear to be pastiches put together from other Ciceronian works. On the other side, John Moles (1997) has made a case for the letters' authenticity on the basis of a reevaluation of the evidence. Moles undertakes this defense in part to vindicate Plutarch, who certainly knew of

¹³¹ Shackleton Bailey (1980: 250).

¹³² Shackleton Bailey (1980: 251).

¹³³ To call Casca a *sicarius* would imply that Caesar's assassination was an appalling and unlawful murder, whereas on all other occasions when Cicero speaks of the assassination he always characterizes it as a glorious deed.

these letters and appears to paraphrase them in his *Lives* of Brutus (22.4-6) and Cicero (45.2, *Syn.* 4.4).

Leaving aside the question of the letters' authenticity, we do know that these particular letters existed as part of a collection of Cicero's correspondence in the late first century BC. So, if nothing else, they represent a critique of Cicero's approach to the tyrannical pretensions of Antony and Octavian written by an ancient author who was very familiar with Cicero's writings and who was also a near contemporary of the events he describes. It does make a difference whether this writer is Brutus himself or – more probable, in my view – a rhetorician/teacher living under the Julio-Claudian regime and part of the burgeoning declamation scene, but without definitive evidence one way or another it seems most prudent to examine the characterization of Antony in the letters on its own terms rather than viewing it through the lens of a particular authorial attribution.

The main argumentative point of both of these letters is that Cicero's posture towards Octavian is that of a slave towards his tyrannical master. There are a number of *sententiae* in the letters that encapsulate this sentiment. The most revealing of these occurs at 1.16.7.23-25: "For if Octavius, he from whom our safety must be sought, pleases you, then you appear not to have fled from the idea of a master but to have merely sought out a friendlier master" (*Nam si Octavius tibi placet, a quo de nostra salute petendum sit, non dominum fugisse sed amiciores dominum quaesisse videberis*). For all that the letters dwell on Antony's desire to emulate Julius Caesar and not to be deterred in this aim by the dictator's fate, the quintessential features of a tyrannical character – *crudelitas*, *libido*, extravagant appetites, violence – are noticeably absent from the letters' portrayal of Antony in general. The most negative comment the author of the letters makes about Antony's character as a *dominus* is that Octavian is "friendlier" (*amiciores*) than

him. By divesting Antony's portrayal of the signal characteristics of tyranny, the author transfers the critique of Cicero's policies to a more abstract plane. That is to say, the author reduces the definition of tyranny from an individual who expresses absolute power through a wide range of shameful and deleterious behaviors to the more basic formulation of an individual who possesses absolute power, with or without a senatorial or popular mandate.

This attitude recalls the more uncompromising position on tyranny adopted by Cicero himself in *Phil.* 8.12.¹³⁴ By adopting this position, the author of the letters shows how Cicero's focus on Antony's supposed tyrannical excesses in his speeches and letters could obfuscate how un-idealistically expedient Cicero's attitude to Octavian actually is. At 1.17.2, the author spells out what he believes will be the consequences of Cicero's elevation of Octavian:

Sustinuisse mihi gloriatur bellum Antoni togatus Cicero noster! Quid hoc mihi prodest, si merces Antoni oppressi poscitur in Antoni locum successio et si vindex illius mali auctor exstitit alterius fundamentum et radices habituri altiores, si patiamur? Ut iam ista quae facit dominationem an dominum [an Antonium] timentis sint. Ego autem gratiam non habeo si quis, dum ne irato serviat, rem ipsam non deprecatur. Immo triumphus et stipendium et omnibus decretis hortatio ne eius pudeat concupiscere fortunam cuius nomen susceperit, consularis aut Ciceronis est?

Our Cicero boasts to me that, even though he is a civilian, he has taken up the war against Antony. What does this profit me, if succession into the position of Antony is demanded as the price for opposing Antony and if the avenger of that man's wicked deed stands ready as the author of another that will have a deeper foundation and roots, if we let it happen? Grant it that [Cicero's] actions are those of a man who is afraid of despotism, or a despot, or Antony. I however cannot thank anyone who, provided he avoid slavery to a bad-tempered master, does not shrink from slavery itself. Indeed is it worthy of a consular or of Cicero that the triumph, the money, and the exhortations in all his decrees will only make [Octavius] less ashamed to desire the fortune of him whose name he has taken?

If this letter was in fact written by Brutus, it is a remarkably prescient analysis of Octavian's future political position. If not, the letter still has value as an articulation of what an uncompromising attitude towards autocratic power looks like in a post-Ciceronian world. The author rejects the argument that the supposed tyranny of Antony should be opposed by any

¹³⁴ See above, pp. 100.

means – including the elevation of a more benevolent tyrant – because of the special awfulness of Antony’s tyrannical character. The author implies that behind all of Cicero’s republican rhetoric and his smokescreen of invective against Antony-the-tyrant, this compromising pragmatism is Cicero’s real approach to the political crisis of 44-43 BC. By this reading, Cicero’s patronage of Octavian is an improper inversion of their “father-son” (1.17.5) relationship, an inversion that leaves Cicero in a servile posture towards an emerging tyrant. The attitude of letters 1.16 and 1.17 to the nature of tyranny thus represents a critique of Cicero’s fundamental attitude towards Antony as it is expressed in the *Philippics*. Cicero’s emphasis on Antony’s tyrannical character is viewed as a distraction from what the author takes to be the real issue in play, namely, the fact that Cicero is raising up new tyrants in order to meet the tyrannical threat posed by Antony.

If an author refuses to attach any importance to Antony’s tyrannical excesses and flagrant defects of character, Cicero’s conduct during the crisis of 44-43 BC can be stripped of much of its heroic luster, and Octavian is laid open to the charge of aiming to secure absolute power. However, an author adopting the converse position could argue, as Cicero himself did, that the special awfulness of Antony’s character authorizes radical measures to oppose him, including sanctioning Octavian’s command of a private army and an extraordinary consulship. Emphasizing Antony’s tyrannical character could be used to color Cicero’s opposition to him with a defining veneer of heroism and obscure the autocratic nature of Octavian’s constitutional position in the post-Ciceronian era. Indeed, in the declamatory tradition represented by Seneca the Elder, this is precisely the dynamic we find operative both in the excerpts he cites and in the overarching themes of the Antony-related *Controversiae* (7.2) and *Suasoriae* (6 and 7).

Janet Fairweather (1981: 84-7), to account for the decision of the *declamatores* to declaim on so potentially dangerous a theme as the proscription of Cicero, stresses the declaimers' devotion to Cicero as an ideal rhetorical model. She suggests that they were attracted to the theme in part because of its inherent danger. Although Seneca the Elder and the *declamatores* whom he excerpts seem to have demurred from pursuing political careers and to have remained on the periphery of Roman political life,¹³⁵ the potential risk of treating a theme that directly implicates Octavian in an unsavory act is certainly more than academic. I would argue, though, that this risk is mitigated by the over-the-top tyrannical characterization of Antony deployed by the *declamatores* whom Seneca quotes. The special horror of Antony's tyrannical character authorizes making him into a villain and throws into relief the comparative benevolence of the other triumvirs.¹³⁶ Admittedly, too little survives of the original declamations to give us any sense of how Antony and the other triumvirs were characterized throughout the entirety of any speech. However, the consistency of Antony's characterization in these excerpts as a bloodthirsty, cruel tyrant conveniently serves as an inverted reflection of the lionized Cicero who appears alongside him. Matthew Roller (1997) and Robert Kaster (1998) have shown that the declaimers exercised a wide discretion to invent aspects of Cicero's characterization in these texts, and a similar dynamic is operative in the declaimers' portrayal of Antony. As we shall see in a survey of those passages in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* that focus on Antony's character, we can say that, through his selection of quotations, Seneca the Elder at least has imposed coherence on the character portrait of Antony that emerges from his text.

¹³⁵ See Fairweather (1981: 1-26) and Sussman (1978: 12-17).

¹³⁶ Fairweather (1981: 85) observes, "The declaimers were normally careful, when speaking of the proscription in which Cicero was doomed, to lay the blame entirely on Antony." She notes that Seneca says of Albucius at *Suas.* 6.9 that "He alone among the declaimers attempted to declare that Antony was not the only one hostile to [Cicero]" (*solus ex declamatoribus temptavit dicere non unum illi esse Antonium infestum*). See below, pg. 113.

The following passages include all the references to Antony in the text of Seneca the Elder that touch upon Antony's character, behavior, or beliefs in some way. Incidental references have been excluded. The excerpts are presented in the order in which they are found in the text; those from *Suasoriae* 6 and 7 have to do with a bargain, invented by the declaimers, whereby Antony would spare Cicero's life if Cicero burned his writings:

Marcellus Aeserninus (*Contr.* 7.2.10): Cogitabat...secum Antonius: Quod Ciceroni excogitabo supplicium? Occidi iussero? Olim iam adversus hunc metum emunivit animum: scit mortem nec in maturam esse consulari nec miseram sapienti. Fiat aliquid novi, quod non expectat, quod non timet; non indignatur cervicem hosti porrigere, indignabitur clienti. Popillium aliquis vocet, ut sciat quantum illi defensi rei profuerint.

Antony thought to himself: What punishment shall I think up for Cicero? Shall I order him to be killed? For a long time now he has girded his mind against this fear. He knows that death is neither untimely for a consular nor wretched for a wise man. Let there be something new, which he does not expect, which he does not yet fear. Let him not think it beneath him to offer his neck to an enemy, but it will be beneath him to do so to a client. Let someone summon Popillius so that Cicero may know how much it profits to have defended that man in court.

Cestius (7.2.12): Magisque admiratus est potentiam suam quod Ciceronem Popillio non licebat <non> occidere.

[Antony] had the greater admiration for his own power because it was not possible for Popillius not to kill Cicero.

Argentarius (7.2.14): Vocatus veni; post proscriptionem Antonius terribilior erat factus etiam suis.

I [Popillius] came when summoned. After the proscription Antony had become more dreadful even to his own men.

Quintus Haterius (*Suas.* 6.1): Crede mihi, cum diligenter te custodieris, faciet tamen Antonius quod Cicero tacere non possit.

Believe me, although you will diligently keep yourself in check, Antony will do something about which Cicero will not be able to keep silent.

Porcius Latro (6.3): Civilis sanguinis Sullana sitis in civitatem redit...Videbis arduos crudelitatem simul ac superbia oculos; videbis illum non hominis sed belli civilis vultum; videbis illas fauces per quas bona Cn. Pompei transierunt, illa latera, illam totius corporis gladiatoriam firmitatem; videbis illum pro tribunali locum quem modo magister equitum, cui ructare turpe erat, vomitu foedaverat.

The Sullan thirst for citizen blood has returned to the city...you will see eyes burning with cruelty and arrogance at the same time; you will see the face not of a man but of

civil war; you will see the gullet through which the possessions of Gnaeus Pompeius passed, the torso, the gladiatorial hardiness of that whole body; you will see the place before the tribunal which he once as Master of the Horse defiled with vomit, a place at which it was inappropriate even to belch.

Pompeius Silo (6.4): [Addressing Cicero] Tacebis ergo proscribente Antonio et rem publicam laniante, et ne gemitus quidem tuus liber erit?

Will you then be silent when Antony is proscribing and ripping apart the Republic, and will not even your groan be free?

Triarius (6.5): 'Quae Charybdis est tam vorax? Charybdim dixi, quae, si fuit, animal unum fuit? Vix me dius fidius Oceanus tot res tamque diversas uno tempore absorbere potuisset.' Huic tu saevienti putas Ciceronem posse subduci?

'What Charybdis is so voracious? Have I said Charybdis, which, if it existed, was a single animal? So help me god of trustworthiness, Ocean could not have swallowed so many different kinds of things at one time.'¹³⁷ Do you suppose Cicero could have been saved from a raging man like that?

Arellius Fuscus Senior (6.5): Ab armis ad arma discurritur; foris victores domi trucidamur, domi nostro sanguini intestinus hostis incubat.

We hasten from one war to another. Victors abroad, we are cut apart at home, at home a home-grown enemy battens on our blood.

Varius Geminus (6.13): Facilius exorari Antonium posse, qui cum tertio esset, ne quis <e> tribus hanc tam speciosam clementiae occasionem praeriperet. Fortasse ei irasci Antonium, qui ne tanti quidem illum putasset quem rogaret.

It could have been easier to win over Antony, who, since he was one of three, would not wish the other two to seize so signal an opportunity for clemency as this one. Perhaps Antony was angry at him because Cicero did not think him worth begging.

Cremutius Cordus (6.19): Quibus visis laetus Antonius, cum peractam proscriptionem suam dixisset esse, quippe non satius modo caedendis civibus sed differtus quoque, super rostra exponit.

When he saw [Cicero dead], Antony was happy, and he said that his proscription was finished, since he was not only sated but positively stuffed with citizen slaughter, and he displayed Cicero upon the *rostra*.

Quintus Haterius (7.1): Non ferēs Antonium; intolerabilis in malo ingenio felicitas est nihilque cupientis magis accendit quam prosperae turpitudinis conscientia... Remittere ait se tibi ut vivas, commentus quemadmodum eripiat etiam quod vixeras... nunc ut scias nihil esse melius quam mori, vitam tibi Antonius promittit.

You will not be able to bear Antony. Good fortune is unendurable in a person of wicked character and nothing incites greedy men more than the awareness that their baseness is

¹³⁷ This is a direct quotation of *Phil.* 2.67.

profitable...He says that he remits your life to you, but he has found a way to snatch your past life from you. The bargain of Antony is crueler than his proscription...Now, so that you may know that nothing is better than death, Antony promises you life.

Pompeius Silo (7.5): Credamus Antonio, Cicero, si bene illi pecunias crediderunt faeneratores, si bene pacem Brutus et Cassius. Hominem et vitio naturae et licentia temporum insanientem, inter scaenicos amores sanguine civili luxuriantem: hominem qui creditoribus suis oppigneravit rem publicam, cuius gulae duorum principum bona, Caesaris ac Pompei, non potuerunt satis facere!

Let us trust Antony, Cicero, if it is the case that those moneylenders did well to entrust money to him, if Brutus and Cassius did well to entrust peace to him: a man mad with natural wickedness and the license of the times, a man wallowing in the blood of his countrymen in the midst of love affairs with actresses, a man who pledged the Republic to his creditors as collateral, a man whose gullet was not satisfied by swallowing the possessions of two leading statesmen, Caesar and Pompey!

Argentarius (7.7): Nihil Antonio credendum est. Mentior? Quid enim iste non potest qui occidere Ciceronem potest, qui servare nisi crudelius quam occidat non potest? Ignoscere tu illum tibi putas qui ingenio tuo irascitur? Ab hoc tu speras vitam cui nondum verba tua exciderunt? Ut corpus, quod fragile et caducum est, servetur, pereat ingenium, quod aeternum est? Ego mirabar si mors crudelior esset Antonii venia.

Antony should not be trusted. Am I wrong? For what is he not capable of – that man who is able to kill Cicero and who is not able to save him except in a way that is more cruel than killing him? Do you think that man who is enraged by your genius will pardon you? Do you hope to win your life from that man who has not yet forgotten your words? Should eternal genius perish so that a fragile and transient body might live? I would marvel if death should turn out to be more cruel than the pardon of Antony.

These excerpts exhibit a number of recurring motifs. *Crudelitas*, a defining feature of tyranny, is cited several times as a prime motivator for Antony's behavior. Antony's invention of new *supplicia* for Cicero in the *Controversiae* passages constitutes an unprecedented manifestation of absolute power. In the *Suasoriae* passages, Quintus Haterius and Argentarius extend the threat posed by this power to Cicero's past life and future glory, as they are represented by his writings. Many of these excerpts bear close affinities to the *Second Philippic* and that speech's emphasis on the voraciousness of Antony's insatiable appetites for consumables, luxuries, and the estates of Pompey and Caesar. One *declamator*, Triarius, even quotes Cicero's comparison of Antony to the mythological monster Charybdis. Another, Porcius Latro, envisions the cruelly burning eyes, the warlike visage, the *gladiator*-like body, and vomit

of Antony. These descriptions highlight how visual cues are the Ciceronian Antony's main mode of signifying the kind of person that he is. In most of these passages, however, the objects of Antony's appetites are far more grotesque than even Cicero imagines. Antony's hunger for flesh and thirst for blood are without limit, engulfing the entire Republic. The grim spectacle of Cicero's severed head has inspired in Cicero's imperial-era acolytes a new charge to lay against the tyrannical Antony. Likewise, Antony's role in the proscriptions of the triumvirate authorizes cogent comparisons to the dictator Sulla, whose "thirst for citizen blood" (*civilis sanguinis sitis*) is reenacted in the person of Antony. The only possibly admirable motive ascribed to Antony – that he wanted to snap up the "signal opportunity of clemency" that Cicero offered (6.13) – is undercut by what I would argue is a bit of word play with Cicero's statement in the *Second Philippic* (2. 116.14-15) that Caesar fettered his enemies with "a pretense of clemency" (*clementiae specie*). The use of the non-pejorative adjective *speciosus* allows Varius Geminus to avoid overtly associating the other triumvirs with a false clemency that would see Cicero gain his life but effectively lose his *libertas*. This is also the essential nature of the *clementiae specie* offered by Caesar, from the Ciceronian perspective.

In sum, there are no redeeming qualities ascribed to Antony in the material collected by Seneca the Elder. That these excerpts do in fact reflect how Antony is portrayed in the lost portions of the *Suasoriae* is evidenced by Seneca's remark about Albucius at *Suas.* 6.9 that "He alone among the declaimers attempted to declare that Antony was not the only one hostile to [Cicero]" (*solus ex declamatoribus temptavit dicere non unum illi esse Antonium infestum*). Seneca's comment at *Contr.* 7.2.13 that Romanius Hispo was the only declaimer to produce an invective against Cicero (as a *turbator otii e re publica*) likewise indicates that consistent attitudes towards Cicero and Antony prevailed among the *declamatores*. One must be careful not

to extrapolate too much from these statements, however. Seneca the Elder's own professed attitude tends toward the hagiographic where Cicero is concerned, as his scathing criticism of the anti-Ciceronian sentiments attributed to Asinius Pollio suggests.¹³⁸ Moreover, there is no definitive corroborating evidence that the *declamatores* Seneca excerpts are a representative sample of the declaimers at work over the course of his lifetime. Seneca could be limiting his selection to pro-Ciceronian *declamatores* for inclusion in his compilation.

All that being said, it is possible to draw some conclusions about the portrayal of Antony in the work of Seneca the Elder. The portrayal is distinctly Ciceronian. There are no references in the Antony-related material to events after Cicero's proscription, and Antony's association with Cleopatra, Egypt, and the Greek East is entirely omitted. The references to Octavian/Augustus are incidental, and but for one allusive exception (6.9) suppress his role in Cicero's execution and dismemberment. The excerpts Seneca includes in his compilations are steeped in the diction and themes of the *Philippics* and focus on the material in the speeches that relates to Antony's tyrannical cruelty and uncontrollable appetites. I would argue, then, that the authors excerpted in these *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, and Seneca the Elder himself, neutralize the risk of implicating the Julio-Claudian regime in tyranny by situating their rhetorical compositions in a Ciceronian discourse whose overriding argument is that the unprecedented depravity of Antony's character justifies any action undertaken to suppress it, including the elevation of Octavian to supreme power. The text of Seneca the Elder presupposes an Antony so bloodthirsty, so powerful, so dreadful, that no one could thwart his desire for vengeance upon Cicero in December of 43 BC. In effect, Cicero creates a tyrannical monster beside whom an ascendant Octavian appears infinitely preferable, and post-Ciceronian authors exploit this cartoonish creation to mark out a safe discursive space in which they can explore the nature of tyranny in a

¹³⁸ Cf. *Suas.* 6.14-15.

Roman context and celebrate the enduring potency of Cicero's writings despite the spectacular death suffered by Cicero's body at Antony's hands.

Velleius Paterculus, an author of a Roman history in two books whose coverage of the career of Mark Antony runs from the death of Julius Caesar (2.56) to the aftermath of the Battle of Actium (2.87), takes an approach to Antony very similar to the elder Seneca's. The main difference between them is that the comparison of Antony to Octavian, which in the text of Seneca is largely implicit, is made explicit in the *Historiae* of Velleius as a key structural feature of his narrative. Velleius is another author who participates in this tradition of vindicating the *libertas*-defending Cicero from the spectacle of tyrannical *crudelitas* inflicted upon him by Antony. Velleius was the veritable court historian of the Emperor Tiberius,¹³⁹ and his participation in this tradition presents at first glance an incongruity with his role in the imperial regime – much more so than does the participation of Seneca the Elder and the declaimers he excerpts, who, as noted, kept a low profile in Roman politics.¹⁴⁰ However, a survey of the relevant passages in the *Historiae* reveals an author at pains to imbue Antony with all the conventional attributes of tyranny and Cicero with all the hallmarks of heroism while keeping Augustus and his regime free of any taints from his close association with his erstwhile brother-in-law. The justness and benevolent nature of Augustus's regime are never called into question because the character of Antony's rule during the triumvirate is so much worse.

In the midst of a discussion of the Proscriptions of 43 BC, Velleius sets a digressive apostrophe to Antony castigating him for Cicero's murder.¹⁴¹ Velleius marks this passage as an

¹³⁹ See Woodman (1977: 28-56) for a discussion of Velleius's relationship to the regime of Tiberius.

¹⁴⁰ Fairweather (1981: 1-26, 132-48).

¹⁴¹ *Hist.* 2.66.3-5. Gowing (2005: 45-8) suggests that Velleius's heroization of Cicero is predicated on an assumption that the Republic still lives in the form of the Julio-Claudian regime.

unusual and special segment of his narrative: “For the indignation surging in my heart and soul compels me to exceed the bound of the proposed project” (*cogit enim excedere propositi formam operis erumpens animo ac pectore*). Velleius’s overflow of *indignatio* is a well-worn rhetorical pose, and A.J. Woodman (1983: *ad Hist.* 2.66) shows that this apostrophe displays many other hallmarks of oratorical prose writing. There can be little doubt that Velleius underwent rhetorical training at some point, and if part of this training was at the hands of a pro-Ciceronian *declamator* like the ones excerpted by Seneca the Elder, this might also explain the unqualified admiration for Cicero displayed throughout Velleius’s narrative. In any case, the characterization of Cicero in the *Historiae* echoes that of the declaimers we have already examined. According to Velleius, Cicero defended the interest of the Republic and its citizens for many years, and Cicero’s execution only enhances his fame and the glory of his writings.¹⁴² Cicero “lives and will continue to live in the memory of all ages” (*vivit vivetque per omnem saeculorum memoriam*).¹⁴³ Cicero “almost alone among Romans” (*paene solus Romanorum*) grasped the nature of the universe. The tone and content of Velleius’s portrait, like those of the declaimers, tends toward the hagiographic.

In contrast, Antony’s portrait in the *Historiae* recapitulates many of the tyrannical slurs brought forward in the *Philippics* and Seneca the Elder’s declamatory extracts. In recounting the crisis precipitated by Antony’s attempt to seize Cisalpine Gaul from Decimus Brutus, Velleius writes, “The state languished oppressed by the domination of Antony” (*torpebat oppressa dominatione Antonii civitas*).¹⁴⁴ Velleius goes on to say that “indignation and grief” (*indignatio*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 2.66.2-4.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 2.66.5.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.61.1.

et dolor) were felt by all until Octavian arose to resist Antony. The contrast between the tyrannical Antony and Octavian the liberator is thus introduced and remains a key theme until Antony's death. Antony's tyranny is represented as the manifestation of an appetite for blood, with Velleius writing that the proscription was completed with the death of Cicero "when Antony was satiated" (*satiato Antonio*).¹⁴⁵ Antony's lack of rationality and restraint is also highlighted in the introduction to the apostrophe.¹⁴⁶ There, Antony is said, along with Lepidus, to have been "raging" (*furente*) in advance of the proscriptions, and to have "renewed the evil precedent of Sulla, the proscription" (*instauratum Sullani exempli malum, proscriptio*). Velleius goes on to say that Octavian was a reluctant participant who had to be "coerced into proscribing anyone" (*aliquem proscribere coactus*), thus casting Antony in the role of architect and chief impulse behind the proscriptions. Elsewhere in the *Historiae*, Velleius makes the claim that "the cruelty of Antony killed Decimus Brutus" (*D. Brutum Antonii interemit crudelitas*), thus associating Antony with the quintessential tyrannical vice of *crudelitas*.

Like other authors writing under the principate, Velleius must tread very carefully short of the line that distinguishes a *princeps* from a *tyrannus/rex/dominus*. The word *tyrannus* only appears once in the *Historiae*, in the context of a debate between Brutus and Cassius over whether Antony should be assassinated along with Julius Caesar:

Tum consul Antonius (quem cum simul interimendum censuisset Cassius testamentumque Caesaris abolendum, Brutus repugnauerat dictitans nihil amplius civibus praeter tyranni – ita enim appellari Caesarem facto eius expediebat – petendum esse sanguinem)...¹⁴⁷

Then the consul Antony (about whom, when Cassius counseled that he should be put to death as well and Caesar's will abolished, Brutus replied declaring that no blood other than that of the tyrant – for he found it expedient to call Caesar so in the context of his exploit – should be sought by the citizens)...

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.64.4.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.66.1.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.58.2.

Velleius regards the word *tyrannus* as having particular associations with the rhetoric of the party of Brutus and Cassius, whereas the word *princeps* is used to describe any of the various statesman who attain preeminent influence over the Roman state. But not all *principes* are alike. At *Hist.* 2.72.2, Velleius declares, “As much as it would have been better for the Republic to have Caesar as its *princeps* than Antony, so too if [Brutus and Cassius] had won, it would have been better for Brutus to be its leader than Cassius” (*si vicissent, quantum rei publicae interfuit Caesarem potius habere quam Antonium principem, tantum retulisset habere Brutum quam Cassium*). For Velleius, it is not a question of whether Rome should be ruled by a *princeps* or some other form of government but rather a question of which *princeps* would make the better leader. Antony’s tyrannical conduct and character are deployed to make Octavian/Augustus’s regime appear better by contrast. The account of the aftermath of Actium (*Hist.* 2.86) is a final case in point. Velleius asserts that the day of Actium was an unqualified boon for the world and highlights Octavian’s superlative clemency to his defeated enemies, contrasting it with Antony’s earlier decisions to arbitrarily and cruelly kill Decimus Brutus and Sextus Pompey. Of course, Velleius’s claim that Octavian did not kill anyone in the aftermath of Actium is a whitewash; one might cite the cases of Caesarion and Marcus Antonius Antyllus as examples of Octavian’s signal lack of *clementia*. The manipulation of historical fact in this narrative is not confined to Antony’s character.

The historical distortion perpetrated by Velleius, casting Octavian in the role of superlative hero and Antony in the role of supreme villain, has its origin in the characterizations perfected by Cicero in the *Philippics*. In these orations, Antony and Octavian perform roles similar to the ones they play in the *Historiae*, and because of this Velleius’s hagiographic portrayal of Cicero need not be taken to undermine the legitimacy of the regime of

Octavian/Augustus and his successors. In Velleius's narrative, Antony's tyrannical character is so terrible and so qualitatively different from Octavian's that the reader can sympathize with Cicero's plight and admire his opposition to Antony without being forced to make the leap to equating opposition to Antony with opposition to one-man rule more generally. The figure of the tyrannical Antony is a device that makes such an equation less likely when it is set beside the uniformly positive portrait of Octavian that Velleius paints.

The characterization of Antony as a tyrant is thus an eminently malleable quantity in Cicero's *Philippics* and the Latin-language authors who contextualize themselves in the rhetorical tradition established by Cicero. Cicero, the author of letters 1.16 and 1.17 in the *Epistulae ad Brutum*, Seneca the Elder and his declaimers, and Velleius Paterculus must all deal with rapidly changing ideas about what the Roman constitutional order is and should be. In Cicero's case these negotiations occur more or less in real time, while for post-Ciceronian authors the issue is how to reconcile the radical changes imposed by Augustus on the Roman state with his ideology that these changes represented merely the restoration of republican norms under his protective aegis. These authors all deploy the tyrannical Antony as a scapegoat that carries the burden of the inherent contradictions that Octavian's ascendancy introduce into Roman government. In his guise as a superlatively villainous tyrant, Antony justifies any and all means employed to eliminate him, including the establishment of a competing autocratic regime. This is the political strategy that allows Cicero to circumvent his own stated ideological commitments to the Republic in order to mount a credible (if ultimately unsuccessful) resistance to Antony. This is the rhetorical approach that allows Latin-language authors writing under the principate to heroize Cicero without demonizing Augustus and the Julio-Claudian regime.

Another feature that many of these authors share is that they flourished as the constitutional order established by Augustus was coalescing into a dynastic succession. The institutional structure of the principate was still being negotiating as these authors wrote. For this reason, the palpable nostalgia for the Republic that these authors express is not just an ideological pose, but is also an attempt to participate in this negotiation and guide the new regime towards a less oppressive posture towards the old ruling class. The Greek-language authors to which we will turn in the next chapter – Josephus, Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio – do not have the same relationship to the Roman Republic as these Latin-language authors do. For them, the principate is a long-established institution; the living memory of the Roman Republic has long since died out. Its *exempla* never could have meant to them what they did to Cicero. Moreover, these Greek-language authors, for all that they held political offices and were well-connected with the Roman elite, still approach the Roman constitutional order from a provincial, outsiders' perspective. Antony, for them, means something else.

Chapter 3: Roman Tyranny in a Greek World

οὗτος δὲ πᾶσαν μὲν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν, ὅσον ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἦν, ἀφείλετο, πᾶσαν δὲ τὴν δημοκρατίαν κατέλυσεν, καὶ δεσπότην μὲν ἀντὶ ὑπάτου τύραννον δὲ ἀντὶ δικτάτορος ἡμῶν ἀντικατέστησε.

[Antony] took all our freedom, as much as was in his power, away from us, and destroyed the whole of our democracy, and set over us a despot in place of a consul, a tyranny in place of a dictator.

This epigrammatic condemnation of Mark Antony’s actions at the Lupercalia of February, 44 BC was composed by Cassius Dio (45.31.2) and put in the mouth of Cicero as he delivers a condensed version of his *Philippics*. It illustrates the influence of Cicero’s tyrannical characterization of Antony on Greek-language authors writing as late as the third century AD under the principate. There are four such imperial-era authors – Josephus (c. 37-100 AD), Plutarch (c. 46-120 AD), Appian (c. 95-165 AD), and Cassius Dio (c. 155-235 AD) – who write extensively about Mark Antony and figure him as a tyrant in ways that recall the attitude of Cicero and the other Latin authors I have discussed in the previous chapter. However, there are a number of features in the works of these four authors that make it necessary to treat them separately as a group. Apart from the significant fact that these four authors write in Greek and deploy a semantically different political vocabulary from our Latin authors, Josephus, Appian, Plutarch, and Cassius Dio also approach the idea of Roman tyranny from radically different perspectives than Cicero, the Senecas, or Velleius Paterculus do. Even to the extent that these authors have been assimilated into the Roman political establishment – Josephus eventually gained Roman citizenship, Plutarch secured Roman citizenship and is reported to have been invested with the *ornamenta consularia* by Trajan, Appian pled cases before Roman emperors and was made a procurator, and Dio was consul and attained the rank of Roman Senator – the geographically and culturally Greek (and also in Josephus’s case, Judean) orientation of their

works result in Antony being cast in subtly different roles from those he plays in Latin literature.¹⁴⁸ The heroization of Cicero and the idealization of republican values that we examined earlier in Latin literature are absent. All of our Greek-language authors approach the principate as a settled institution and are more preoccupied with the question of what constitutes a good Roman emperor and monarch than the question of whether such a figure is or should be tolerated in the Roman constitutional order. Through the tyrannical portrayal of Antony, our authors attempt to articulate an answer to this question.

The aim of this chapter is to assess each of these four authors' portraits of the tyrannical Antony in order to determine why these authors 1) draw on (or do not draw on) the Cicero-inspired historiographical and rhetorical traditions as a source, 2) cast Antony as a distinctly tyrannical villain, and 3) emphasize certain tyrannical qualities in Antony but not others. On this last question, I should state that my working definition of an archetypically oppressive tyrant is as follows: an autocrat who usually lacks a constitutionally legitimate office, governs with the goal of satisfying his own needs and desires rather than his subjects', gains and maintains power through force using mercenary bodyguards as instruments, indulges an insatiable appetite for wealth, luxuries, and sexual conquests, displays a penchant for inflicting arbitrary violence, cruel torture, and the confiscation of property on individuals within his sphere of control, and

¹⁴⁸ For general overviews of the public careers of each of these authors as they have been reconstructed from ancient *testimonia* and the authors' works themselves, see Rajak (1983: 185-222) on Josephus, Jones (1971: 13-38) on Plutarch, Gowing (1992: 9-18) on Appian, and Gowing (1992: 19-32) on Cassius Dio. This chapter will not cover the entirety of Plutarch's, Appian's, or Cassius Dio's treatments of Antony since the narratives of each of our authors depict a dramatic shift in the primary motivations behind Antony's behavior around the time he is said to have fallen in love with Cleopatra. The tyrannical desire for wealth and supreme power is replaced by a mad desire to love and gratify Cleopatra, and with this transformation comes a corresponding change in characterization that demands a separate treatment in a subsequent chapter. For this reason, my analysis in the present chapter will roughly encompass Plutarch, *Ant.* 1-25; Appian, *BC* 2.33-5.145; and Cassius Dio, 44.34-48.24. Because Josephus's treatment of Antony in the *BJ* and *AJ* is more piecemeal, given the fact that Antony only appears in Josephus when his actions bear implications for Josephus's narrative of Judean history, I will effectively cover this historian's entire treatment here.

suppresses or otherwise hinders political dissent.¹⁴⁹ A given tyrant can exhibit all, some, or none of these traits. An author's decision to attribute one or a specific combination of these traits to Antony reveals a great deal about an author's rhetorical purpose in characterizing Antony. What will emerge from my analysis is that our authors exercise a wide discretion in choosing whether to give greater attention and thematic emphasis to, say, Antony's delight in bloodshed and arbitrary executions as the dominant feature of his tyrannical persona (Appian and Cassius Dio) or Antony's insatiable appetite for the wealth and property of non-Roman subject peoples (Josephus and Plutarch). Both of these character traits are defining features of traditional Greco-Roman characterizations of the tyrant and are by no means mutually exclusive. However, the greater prominence accorded to one or the other trait by our authors correlates with particular rhetorical objectives underlying each of these authors' treatments. These objectives differentiate them from one another, and that can be seen most clearly through direct comparison.

I will argue that Josephus and Plutarch emphasize Antony's tyrannical predation upon non-Roman subject peoples in order to formulate a negative model for their Roman readers for how a *princeps* and his provincial administrators ought not to behave. While both Josephus and Plutarch acknowledge that Antony exemplifies the classic tyrannical *topos* of arbitrarily killing his fellow citizens and elite foreigners, the greater emphasis in these authors' works on Antony's exploitative predation upon the material goods of the people under his control to fund his decadent lifestyle – another classic tyrannical characteristic – establishes a different focus of critique for Antony from what we have seen articulated in the Latin authors in the previous

¹⁴⁹ The *loci classici* for the conceptualization of the figure of the tyrant are Plato, *Republic* 9 and Aristotle's *Politics* (esp. Books 4 and 5), although historiographical and rhetorical texts are also key to establishing a valid archetypal definition. For overviews and systematizations of this evidence, see Parker (1998) and Kalyvas (2007), and see Dunkle (1967) and Glinister (2006) for the distinctively Roman spin that authors writing in a Roman cultural milieu apply to representations of tyranny. See Flory (1988b) for a discussion of *luxus/τροφή* as defining feature of tyranny in the context of the propaganda wars between Octavian and Antony.

chapter and will see in the works of Appian and Cassius Dio. These latter two Greek-language authors, in contrast, are less concerned with Antony's oppressiveness as an administrator than with the role Antony plays as the antagonist of Octavian. I will argue that Appian, uniquely among the authors under discussion in this chapter, portrays Antony as a conventional tyrant in order to cast Octavian and his principate in the best possible light. Cassius Dio is aware of the tradition of the tyrannical Antony exploited by Appian and allows it to intrude into his narrative on certain occasions (particularly in his account of the Proscriptions of 43 BC). In general, however, Dio attributes to Antony a relatively neutral, flat characterization that renders him typologically indistinguishable from Octavian and other prominent Roman leaders who jockeyed for power in the first century BC. In this way, Dio is unusual because his pre-Cleopatra Antony is neither an artifact of Ciceronian or Augustan propaganda nor a projection of contemporary anxieties about oppressive imperial dynasts onto a figure of the distant past.

The importance of setting these four portraits of the tyrannical Antony side by side in this way consists in demonstrating that the conception of a tyrant – and even the conception of a specific “tyrant” such as Antony – is not monolithic. Within the archetype of tyranny there are variations that authors can take advantage of in order to imbue their narratives with radically different ideologies. In the previous chapter I showed how the stock figure of the tyrant is used by Cicero and the Latin authors writing after him in order to forge a continuity of commitment to the republican ideology that Cicero represents and to the benevolent autocracy that Octavian/Augustus established ostensibly to uphold it. In this chapter, I will show that Greek-language authors use the stock figure of the tyrant to emphasize their discontinuity with the historio-biographical traditions that they have inherited. They also deploy this figure to create an

identity for themselves that is independent from the ruling regime that they simultaneously participate in and, because of their non-Romanness, stand apart from.

Part One: Josephus

Josephus, the author of the *Bellum Judaicum* and *Antiquitates Judaicae*, is the earliest of the extant Greek-language authors who write extensively about Antony.¹⁵⁰ He is also in many ways the author least engaged in the Latin-language tradition of the tyrannical Antony. Josephus claims familiarity with Livy and the presence of Latinisms in his Greek has been postulated.¹⁵¹ However, Josephus does not display any obvious engagement with the writings of Cicero, and he does not view Cicero himself as a historically significant player in Rome's interventions in the eastern Mediterranean in the first century BC. Cicero is mentioned just once in Josephus's *oeuvre* (*AJ* 14.4.3), and that only to use his consulship with Gaius Antonius to date Pompey's sack of Jerusalem and his trespassing into the temple there to 63 BC. The absence of Cicero from the *BJ* and *AJ*, and, really, the absence from these texts of any elements of Antony's life and career outside the scope of his activities as the *de facto* administrator of Rome's eastern dependencies in the years 42-31 BC, produce an Antony whose tyrannical characterization is not colored, as it is in other sources, by his offering Julius Caesar a crown at Lupercalia of February, 44 BC, or by his bloodthirsty delight in proscriptions and dismemberment. Instead, the Antony that Josephus presents to the reader is, on close reading, a tyrant defined primarily by his oppressive predation upon the subject peoples under his control.

¹⁵⁰ The fragmentary *Life of Augustus* by Nicolaus of Damascus (c. 64 BC - ?) was written decades earlier than any of the works of Josephus and might at first glance seem to fall within the scope of this chapter, particularly *FGrH* 90 F 130, which covers the period of March 15 – November of 44 BC and Octavian's initial attempts to supplant Antony as leader of the Caesarian faction. Since Antony's characterization in this surviving portion of the *Life* is rather flat and not readily assimilated to any archetypal character type, much less that of a tyrant specifically, I have chosen to prioritize relevance over comprehensiveness by omitting an analysis of this text from the present chapter.

¹⁵¹ Ward (2007).

The perception that Roman administrators engaged in oppressive predation upon the Judean people is an issue that had a direct, personal impact on Josephus himself. Josephus was a leader of the Judean revolt of 66-70 AD who surrendered to the Romans and became a courtier to the Flavian regime. The objectives of Josephus's historical and autobiographical works, at the most basic level, are to justify this change in allegiance, reconcile his countrymen to the status quo of Roman hegemony, and inspire his Roman readers to practice goodwill and good government towards Judaism and the Judean people.¹⁵² There are a number of strategies Josephus employs to achieve these ends, but my concern is chiefly with his manipulation of the characterization of Roman leaders to exemplify both good Roman governance and oppressive Roman governance over Judea. The *BJ* reaches a climax with the Romans' siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and Josephus's patrons, Vespasian and Titus, emerge as paragons of good character who model how Roman leaders ought to act towards their fellow Romans and towards the non-Roman communities under Roman control. This is a neat trick considering the representation of the latter on the Arch of Titus despoiling Jerusalem, and we will discuss below how Josephus carries it out. The contrast between the Flavians – Titus in particular – and earlier Roman emperors and provincial administrators in Josephus's narrative is especially marked. My goal in this section is to show how Josephus's negative portrayal of Antony sets the stage for a comparatively positive portrayal of Titus.

¹⁵² These at least are the demonstrable rhetorical objectives of Josephus's writings, but there has been great scholarly controversy over the extent to which Josephus's historical writings constitute propaganda for the Flavian regime. The most recent treatment of the issue is by Nicole Kelley (1994), who also collects much of the standard bibliography on the issue. Kelley's contention that Josephus writes to build up a consensus in Roman-Judean relations for a diverse audience that includes people on all sides of the Roman-Judean conflict is, I think, a valid one. I should also note here that I generally use the word "Judean" (rather than "Jewish") to describe the inhabitants of the province of Judea throughout this chapter because this is the word Josephus himself customarily uses. See also Connor and Eck (2005) on the prescriptive political dimension of Josephus's engagement with his Roman audience and additional bibliography on the various constituencies of Josephus's audience more generally.

The word τύραννος appears no less than eighty times in the *oeuvre* of Josephus.¹⁵³ Sometimes this word is deployed neutrally to describe an autocratic ruler of a city-state who possesses no other title or office to speak of,¹⁵⁴ but more often Josephus uses this word pejoratively to describe individuals who selfishly oppress the people whom they govern and who display an impious disregard for traditional standards of behavior. For example, John of Giscala and Simon bar Giora, the chief rebel leaders and Titus’s primary antagonists, are frequently termed tyrants.¹⁵⁵ In his preface to the *BJ* (1.27) Josephus indicates that a major theme of this work will be the “cruelty” (ὠμότης) of the tyrants John and Simon towards their fellow countrymen and the contrasting “clemency” (φειδώ) of the Romans. Josephus also applies the word τύραννος to oppressive Roman emperors, showing that his interest in critiquing the character of particular regimes also extends to Judea’s imperial hegemon. For example, Josephus describes the atrocities committed by the regime of the emperor Caligula and condemns it in his own voice as a “tyranny” (τυραννίς) at *AJ* 19.1.3, and a speech put in the mouth of Vespasian at *BJ* 5.595 calls his rival Vitellius a τύραννος. Roman leaders like Vespasian and Titus are instead invoked as champions against oppressive tyranny perpetrated by the emperors whom they usurped or by the leaders of the Judean rebels. Josephus’s statement in the preface of *BJ* (1.9) is a programmatic example of this phenomenon:

ὅτι γὰρ αὐτὴν στάσις οἰκεία καθεῖλεν, καὶ τὰς Ῥωμαίων χειρὰς ἀκούσας καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἐπὶ τὸν ναὸν εἴλκυσαν οἱ Ἰουδαίων τύραννοι, μάρτυς αὐτὸς ὁ πορθήσας Καῖσαρ Τίτος, ἐν παντὶ τῷ πολέμῳ τὸν μὲν δῆμιον ἐλεήσας ὑπὸ τῶν στασιαστῶν φρουρούμενον, πολλάκις δὲ ἐκὼν τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς πόλεως ὑπερτιθέμενος καὶ διδοὺς τῇ πολιορκίᾳ χρόνον εἰς μετάνοιαν τῶν αἰτίων. εἰ δὴ τις ὅσα πρὸς τοὺς τυράννους ἢ τὸ ληστρικὸν αὐτῶν κατηγορικῶς λέγοιμεν ἢ τοῖς δυστυχίμασι τῆς πατρίδος ἐπιστένοντες συκοφαντοίῃ, διδῶτω παρὰ τὸν τῆς ἱστορίας νόμον συγγνώμην τῷ πάθει.

¹⁵³ The related terms τυραννίς and τυραννεύω are used thirty-nine and sixty-three times, respectively.

¹⁵⁴ At *BJ* 1.60, for example, Josephus refers to Zeno Cotulas as a τύραννος merely in order to specify his role in the government of the city of Philadelphia.

¹⁵⁵ On the characterization of John and Simon as tyrants, see Brighton (2009: 79-81).

That an internal *stasis* destroyed [the Temple] and that the tyrants of the Judeans drew the unwilling hands of the Romans and fire upon the Temple, Titus Caesar, the man who besieged it, is a witness. Throughout the entirety of the war he took pity upon the [Judean] people hemmed in by rabble-rousers, and he often of his own will deferred the taking of the city and during the siege gave those responsible time to change their minds. Indeed, if someone should fault us for condemning the tyrants or their banditry or for lamenting the misfortunes of our country, let him give us pardon for this affectation, contrary to the conventions of history though it be.

The collocation of the word τύραννος with “banditry/robbery” (τὸ ληστρικὸν) or robbers is a recurring feature of Josephus’s characterization of tyranny that serves to define it primarily in terms of the tyrant’s material predation upon oppressed people.¹⁵⁶ The legitimacy of both the Flavian regime and Roman hegemony over Judea is established by Josephus in part through the negative contrast such tyrants/bandits provide, particularly the tyrants John and Simon and the “bandit” groups, vaguely labeled “Sicarii” or “Zealots” by Josephus (cf. *BJ* 2.254ff. and 2.651, respectively), under their authority and others’ authority that operated in Judea during the period of unrest.¹⁵⁷ Groups that allegedly “distribute themselves throughout the land and loot the houses of the elite and murder their owners and set fire to villages” (μεριζόμενοι δὲ εἰς τὴν χώραν κατὰ λόχους διήρπαζόν τε τὰς τῶν δυνατῶν οἰκίας καὶ αὐτοὺς ἀνήρουν καὶ τὰς κώμας ἐνεπίμπρασαν, *BJ* 2.265) make the Roman administration appear preferable. Josephus would have the reader believe that this justifies shifting one’s allegiance to the Flavian regime.

For all that Josephus portrays John and Simon as tyrannical villains, however, he does not gloss over potentially legitimate grievances that the Judean people have against policies of particular Roman provincial administrators. Nor does Josephus airbrush the principled

¹⁵⁶ Brighton (2009: 78-80). On the precedent in Roman rhetoric and historiography of associating existing or would-be tyrants with “banditry,” see Shaw (1984) and Roller (2001: 54-6). Shaw (1993: 184-89) also finds a stark opposition in the *AJ* between leaders who practice banditry and leaders who exercise legitimate kingship.

¹⁵⁷ Donaldson (1990) delineates the vagueness and imprecision of Josephus’s use of the terms “Sicarii” and “Zealots” to describe the Judean insurgents and demonstrates how the “bandits,” as Josephus describes them, exemplify a type of peasant rebellion that is as much a revolt against the hegemony of the native elite constituency that Josephus represents as it is a political movement, if not more so.

opposition that some Judeans bear against the idea of Roman hegemony in any form. As an example of the former, Josephus cites Nero's maladministration of the Empire and the oppressive regime of Nero's Judean procurator Gessius Florus, whom Josephus describes as follows at the end of the *AJ* (20.252) at the point in the narrative where the *BJ* subsequently picks up:

Γέσσιος δὲ Φλώρος ὁ πεμφθεὶς Ἀλβίνου διάδοχος ὑπὸ Νέρωνος πολλῶν ἐνέπλησε κακῶν Ἰουδαίους. Κλαζομένιος μὲν ἦν τὸ γένος οὗτος, ἐπήγετο δὲ γυναῖκα Κλεοπάτραν, δι' ἣν φίλην οὖσαν Ποππαίας τῆς Νέρωνος γυναικὸς καὶ πονηρία μηδὲν αὐτοῦ διαφέρουσάν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπέτυχεν. οὗτω δὲ περὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐγένετο κακὸς καὶ βίαιος, ὥστε διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῶν κακῶν Ἀλβίνον ἐπήνουν ὡς εὐεργέτην Ἰουδαῖοι· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ ἐπεκρύπτετο τὴν πονηρίαν καὶ τοῦ μὴ παντάπασιν κατάφωρος εἶναι προυνόει, Γέσσιος δὲ Φλώρος καθάπερ εἰς ἐπίδειξιν πονηρίας πεμφθεὶς τὰς εἰς τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν παρανομίας ἐπόμπευεν, μήτε ἀρπαγῆς παραλιπῶν μηδένα τρόπον μήτε ἀδίκου κολάσεως· ἦν γὰρ ἄτεγκτος μὲν πρὸς ἔλεον, παντὸς δὲ κέρδους ἄπληστος, ὃ γε μηδὲ τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν ὀλίγων διέφερεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ λησταῖς ἐκοινώνησεν· ἀδεῶς γὰρ οἱ πολλοὶ τοῦτ' ἔπραττον ἐχέγγυον παρ' ἐκείνου τὴν σωτηρίαν ἐπὶ τοῖς μέρεσιν ἔχειν πεπιστευκότες. καὶ τοῦτο μέτριον οὐκ ἦν· ἀλλ' οἱ δυστυχεῖς Ἰουδαῖοι μὴ δυνάμενοι τὰς ὑπὸ τῶν ληστῶν γινομένας πορθήσεις ὑπομένειν ἠναγκάζοντο τῶν ἰδίων ἡθῶν ἐξανιστάμενοι φεύγειν ἅπαντες, ὡς κρεῖττον ὅπουδῆποτε παρὰ τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοις κατοικήσοντες, καὶ τί δεῖ πλείω λέγειν; τὸν γὰρ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους πόλεμον ὁ καταναγκάσας ἡμᾶς ἄρασθαι Φλώρος ἦν κρεῖττον ἡγουμένους ἀθρόως ἢ κατ' ὀλίγον ἀπολέσθαι. καὶ δὴ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔλαβεν ὁ πόλεμος δευτέρῳ μὲν ἔτει τῆς ἐπιτροπῆς Φλώρου, δωδεκάτῳ δὲ τῆς Νέρωνος ἀρχῆς.

Gessius Florus, having been sent by Nero as a successor to Albinus, loaded the Judeans with many misdeeds. He was a Clazomenean by origin, and he had a wife called Cleopatra, differing from him not at all in wickedness, through whom he had obtained the office on account of her friendship with Poppaea the wife of Nero. He was so wicked and violent beyond his authority that the Judeans praised Albinus as a benefactor because of the utter excess of Florus's misdeeds. For Albinus had hidden his wickedness and had foresight not to carry it before the eyes of all men, but Gessius Florus, just as if he had been sent specifically to make a display of wickedness, paraded his lawless acts in front of our people, not omitting any kind of theft or unjust punishment. For he was not touched at all by pity, he was left unsatisfied by every piece of profit (it making no difference to him whether it was a big one or small one), but he made common cause with the robbers. Many fearlessly took up this occupation trusting that they would have him as a security for their salvation in their particular robberies. There was no moderation in this, and the unhappy Judeans, not being able to remain settled by reason of the depredations of the bandits, were obliged to abandon their accustomed dwelling places and all go into exile in order to live better somewhere else, among foreign peoples. What more is there to say? Florus was the one who necessitated our taking up war with the Romans, since we thought it better to die all at once than little by little. The war began in the second year of Florus's procuratorship and in the twelfth year of Nero's reign.

The key feature of Florus's administration is its rapacity and its tacit collusion with "bandits" who unjustly exploit the Judean people. At *BJ* 2.293-5, Josephus claims that Judean indignation against Florus turned to open sedition when the procurator attempted to remove seventeen talents of gold from the Temple in Jerusalem. This act caused the Judeans to beseech the Roman emperor to "free them from tyranny" (τυραννίδος ἐλευθεροῦν σφᾶς) and compounded Florus's alleged depredation of the Judean people with a grave offense against Jewish religious sensibilities. Josephus's comment that Florus obliged the Judeans to rebel is significant because it implies that Josephus does not regard the legitimacy of Roman rule in Judea as a necessarily settled issue. As this passage illustrates, Josephus, as a matter of pragmatism, predicates the pacification of Judea on a Roman provincial administration that does not oppressively exploit the people of Judea. The implicit lesson for Josephus's Roman readership is that avoiding these offensive impositions on the Judean people will secure the continued peaceful toleration of Roman rule. The essential tragedy of the Great Revolt of 66-73 AD, as Josephus presents it, is that a reasonable backlash against Roman maladministration was co-opted by self-destructive opportunists. These revolutionary forces rejected compromise precisely at the point when a new Roman regime came on the scene that was conciliatory to Judean sensibilities and sympathetic to Judean interests.

In his role as commander of the Roman forces opposing the rebels and besieging Jerusalem, Titus in particular stands out as a model of enlightened Roman administration. Josephus portrays him as an exceptionally effective military tactician whose direct intervention frequently saves Roman troops from disaster (e.g. *BJ* 5.81).¹⁵⁸ Josephus also represents Titus as a Roman commander who is especially inclined to come to terms with and pardon his adversaries,

¹⁵⁸ On Titus's military prowess, see Paul (1993).

only engaging in destructive violence as a last resort (e.g. *BJ* 5.456 and 6.124). He also portrays him as a commander who is not unduly influenced by the lobbying of other eastern client-kings or any interests apart from securing political stability and justice.¹⁵⁹ Even the destruction and looting of the Temple is presented as less Titus's fault than the rebel leaders' (*BJ* 6.124-8).

The arguments against principled opposition to a Roman presence of any kind in Judea are articulated in a series of speeches delivered in the narrative by Titus and by Josephus himself, in his capacity as Titus's emissary, to the Judeans under siege in Jerusalem. These *suasoriae* are long and the rhetoric deployed complex, so I will confine my comments to those elements that afford insight into how Josephus justifies submission to Roman rule in Judea. Much of this material amounts to boilerplate *topoi* asserting the various reasons why opposing a militarily superior foe is inadvisable. Josephus lays particular stress on the role that the favor of *τύχη* has played in securing (and therefore justifying) Roman hegemony in the Mediterranean world.¹⁶⁰ There are, however, a number of arguments deployed by Josephus that are contingent on Judea's cultural milieu, particularly his contextualizing of the current political situation in the long Biblical narrative of Jewish history (5.379-93) and his assertions that the miraculous success of

¹⁵⁹ See Rajak (1983: 198-22) and Paul (1993). Both of these scholars stress the propagandistic value of Josephus's portrayal of the Flavians, and it is not difficult to find instances of Josephus exceeding the bounds of believability in ascribing noble motives and sentimentality to Titus. For example, at *BJ* 5.450 Josephus reports that Titus "felt *pathos* at the spectacle" (Τίτω μὲν οὖν οἰκτρὸν τὸ πάθος κατεφαίνετο) of Judean prisoners of war being subjected to every kind of torture and then crucifixion but believed that only by such hyperbolically cruel spectacles could the remaining rebels be induced to surrender. Cf. Livy, *AUC* 25.24 on the Roman general Marcellus weeping at the sack of Syracuse. Reading such an anecdote through the interpretive framework of Mason (2005), who argues that Josephus couched criticism of the ruling regime in a portrayal of Titus that was so hyperbolically positive that it could plausibly be read as ironic, it is possible to take the juxtaposition of Titus's compassion for the prisoners and the cruelty inflicted upon them as a way of disclosing the atrocities committed by Titus and the Romans without directly criticizing them. Whether this is Josephus's true intention or not, at the very least his decision to report atrocities committed by both sides hints at a basic rhetorical goal of inspiring greater moderation and a willingness to compromise in every constituency of his audience.

¹⁶⁰ A. M. Eckstein (1993: 198-203) has shown that this aspect of the rhetoric of Josephus's speech is remarkably similar in content and reasoning to that deployed by Polybius in accounting for why Rome had been such a successful imperialistic enterprise, suggesting perhaps that Josephus was directly influenced by Polybius's writings in composing this speech.

Titus and the Roman military thus far all indicate that the Jewish God favors the Romans.¹⁶¹ In Josephus's memorable turn of phrase: "Fortune has migrated over to the Romans' side from everywhere, and God, who has bestowed empire on nation after nation, is now bestowing it upon Italy" (μεταβῆναι γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοὺς πάντοθεν τὴν τύχην, καὶ κατὰ ἔθνος τὸν θεὸν ἐμπεριάγοντα τὴν ἀρχὴν νῦν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰταλίας εἶναι, *BJ* 5.367). By arguing that warring against the Romans amounts to warring against God and his chosen rulers, Josephus attempts to undermine the religious case for resisting Roman rule to the point of martyrdom.

Josephus also addresses what could be called the secular case for principled resistance to Roman hegemony. He argues against the idea that fighting to regain "freedom" (ἐλευθερία) for Judea is an appropriate goal. Josephus has his avatar remark (*BJ* 5.367):

εἰ γὰρ δὴ καὶ πολεμεῖν ὑπὲρ ἐλευθερίας καλόν, χρῆναι τὸ πρῶτον: τὸ δ' ἄπαξ ὑποπεσόντας καὶ μακροῖς εἰξάντας χρόνοις ἔπειτα ἀποσειεσθαι τὸν ζυγὸν δυσθανατούντων, οὐ φιλελευθέρων εἶναι.

Even if it is a good thing to wage war for the sake of freedom, one must do so at the very outset. But having once and for all been subjugated and having been obedient for such a long time, to shake off the yoke is characteristic of men who will die an ignoble death, not men who love freedom.

The logic of this curious and seemingly arbitrary assertion only becomes apparent if one understands what kind of ἐλευθερία Josephus is talking about. Putting Josephus's statement in dialogue with the discourse he puts into the mouth of Titus during the Roman general's own address to the besieged Judeans suggests that Josephus conceives of the Judeans' relationship to the Roman emperor and his regime as akin to the relationship of master and slave. Josephus represents Titus as a commander who endeavors to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and destruction and who shows respect for Judean sensibilities. When Titus tries to effect a mutually beneficial reconciliation between the rebels and Rome at his final parlay with the besieged, however, he is

¹⁶¹ On the religious aspect of Josephus's rhetoric, both here and in the *BJ* more generally, see Rajak (1983: 98-102).

represented using a tellingly condescending metaphor to typify the nature of the Judeans' relationship with Roman power at *BJ* 6.347-50:

ἔπειτα, μιαρῶτατοι, προκαλεῖσθέ με πρὸς λόγους νῦν; ἵνα τί σώσητε τοιοῦτον οἶον ἀπόλωλεν; ποίας ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς ἀξιούτε μετὰ τὸν ναὸν σωτηρίας; ἀλλὰ καὶ νῦν μετὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν ἐστήκατε καὶ οὐδ' ἐν ἐσχάτοις ὑποκρίνεσθε γούν ἰκέτας, ὃ ταλαίπωροι, τίνι πεποιθότες; οὐ νεκρὸς μὲν ὑμῶν ὁ δῆμος, οἴχεται δ' ὁ ναός, ὑπ' ἐμοὶ δὲ ἡ πόλις, ἐν χερσὶ δὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἔχετε τὰς ψυχάς; εἶτα ὑπολαμβάνετε δόξαν ἀνδρείας τὸ δυσθανατᾶν; οὐ μὴν ἐγὼ φιλονεικήσω πρὸς τὴν ἀπόνοιαν ὑμῶν, ρίψασι δὲ τὰ ὄπλα καὶ παραδοῦσι τὰ σώματα χαρίζομαι τὸ ζῆν, ὥσπερ ἐν οἰκίᾳ πρῶτος δεσπότης τὰ μὲν ἀνήκεστα κολάσας, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ σώζων ἐμαυτῷ.

After all that has happened, you most blood-defiled men, you now call me to negotiations? What can you now save that is worth what has already been destroyed? What sort of salvation do you think you merit after the [destruction of] your Temple? Yet even now you stand with your weapons and not even in these last extremities do you even pretend to be suppliants! Pitiful men, what are you relying on? Is not your citizen-body a corpse? Is not your Temple gone? Is not your city under my control? Do you not hold onto lives that are already in my hands? Do you consider it glorious courage to die a grim death? I at any rate will not stoop to engage with your irrationality, but I will repay those who throw down their weapons and surrender their bodies with their lives, and just like a gentle master of the household I will punish the incorrigible and preserve the rest for myself.

Josephus's decision to have Titus explicitly claim the role of "master/lord" (δεσπότης) over the Judeans is striking because Roman lordship over the Judeans could never be reconciled with ἐλευθερία, however "gentle" (πρᾶος) the master is. Josephus's attribution of this mindset to his ideal Roman leader Titus implicitly represents his acceptance of the necessity of Judean subservience to the Romans.¹⁶² It also signals his decisive ideological break with those Judeans who would refuse to compromise on the question of acquiescing to Roman rule. Josephus's adoption of this servile posture also stands in sharp contrast with the Latin-language authors covered in the previous chapter, who, notwithstanding the *de facto* reality of the imperial regime's virtually unlimited prerogative over their lives and property, would balk at the suggestion that their relationship to the emperor was analogous to a master-slave relationship.¹⁶³

¹⁶² On "gentleness" as an ideological marker of good emperors, see Wallace-Hadrill (1982: 32-48).

¹⁶³ Tacitus is the exception. At *Ann.* 1.7 he writes that on the occasion of Tiberius's accession: "At Rome the consuls, senators, and equestrians rushed into slavery" (*Romae ruere in servitium consules, patres, eques*).

Certainly in the *Res Gestae*, Augustus figures his conflict with Antony as a struggle to liberate the Republic from the *dominatio* that Antony had imposed upon it.¹⁶⁴ Most Roman historians whose works survive followed suit.

Josephus's awareness of the reality of the servile condition of the Judean people vis-à-vis the imperial regime is more than theoretical. His own account of his experience as a war captive interceding with Titus to secure the freedom of his family and friends at the end of the revolt, which includes a harrowing description of his successful intercession with Titus on behalf of three friends who had already been crucified but had not yet died (*Vita* 75), characterizes Josephus as an individual who is acutely aware of the complete dependence of his position and those of his family and friends on the goodwill of the imperial regime. For Josephus, subservience to the autocratic power of the imperial regime is an unalterable fact of life, but the character of this regime is variable. Titus is a *πρῶτος δεσπότης*, a model for good Roman governance. Josephus therefore does not regard the fact that Roman statesmen like Titus wield autocratic power as a problem in and of itself. It is the tyrannical abuse of power, and as we shall see in Antony's case, the potential corrupting influence of power on certain temperaments, that Josephus attacks through his *exempla* of Roman administrators who have pursued policies that have precipitated civil unrest and even rebellion.

Although Antony and Cleopatra are relatively minor characters in the context of the larger narratives of the *BJ* and *AJ*, they nevertheless play decisive roles in shaping the political landscape of mid-first century AD Judea. They also exert a paradigmatic influence on Josephus's literary imagination. Antony is the Roman administrator responsible for securing the kingship of

¹⁶⁴ *Res Gestae* 1.1: "At eighteen years of age, I raised an army on my own initiative and at my own expense, through which I liberated the Republic when it was being oppressed by the domination of a faction" (*Annos undeviginti natus exercitum privato consilio et privata impensa comparavi, per quem rem publicam a dominatione factionis oppressam in libertatem vindicavi*). See Roller (2005: 215-20) for a discussion of Augustus's rhetoric and other examples of the Republic and its alleged oppressors being analogized to a slave/master dichotomy.

Judea for Herod the Great and his descendants, an accession Antony achieved by ordering that Antigonus, a Parthian appointee and the last king of the Hasmonean dynasty, be beheaded (*AJ* 15.1-10). In the portion of his narrative that recounts Herod's rise to power, Josephus displays a favorable attitude towards Herod the Great and portrays him as an admirable mediator between Roman and Judean interests.¹⁶⁵ Josephus therefore does not condemn Antigonus's execution since it is the mechanism of Herod's ascendancy, but Josephus does stress the unprecedented "debasement" (ἀτιμία) that beheading a king of Antigonus's stature represents. As a way of emphasizing the shock value of this event, Josephus even includes an uncharacteristically long quotation from Strabo in order to prove that no king had ever been beheaded this way before (*AJ* 15.9-10). Antony thus represents a shift in the character of the Roman administration of Judea. While Pompey and successive Roman generals/administrators had forcefully consolidated Roman hegemony over Judea through military conquest, they left the Hasmonean dynasty and Jewish religious institutions intact. Antony, in contrast, established a pattern of responding to entrenched nationalistic agitation by exacting degrading reprisals that were designed to quell Judean unrest. Ultimately, Titus himself is compelled by the intransigence of the Judean rebels to engage in similarly brutal acts of repression during the dénouement of the siege of Jerusalem. As we have seen, though, Josephus finds more to blame in the futile resistance to such power than in its exercise. Brutality in the service of creating stability is justifiable in both Antony's treatment of Antigonus and Titus's treatment of the Judean rebels in Jerusalem. When power is used in ways that exacerbate instability, however, Roman hegemony is transformed into Roman tyranny. Antony establishes the paradigm in the *BJ* and *AJ* for this kind of Roman administration as well.

The defining characteristic of Antony's administration of the Near East in the works of Josephus is the inappropriate influence Cleopatra exerts upon it. Like most ancient authors who

¹⁶⁵ On the increasingly downward trajectory of Josephus's portrayal of Herod, see Toher (2003).

cover the later career of Antony, Josephus explains Cleopatra’s overweening influence as a consequence of Antony’s *eros*-induced madness.¹⁶⁶ What I am concerned with in this chapter are the ramifications of Cleopatra’s influence upon Antony for the triumvir’s treatment of Judea and its client-king Herod. It is not an overstatement to say that Josephus’s portrayal of Cleopatra rivals the efforts of the Augustan poets in vitriol and negativity.¹⁶⁷ Apart from her deleterious influence on Antony’s life and career, the chief fault that Josephus attributes to Cleopatra is a covetousness for the possessions of neighboring Roman client-kingdoms. This impulse was expressed, according to Josephus, in her attempts to cajole Antony into orchestrating the transfer of lands from the kingdoms of Malchus of Arabia and Herod to her. Of one such attempt Josephus writes at *AJ* 15.93-5:

τὸ μέντοι περιφανὲς τῆς ἀδικίας ἐξεδυσώπει μὴ μέχρι τοσούτου κατήκοον γινόμενον ἐπὶ μεγίστοις ἀμαρτάνειν. ἴν’ οὖν μήτ’ ἀρνηθῆ παντάπασιν μήθ’ ὅσα προσέταττεν ἐκείνη διαπραξάμενος ἐκ φανεροῦ δόξει κακός, μέρη τῆς χώρας ἐκατέρου παρελόμενος τούτοις αὐτὴν ἐδωρήσατο. δίδωσιν δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐντὸς Ἐλευθέρου ποταμοῦ πόλεις ἄχρις Αἰγύπτου χωρὶς Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος, ἐκ προγόνων εἰδὼς ἐλευθέρας, πολλὰ λιπαρούσης αὐτῆς αὐτῇ δοθῆναι.

However, the brazenness of [Cleopatra’s] wrongdoing shamed [Antony] into not being obliging up to the point where he himself would be committing wrongs in serious matters. Therefore, he took parts of each of their realms and gave them to her so that he would not have to refuse her completely and so that he would not appear to be manifestly bad to others because he had done everything that she commanded of him. He also gave her the cities situated between the Eleutherus River and Egypt except for Tyre and Sidon – which he knew had been free cities from the time of her forebears – although she earnestly pled with him that they be given to her.

Antony is not so enthralled with Cleopatra that he will allow her to seize all of Herod’s kingdom, but the transfer of even some Judean lands to Cleopatra still represents, in Josephus’s eyes, a grave injustice. The condemnation expressed in this passage is of a piece with Josephus’s thematic preoccupation with the “banditry/robbery” practiced by successive Roman procurators

¹⁶⁶ *AJ* 14.324: “Cleopatra met [Antony] in Cilicia and made a captive of him through love” (Κλεοπάτρα περὶ Κιλικίαν ἐντυχοῦσα δι’ ἔρωτος αὐτὸν ἐκεχειρώτο).

¹⁶⁷ See *BJ* 1.359-60, *Ap.* 2.56-60, and *AJ* 15.65, along with Schwartz (2005: 75-6) for commentary.

and the Judean tyrants John and Simon. Although the kingdom of Egypt no longer existed to threaten Judean territorial integrity in Josephus's own time, the issue of unduly favoring one client king over another was of contemporary relevance for Josephus given the partitioning of Judea into a tetrarchy that occurred after the death of Herod in 4 BC. As the narratives of the *BJ* and *AJ* illustrate, the tension produced among Rome's Near Eastern dependencies by Antony's mismanagement of Cleopatra only fails to escalate into civil unrest because of the shrewd political acumen of Herod, who consistently succeeds in mitigating the negative consequences of Antony's subjugation to Cleopatra.

Herod's importance as a check on the worst excesses of Antony's administration is exemplified in two anecdotes that display the fundamentally tyrannical character of Antony's and Cleopatra's regimes. Although Josephus does not ever explicitly apply the label τύραννος to Antony himself, it is possible nonetheless to read the conventional features of the tyrant attributed to Antony in Josephus's writings as an invocation of this stock figure.¹⁶⁸ Among the more prominent and consistently deployed *topoi* for characterizing a ruler as a τύραννος in Greek historiographical discourse is unrestrained and degrading sexual predation on individuals who are in a position to precipitate the overthrow of a tyrant's regime. The classic examples of this phenomenon are Harmodius and Aristogeiton and the Peisistratids, and Pausanias and Philip II of Macedon, both cases where sexual humiliation was traditionally thought to have resulted in the assassination of a key figure in an authoritative regime.¹⁶⁹ In the *Politics* (1311a-b), Aristotle

¹⁶⁸ In positing that the figure of the tyrant can be invoked without being explicitly labeled as such, I follow the methodology of Tom Stevenson (2009), who, as we saw in the previous chapter, argues that Cicero figures Antony as a tyrant in the *First Philippic* by characterizing him as cruelly violent and reliant on a bodyguard in maintaining an illegitimate authority over his fellow citizens.

¹⁶⁹ Palmer (1982: 107-9) highlights how in Thucydides' account of the overthrow of the Peisistratids (6.54-60), the tyrannical regime is portrayed as a virtuous and competent government apart from Hipparchus's signal act of sexual exploitation and humiliation, highlighting its importance as a justification for violent opposition to tyranny.

provides a compendium of sexual liaisons that putatively resulted in an act of insurrection against a tyrant's regime.¹⁷⁰ A tyrannical ruler's sexual exploitation of his subjects is thus frequently cited as a proximate cause for the overthrow of his regime. Josephus thus uses both Antony's and Cleopatra's predatory sexual behavior as a marker of the tyrannical character of their regimes.

In 36 or 35 BC, about two years after Herod's kingship over Judea was established, Josephus reports that Antony sent his confidant Quintus Dellius on an embassy to Herod in order to discuss the question of giving Herod's brother-in-law Aristobulus the office of High Priest.¹⁷¹ Herod wishes to quash this potential appointment since Aristobulus is a member of the Hasmonean dynasty and could challenge Herod's authority through the immense influence of this important office. When, however, Dellius lays eyes on the sixteen-year-old Aristobulus and his sister Mariamme, Herod's wife, Dellius's objective in the negotiation changes, as Josephus reports at *AJ* 15.27-30:

καὶ Δέλλιος ἐτεραπεύετο λέγων οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων αὐτῷ δοκεῖν, ἀλλὰ τινος θεοῦ γενέσθαι τοὺς παῖδας. ἐπραγματεύετο δὲ δι' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς τὰς ἡδονὰς ἐλκύσαι τὸν Ἀντώνιον. ὁ δὲ τὴν μὲν κόρην ἠδέσθη μεταπέμπεσθαι γεγαμημένην Ἡρώδην καὶ τὰς εἰς Κλεοπάτραν ἐκ τοῦ τοιοῦτου διαβολὰς φυλαττόμενος, ἐπέστελλε δὲ πέμπειν τὸν παῖδα σὺν εὐπρεπείᾳ προστιθείς, εἰ μὴ βαρὺ δοκοίη. τούτων ἀπενεχθέντων πρὸς Ἡρώδην οὐκ ἀσφαλὲς ἔκρινεν ὥρα τε κάλλιστον ὄντα τὸν Ἀριστόβουλον ἐκκαϊδεκαέτης γὰρ ὦν ἐτύγχανεν, καὶ γένει προύχοντα πέμπειν παρὰ τὸν Ἀντώνιον, ἰσχύοντα μὲν ὡς οὐκ ἄλλος ἐν τῷ τότε Ῥωμαίων, ἔτοιμον δὲ τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς αὐτὸν ὑποθεῖναι καὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀπαρακαλύπτως ἐκ τοῦ δύνασθαι ποριζόμενον. ἀντέγραψεν οὖν ὡς, εἰ μόνον ἐξέλθοι τῆς χώρας τὸ μεράκιον, ἅπαντα πολέμου καὶ ταραχῆς ἀναπλησθήσεται Ἰουδαίων ἐλπιδάντων μεταβολὴν καὶ νεωτερισμὸν ἐπ' ἄλλῳ βασιλεῖ.

And Dellius marveled, saying that the children seemed to him to have been born not from men but from some god. In this way, he was busy with his own business of dragging Antony into hedonistic activities. But Antony was ashamed to send for the girl given that she was married to Herod, and he was wary of being slandered to Cleopatra on account of such an act. Yet he ordered that they send the boy, couching the request in the *politesse* of the phrase

¹⁷⁰ On the Roman side, one could also cite Lucretia and the overthrow of the Tarquins (Livy 1.57-60). The representation of corrupt Roman governors as a sexual predator was also a commonplace in Roman oratory; see Richlin (1983: 96-104).

¹⁷¹ For Dellius's career, see Pelling (1988: 185).

“unless it should be a burden.” When Herod was informed of all this he judged that it would not be safe to send Aristobulus, who was then in his most beautiful bloom (for he was in his sixteenth year of age) and surpassing in lineage, to Antony. For no one else among the Romans of that time was stronger than Antony, and he was ready to subject Aristobulus to his erotic desires and was able to furnish himself with pleasures openly because of his power. [Herod] therefore wrote back that if the boy should even leave the country, the whole of it would then be filled with war and tumult because the Judeans had conceived a hope for a change and revolution in the government with the appointment of another king.

The ostensible excuse Herod makes for holding Aristobulus back – that it will cause unrest in Judea by instilling hope in the anti-Herod faction for a full restoration of the old dynasty – conceals a fear on Herod’s part, indicated by the references to Aristobulus’s superlative beauty and lineage, that the “erotic desires” (τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς) that Antony will enjoy with Aristobulus actually will induce Antony to effect a regime change at the cost of Herod’s kingship and possibly his life. Herod shrewdly forecasts what would arise from Antony’s potential liaison with Aristobulus, and he uses the pretense of imminent civil unrest to prevent Aristobulus from leaving the country to join Antony. In essence, Josephus insinuates that Aristobulus threatens to become another Cleopatra and subvert Herod’s competent administration of Judea. Antony’s failure to foresee the potential ramifications of his sexual exploitation of Aristobulus – renewed instability in Judea and the potential rebellion of Herod should his kingship be threatened – is an all the more egregious oversight because Antony himself has had first hand experience with the serious civil unrest that a regime change in Judea might produce. As we noted earlier, Antony had taken the unprecedented step of beheading the former Hasmonean king Antigonus (*AJ* 15.9-10) earlier that year in order to quell the violent civil unrest incited by Herod’s ascendancy to kingship. The recklessness that Antony subsequently displays in risking a renewal of this unrest would come across as inexplicable were it not that Josephus supplies an explicit aetiology for it. Naturally it is one that suits his own thematic interests: Antony is a predatory tyrant who cannot control his sexual appetites.

Antony is described as the strongest Roman of that time and capable of displaying his erotic pleasures openly because of his power. Josephus posits a direct link between the absolute power of Antony's position and his willingness to engage in sexual predation that, paradoxically, threatens the very power that makes his sexual predation possible. Antony's inability to appreciate this reality is a serious character flaw, one that aligns his characterization with a number of historical tyrants whose regimes were overthrown through a similar failure to recognize the risks of indulging in sexual license. Antony's near mistake is only avoided through the prudent intervention of Herod. This feature of the anecdote underscores another of Josephus's key themes and makes Antony into a compelling object lesson for future Roman leaders who read Josephus's narrative. The stable administration of Judea should be the product, by Josephus's implication, of a mutually beneficial compact between a just and non-oppressive Roman administration and politically savvy, loyal client-kings. A king like Herod can mitigate the worst excesses of a predatory Roman administrator of Antony's caliber, but the combination of a corrupt administrator such as Gessius Florus and the selfish incompetence of the tyrants John and Simon will become catalysts for violent civil strife. The story of Antony and Aristobulus illustrates precisely why the Romans have an interest in installing strong and politically adept native leadership in Judea and avoiding depredations that erode this leadership's legitimacy.

Josephus relates another anecdote shortly thereafter (*AJ* 15.99-103) that reinforces the major themes of the Antony/Aristobulus anecdote. After escorting Antony to the Syrian border where he will begin his expedition against the Parthians in 37 BC, Cleopatra returns to Egypt by land through Judea and, like Antony, makes an attempt at sexual predation that risks the stability of the entire eastern Mediterranean. The target of her advances is Herod:

ἐν τούτοις οὐσα καὶ πλείονος αὐτῇ συνηθείας πρὸς τὸν Ἡρώδην γινομένης διεπείραζεν εἰς συνουσίαν ἐλθεῖν τῷ βασιλεῖ, φύσει μὲν ἀπαρακαλύπτως ταῖς ἐντεῦθεν ἡδοναῖς χρωμένη, τάχα δέ τι καὶ παθοῦσα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐρωτικὸν ἢ καὶ τὸ πιθανώτερον ἀρχὴν ἐνέδρας τὴν ἐπ’ αὐτῇ γενησομένην ὕβριν ὑποκατασκευάζουσα: τὸ δὲ σύμπαν ἐξ ἐπιθυμίας ἠττήσθαι διέφαινε. Ἡρώδης δὲ καὶ πάλαι μὲν οὐκ εὖνους ἦν τῇ Κλεοπάτρᾳ χαλεπὴν εἰς ἅπαντας ἐπιστάμενος, τότε δὲ καὶ μισεῖν ἀξιῶν, εἰ δι’ ἀσέλγειαν εἰς τοῦτο πρόεισιν, καὶ φθῆναι τιμωρούμενος, εἰ ἐνεδρεῦουσα τοιούτοις ἐγχειροίῃ, τοὺς μὲν λόγους αὐτῆς διεκρούσατο, βουλὴν δ’ ἐποιήσατο σὺν τοῖς φίλοις ὑποχείριον ἔχων ἀποκτεῖναι: πολλῶν γὰρ ἀπαλλάξειν κακῶν ἅπαντας οἷς ἐγένετό τε ἤδη χαλεπὴ καὶ προσεδοκᾶτο: τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο καὶ Ἀντωνίῳ λυσιτελήσειν οὐδ’ ἐκείνῳ πιστῆς ἐσομένης, εἰ τις αὐτὸν καιρὸς ἢ χρεία κατάσχοι τοιούτων δεησόμενος. ταῦτα βουλευόμενος ἐκώλυον οἱ φίλοι, πρῶτον μὲν διδάσκοντες, ὡς οὐκ ἄξιον μείζω πράττοντα κινδύνων τὸν φανερώτατον ἀναλαμβάνειν, ἐγκείμενοι δὲ καὶ δεόμενοι μηδὲν ἐκ προπετείας ἐπιτηδεύειν: οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἀνασχέσθαι τὸν Ἀντώνιον, οὐδ’ εἰ σφόδρα τις αὐτῷ τὸ συμφέρον στήσειε πρὸ τῶν ὀμμάτων: τὸν τε γὰρ ἔρωτα μᾶλλον ὑπεκκαύσειν τὸ δοκεῖν βία καὶ κατ’ ἐπιβουλὴν αὐτῆς στέρεσθαι, μέτριον δὲ οὐδὲν εἰς τὴν ἀπολογίαν φανεῖσθαι, τοῦ μὲν ἐπιχειρήματος εἰς γυναικα γεγενημένου μέγιστον ἀξίωμα τῶν κατ’ ἐκείνον ἐσχηκυῖαν τὸν χρόνον, τῆς δ’ ὠφελείας, εἰ καὶ ταύτην τις οἰηθείη, σὺν αὐθαδεῖα καὶ καταγνώσει τῆς ἐκείνου διαθέσεως φανουμένης. ἐξ ὧν οὐκ ἄδηλον, ὡς μεγάλων καὶ ἀπαύστων κακῶν ἀναπλησθήσεται τὰ περὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ γένος, ἐξὸν ἀποκρουσάμενον τὴν ἀμαρτίαν, εἰς ἣν ἐκείνη παρακαλεῖ, θέσθαι τὸν καιρὸν εὐσχημόνως, τοιαῦτα δεδιττόμενοι καὶ τὸ κινδυνῶδες ἐξ εἰκότος παραδηλοῦντες ἐπέσχον αὐτὸν τῆς ἐπιχειρήσεως, ὃ δὲ τὴν Κλεοπάτραν δωρεαῖς θεραπεύσας ἐπ’ Αἰγύπτου προέπεμψεν.

Being more and more in close company with Herod, [Cleopatra] attempted to have sex with the king, since she was accustomed to enjoy such pleasures as these without concealment. It could be that she actually had an erotic desire for him, or, what is more credible, she was contriving that any outrage done to her would become the beginning of an ambush for Herod. In a word, she gave the appearance of being overmastered by desire. Yet Herod had never been well-disposed toward Cleopatra and knew how harsh she was to everyone, and at the time he considered it a good idea to despise her if she went so far on account of her licentiousness. He would have to strike first, if she was assailing him with such wiles in order to ambush him. He demurred from entertaining her entreaties and took counsel with his friends about whether he should kill her while he had the chance. For he said that he would eliminate all the many evils that had already made her so difficult to deal with and that would continue to make her so in the future. This would be advantageous to Antony in the very same way, since she would not be loyal to him if some exigency or need should lay hold of him when he was in need of it. But his friends prevented him from following through on this plot, admonishing him first of all that it was not worthwhile for him to do something so serious and thus take upon himself the most obvious of dangers, and they laid into him and begged him to undertake nothing hastily. For they said that Antony would not countenance it, not even if someone were to put the advantages before his very eyes. Indeed, his love would burn all the more if it appeared that he had been bereft of her through violence and treachery, and no mitigating factor would appear convincing as a defense for plotting against the woman with the greatest prestige of anyone living at that time. As for the advantage, if in fact anyone would accept that there was one, it would be perceived right along with his insolence and total disregard for Antony’s mindset. From these acts, it was not hard to see, his regime and family would be beset by terrible and unceasing evils, although it was possible for him to avoid the error into which she was leading him and resolve the issue politely. By scaring him with such arguments and making him aware of the likely dangers, they

succeeded in holding him back from going on the offensive. He instead sent Cleopatra onward to Egypt after pampering her with gifts.

Cleopatra's practice of engaging in sex "without concealment" (ἀπαρακαλύπτως) mirrors the lack of discretion inspired in Antony by the acquisition of supreme power that we saw earlier.¹⁷² Just as Antony is "stronger than any other Roman of that time" (ισχύοντα μὲν ὡς οὐκ ἄλλος ἐν τῷ τότε Ῥωμαίων, *AJ* 15.27), Cleopatra is the woman with "the greatest prestige" (μέγιστον ἀξίωμα) of those then living. Their superlative power links Antony and Cleopatra together and marks them both as tyrants. Their power is what authorizes the opportunity to engage in sexual indiscretion and also ensures protection from the consequences of this indiscretion. Only the wisdom of Herod's inner circle and his own political acumen allow him to prevent incipient sexual exploitation by a tyrannical figure from turning into a political crisis. That Herod entertains the idea of assassinating Cleopatra creates a topical connection between her behavior and the fates of many historical Greek tyrants. Only Herod's restraint, and his awareness that following this course of action could cost him his life and plunge the eastern Mediterranean into chaos, prevent Cleopatra from enacting the traditional narrative of tyrannical exploitation followed by violent reaction. Cleopatra and Antony are thus marked in the works of Josephus as agents of instability, and the pattern of their rule over the eastern Mediterranean becomes both an example to be avoided and, in retrospect, a harbinger of administrations to come.

At this point, we must ask whether Josephus's contemporary readership, both Judean and Roman, would view his tyrannical representation of Antony and Cleopatra as a relevant *exemplum* with which to compare their own experience of the politics of the eastern

¹⁷² Josephus's graphic vilification of Cleopatra for her sexual promiscuity recalls the attitude evinced by the Augustan poets towards the Egyptian queen. Cf. Propertius's characterization of Cleopatra as a "woman who has worn herself out among her slaves" (3.11.30: *famulos inter femina trita suos*) and as the "whore queen of unchaste Canopus" (3.11.39: *incesti meretrix regina Canopi*). See Wyke (1992: 104-6).

Mediterranean. After all, Antony and Cleopatra take up only a small portion of Josephus's lengthy historical narratives, and the political landscape of 41-30 BC is fundamentally different from the Neronian and Flavian periods in a number of ways. Even so, I would argue that for Josephus even to write the names Antony and Cleopatra would create a deep resonance in his readers that would remind them of the contemporary political situation in Judea. We have already noted how Florus Gellius's wicked wife was named Cleopatra. This seems less of a coincidence than a deliberate harking back to the famous Egyptian queen in light of the fact that no fewer than two reputedly oppressive and corrupt procurators of Judea in Josephus's time,¹⁷³ Marcus Antonius Felix (52-58 AD) and Marcus Antonius Julianus (66-70 AD), were descendants of freedmen of Mark Antony and continued to use this name even when they were entitled to use the *nomen gentilicium* Claudius.¹⁷⁴ Felix, better known today for his appearance in the *Book of Acts* (24), is also reported to have been married to Drusilla of Mauretania, a granddaughter or great-granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra through their daughter Cleopatra Selene II.¹⁷⁵ These are not the only namesakes of Mark Antony to exercise power in the eastern Mediterranean during this period. A Roman client-king named Marcus Antonius Polemo ruled a part of Cilicia Tracheia in Asia Minor in the years 28-68 AD, and coinage produced by his regime survives that attests to the fact that the name Marcus Antonius was a manifestation of this client-king's own program of self-fashioning and propaganda.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Deserved or not, Josephus's scathing assessment of the character of Felix (*AJ* 20.162, 181) is corroborated by Tacitus (*Ann.* 12.54) and *Acts* 24.26.

¹⁷⁴ Brenk and De Rossi (2001: 415).

¹⁷⁵ See *ibid.*, on the career of Felix and his intricate conjugal history.

¹⁷⁶ For the career and coinage of Marcus Antonius Polemo, see Sullivan (1979).

The examples of these procurators and client-kings suggest that the name of Mark Antony could still be an asset for securing authority in the eastern Mediterranean during the period in which Josephus is writing. Mark Antony was also a direct ancestor of the emperors Caligula, Claudius, and Nero through his daughter Antonia Minor. Employing Mark Antony's name as an administrator of Rome's eastern dependencies could therefore be construed as a sign of alignment with the current imperial regime as much as an attempt to draw power from the reputation of Antony himself.¹⁷⁷ In both of Josephus's historical narratives, however, Antony and the procurators and emperors who carry on his legacy, whether by name or through lineage, are connected more than anything else by an atavistically tyrannical tendency. They become corrupted by power, prey upon the citizens and subject peoples of the empire, and foment violent civil unrest and instability. The revolt against Nero and the ascendancy of the Flavian regime represent an implicit rejection of Mark Antony's legacy. In this way, Josephus uses the tyrannical Antony to establish a precursor to the corrupt Roman administrators and emperors of his own time that justifies Judean resistance to these leaders. At the same time, he sets the stage and provides an anti-paradigm for more moderate and just Roman administrators, like Octavian and the Flavians, that can justify Judean submission to Roman hegemony. The continuity of tyrannical oppression between Antony and his descendants/namesakes strengthens the case for resisting not just a single bad emperor or procurator, but the entire dynasty, as inveterately corrupt. The need for a new dynasty and a new regime is revealed by the intellectual archaeology

¹⁷⁷ Ceaușescu (1973: 269-77) shows that the emperor Caligula's adoption of the titles and personae of "New Dionysus," "New Helios," Hercules, and Alexander the Great would have been perceived as "l'intention de Caligula de réhabiliter la mémoire de Marc-Antoine" (277) and represented an attempt to bridge the ideological gap between the eastern and western halves of the empire through the figure of Antony. Brenk (1992) and Champlin (2003b: 171-77) note similar parallels between the representations of Antony and Nero in our historiographical and biographical sources that suggest some patterning of the latter on the former. Whether this patterning was a deliberate act of self-fashioning by the emperors in question or not, it at least suggests that the association of the ruling Julio-Claudian regime with the figure of Antony in his role as an eastern dynast was a plausible and ready intuitive leap for many ancient authors writing under the principate. See also above, pp. 51-2.

of Josephus's historiography, and submission to that new dynasty is justified by the historian's own eyewitness testimony. This balancing act between resistance and submission is characteristic of Josephus, but it is not unique to this historian. As we will now see, Plutarch, his near contemporary, in typical Second Sophistic fashion engages with the tension between these two postures towards Rome as well.

Part Two: Plutarch

Plutarch (c. 46 – 120 AD), chronologically the next Greek-language author in our series, is the only author under consideration in this chapter to write in the genre of biography rather than history, and one of my aims in this section is to identify and examine the aspects of Plutarch's portrait of the tyrannical Antony that are conditioned by genre. One such aspect that emerges directly from the generic structure of the *Parallel Lives* is the importance of Antony's tyrannical character as a point of comparison between Plutarch's biographical subjects. In the following passage from the *synkrisis* of Antony and Demetrius Poliorcetes (2.1-3), Plutarch defines Antony's aspiration to secure supreme power as a tyrannical impulse. This characterization authorizes reading the *Life of Antony* as an account of the rise of a tyrant:

ἡ μέντοι προαίρεσις, ἀφ' ἧς ἐκτίσαντο τὴν ἀρχήν, ἄμεμπτός ἐστιν ἢ τοῦ Δημητρίου, κρατεῖν καὶ βασιλεύειν ἀνθρώπων εἰθισμένων κρατεῖσθαι καὶ βασιλεύεσθαι ζητοῦντος, ἢ δ' Ἀντωνίου χαλεπὴ καὶ τυραννικὴ, καταδουλουμένου τὸν Ῥωμαίων δῆμον ἄρτι διαφυγόντα τὴν ὑπὸ Καίσαρι μοναρχίαν. ὁ δ' οὖν μέγιστον αὐτῷ καὶ λαμπρότατόν ἐστι τῶν εἰργασμένων, ὁ πρὸς Κάσσιον καὶ Βροῦτον πόλεμος, ἐπὶ τῷ τὴν πατρίδα καὶ τοὺς πολίτας ἀφελέσθαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἐπολεμήθη. Δημήτριος δὲ καί, πρὶν εἰς τύχας ἐλθεῖν ἀναγκαίας, ἐλευθερῶν τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ τῶν πόλεων ἐξελαύνων τὰς φρουρὰς διετέλεσεν, οὐχ ὥσπερ Ἀντώνιος, ὅτι τοὺς ἐλευθερώσαντας τὴν Ῥώμην ἀπέκτεινεν ἐν Μακεδονίᾳ, σεμνυνόμενος.

The intention to acquire power to rule over others is blameless in the case of Demetrius because he intended to rule and reign over people who were accustomed to be ruled by kings. But in Antony's case the intention was abrasive and tyrannical because he intended to enslave the Roman people, who had just escaped the monarchy of Caesar. And that which was the greatest and most brilliant of his accomplishments – namely, the war against Cassius and Brutus – was waged for the purpose of taking liberty away from his country and its citizens. Demetrius, on the other hand, before he experienced the hard necessities of fortune,

made a policy of liberating Greece and driving out the garrisons from her cities. This was not so with Antony, who boasted that he had killed in Macedonia those people who had intended to free Rome.

In chapter 1, I stressed the similarities Plutarch posits between the theatrical and performative aspects of Demetrius's and Antony's public personae, so it is interesting now to consider why Plutarch uses a no less thematically important aspect of his subjects' character to draw a sharp distinction between them. I would argue that Plutarch draws this distinction in order to explain what would otherwise appear to be a strong element of cognitive dissonance running through his treatments of the leading figures of the late Republic. For example, Plutarch censures Sulla's brutal execution of his political enemies (*Sul.* 30.4-5) and Julius Caesar's "insatiable love for power and his mad desire to be first and greatest" (ἔρωσ ἀπαρηγόρητος ἀρχῆς καὶ περιμανῆς ἐπιθυμία τοῦ πρώτου εἶναι καὶ μέγιστον, *Ant.* 6.3),¹⁷⁸ but there is no corresponding indication in any of his works that these censures imply an indictment of the political order of his own time. Plutarch does not call for the abolition of the principate or the grant of complete liberty to the Greek city-states of the Empire. Plutarch does of course express admiration for Titus Flamininus's and Nero's grants of freedom and autonomy to the city-states of Greece, but elsewhere, as Jones (1971: 119-21) notes, Plutarch puts forward the idea that the Roman

¹⁷⁸ *Sul.* 30.4-5 offers compelling evidence that Plutarch believes that securing tyrannical power induces a noticeable change in behavior for the worse. However, Plutarch is unsure whether this transformation is a true change in an individual's nature or the revelation of previously suppressed character faults: "[Sulla's massacre] allowed even the dullest Roman to understand that there had merely been a change in the tyranny. The tyranny had not been abolished. Marius had been naturally harsh from the beginning. He did not change his nature on account of acquiring power. Sulla, in contrast, had used his good fortune in a moderate and statesman-like way at first, and he gave the impression that he would be a leader from the Roman elite who would benefit the people. Moreover, since his youth he had been of a sanguine disposition and easily given to tears of pity. Therefore, he fixed a stigma on great offices of power, namely, that they did not allow the character that had been manifested from the beginning in someone's behavior to remain fixed, but made it capricious, boastful, and inhuman. Whether this development is a change in nature caused by fortune, or whether it is a revelation of underlying wickedness brought about by the acquisition of power, is a matter for some other treatise" (Τοῦτο καὶ τῷ βραδυτάτῳ Ῥωμαίων νοῆσαι παρέστησεν ὡς ἀλλαγὴ τὸ χρῆμα τυραννίδος, οὐκ ἀπαλλαγὴ γέγονε. Μάριος μὲν οὖν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς χαλεπὸς ὢν ἐπέτεινε, οὐ μετέβαλε τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τὴν φύσιν. Σύλλας δὲ μετρίως τὰ πρῶτα καὶ πολιτικῶς ὁμιλήσας τῇ τύχῃ καὶ δόξαν ἀριστοκρατικοῦ καὶ δημοφελοῦς ἡγεμόνος παρασχών, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φιλόγελως ἐκ νέου γενόμενος καὶ πρὸς οἶκτον ὑγρὸς, ὥστε ῥαδίως ἐπιδακρύνειν, εικότως προσετρίψατο ταῖς μεγάλαις ἐξουσίαις διαβολὴν ὡς τὰ ἦθη μένειν οὐκ ἐώσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τρόπων, ἀλλ' ἐμπληκτα καὶ χαῦνα καὶ ἀπάνθρωπα ποιούσας. τοῦτο μὲν οὖν εἴτε κίνησις ἐστὶ καὶ μεταβολὴ φύσεως ὑπὸ τύχης, εἴτε μᾶλλον ὑποκειμένης ἀποκάλυψις ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ κακίας. ἕτερα τις ἂν διορίσειε πραγματεία).

administration of his own time and the limited freedom the Greek city-states enjoyed was a net benefit and preferable to complete self-government (cf. *Political Precepts* 824c). Real freedom for Greece might well have the effect of taking power and prestige away from men like Plutarch who relied on close connections with Roman officials to make their own political/social positions tenable. Plutarch supports both the ideological impetus behind the struggle for “freedom” (ἐλευθερία) and the status quo of its suppression. To justify this contradiction, Plutarch deploys an argument in the passage above that we have already seen in Josephus, namely, that fighting to secure ἐλευθερία is only really commendable and feasible for people who have never been inured to a servile condition. In the passage above, the moral value of Demetrius’s and Antony’s aspirations to win supreme power is defined less by their own character than by the character of the people whom they desire to rule. If it was wrong for Antony to attempt to establish a monarchy on the model of Julius Caesar in the 40s BC because of the free condition of the Roman people, we can infer that the century and a half of acculturation to monarchical rule that intervened between Antony’s time and Plutarch’s has, in Plutarch’s mind, legitimized the principate by rendering the citizens and subject peoples of the Empire incapable of adopting any but a servile posture vis-à-vis the imperial regime. For Plutarch, then, like the other authors discussed in this chapter, the principate is an institution to be taken for granted.¹⁷⁹

The fundamental conceit of the *Parallel Lives* is that individuals have the power to shape how their character is manifested in terms of behavior.¹⁸⁰ If we were not capable of learning from the examples of others, then Plutarch’s project would have no useful purpose. In this I

¹⁷⁹ See Plutarch, *Praec. ger. Reip.* 798a.

¹⁸⁰ On the broad moral program of the *Lives*, see Duff (1999:13-73). The excerpt from the *Life of Sulla* above, n. 177, offers evidence that Plutarch is open to the idea that character can be altered.

follow Jones (1971: 103-9) and Swain (1996: 135ff.), who reject the conventional view that Plutarch's primary purpose in writing pairs of matched Greek and Roman *Lives* is to persuade his readership of the cultural equality of Greeks and Romans and advocate for cultural unity in the organization of the Empire.¹⁸¹ Plutarch rather takes the cultural unity of Greco-Roman society – and the essential similarity of the virtues and vices among Greeks and Romans – as a given. He is primarily concerned with ethical problems that transcend individual cultures, although he does of course acknowledge the existence of incidental cultural differences between Greeks and Romans. In this respect, Plutarch exemplifies the deliberate movement towards increased cultural fusion that characterizes the Second Sophistic. Although Plutarch cultivates a decidedly provincial identity as a locally politically active Boeotian and, in his biographical writing at least, does not display a primary interest in rhetorical theory and display, he is engaged in a project that he believes will act as an agent of progressive change for himself and others.¹⁸² He wants his readers to achieve better moral conduct in their public and private lives. I would argue that the *Life of Antony* likewise is predicated on the idea that character is an evolving and malleable quality, dependent on certain predispositions but ultimately shaped by the influence of environment and education. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Plutarch's depiction of Antony's tyrannical behavior in roughly the first half of the *Life*, before Antony becomes involved with Cleopatra and comes under the decisive influence of *eros*. The paradigm Plutarch

¹⁸¹ For a reading of the *Lives* that argues for the primary importance of their potential to influence contemporary politics, see Stadter (2014: 1-12 and *passim*).

¹⁸² Plutarch's deliberate distancing of his biographical and philosophical projects from the decidedly rhetorical *zeitgeist* of the Second Sophistic, after undertaking some early forays into the medium of epideictic show-pieces and performative oratory (e.g. *On the Fortune of Alexander*) has been noted by Anderson (1993: 9-11, 114-18) and Stadter (2015: 4-6). Plutarch's intense engagement with Platonic philosophy in the *Life of Antony* and more generally, however, exemplifies the kind of intellectual archaeology of the monuments of the Classical Age of Greece that typifies the intellectual orientation of the Second Sophistic, and this feature of Plutarch's thematic program will be addressed in more detail when I turn to the topic of Antony's *eros* for Cleopatra in the following chapter.

exploits to create Antony's progressively more tyrannical character in this section of the life is a variation on the rhetorical strategy of Cicero delineated in the previous chapter.¹⁸³

Plutarch's direct use of the *Second Philippic* as a key source for the *Life of Antony* has long been recognized by scholars,¹⁸⁴ and in this historiographical choice Plutarch differentiates himself strikingly from the practice of other ancient historians who write about Antony. As shown by Fergus Millar (1964: 52-5), Cassius Dio also draws heavily from Cicero's *Philippics* in composing the invective against Antony that he puts in Cicero's mouth at 45.18-46.29, but Dio does not exploit the *Philippics* as sources for his account and characterization of Antony elsewhere in his historical narrative. Dio observes a distinction between the genres of invective and history that Plutarch, in contrast, erases in his biography. The reason for this is partly to do with the nature of Plutarch's biographical project. By choosing to devote substantial attention to his subjects' early life and career – topics that are less relevant to the narrative histories that focus on the development of events rather than individuals – Plutarch puts himself in the position of having to rely much more on non-historiographical sources to acquire this information. For the early life and career of Antony, the *Second Philippic* serves as Plutarch's main source.

Unlike the historiographical treatments of Josephus, Appian, and Cassius Dio, Plutarch's coverage of Antony's life allows the biographer to present Antony's development as a dynamic process. Josephus's tyrannical Antony is not a dynamic figure who changes over the course of his narratives in the *BJ* and *AJ*. Josephus presents an Antony who has been corrupted by absolute power, but the moment of transition from statesman to tyrant lies outside the scope of Josephus's

¹⁸³ In general, the subjects of Plutarch's *Lives* tend to maintain a stable character over the duration of the narrative, as Swain (1989) has shown. I do not imply here that Antony undergoes a complete transformation in character, only that certain latent aspects of his character become more expressive and prominent as the narrative progresses, which, again, is unusual for the *Lives*.

¹⁸⁴ See Scuderi (1984: 15-19) and Pelling (1988: 26-31).

treatment. Cicero's tyrannical Antony, for reasons of his own, is likewise a static figure. In the *Second Philippic*, the continuity of character between Antony's youthful indiscretions and the tyrannical excesses of his maturity is stressed. Antony's exposure to the corrupt characters of men such as Curio, Gabinius, and Clodius in his youth is presented by Cicero as less a cause of Antony's youthful indiscretion than as a contingent circumstance of the bad impulses of Antony's own character (*Phil.* 2.44-6). Cicero writes of Antony's devotion to Curio, "With night as your ally, with your lust for sex as your instigator, and with the need for money compelling you, you were let down through [Curio's] roof" (*tu tamen nocte socia, hortante libidine, cogente mercede, per tegulas demitterere*). Antony engineers his own ruin.

Plutarch, in contrast, describes Antony's relationship with Curio as one of exploitation by an older man (*Ant.* 2.3):

Ἀντωνίῳ δὲ λαμπρῷ καθ' ὄραν γενομένῳ τὴν Κουρίωνος φιλίαν καὶ συνήθειαν ὥσπερ τινὰ κῆρα προσπεσεῖν λέγουσιν, αὐτοῦ τε περὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀπαιδεύτου γενομένου, καὶ τὸν Ἀντώνιον, ὡς μᾶλλον εἶη χειροῆθης, εἰς πότους καὶ γυναῖα καὶ δαπάνας πολυτελεῖς καὶ ἀκολάστους ἐμβάλλοντος.

They say that Antony's friendship and *simpatico* with Curio fell upon him like a curse when he was in the most brilliant period of his youth, and that Curio, who was undisciplined in matters of pleasure, threw Antony into drinking, the enticements of women, and rich, unrestrained banqueting in order to make him more submissive.

Plutarch thus distorts his Ciceronian source material and reshapes it to posit a cause and effect relationship between Antony's becoming involved with Curio and the beginning of the moral problems of his youth, eliding Cicero's slander that Antony was already engaged in prostitution before he became involved with Curio (*Phil.* 2.44).¹⁸⁵ Cicero emphasizes the consistency of Antony's character through his account of the relationship with Curio while Plutarch instead transforms Curio into a catalyst for a character transformation, or at least he casts Curio in the role of bringing out Antony's latent character flaws. Over the course of the *Life*, Plutarch, I

¹⁸⁵ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 2.3).

would argue, uses transformative relationships like Antony's association with Curio in order to create a characterization for Antony that progressively grows more tyrannical over time. This progressive development is Plutarch's distinctive contribution to the historio-biographical tradition about Antony, and it makes sense given that Plutarch's special programmatic concern is to illustrate how character can be shaped and changed over time.

Plutarch's decision to begin the *Life* with a discussion of Antony's father – typical and boilerplate though the details of the father-son relationship are¹⁸⁶ – serves an important function in establishing a baseline for the young Antony's character (*Ant.* 1.1-3):

Ἀντωνίου πάππος μὲν ἦν ὁ ῥήτωρ Ἀντώνιος, ὃν τῆς Σύλλα γενόμενον στάσεως Μάριος ἀπέκτεινε, πατὴρ δὲ ὁ Κρητικὸς ἐπικληθεὶς Ἀντώνιος, οὐχ οὕτω μὲν εὐδόκιμος ἐν τοῖς πολιτικοῖς ἀνὴρ οὐδὲ λαμπρὸς, εὐγνώμων δὲ καὶ χρηστός, ἄλλως τε καὶ πρὸς τὰς μεταδόσεις ἐλευθέριος, ὡς ἀφ' ἐνὸς ἂν τις ἔργου καταμάθοι. κεκτημένος γὰρ οὐ πολλὰ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῇ φιλοφροσύνῃ χρησθαι κωλυόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς, ἐπεὶ τις ἀφίκετο τῶν συνήθων πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀργυρίου δεόμενος, ἀργύριον μὲν οὐκ εἶχε, παιδαρίῳ δὲ προσέταξεν εἰς ἀργυροῦν σκύφον ὕδωρ ἐμβαλόντι κομίσαι: καὶ κομίσαντος, ὡς ζύρεσθαι μέλλων κατέβρεχε τὰ γένηα. τοῦ δὲ παιδαρίου καθ' ἐτέραν πρόφασιν ἐκποδῶν γενομένου, τὸν μὲν σκύφον ἔδωκε τῷ φίλῳ χρησθαι κελεύσας, ζητήσεως δὲ πολλῆς ἐν τοῖς οἰκέταις οὔσης ὁρῶν χαλεπαίνουσαν τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ βουλομένην καθ' ἕκαστον ἐξετάζειν ὡμολόγησε, συγγνώμην ἔχειν δεηθείς.

The grandfather of Antony was the orator Antonius, whom Marius killed because he was part of Sulla's faction, and his father was called Antonius Creticus. The latter was not an outstanding or brilliant politician, but he was congenial and honest and especially liberal when it came to giving, as one can learn from the following anecdote. Although he did not possess much and on this account was forbidden from practicing philanthropy by his wife, when a certain man among his peers came to him in need of money – and he did not have any cash on hand – he directed a slave to fill up a silver bowl with water and bring it to him. When it was brought, he moistened his cheeks as if he were about to shave. Having then gotten the slave out of the way by some pretext or other, he gave the bowl to his friend, having enjoined him to make use of that in lieu of money. But when a large-scale search was made among the household slaves for the bowl, and he recognized that his wife was very angry and planned to torture each of them, he acknowledged what had happened and, after pleading with her, obtained a pardon.

The immediate reference here to the killing of Marcus Antonius the Orator during the civil strife between Marius and Sulla establishes the thematic importance of political violence to

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder* (1.1-2). On the conventionality of Plutarch's description of Antony's youth, see Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 1.1-3).

Antony's character. Plutarch picks up this theme in the next section of the *Life* (2.1) when he speculates that Cicero's decision to kill Antony's stepfather Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura was the root cause of the hatred that sprang between them.¹⁸⁷ Plutarch thus implies that arbitrary executions inspire vengeful hatred in the survivors, and in this way suggest a motive for Antony's tyrannical behavior that works alongside a corrupted disposition to spend ill-gotten money lavishly on himself and his associates. This disposition is also anticipated in Antony's family. His father Creticus's generosity towards his indigent friend and his craven posture towards his wife prefigure Antony's own lavishness and his submissive posture towards Cleopatra. Antony's expenditure of wealth, often done to gratify others from motives of *esprit de corps*, is a recurring theme of the *Life*. Plutarch's programmatic exposition of the same character quality in Creticus exemplifies both how Antony's extravagance can be construed as an essentially good quality that is ultimately debased by the corrupting influence of flatterers and parasites, and how a character quality, in Plutarch's hands, can recur atavistically in a family line. Indeed, even after his account of the baneful influence of Curio on Antony, Plutarch includes a description of Antony's general appearance and character (*Ant.* 4.1-4) that emphasizes how his generosity with the soldiers under his command, and his willingness to help them successfully pursue love affairs, come across as very positive qualities. However, it also emphasizes the contrast with the deleterious effects of Antony's own pursuit of erotic fulfillment with Cleopatra at the expense of his duty to his family and household later in the narrative.

One other aspect of Plutarch's treatment of Antony and his family that displays a pointed, if coincidental, similarity with Josephus's treatment is Antony's implied status in Plutarch's *Life* as a source for atavistic tyrannical behavior in his descendants. The *Life of Antony* proper ends at

¹⁸⁷ Plutarch's most detailed account of the Catilinarian conspiracy in the *Life of Cicero* (17-22) nevertheless does not dispute the tyrannical aspirations and corrupt character of Lentulus Sura and even mentions that a divine portent authorized Cicero to perform this execution.

87.4 with a genealogy that traces the lineage from Antony to his descendant Nero, who, Plutarch writes, “came to rule in our own time, killed his mother, and came just short of overturning the hegemony of the Romans because of his foolishness and lunacy, being fifth in the reckoning of succession from Antony” (οὗτος ἄρξας ἐφ’ ἡμῶν ἀπέκτεινε τὴν μητέρα καὶ μικρὸν ἐδέησεν ὑπὸ ἐμπληξίας καὶ παραφροσύνης ἀνατρέψαι τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν, πέμπτος ἀπὸ Ἀντωνίου κατ’ ἀριθμὸν διαδοχῆς γενόμενος). I do not think that it is an overstatement to translate διαδοχή as “succession” and to imply that Plutarch views Antony as one of Nero’s dynastic predecessors.

Plutarch’s overall attitude towards Nero is a controversial topic in scholarship, with Brenk (1992: 4356-9) arguing that all the various references to Nero in Plutarch’s *oeuvre* are uniformly negative in tone while Jones (1971: 13-19) sees manifested in Plutarch’s acknowledgment of Nero’s philhellenism and his “liberation” of Greece at the Isthmian Games in 67 AD (cf. *Flam.* 12.8 and *De sera num. vind.* 567f.) a more nuanced attitude on Plutarch’s part towards the emperor of his youth. Brenk’s focus on Plutarch’s supposed connection with the circle of Thræsea Paetus, a Roman senator and Stoic philosopher executed by Nero for his political beliefs in 66 AD, aligns Plutarch’s interest with that of Roman senators and attributes to him a philosophically-inspired opposition to tyranny. I think it is revealing, though, that this argument relies almost exclusively on inference since Plutarch nowhere mentions Nero’s suppression of the Roman intelligentsia nor gives any explicit indication that this suppression affected him personally. In fact, where Plutarch criticizes Nero in his extant works, it is to highlight predatory exploitation practiced by his freedmen in Italy (*praec. Ger reip.* 815D) and by his procurators in the provinces (*Galba* 4.1). In this way, Plutarch’s approach to Nero/Antony exhibits greater similarities to that of Josephus than it does to those of the other Greek-language authors who came after him.

Unlike Josephus, however, Plutarch configures the scope of his criticism to encompass the predations inflicted by Antony on his fellow citizens in Rome and Italy. From his report of Antony's exemplary conduct under Gabinius to his tenure as Caesar's Master of the Horse, Plutarch sketches a worsening pattern of drunken partying, sexual indiscretions, and oppressive extravagance that culminates in Caesar rebuking Antony for his behavior (and temporarily reforming it, in Plutarch's estimation) by choosing Lepidus instead of him as his consular colleague in 46 BC (*Ant.* 10). Plutarch's treatment of the next step in Antony's development – the Proscriptions of 43 BC – illustrates Plutarch's emphasis on predatory exploitation as the defining aspect of tyranny. In describing the murders committed by the triumvirs, Plutarch recognizes the excessive cruelty of this violence, but his condemnation of it is much more equivocal and much less inflammatory than those of the Latin authors we have discussed in the previous chapter or the accounts of Appian and Dio that we will consider in due course. Plutarch focuses on the triumvirs' bartering of close relatives and associates when he puts forward his moralizing commentary on the Proscriptions (*Ant.* 19.3):

οὐδὲν ὠμότερον οὐδ' ἀγριώτερον τῆς διαμείψεως ταύτης δοκῶ γενέσθαι· φόνων γὰρ ἀντικαταλασσόμενοι φόνους, ὁμοίως μὲν οἷς ἐλάμβανον ἀνήρουν οὓς ἐδίδοσαν, ἀδικώτεροι δὲ περὶ τοὺς φίλους ἦσαν οὓς ἀπεκτίνυσαν μηδὲ μισοῦντες.

To my mind, nothing could be more savage and cruel than this exchange. For by trading killings for killings, they murdered the men that they seized, no less than the men that they surrendered. Indeed, they were more unjust where their friends were concerned, since they killed them without even hating them.

Plutarch's comment that the triumvirs would have been more just if they had just put to death their hated enemies and protected their friends and relatives does not of course constitute an endorsement of the triumvirs' method of consolidating power, but it does introduce a note of philosophical detachment into Plutarch's account that softens the force of the condemnatory

language. This equivocation is even more pronounced when Plutarch describes the execution and dismemberment of Cicero at *Ant.* 20.2:

Κικέρωνος δὲ σφαγέντος ἐκέλευσεν Ἀντώνιος τὴν τε κεφαλὴν ἀποκοπῆναι καὶ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν δεξιάν, ἣ τοὺς κατ’ αὐτοῦ λόγους ἔγραψε. καὶ κομισθέντων ἐθεᾶτο γεγηθῶς καὶ ἀνακαγχάζων ὑπὸ χαρᾶς πολλάκις· εἴτ’ ἐμπλησθεὶς ἐκέλευσεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ βήματος ἐν ἀγορᾷ τεθῆναι, καθάπερ εἰς τὸν νεκρὸν ὑβρίζων, οὐχ αὐτὸν ἐνυβρίζοντα τῇ τύχῃ καὶ καταισχύνοντα τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπιδεικνύμενος.

When Cicero was slain Antony ordered that his head and his right hand – the hand with which he had written his speeches against him – be chopped off. And when they were brought to him, he gazed upon them full of joy and often laughing in his delight. Then when he had been sated he ordered them to be placed in the Forum above the Rostra as if he were heaping some final outrage on the corpse rather than making a display of himself as he abused his good fortune and brought shame upon his authority.

The delight and appetitive satisfaction that are conventionally ascribed to Antony in other accounts of his viewing Cicero’s remains are both present, but other conventional elements that contribute to Antony’s tyrannical characterization elsewhere – his viewing the body while feasting or drunk – are absent. Furthermore, Plutarch’s assertion that Antony’s treatment of Cicero’s corpse brought shame on his “authority” (ἐξουσία) acknowledges the legitimacy of Antony’s political position. This legitimacy sets up a contrast between Antony and the quintessential tyrant, who lacks legitimate political authority. Plutarch’s language in this passage could also be construed to imply that there was some justification for the triumvirs’ expediency in liquidating their political enemies to consolidate power, even if there was no justification for the subsequent abuse of Cicero’s corpse. In any case, Plutarch’s condemnations of the political murders perpetrated by the triumvirs themselves are brief and relatively colorless, at least compared to other accounts and to Plutarch’s condemnation of the predation of property that accompanied the Proscriptions at *Ant.* 21.1-3:

Ἦν δὲ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ Ῥωμαίοις ἐπαχθῆς ἡ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχή, καὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ὁ Ἀντώνιος τῆς αἰτίας εἶχε, πρεσβύτερος μὲν ὢν Καίσαρος, Λεπίδου δὲ δυνατώτερος, εἰς δὲ τὸν βίον ἐκεῖνον αὐθις τὸν ἠδυπαθῆ καὶ ἀκόλαστον, ὡς πρῶτον ἀνεχαίτισε τῶν πραγμάτων, ἐκκεχυμένος. προσῆν δὲ τῇ κοινῇ κακοδοξία τὸ διὰ τὴν οἰκίαν οὐ μικρὸν μῖσος ἦν ὧκει, Πομπηίου τοῦ Μεγάλου γενομένην, ἀνδρὸς οὐχ ἥττον ἐπὶ σωφροσύνῃ καὶ τῷ τεταγμένως

καὶ δημοτικῶς διαιτᾶσθαι θαυμασθέντος ἢ διὰ τοὺς τρεῖς θριάμβους. ἤχθοντο γὰρ ὀρώντες αὐτὴν τὰ πολλὰ κεκλεισμένην μὲν ἡγεμόσι καὶ στρατηγοῖς καὶ πρέσβεσιν, ὠθουμένοις πρὸς ὕβριν ἀπὸ τῶν θυρῶν, μεστὴν δὲ μίμων καὶ θαυματοποιῶν καὶ κολάθουρῶν, μεστὴν δὲ μίμων καὶ θαυματοποιῶν καὶ κολάκων κραιπαλώντων, εἰς οὓς τὰ πλεῖστα κατανηλίσκετο τῶν χρημάτων, τῷ βιαιοτάτῳ καὶ χαλεπωτάτῳ τρόπῳ ποριζομένων. οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἐπώλουν οὐσίας τῶν φονευομένων, ἐπισυκοφαντοῦντες οἰκείους καὶ γυναῖκας αὐτῶν, οὐδὲ τελῶν πᾶν ἐκίνησαν γένος, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ ταῖς Ἑστιάσι πυθόμενοι παρθένοις παρακαταθήκας τινὰς κεῖσθαι καὶ ξένων καὶ πολιτῶν, ἔλαβον ἐπελθόντες. ὥς δ' οὐδὲν ἦν ἰκανὸν Ἀντωνίῳ, Καῖσαρ ἠξίωσε νείμασθαι τὰ χρήματα πρὸς αὐτόν.

And the regime of the Triumvirate was burdensome to the Romans. Antony was most responsible for this since, although he was older than Caesar and stronger than Lepidus, he threw himself into that hedonistic and unrestrained lifestyle as soon as he had shaken off the yoke of pressing business. Moreover, a not insignificant amount of hatred attached to his generally bad reputation on account of the house he occupied, which had once belonged to Pompey the Great, a man no less admired for his dignified restraint and the well-ordered and public-spirited way he lived than for his three triumphs. People were grieved seeing this house more or less barred against civic leaders, generals, and ambassadors who in an outrageous manner were pushed away from its doors. Instead, the house was full of mime-actors, wonder-workers, and drunken flatterers. Upon these people Antony wasted most of the money that had been acquired, and in the most violent and grievous manner. For not only did they sell the property of the men who had been murdered – bringing slanderous charges against their wives and members of their households – and set in motion every kind of taxation, but when they also learned that some deposits made by both citizens and foreigners had been left with the Vestal Virgins, they set upon them and took the money. And since nothing was sufficient for Antony, Caesar asked that the money be divided with him.

It is significant, I think, that Plutarch presents the reader with an Antony who is capable of being “sated” where Cicero’s murdered corpse is concerned but who is not capable of finding any amount of money “sufficient” (ικανὸν). The absence of any limits to Antony’s predation – he and his satellites despoil the wives and kinsmen of the proscribed and appropriate money that had been deposited with the Vestal Virgins – evinces a complete lack of restraint that typifies Antony’s tyrannical persona. The generosity that Plutarch ascribes to Antony earlier in the life (4.3) has degenerated into squandering ill-gotten wealth on unsavory characters – in fact, the typical retinue of a Hellenistic king. Plutarch uses the Platonic metaphor of a hedonistic, unruly horse to highlight this character flaw, writing here that Antony pursued a hedonistic lifestyle

after “shaking off the yoke of pressing business.”¹⁸⁸ The difference, however, between Antony and conventional tyrants who kill out of fear of political opposition or because of a cruel disposition is that the overriding motivation for Antony’s superlatively “violent” and “grievous” murders is the desire to acquire money. For Plutarch, as it is for Josephus, the tyrannical character of a Roman administration is defined not by its illegitimacy or its violent cruelty so much as by its venal behavior. Plutarch’s description of the Proscriptions of Sulla likewise stresses the venal motivations behind the Dictator’s violent oppression,¹⁸⁹ indicating that Plutarch’s fixation on the avaricious impetus behind tyrannical oppression is a particular concern of his rather than an artifact of his source material for Antony’s career. This authorial concern is conditioned by Plutarch’s lived and remembered experience of Roman exploitation in Greece, as an examination of Plutarch’s treatment later in the *Life* of Antony’s provincial administration will show.

The reference above to Antony’s wasting money on “flatterers” is part of a recurring pattern in the *Life* of attributing Antony’s behavior to the influence of obsequious individuals in his orbit, with Cleopatra herself fulfilling the role of arch-flatterer.¹⁹⁰ Plutarch’s account of Antony’s first foray into provincial administration also features the rapaciousness of flatterers as the key motivation behind Antony’s predatory exploitation of the provincial subjects under his control. Plutarch (*Ant.* 24.3) describes Antony appearing in Asia ostensibly as “Dionysus the

¹⁸⁸ Cf. *Ant.* 36.1, where Plutarch cites Plato and *Phaedrus* 254a directly, and see Pelling (1988: ad 36.1) for a discussion of the metaphor’s thematic significance for the *Life* as a whole.

¹⁸⁹ Plutarch, *Sul.* 31.5: “Those who were killed on account of rage and enmity were nothing compared to those who were cut down for their property. It was even a typical thing among the killers to say that ‘a large house killed this one, a garden killed that one, and warm baths killed this other one’” (ἦσαν δὲ οἱ δι’ ὀργὴν ἀπολλύμενοι καὶ δι’ ἔχθραν οὐδὲν μέρος τῶν διὰ χρήματα σφαττομένων, ἀλλὰ καὶ λέγειν ἐπιήει τοῖς κολάζουσιν ὡς τόνδε μὲν ἀνήρηκεν οἰκία μεγάλη, τόνδε δὲ κῆπος, ἄλλον ὕδατα θερμά).

¹⁹⁰ For an overview of the theme of flattery in the *Life* and its indebtedness to philosophical treatments of the concept going back to Plato, see Pelling (1988: 16-18).

Joy-Giver and Gracious One” (Διόνυσος Χαριδότης καὶ Μειλίχιος), but remarks that for many he was rather “Dionysus the Cruel and Savage One” (Διόνυσος Ὠμηστής καὶ Ἀγριώνιος) because “he took away the property of fine, upstanding men in order to gratify flatterers and men who deserved a flogging” (ἀφηρεῖτο γὰρ εὐγενεῖς ἀνθρώπους τὰ ὄντα μαστιγίαις καὶ κόλαξι χαριζόμενος, *Ant.* 24.3). Plutarch goes on to remark, however, that when it came to the corruption of his administration, Antony “was ignorant of many things that were going on, not because he was frivolous by nature so much as because he trusted those around him through a kind of simplicity” (ἡγνόει γὰρ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν γιγνομένων, οὐχ οὕτω ῥάθυμος ὢν, ὡς δι ἀπλότητα πιστεύων τοῖς περὶ αὐτόν, *Ant.* 24.6). The point here is that Antony’s misplaced reliance on the good faith of his associates was the catalyst for corruption in his provincial administration.

This insistence on Antony’s good faith, as he tried to make amends for the depredations of his retainers, stands as a contrast to Antony’s unequivocal pursuit of money and resources to gratify his followers during the Proscriptions. Perhaps this passage sends the reader back to see if Antony’s tyrannical behavior as a triumvir likewise originated with his satellites. In any case, though, the result is the same: the tyrannical exploitation of people under his regime’s control. Antony’s descendant Nero illustrates the same pattern in Plutarch’s scattered remarks about him elsewhere in his *oeuvre*. Like Antony, Plutarch’s Nero also displays a pronounced Philhellenism and a preoccupation with the arts that is counterbalanced by his deficiencies in managing a corrupt imperial administration. As in the case of Antony, Nero’s deficiencies are alternately attributed to his own character defects and to the corrupt character of his retainers and associates, an inconsistency that has complicated scholarly efforts to tease out Plutarch’s attitude towards Nero. Again, the important point is that the outcome is the same whether the ultimate cause of

tyrannical oppression resides in the character of a tyrant himself or in the corrupting influence and corrupt characters of his associates.

Antony's meeting with Cleopatra in Tarsus (*Ant.* 26) marks a turning point in the *Life* inasmuch as *eros* and madness – as opposed to the tyrannical desire for wealth, extravagance, and power – then become the primary motivators of Antony's behavior and the defining features of his characterization. I will treat this shift to a focus on Antony's erotic madness in Plutarch's *Life* in the next chapter, but there are two occasions where the earlier, tyrannical characterization of Antony erupts into this love-themed latter portion of the *Life*. Plutarch records two anecdotes about Antony that were passed down to him by his grandfather Lamprias (*Ant.* 28) and his great-grandfather Nicarchus (*Ant.* 68), respectively. Lamprias heard the first story himself from his friend Philotas, a medical student studying in Alexandria in the 30s BC, and Nicarchus experienced the second event at first hand. Both anecdotes have been frequently cited to illustrate how Plutarch uses oral tradition as part of his source material, but their significance to the thematic program of the *Life* has been less well delineated.¹⁹¹ In the first story, Plutarch relates how Philotas visited the kitchen of the royal palace in Alexandria and witnessed eight boars being roasted and other lavish banqueting provisions being prepared. After asking how many guests are expected, Philotas is astonished to learn from the cook that the elaborate preparations are only for twelve people. The large number of boars is accounted for by the fact that the cooks must have a perfectly cooked meal ready whenever Antony and Cleopatra should call for one. The extravagance of Antony's and Cleopatra's banquets is of course depicted elsewhere in the *Life* (e.g. *Ant.* 58 and 71), and to a certain degree Antony's responsibility for the extravagance is mitigated by the fact that Cleopatra, like the rest of Antony's satellites in the

¹⁹¹ See Pelling (1988: 29 and *ad Ant.* 28.3 and 68.7) for discussion and relevant bibliography.

Life, abets it. I would still suggest, however, that Antony's participation in the wastefulness of the banquet is a reflection of Plutarch's characterization of him as a man whose appetite for wealth, wine, food, and women can never be satisfied. If we presume that Plutarch heard this anecdote from his grandfather in his youth, the independent confirmation provided by such a revered authority for Antony's insatiable character would help to explain Plutarch's acceptance of the tyrannical characterization of Antony that he found in Cicero's *Second Philippic*.

The second of Plutarch's family anecdotes about Antony famously concerns the preparations for the Battle of Actium and their effect on the ordinary people of Greece. If the first anecdote highlights the scale of the resources that Antony consumes, the second anecdote offers insight into their costs and particularly into how these costs are borne by the people who are oppressed by Antony's administration. Plutarch writes that his great-grandfather Nicarchus used to tell the story of how, to supply Antony's troops at Actium, "all his fellow citizens" living in the vicinity "were compelled to carry a stipulated amount of grain on their shoulders to the sea at Anticyra, and were goaded to go faster with whips" (τοὺς πολίτας ἅπαντας ἀναγκάζεσθαι τοῖς ὅμοις καταφέρειν μέτρομα πυρῶν τεταγμένον ἐπὶ τὴν πρὸς Ἀντίκυραν θάλασσαν, ὑπὸ μαστίγων ἐπιταχνομένου, *Ant.* 68). The use of "whips" to goad these ostensibly free individuals to exert greater effort is an implicit marker of their degradation to a servile level in relation to the Roman administration of Antony. Like the first anecdote, the second evokes an earlier occasion in the *Life* where Plutarch depicts the predation perpetrated by Antony's regime on non-Roman subject peoples, namely, the oppressive taxation inflicted by Antony's administration on the people of Asia (*Ant.* 24). The cultural memory of his ancestors' exploitation at Antony's hands thus stands in the *Life* as corroborating evidence for Antony as a tyrant, in that he subjects the non-Roman people under his control to depredation and degradation. In this way, Plutarch articulates an

anxiety about the dangers of tyrannical tendencies in autocratic Roman leaders that reflects the perspective of non-Roman subject peoples living under the Empire, as distinct from the perspective of a Roman senator who fears execution or exile at the hands of a tyrannical emperor. The difference is that the provincial subject fears the seizure of wealth due to the extravagant needs of a tyrant. By imbuing his narrative of the career of Antony with this preoccupation, Plutarch expresses a view of tyrannical tendencies in Roman leaders similar to what we have seen in the writings of Josephus.

Part Three: Appian

Plutarch's personal experience of the reign of Nero and the familial memory he harbors of the suffering of ordinary Greeks during the Civil Wars make the biographer's attitude towards the tyrannical Antony somewhat different from that of Appian (c. 95 – 165 AD), who lacks (or at least nowhere in his work evinces) any firsthand experience of tyrannical oppression by the Roman regime. Appian's attitude towards the principate as an institution is positive. Appian himself participated in the imperial bureaucracy and states at the outset of his history of the civil wars that the subjugation of Egypt, his native land, to Roman control marked a moment of completion for the Roman empire, suggesting that Appian conceives of the incorporation of Egypt into the Roman empire as a natural and inevitable development (*BC* 1.1.5). The experience of Egypt as a stable, peaceful, and privileged province under the Antonines is a plausible explanation for Appian's generally positive attitude toward the idea of monarchy and the institution of the principate,¹⁹² although Appian is much less sanguine about the long series of civil wars that culminated in the government of Augustus. Bucher (2000), who has produced the most recent scholarly treatment of the composition and aims of Appian's treatment of

¹⁹² See Gowing (1992: 273-87).

Rome's civil wars, identifies Appian's primary goal as describing how the Roman state developed through a series of *staseis* into a stable monarchy. For Bucher (2000: 415-20), the focus of Appian's narrative is the impersonal forces, both social and divine, that teleologically guide Rome towards monarchical government. The character and agency of individual Roman statesmen are regarded, Bucher claims, as incidental to the progress of this narrative. This view is shared by Alain Gowing (1992: 92), who observes that "Appian shapes his narrative around not people but events, and thus it happens that Octavian emerges as a less imposing figure than in Dio's account." My aim in this section is to offer a counterargument to this position by showing how Appian imbues the figure of Mark Antony with tyrannical traits in such a way as to make individual character a decisive factor in influencing the course of events. Through the representation of Antony as a tyrant, Appian makes a sharp distinction between Octavian and his rival. Appian not only establishes an aetiology for Octavian's creation of a stable and relatively un-oppressive regime but also represents Octavian as a better leader than Dio's portrayal does.

In his account of the civil wars, Appian is noticeably equivocal when ascribing motives to the actions of Roman statesmen. The desire for supreme power at the expense of peers is customarily adduced as an explanation for many watershed decisions by the characters themselves or by Appian in his own voice,¹⁹³ but Appian often lists other possible explanations, apparently willing to give Roman leaders the benefit of the doubt when they were faced with pressing political exigencies. For example, Appian explains Julius Caesar's decision to invade Parthia as the result either of his loss of hope in the future, his fatigue with politics, his desire to avoid assassination, or as part of a plan to give Rome over to his enemies or cure his epilepsy (2.16.110). Yet Appian is capable of drawing a distinction between a character's expressed

¹⁹³ In just the first book of Appian's *BC*, such equivocal "either/or" explanations for characters' decisions occur at 1.2.16, 1.3.25, 1.4.28, 1.8.71, 1.10.85, 1.10.86, 1.10.89, 1.11.102, and 1.13.115.

motives and his subsequent behavior in order to produce an ironic commentary on the character's actions. Appian first recounts how Sulla stated that his motive for his first march on Rome in 88 BC was "to free her from tyrants" (ἐλευθερώσων αὐτὴν ἀπὸ τῶν τυραννούντων, 1.7.57). Then, he chronicles the bloodshed and oppression that Sulla inflicted on Rome once he occupied it a second time in 83 BC (1.11.95-97). Appian subsequently writes of Sulla that he "was a *de facto* king or tyrant, not elected but by force and violence" (ὁ δὲ ἔργῳ βασιλεὺς ὢν ἢ τύραννος, οὐχ αἰρετός, ἀλλὰ δυνάμει καὶ βίᾳ, 1.11.98). In short, Appian adds, he was "dreadful and extreme in his anger in all ways" (ἐς ἅπαντα δ' ἦν οὕτω φοβερὸς καὶ ἄκρος ὀργῆν, 1.11.101). A key component of the "force and violence" that defines Sulla's tyranny is his bodyguard,¹⁹⁴ and Sulla's decision to become a private citizen again – an unparalleled development that Appian finds astounding – is signaled by his dismissal of this bodyguard (1.12.104), an act that likewise symbolizes the end of his tyranny over the Romans.

As we see in the symbolism of Sulla's bodyguard and as we observed in chapter 1, Appian's *modus operandi* is to show rather than to tell. The signs of tyranny that Appian attaches to Antony and, conversely, does not attach to Octavian, mark Antony as a would-be tyrant in a way that belies the moralistic rhetoric and ambiguous motives that Appian ascribes to Antony.¹⁹⁵ Of Lepidus's and Antony's decision to avenge Julius Caesar, for example, Appian writes that they were motivated to do so "either because of friendship, the oaths they had sworn together, or even because they desired power" (εἴτε φιλίας ἔνεκα εἴτε τῶν ὁμωμοσμένων, εἴτε καὶ ἀρχῆ

¹⁹⁴ In addition to possessing a large bodyguard (φυλακὴν τοῦ σώματος περιέθετο πολλήν), Appian states (1.100) that Sulla had twenty-four lictors as dictator and that this was the same number that preceded the ancient Roman kings.

¹⁹⁵ At 3.2.18, for example, Antony delivers a speech to Octavian in response to the latter's request for Julius Caesar's will to be executed that denies Octavian any interest or say as Caesar's heir in the decisions of government because acknowledging such an interest would imply that Caesar's authority and power were inheritable, rendering Caesar a king or tyrant. Antony is unwilling to accept this ostensibly because it goes against traditional republican ideology against kingship.

ὀρεγόμενοι, 2.17.124) and then puts a short speech in Antony's mouth that earnestly illustrates the first two possible motives but not the third. Any educated reader of Appian, knowing how history plays out, would not take Antony's rhetoric at face value or construe Appian's equivocation as genuine *aporia*. However, as a narrative device, the ambiguity of Antony's motives in the early portion of Appian's account of his career creates an opportunity for character development: from potential aspirant, to supreme power, to a fully realized tyrant. I believe that Appian is keenly interested in depicting the transformation that happens when Antony crosses the line that separates jockeying for political influence from actively pursuing tyrannical power. I would suggest that Appian's interest in this transformation is conditioned by a deeper interest in delineating the mechanisms through which Roman statesmen secure and maintain *de facto* tyrannical power.

Antony's tyrannical pretensions are next addressed in a speech that Appian puts in the mouth of Brutus after the assassination of Julius Caesar. This set piece, although tinged with rhetoric that goes against Appian's own pro-monarchy inclination, puts forward a novel account of the nature of tyranny that maps well onto Appian's own conception of it. The rhetoric bears important implications for how Appian characterizes Antony as a tyrant later in the narrative. Here, addressing a crowd of plebeians, Appian's Brutus reflects upon the way that a tyrant acquires his distinctive bodyguard, the instrument of coercive force by which the tyrant secures his power (2.19.140-1):

Σύλλας δὲ καὶ Καῖσαρ, οἱ σὺν ὄπλοις ἐς τὴν πατρίδα ὡς πολεμίαν ἐμβalόντες, ἐπὶ αὐτῇ τῇ πατρίδι φρουρῶν καὶ δορυφόρων δεόμενοι, οὔτε διέλυσαν ὑμᾶς ἐς τὰς πατρίδας, οὔτε γῆν ὑμῖν ἐωνοῦντο ἢ τὴν τῶν δεδημευμένων ἀνδρῶν ἐπένεμον, οὔτε τὰς τιμὰς τοῖς ἀφαιρουμένοις ἐς παρηγορίαν ἐδίδοσαν, πολλὰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν ταμείων ἔχοντες, πολλὰ δὲ ἐκ τῶν δεδημευμένων, ἀλλὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν οὐδὲν ἀμαρτοῦσαν οὐδὲ ἀδικοῦσαν πολέμου νόμῳ καὶ ληστηρίου νόμῳ τὴν τε γῆν ἀφηροῦντο καὶ οἰκίας καὶ τάφους καὶ ἱερά, ὧν οὐδὲ τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους πολεμίους ἀφηρούμεθα, ἀλλὰ δεκάτην αὐτοῖς μόνην καρπῶν ἐπετάσσομεν. οἱ δὲ ὑμῖν τὰ τῶν ὑμετέρων ὁμοεθνῶν διένεμον, τῶν ἐπὶ Κελτοὺς ὑμᾶς αὐτῷ Καίσαρι στρατευσάντων καὶ προπεμνάντων καὶ εὐξαμένων πολλὰ κατὰ τῶν ὑμετέρων

νικητηρίων. καὶ συνώκιζον ὑμᾶς ἐς ταῦτα ἀθρόους ὑπὸ σημείοις καὶ συντάξει στρατιωτικῇ, μήτε εἰρηνεύειν δυναμένους μήτε ἀδεεῖς εἶναι τῶν ἐξελαθέντων· ὁ γὰρ ἀλώμενος καὶ τῶν ὄντων ἀφηρημένος ἔμελλεν ὑμῖν περιπολῶν ἐφεδρεύειν καιροφυλακῶν. τοῦτο δ' ἦν, ὅπερ οἱ τύραννοι μάλιστα ἐβούλοντο, οὐ γῆν ὑμᾶς λαβεῖν, ἦν δὴ καὶ ἐτέρωθεν εἶχον παρασχεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅπως ἐχθροὺς ἐφεδρεύοντας ἔχοντες ἀεὶ βέβαιοι φύλακες ἦτε τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς ταῦτα ὑμῖν συναδικούσης· εὖνοια γὰρ ἐς τυράννους γίγνεται δορυφόρων ἐκ τοῦ συναδικεῖν καὶ συνδεδιέναι. καὶ τοῦτο, ὃ θεοί, συνοικισμὸν ἐκάλουν, ὃ θρήνος ὁμοφύλων ἀνδρῶν ἐπῆν καὶ ἀνάστασις οὐδὲν ἀδικούντων.

Sulla and Caesar, who invaded their homeland in arms as if it were an enemy country in need of garrisons and bodyguards, did not discharge you to your homelands nor purchase land for you nor divide among you the property of men from whom it had been confiscated, nor did they give compensation as a consolation to those who had been robbed, although they possessed a great deal both from the treasury and from confiscated estates. Instead by the law of war and the “law” of robbery they took land from Italy – which had committed no error and done no wrong – as well as its people’s houses and tombs and temples, things which we do not take even from foreign enemies. Rather, we impose on them only a tribute of a tenth of their produce. They distributed to you the goods of your own people, the people who had sent you to campaign with Caesar against the Gauls and who had delivered many prayers at your festival of victory. They sent you out as colonists in this way all together under your standards and military organization so that you could neither have peace nor be unafraid of those who had been driven out. For the man who was trodden down and deprived of his property was likely to lurk about waiting for the right moment to displace you. This was the very thing that the tyrants particularly conspired to accomplish, not for you to acquire land, but that you, having enemies waiting to attack you, would always be firm guardians of a regime committing unjust acts together with you. For the goodwill of bodyguards to tyrants comes about from committing unjust acts together and from common fears. This, O gods, they termed “colonization,” upon the heels of which came the lament of kindred people and the dispossession of those who had done no wrong.

The assimilation of the Roman legions to a “bodyguard” (φρουρῶν καὶ δορυφόρων) is a striking rhetorical gesture, particularly as the word (δορύφορος) is used as a distinctive marker of tyrants in Greek historiography beginning with Herodotus (1.59 and *passim*).¹⁹⁶ Brutus articulates an innovative explanation for an aspect of tyranny that is more often taken for granted, namely, the loyalty of the bodyguard to its tyrant, arguing that this loyalty is based on complicity in wrong-doing and fear of common enemies made through wrong-doing. Invoking both Sulla and Julius Caesar also establishes a tradition of tyranny in Roman politics that

¹⁹⁶ See Mitchell (2006: 180-4). Aristotle (*Pol.* 1311a) likewise sees a difference between the bodyguard of kings, which is composed of citizens, and that of tyrants, which is composed of foreign mercenaries, highlighting in a different context the coercive and venal (as opposed to voluntary and spontaneous) nature of the relationship between tyrant and bodyguard.

revolves around exploiting colonization as an instrument for consolidating tyranny. Although Brutus's republican rhetoric can hardly be taken as representing Appian's own view, it is significant that, over the course of the next three books of Appian's history, Antony's actions where bodyguards and colonization are concerned increasingly align him with the praxis of Roman tyranny that Brutus lays out here.

At several points in the narrative subsequent to Brutus's speech, Antony's behavior exhibits overtly tyrannical features that differentiate his characterization from that of Octavian, putting the latter in a much better light. Still, Appian recognizes that a distinctive feature of Roman tyranny is that aspirants to tyrannical power always have the veneer of legitimate political offices, and that Roman tyranny is less a matter of the aspirant's constitutional position (or lack thereof) than of the methods he uses to secure and retain power.¹⁹⁷ Antony is often depicted as angry and frequently acts on his anger (a trait that evokes the tyrannical Sulla from 1.11.101), while Octavian is marked by his coolly rational decision-making.¹⁹⁸ At 3.1.5, Antony acquires the bodyguard that will ensure that he can exert power through the application of force, although, again, Appian says that it is uncertain whether Antony planned this step all along or merely saw an opportunity at this moment and seized it. Once the bodyguard is in place, however, Antony's tyrannical characterization becomes more unambiguous. Appian states at 3.1.7 that Antony "was aiming at domination while already having a monarchical power" (ἐπιδυναστείας ὧν ὁ Ἀντώνιος ἤδη μοναρχικῆς ἀρχὴν). At 3.6.39, Antony also accuses Octavian of tampering with his bodyguard and plotting against his life. When Antony is about to leave Rome

¹⁹⁷ The critique of Cicero's *Philippics* that Appian puts in the mouth of Piso (3.8.54-60) discredits Cicero's argumentation largely by appealing to the legality of Antony's political office and actions.

¹⁹⁸ On Antony's anger, see, for example *BC* 3.1.8, 3.4.28-29, 5.6.58, and particularly 5.6.59, where Antony's anger is cited as the cause of Fulvia's succumbing to illness. On Octavian's relative equanimity, see 3.2.13, 3.3.21, and 3.4.28, although in the heat of the moment Octavian too is capable of acting on anger. At 5.13.125, Octavian orders the slaughter of a detachment of Lepidus's guards who jeered at him during a fight that broke out among their respective soldiers.

in order to wrest the province of Cisalpine Gaul from Decimus Brutus (3.7.46), Appian describes a scene where “all of the Senate” and “most of the knights” took an oath not “to leave off from their goodwill and fidelity to Antony” (οὐκ ἐκλείμειν τὴν ἐς Ἀντώνιον εὐνοίαν τε καὶ πίστιν). This gesture recalls the oaths that Roman senators and magistrates had to swear to Caesar under similar duress (cf. 2.2.12, 2.16.106). At 3.8.50, Appian reports that Cicero and his friends accused Antony of aspiring to be Caesar’s successor on the basis of their assessment that his bodyguard and accoutrements were more “proud/pompous” (σοβαρώτερος) than was fitting for a yearly magistrate. Later, in Appian’s account of the outbreak of the Perusine War (5.3.20), Antony’s brother Lucius also acquires a bodyguard in order to challenge Octavian’s power in Italy, creating a tyrannical family resemblance between the Antonii that reinforces the distinction Appian draws between Antony and Octavian.

Unlike Antony or any of the other tyrannical figures in Appian’s narrative such as Sulla or Julius Caesar, Octavian is never accused by Appian of having hired a bodyguard to secure his political position and personal safety. Octavian instead relies on the voluntary goodwill of his fellow Romans to maintain his power and protect his person. By so doing, he prefigures the revered, legitimate monarch that he will become. The closest Octavian comes to having a tyrant’s bodyguard is at 3.4.28, where Octavian is spontaneously accompanied and protected by “a crowd that was like a bodyguard” (μετὰ πλήθους οἷα φρουρᾶς). The qualifier οἷα highlights the difference between the function of Octavian’s satellites in this passage and their potential symbolism as a marker of tyranny. A true tyrannical bodyguard in Appian’s terms would be bound to Octavian by complicity in mutual wrong-doing, but here the motive for the crowd acts to protect Octavian as he moves about Rome complaining of Antony’s injustice towards himself and his fellow citizens. Octavian’s own complicity in the tyrannical acts of Antony and the

triumvirate is likewise downplayed in order to emphasize how his character is different from Antony's. Octavian's role in the Proscriptions is portrayed as passive – Appian does not mention any individuals whom Octavian added to the lists – and, in his own voice, Appian writes of the Proscriptions (4.3.16):

ταῦτα δὲ ἀξιῶσει τε τῶν τριῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς αὐτῶν μάλιστα ἀρετῇ καὶ τύχῃ, τὴν ἀρχὴν συστησαμένου τε ἐς ἔδραν ἀσφαλῆ καὶ γένος καὶ ὄνομα τὸ νῦν ἄρχον ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ καταλιπόντος, ἐπιφανέστερα.

These matters are all the more notable due to the rank of the triumvirs and especially the virtue and good fortune of one of them, who established his power on a strong foundation and left behind the lineage and the illustrious name (from himself) that now rules.

For Appian, Octavian's superior character and the fact that he established a lasting, stable regime differentiate him sharply from Antony and Lepidus, even in the context of what is patently a tyrannical program of oppression carried out jointly by all three men. Appian's invocation of Octavian's principate further implies that a key feature of Appian's conception of tyranny is its violent instability.

In Appian's narrative, Octavian's complicity in tyranny thus comes across as an unfortunate result of the exigencies of politics and the coercion brought to bear on him by Antony and his associates. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in Appian's account of Octavian's participation in acquiring colonies for his and Antony's veterans in 42 BC (5.2.12-17), a process that involved summarily seizing property from an array of Roman land-holders. This colonization is reminiscent of the process, detailed by Brutus above, of establishing what is effectively a bodyguard of veterans by having them collude in the eviction of Italian landholders. But Appian makes a point of remarking that the soldiers were more loyal to Antony than to Octavian because they believed that the victory in the Battle of Philippi was brought about by his leadership alone (5.2.14), and the veterans, goaded by Antony's partisans, become angry and violent over the delays in the process, eventually killing a centurion who rebukes them (5.2.16).

According to Appian, Octavian’s view of the land appropriations themselves and the manner in which they were conducted is decidedly on the side of the dispossessed, even though the settling of the veterans in colonies was absolutely necessary to maintain his political position. Appian states that “Caesar did not fail to recognize that [the dispossessed landholders] were suffering injustice, but there was no means for him to prevent it, since there was no money to give in payment to the farmers nor could he defer [giving the soldiers] the spoils of victory due from the wars” (ὁ δὲ Καῖσαρ οὐκ ἠγγόει ἀδικουμένους. ἀμήχανα δ’ ἦν αὐτῷ· οὔτε γὰρ ἀργύριον ἦν ἐς τιμὴν τῆς γῆς δίδοσθαι τοῖς γεωργοῖς, οὔτε ἀναβάλλεσθαι τὰ ἐπινίκια διὰ τοὺς ἔτι πολέμους, 5.2.16). In the matter of the centurion murdered by the mob of veterans, Appian records that Octavian exercised considerable restraint and mercy towards the guilty, thus inducing shame and transforming their hostile attitude into one of willing obedience (5.2.16). This style of leadership contrasts sharply with Antony’s in the matter of his own bad-tempered soldiers during a muster at Brundisium earlier in the narrative at 3.7.43. There, Antony becomes angry (χαλεπτόμενος) at his soldiers’ refusal to salute him, and he “did not hold back but instead reviled their ungratefulness” (οὐ κατέσχευεν, ἀλλ’ ὠνειδίεζεν ἀχαριστίαν). When Antony offers 100 drachmas to each man, the soldiers “laughed at his stinginess, and when he became angry with them, they fell into disorder and stormed off” (οἱ δὲ ἐγέλασαν τῆς συμκρολογίας καὶ χαλεπήναντος αὐτοῦ μᾶλλον ἐθορύβουν καὶ διεδίδρασκον). Antony’s subsequent decision to execute the most seditious of the soldiers as an example backfires. Instead of striking fear into the soldiers, the soldiers were rather “turned to anger and hatred by this act” (ἐς ὀργὴν ἀπὸ τοῦδε καὶ μῖσος ἐτρέποντο). Antony’s violent anger and cruelty thus produce instability and greater insubordination, while Octavian’s restraint and mercy produce willing acquiescence to his power and position.

Constitutionally speaking, both Octavian and Antony wielded a legitimate authority in each of the anecdotes discussed above: Octavian held the office of triumvir and Antony held the office of consul. Again, tyranny for Appian, at least in its Roman context, is not defined by holding illegitimate authority as such but by securing and consolidating authority through force, violence, anger, and fear.¹⁹⁹ Through his characterizations of Octavian and Antony, Appian is particularly concerned with showing the distinction between monarchy and tyranny. Unlike the other authors in this chapter, however, Appian does not characterize Antony and Octavian in any overt way as paradigmatic models for the emperors of his own time: Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. Appian's account of the struggle between Antony and Octavian is, in my view, more an aetiology for the stability that defines his own time than an exemplary prescription for contemporary politics.²⁰⁰ The “consensus and monarchy” (ὁμόνοιαν καὶ μοναρχίαν) that Octavian forged “from multifarious civil strife” (ἐκ στάσεων ποικίλων) through his establishment of a dynasty (1.1.6) preclude the reader from reading a figure like Antony into the putative harmony of the post-Augustan political order, even as such a pro-principate picture

¹⁹⁹ Appian, like Cassius Dio, composes his own *Philippic* speech, puts it in the mouth of Cicero, and composes a speech for one of Antony's partisans as a rebuttal (3.8.52-60). Appian also remarks (4.4.20) that the defining feature of Cicero's *Philippics* is their characterization of Antony as a tyrant, describing them as “the speeches against Antony as a tyrant” (τοὺς κατὰ Ἀντωνίου λόγους οἷα τυράννου). Appian's *Philippic* is revealing insofar as Antony is primarily challenged on the basis of not having had authority or Senatorial sanction to perform actions such as taking over the province of Cisalpine Gaul from Decimus Brutus (3.8.52) and executing seditious soldiers at Brundisium (3.8.53). Antony's partisan Piso dismisses the question of authority, relying on Antony's position as consul and on senatorial and assembly decrees granting him and his actions legitimacy, and he frames the question of whether Antony is a tyrant or not on the basis of behavior rather than constitutional legitimacy, asking (3.8.57): “Whom has the one now under attack [i.e. Antony] killed without due process as a tyrant would?” (τίνα ἔκτεινεν ὡς τύραννος ἄκριτον ὃ νῦν κινδυνεύων ἀκρίτως;). Antony will of course do this very thing during the Proscriptions of 43 BC, but at this point in the narrative, since Antony has not yet engaged in this type of tyrannical behavior, Appian presents the Ciceronian party's opposition to Antony as ineffectual against the veneer of the consul's constitutional legitimacy.

²⁰⁰ Indeed, where the contemporary present intrudes into Appian's narrative, the historian finds less to criticize in the principate itself than in the popular movements behind the rise of leaders like Julius Caesar and Octavian, which he claimed blurred distinctions among the empire's lower classes. As Swain (1996: 250) notes, Appian's commentary at 2.17.120 on the aftermath of Caesar's assassination and the concessions to the plebs made by the Liberators evince the attitude that what was unfortunate about the civil strife of the first century BC was not the loss of liberty to a tyrannical regime but the elevation of the lower classes to a more equitable level with the old elites. See above, pp. 63-4.

of history necessarily glosses over the period of intense civil strife and dynastic rivalry in the immediate aftermath of the death of Nero. Antony's tyrannical behavior occurs in the context of trying to secure and consolidate supreme power, but there is simply no indication that Appian cares to represent the principate established by Octavian as anything other than a stable institution where such jockeying for power among prospective dynasts is no longer possible.

Part Four: Cassius Dio

The historian Cassius Dio, like Appian, has long been recognized as a strong supporter of monarchy as his preferred system of government.²⁰¹ This point is worth stressing at the outset because he is acutely aware of Rome's republican traditions and also takes a keen interest in interrogating the theoretical justifications for monarchical government, even going so far as to stage a lengthy debate between Agrippa and Maecenas on the relative merits of democratic and monarchical systems of government. Dio's firm commitment to monarchy renders him another imperial era author who effectively takes the principate for granted. But unusually among the authors we have discussed, Dio locates the moment of transition from republic to principate not at Actium but at Philippi:

ἀλλ' αὐτός τε ἑαυτοῦ κρείττων τε ἅμα καὶ ἤττων γενόμενος καὶ ἔσφηλεν ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἐσφάλη, καὶ τούτου τό τε δημοκρατικὸν συμπαρανόλωσε καὶ τὸ μοναρχικὸν ἐκράτυνε. καὶ οὐ λέγω ὡς οὐ συνήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς ἡττηθεῖσι τότε· τί γὰρ ἂν τις ἄλλο περὶ αὐτῶν ἀμφοτέρωθεν μαχεσαμένων εἴποι ἢ ὅτι Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν ἐνίκηθησαν, Καῖσαρ δὲ ἐκράτησεν; ὁμοφρονῆσαι μὲν γὰρ ἐν τῷ καθεστῶτι τρόπῳ τῆς πολιτείας οὐκέθ' οἷοί τε ἦσαν· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅπως δημοκρατία ἄκρατος, ἐς τοσοῦτον ἀρχῆς ὄγκον προχωρήσασα, σωφρονῆσαι δύναται· πολλοὺς δ' ἂν ἐπὶ πολλοῖς καὶ αὐθις ἀγῶνας ὁμοίους ἀνελόμενοι πάντως ἂν ποτε ἐδουλώθησαν ἢ καὶ ἐφθάρησαν.

But [the People], at the same time triumphing over and being defeated by themselves, both destroyed themselves and were destroyed, and from this they annihilated the democratic part and gave strength to the monarchical part. And I am not saying that it was not advantageous that they were defeated then. What other thing can one say about those on both sides battling it out other than that the Romans were conquered and Caesar

²⁰¹ See Gowing (1992: 25-6, 91-3).

[i.e. Octavian] prevailed? For they were no longer able to come to a consensus in the framework of the constitution then in force. It is not possible that a pure democracy, coming into so massive an empire, can exercise self-control. They would have undertaken many such conflicts again and again, and at some point would have been enslaved or annihilated.

Dio, like Appian, thus views the establishment of principate as a necessary step to prevent further civil strife and the collapse of the Roman state. Unlike his fellow historian Appian, however, Dio lived through a period of particularly unstable and oppressive government, and his character portraits of Roman statesmen of the past and key political figures of his contemporary present evince, as Maud Gleason (2011) shows, a deep concern with the proper behavior an emperor should display towards the Roman senate, of which Dio himself was a member. The words Dio puts into the mouth of Julius Caesar at 43.17.2 on the occasion of a speech to the Senate after his march on Rome encapsulate a distinction between tyranny and a more enlightened form of monarchy that is operative throughout his narrative:

νῦν τε πολὺ μᾶλλον προθυμήσομαι μετὰ πάσης ἐπιεικείας οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐ δεσπόζω ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ προστατεῖν, οὐδὲ τυραννεύειν ἀλλ' ἡγεμονεύειν, πρὸς μὲν τᾶλλα πάνθ' ὅσα ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν δεῖ πράττειν καὶ ὑπατος καὶ δικτάτωρ, πρὸς δὲ δὴ τὸ κακῶς ποιῆσαι τινα ιδιότης ὄν.

Now I am much more zealous than ever, with every propriety, not, by Zeus, to be a despot over you but to guide you, not to tyrannize you but to lead you, to do everything on behalf of you that it is necessary to do as consul and dictator, but, as if I were a private citizen, to do no wrong to anyone.

The difference between a tyrant and an autocratic non-tyrant, according to this formulation, is that the latter observes limits on his power in order to protect his notional peers from unjust harm. This suggests the questions of whether Dio's Antony exemplifies or does not exemplify this paradigm, and of whether Antony's behavior can be read as a tacit comment on the tyrannical excesses committed by emperors like Commodus in Dio's own time.

We might expect, based on the precedents provided by Josephus, Plutarch, and Appian, that Dio too would make use of Mark Antony as an *exemplum* of tyranny during the republican

period to prefigure tyrannical *principes* and serve as a contrast to the more palatable Octavian, but a survey of the representation of Antony in Dio's *Historia Romana* reveals that this is generally not the case. The portion of Dio's narrative that runs from 44.34 to 48.24 is where such a tyrannical characterization would be possible, since Dio, like Plutarch and Appian, creates a shift in motivation from the desire for power to the desire/love for Cleopatra beginning at 48.24. I would argue that Dio's characterization of Antony does not consistently exhibit any of the distinctly tyrannical features that have typified Antony as a tyrant in the works of the other authors examined in this chapter. In fact, but for a few exceptional moments in the narrative (particularly Antony's actions during the Proscriptions of 43 BC in Book 47), Antony's characterization is not typologically different from that of the other Roman dynasts in the narrative – at least prior to his becoming involved with Cleopatra. I think that Gowing (1992: 121) is right in concluding that “Dio's Antony, then, is essentially a product of the historian's overriding interest in Octavian. In comparison with other characters, Antony becomes only a slightly more substantial figure, whose activities needed to be noted but not painstakingly described.” Dio neither projects anxieties about oppressive emperors of his own time onto Antony nor does he cast Antony to play the villain to a heroic Octavian, as Appian does. For Dio, Antony is simply one among many potential dynasts jockeying for power until his love for Cleopatra transforms him into a tragic figure.

There are two prominent places in Dio's narrative where Antony does take on a tyrannical persona, however. In the *Philippic* speech Dio adapts from Cicero's own Latin text and lays out in 45.18-47, the preoccupation with Antony's alleged tyrannical behavior is transplanted from the thematic program of Cicero's Latin text into the Greek text that Dio has

composed.²⁰² Additionally, Dio's account of the Proscriptions of 43 BC includes the following description of Antony gazing on the spectacle of Cicero's severed head (47.8.1-3):

ἐκεῖνος μὲν οὖν πολλοὺς, ὅσους γε καὶ ἠδυνήθη, διεσώσατο· ὁ τε Λέπιδος τῷ τε ἀδελφῷ τῷ Παύλῳ ἐς Μίλητον ἐκδρᾶναι ἐπέτρεψε, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους οὐκ ἀπαραίτητος ἦν· ὁ δὲ Ἀντώνιος ὡμῶς καὶ ἀνηλεῶς οὐχ ὅτι τοὺς ἐκτεθέντας ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐπικουρήσασιν αὐτῶν ἐπιχειρήσαντας ἔκτεινε. τὰς τε κεφαλὰς σφῶν, εἰ καὶ σιτούμενος ἐτύγγανεν, ἐπεσκόπει, καὶ ἐπὶ πλείστον τῆς τε ἀνοσιωτάτης καὶ τῆς οἰκτροτάτης αὐτῶν ὄψεως ἐνεπίμπλατο. καὶ ἡ γε Φουλουία πολλοὺς καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ κατ' ἔχθραν καὶ διὰ χρήματα, καὶ ἔστιν οὗς οὐδὲ γινγνωσκόμενους ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἐθανάτωσεν· ἐνὸς γοῦν τινος κεφαλὴν ἰδὼν εἶπεν ὅτι “τοῦτον οὐκ ἠπιστάμην”. ὡς δ' οὖν καὶ ἡ τοῦ Κικέρωνός ποτε ἐκομισθῆ σφίσι (φεύγων γὰρ καὶ καταληφθεὶς ἐσφάγη), ὁ μὲν Ἀντώνιος πολλὰ αὐτῷ καὶ δυσχερῆ ἐξονειδίσας ἔπειτ' ἐκέλευσεν αὐτὴν ἐκφανέστερον τῶν ἄλλων ἐν τῷ βήματι προτεθῆναι, ἵν' ὄθεν κατ' αὐτοῦ δημηγορῶν ἠκούετο, ἐνταῦθα μετὰ τῆς χειρὸς τῆς δεξιᾶς, ὥσπερ ἀπετέμνητο, ὀρθοῦ· ἠδὲ δὴ Φουλουία ἔς τε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτὴν πρὶν ἀποκομισθῆναι ἐδέξατο, καὶ ἐμπικραναμένη οἱ καὶ ἐμπτόσασα ἐπὶ τε τὰ γόνατα ἐπέθηκε, καὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς διανοίξασα τὴν τε γλῶσσαν ἐξεῖλκυσε καὶ ταῖς βελόνας αἷς ἐς τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐχρήτο κατεκέντησε, πολλὰ ἅμα καὶ μιὰρὰ προσεπισκόπτουσα.

[Octavian] saved as many people as he could, and Lepidus directed his brother Paulus to escape to Miletus and was not unmerciful to others. But Antony savagely and piteously killed not only those who were proscribed but even the people who tried to help anyone. He gazed upon their heads, even if he happened to be eating, and filled himself as much as possible with the most unholy and pitiable spectacle that they provided. Fulvia also killed many herself on account of enmity and to get their money, and it was actually the case that her husband was unacquainted with some of these people. In fact, seeing the head of one of these strangers he said, “I do not know this man.” And when the head of Cicero was carried in to them (for he was slain after being caught while trying to escape), Antony, after reviling him with many grievous insults, then commanded that it be placed more prominently than any others on the Rostra, where Cicero had often been heard leveling invectives against him. There it was viewed along with this right hand, just as it had been cut off. Fulvia herself even took the head into her hands before it was carried away, and placing it on her knees she reviled and spit upon it, and, opening its mouth, she drew out the tongue and stabbed it with her hairpins while making many brutal jokes.

The emphasis in this passage on Cicero's head is, as Gleason (2011: 40) observes, a manifestation of Dio's preoccupation with severed heads more generally,²⁰³ a preoccupation whose origin Gleason traces to the political executions and instability Dio witnessed in his own

²⁰² For an overview of the rhetoric of the *Philippic* speeches composed by both Dio and Appian, see Bosworth (1988: 95-9). Bosworth notes how both Dio and Appian set up Cicero as a straw man to be demolished, but Dio's speech is much more sophisticated and steeped in the Roman declamatory tradition.

²⁰³ At 73.12, Dio reports how he and his fellow senators, sitting in the arena, watched the emperor Commodus cut the head off an ostrich. Commodus proceeded to brandish the severed head and his bloody sword at Dio and his colleagues, threatening them with the same fate and striking terror into them. Severed heads and tyrants thus have a very personal resonance for Dio. See Gleason (2011: 48-9) and Beard (2014: 1-8) on this anecdote.

time. The Antony of this passage might thus be read as a prefiguration of the tyrannical regime of a Commodus or a Caracalla but for the fact that the focus in this passage is on Antony's wife Fulvia.²⁰⁴ Dio's description of the desecration of Cicero's dismembered body by Fulvia is a detail that is given in no other source, although her presence here tallies well with her participation in other excesses of triumviral rule in Dio's narrative, such as the summary confiscation of lands from Italian landholders and Antony's execution of seditious soldiers at Brundisium. Again, Fulvia's presence in these anecdotes is not mentioned in other sources. I would like to suggest that Dio's purpose in featuring Fulvia is to imply that she, much like her successor Cleopatra, was part of the animus behind Antony's tyrannical behavior. The tyrannical disposition within Antony himself is catalyzed by Fulvia's influence. Antony's distinctly tyrannical behavior in other authors – gorging on the ghastly spectacle of severed heads even while eating,²⁰⁵ killing anyone who sought to help the proscribed – is not the single focus of Dio's account in the way that is in Appian's or in accounts by Latin-language authors discussed in the previous chapter. It makes less of an impression in the overall narrative of the desecration of Cicero's corpse than Fulvia's attack on his tongue with her hairpins and harangues. That Antony does not manifest such behavior elsewhere in Dio's narrative suggests that its occurrence here is best explained as an isolated artifact of the Latin rhetorical/declamatory tradition about Cicero's death. Dio signals some familiarity with this tradition in his mention of Popillius, Cicero's traditional betrayer in the Roman declamatory tradition,²⁰⁶ and in his deep engagement with Cicero's *Philippics* themselves. Fergus Millar (1964: 52-5) has shown that Dio scrupulously

²⁰⁴ See Delia (1991) for an overview of how Fulvia is represented and distorted for rhetorical effect in our sources.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Athenaeus 6.251a, where Alexander the Great jokingly rejects any interest in engaging in this behavior himself.

²⁰⁶ On the Roman declamatory tradition's influence on Dio, see Wright (2001).

avoids using the content of Cicero's *Philippics* as a source for his historical narrative. In this way, Dio's methodology is very different from Plutarch's and Appian's, evincing a marked determination not to allow invective to define his portrayal of characters in the historical narrative proper.

Apart from this story, distinct markers of tyrannical behavior are absent from Dio's broader narrative about Antony. The recurrent references in Appian's history to Antony's bodyguard, his anger, his attempts to instill fear and loyalty through violence, are present only in the *Philippic* Dio puts into Cicero's mouth at 45.18-47. Octavian's characterization is likewise uninflected by any of the relatively positive attributes he is given by the other authors we have considered, apart from the exceptional treatment he is also accorded in Dio's account of the Proscriptions. In the passage discussed above, Octavian is distinguished from Antony, Lepidus, and Fulvia by his willingness to save as many people as he could (47.8.1), and earlier Dio remarks of him (47.7.1-3):

ἔδοκει δὲ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ Καίσαρος κατὰ τὴν τῆς δυναστείας κοινωνίαν γίνεσθαι, ἐπεὶ αὐτός γε οὐδὲν τι συχνοὺς ἀποκτεῖναι ἐδεήθη· τῆ τε γὰρ φύσει οὐκ ὤμους ἦν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς ἤθεσιν ἐνετέθραπτο. πρὸς δ' ἔτι νέος τε ὢν καὶ ἄρτι ἐς τὰ πράγματα παριῶν οὐτ' ἄλλως [ἂν] ἀνάγκην πολλοὺς σφοδρῶς μισεῖν εἶχε καὶ φιλεῖσθαι ἤθελε. σημεῖον δὲ ὅτι, ἀφ' οὗ τῆς τε πρὸς ἐκείνους συναρχίας ἀπηλλάγη καὶ τὸ κράτος μόνος ἔσχεν, οὐδὲν ἔτι τοιοῦτον ἔπραξεν.

And the part played in this by [Octavian] Caesar was attributable to his sharing power in common [with Antony and Lepidus], since he himself did not need to kill many men at all. Indeed, he was not savage by nature and had cultivated the habits of his father. Moreover, being still a young man and just at the moment becoming active in politics he did not have a reason to hate many people intensely, and he wished to be liked. The proof of this is that from the time when he ceased sharing the government and alone held power, he never did anything of that sort again.

Dio's assertion that Octavian was not "savage by nature" is undercut a little bit by his subsequent remarks that Octavian only refrained from engaging in bloodshed because he was too young and too new to politics to have made many enemies. The implication is that Octavian would have participated more actively in the Proscriptions and equaled Lepidus and Antony in

tyrannical murder and oppression had he had more enemies at the time. Dio’s conjecture that an important motive for Octavian was the desire “to be liked” implies that Antony in contrast was not concerned, in Dio’s view, with being feared or hated, but the contrast is not as great as it is in Appian’s narrative, where Octavian’s “virtue and good fortune” (ἀρετή καὶ τύχη) are juxtaposed to Antony’s tyrannical cruelty (*BC* 4.3.16). In Dio’s history, Octavian is distinguished by greater restraint and discretion, although more often than not Antony and Octavian are bound together by Dio in Books 45-48 into a kind of cabal that aspires to acquire supreme power by discreet diplomacy and deception.²⁰⁷ Both Antony and Octavian are capable of exercising considerable political acumen to manage political crises and outmaneuver their enemies, and the use of violence and the threat of force to effect their aims is the exception rather than the rule. Dio devotes particular attention to the triumvirs’ use of various ploys and pretexts to secure monarchical power. For example, before recounting the events of the Battle of Philippi, Dio says of Antony and Octavian at 47.39.1-2:

ἀλλ’ ἐκείνους μὲν τοὺς ἀγῶνας ὑπὲρ τοῦ τίνας ἐπακούσουσιν ἐποιήσαντο, τότε δὲ οἱ μὲν ἐς δυναστείαν αὐτοὺς ἤγον, οἱ δὲ ἐς αὐτονομίαν ἐξήρουντο.

But those later contests [between Antony and Octavian] were undertaken for the purpose of determining which man [the Romans] would be subservient to, but in the contest at that time, one faction [Antony and Octavian] led them to despotism and the other [Brutus and Cassius] drew them on to self-government.

In the broader narrative outside the account of the Proscriptions, then, Antony’s and Octavian’s characterizations exhibit more alignment than divergence.

There are two other episodes from the careers of Antony and Octavian – Antony’s execution of seditious soldiers at Brundisium in 43 BC and Octavian’s handling of the colonization of his and Antony’s veterans in 42 BC – that illustrate Dio’s more neutral attitude,

²⁰⁷ Cf. 45.11 and 46.35.

compared with Appian's, to representing the characters of Antony and Octavian.²⁰⁸ Of the incident at Brundisium, Dio writes (45.13.1-3):

Ἀντώνιον δὲ τὴν μὲν ἀρχὴν φιλοφρόνως οἱ στρατιῶται ἐν τῷ Βρεντεσίῳ ἐδέξαντο, προσδοκῆσαντες πλείω παρ' αὐτοῦ τῶν προτεινομένων σφίσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ Καίσαρος λήψεσθαι, ἐπειδὴ καὶ πολλῶν πλείω κεκτηῖσθαι αὐτὸν ἐκείνου ἐνόμιζον. ὥς μέντοι ἑκατόν τε ἑκάστῳ δραχμᾶς δώσειν ὑπέσχετο, καὶ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τούτῳ θορυβησάντων σφαγῆναι ἄλλους τέ τινας καὶ ἑκατοντάρχους ἔν τε τοῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς τῆς γυναικὸς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐκέλευσε, τότε μὲν ἡσύχασαν, πορευόμενοι δὲ ἐς τὴν Γαλατίαν καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἄστυ γεγεννημένοι ἐνεωτέρισαν, καὶ καταφρονήσαντες τῶν ὑποστρατῆγων τῶν ἐπιτεταγμένων σφίσι συχνοὶ πρὸς τὸν Καίσαρα μετέστησαν.

In the beginning at least, the soldiers in Brundisium welcomed Antony warmly because they anticipated that they would receive more from him than what had been offered to them by [Octavian] Caesar, since they believed that Antony had a lot more money. However, when he promised that he would give one hundred drachmas to each soldier and there was a great uproar among them about it, he ordered some of the centurions to be slaughtered before his own eyes and those of his wife. They were pacified for the moment, but when they started marching to Gaul and had arrived near Rome the uproar broke out anew, and disdaining the officers who had been appointed to command them, many of them switched sides to [Octavian] Caesar.

There are a number of revealing differences between Dio's version of this incident and Appian's. Dio's claim that the soldiers received Antony warmly at first is quite a different start to the narrative than what Appian says, namely, that the soldiers refused to salute Antony and made him angry even before the question of payment was raised. Antony's uncontrollable anger, as we saw in our discussion of the Appian passage above, is manifested after the soldiers raise an outcry at the amount of the payment and again when Antony commands that the most seditious of the soldiers be killed. Appian is explicit in asserting that Antony's motivation in performing these executions is to instill fear, a goal that he fails to achieve. Dio's account, in contrast, does not speculate about Antony's motives and stresses the limited scope of the punishment he inflicts on the soldiers. It is only a few of the centurions who are killed rather than a mob of seditious soldiers. The presence of Fulvia at the execution spectacle also mitigates Antony's responsibility

²⁰⁸ Gowing (1992: 106-7) notes the differences between Appian's and Dio's versions of this episode, but he does not explore the overtly tyrannical dimension of Antony's characterization in Appian.

for what could be construed as tyrannical behavior in ordering these executions. Later during the account of the Proscriptions, Fulvia is a major impetus behind the extra-judicial killings committed in Antony's name and, as seen above, in the subsequent spectacles involving severed heads.

Dio's version of the triumvirs' colonization process after the Battle of Philippi portrays a different Antony. For Appian, colonization through dispossession is used by tyrannical Roman leaders to make veteran soldiers complicit in a tyrannical regime's crime. Appian's Octavian regards this process as unjust, and he participates in it only because of political necessity and the pressure put upon him by Antony and his allies. Dio's treatment of the affair, however, makes Octavian an active and merciless agent in the dispossession of Italian land holders (48.6.2-48.7.3):

καὶ γὰρ ἐτοιμώτατον ἀμφοτέροις ἐδόκει εἶναι τὰ τῶν ἀόπλων τοῖς συμπολεμήσασσι χαρίσασθαι. ὡς γοῦν παρὰ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν πολλὴ ταραχὴ ἐγένετο καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐς πόλεμον προήγετο (πᾶσαν γὰρ κατ' ἀρχὰς τὴν Ἰταλίαν, πλὴν εἴ <τί> τις τῶν ἐστρατευμένων ἐν δωρεᾷς μέρει λαβῶν ἢ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ δημοσίου πριάμενος εἶχε, μετὰ τῆς δουλείας καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἄλλης κατασκευῆς τοὺς δεσπότας ὁ Καῖσαρ ἀφηρεῖτο καὶ ἐκείνοις ἐδίδου, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῶν κτημάτων ἀποστερούμενοι δεινῶς πρὸς αὐτὸν ἠγανάκτου), μετεβάλλοντο ἢ τε Φουλουῖα καὶ ὁ ὕπατος, πλείω δύναμιν ἐν τοῖς ἐτέροις τοῖς ἀδικουμένοις σχήσειν ἐλπίσαντες, καὶ τῶν μὲν ληψομένων τοὺς ἀγροὺς ἠμέλησαν, πρὸς δὲ ἐκείνους, ἅτε καὶ πλείονας ὄντας καὶ ὀργὴν δικαίαν ὑπὲρ ὧν ἀπεστεροῦντο ποιουμένους, ἐτράποντο. κακὰ τούτου ὑπολαμβάνοντες αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐκάστους καὶ συνήροντο καὶ συνίστων, ὥστε καὶ τοὺς ἐν τῷ πρὶν τὸν Καῖσαρα φοβουμένους τότε προστατῶν ἐπιλαβομένους ἀναθαρσῆσαι καὶ μηδενὸς ἔτι τῶν οἰκείων ἀφεῖσθαι· καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ Μάρκῳ ταῦτα συνδοκεῖν ἐνόμιζον. τούτους τε οὖν ὁ τε Λούκιος καὶ ἡ Φουλουῖα προσεποιούντο, καὶ τοῖς ἐτέροις τοῖς ἀμφὶ τὸν Καῖσαρα οὐδὲν προσέκρουον. οὐ γὰρ ὡς <οὐ> δέον αὐτοὺς κληρουχῆσαι τίνα προεβάλλοντο, ἀλλὰ ἀρκοῦντα αὐτοῖς τὰ τῶν ἀντιπολεμησάντων σφίσις ἀπέφαινον, καὶ μάλισθ' ὅτι καὶ χωρία καὶ ἐπιπλα τὰ μὲν ἔτι τότε ὄντα <τὰ δὲ> καὶ πεπραμμένα ἀπεδείκνυσαν, ὧν τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ τῶν δὲ τὴν τιμὴν ἔφασκον αὐτοῖς δοθῆναι χρῆναι. εἰ δ' οὖν μηδὲ ταῦτά σφισιν ἀρκέσειε, ταῖς γε ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας ἐλπίσι πάντας αὐτοὺς ἀνηρτῶντο. ὥστε ταχὺ ἐκ τούτων συνέβη Καῖσαρα μὲν, ἅτε καὶ βία τὰ τῶν κεκτημένων τι ἀφαιρούμενον καὶ πόνους ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν καὶ κινδύνους πᾶσιν ὁμοίως προσάγοντα, ἀμφοτέροις αὐτοῖς προσκροῦσαι.

For it seemed most expedient to both parties to gratify those who had fought for them with the possessions of the unarmed. But contrary to what they had anticipated, this caused great upheaval. The business was in fact heading towards war, for at first [Octavian] Caesar took from the owners virtually all of Italy, except what some old soldier had taken as a gift or bought from the public holdings, along with all the slaves

and equipment. He gave it to the soldiers. On account of this, those who had been dispossessed were intensely angry at him. Then Fulvia and the consul [Lucius Antonius] changed course, hoping that they would get more power by taking up the cause of the dispossessed, and they stopped supporting those who had taken the land. They went over to those on the other side because those people were more numerous and because they were justifiably angry over what had been stolen from them. From then on they aided and united them by cultivating them on an individual-by-individual basis. The result of this was that those who had once feared [Octavian] Caesar took heart at having [Fulvia and Lucius Antonius] as leaders and would no longer give up any of their possessions. For they thought Mark Antony agreed with them on this matter as well. In this way, Lucius and Fulvia worked on these people, and they did not clash with the other party around Caesar. Indeed, rather than putting up the pretense that there was no reason for anyone to receive an allotment, they asserted that the possessions of those who had fought against them were sufficient. They showed off the lands and goods, some still yet available and some already sold, and they said the former should be given to the soldiers directly and the price of the latter handed over to them. If all this should not have been enough for them, they tried to entice these others by prospects in Asia. As a result of all this, [Octavian] Caesar, because he was taking by force the property of everyone possessing anything and giving burdens and dangers to everyone alike, clashed with both sides.

Octavian's motivation in taking such a hard line is unclear, but the arbitrariness of the land seizures is evocative of the kind of exploitation we have seen practiced by tyrannical Roman leaders throughout this chapter. The effect of these depredations – rage and unrest among its victims – is also a typical feature of the tyrannical paradigm. If Dio's reader had to judge Octavian from this passage alone, he or she could reasonably assume that Dio viewed Octavian as a tyrant in the mold of a Sulla or Julius Caesar. Yet when this incident is contextualized in Dio's broader narrative – much in the same way that I have sought to contextualize Dio's description of Antony's tyrannical behavior during the Proscriptions in the broader narrative arc – it can be seen that Octavian's role in the colonization process is, for Dio, an uncharacteristic public relations lapse for the young triumvir. Dio's own political preference for monarchy and for *principes* like Octavian is fairly explicit throughout his narrative, but Dio chooses to present Octavian as a flawed leader who is capable of making mistakes. In this way, the sharp contrast in autocratic temperament that separates the monarchical Octavian from the tyrannical Antony in other Greek-language authors is somewhat blurred in Dio's narrative.

The portraits of the tyrannical Antony that are drawn by each of our authors – Josephus, Plutarch, Appian, and Cassius Dio – all exhibit a pronounced debt to the stock archetype of a tyrant that is instantiated throughout Greco-Roman literature going all the way back to the earliest Greek historians and rhetoricians of the fifth century BC. Yet the choices these authors make in terms of emphasizing some typical traits of this stock figure while downplaying others reveal a great deal about how Antony fits into their broader thematic programs. Josephus and Plutarch use the tyrannical Antony as a means of critiquing the oppressive predation that Roman administrators inflicted upon provincial subjects both in the distant past and in their contemporary present. The specifically cruel and bloodthirsty aspects of Antony’s tyrannical character that are manifested against his fellow Romans – the execution and dismemberment of Cicero, for example – are either entirely omitted, as in the case of Josephus, or they are relegated to an importance subsidiary to Antony’s broader preoccupation with acquiring ill-gotten wealth and property, as in the case of Plutarch, who configures Antony’s tyrannical behavior towards other Romans as a precursor of the more widespread exploitation that he will visit upon Rome’s eastern dependencies. Appian and Dio, in contrast, follow a somewhat more traditional approach in emphasizing Antony’s cruelty towards his fellow Romans, but the nods to republican ideology that characterize Latin authors’ treatments of the tyrannical Antony are noticeably absent. There is no heroization of Cicero as such by either Appian or Dio, and the prominent and unambiguous support for the institution of monarchy that both of these authors exhibit is channeled into creating narratives that justify the imposition of this style of government to bring an end to the chaotic civil strife that characterized the first century BC. After all, they had their living to make. We have seen, however, that the contrast between Octavian and Antony in terms of their fitness to rule is much more pronounced in Appian’s narrative than Dio’s, illustrating how much less

necessary the tyrannical Antony became for justifying the institution of the principate in the third century AD and how much latitude a historian of that period could employ in deviating from the characterizations of prominent Roman statesmen by his predecessors.

Indeed, the absence of any extended discussion in my treatment of the issue of source criticism is something that I hope will not be taken as an indication of an unwillingness on my part to engage with the question of whether our authors' portrayal of the tyrannical Antony is merely an artifact of their digestion of earlier sources that were steeped in Ciceronian invective or Augustan propaganda. I think that it is reasonable to presume that the idea of the tyrannical Antony is a Ciceronian and Augustan invention that directly conditions casting Antony into this role in all later literature, but even in those rare cases where the work of one of our authors can be directly compared to one of his sources (as we have done in the case of Plutarch and Dio and their exploitation of Cicero's *Second Philippic*) it is evident that the later author has exercised considerable discretion in re-fashioning his source material to suit the particular thematic needs of his own work. At its most basic level the tyrannical Antony is an idea that Josephus, Plutarch, Appian, and Dio have inherited from earlier sources that are decidedly hostile to Antony, but the nuances of each author's delineation of Antony's tyrannical character are distinct enough from one another and from earlier recoverable sources like Cicero's *Second Philippic* that explaining them is not a question of engaging in more fine-tuned source criticism. It is a question of determining what role each of these authors need Antony to play in the drama of the fall of the Republic from the death of Julius Caesar through the establishment of the triumvirate. The role that these authors need Antony to play in this drama's final act at Actium and Alexandria will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Mark Antony and the Madness of Love

ANTONY

I'll help thee. – I have been a man, Ventidius.

VENTIDIUS

Yes, and a brave one; but –

ANTONY

I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my Reason, have disgrac'd
The name of Soldier, with inglorious ease.
In the full Vintage of my flowing honors,
Sate still, and saw it prest by other hands.
Fortune came smiling to my youth, and wooed it,
And purple greatness met my ripen'd years.
When first I came to Empire, I was born
On Tides of People, crowding to my Triumphs;
The wish of Nations, and the willing World
Received me as its pledge of future peace;
I was so great, so happy, so belov'd,
Fate could not ruine me; till I took pains,
And work'd against my fortune, chid her from me,
And returned her loose; yet still she came again.
My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
At length have weary'd her, and now she's gone,
Gone, gone, divorc'd for ever. Help me, soldier,
To curse this Mad-man, this industrious Fool,
Who labour'd to be wretched: Pr'ythee, curse me.²⁰⁹

– John Dryden, *All for Love*, 1.1.292-311

In this lament, John Dryden manages to capture the essence of the version of Mark Antony that has itself captured the popular imagination for over two millennia. This is the Antony who abandons all his power and prestige as a Roman triumvir to become an orientalized hedonist who fawns on Cleopatra. He has ignored the commands of reason to follow the dictates of his heart; he has taken a course that his friends and fellow Romans think insane. As a subject for fiction, drama, and film the love of Antony and Cleopatra has an enduring appeal. But as a subject of biographical, historiographical, or literary inquiry, the love of Mark Antony for

²⁰⁹ The text here printed is that of Hooker and Swedenberg (1984), which retains the original orthography.

Cleopatra has, at first glance, an air of banality and popular romanticism about it. Historical and biographical treatments of the pair have therefore tended to de-romanticize Antony's alliance with Cleopatra by uncovering the political, military, and financial exigencies that forced Antony to turn away from Italy and the West and establish a new, Egypt-centered power base in the East.²¹⁰ Stripped of the veneer of poetic melodrama with which the ancient historio-biographical tradition and subsequent centuries of adaptation have lacquered it, the liaison of Antony and Cleopatra appears less as an exchange of feelings than as a bit of political horse-trading.

Even historio-biographical treatments of Antony and Cleopatra that accept that *eros* was an influential factor in the relationship – and these are generally treatments aimed at a popular audience – tend to suffer from a presumption that the ancient sources that describe the *eros* of Antony for Cleopatra are all of one piece; that they define the nature, aetiology, and manifestations of Antony's love for Cleopatra in virtually the same way. Such a view authorizes the synthesis of the ancient evidence into a composite picture of Antony in love, and it is this amalgam of Propertius, Plutarch, Cassius Dio, and others that is represented in the modern biographical tradition. There are in fact many different attitudes on display in our source material about what causes Antony's erotic madness and what role Cleopatra plays in inducing it. My intention in this chapter is to survey the *testimonia* for Antony's *eros* and madness in our surviving sources and delineate how Antony's characterization as a madman and lover figure into each author's particular thematic and rhetorical program.

We will see in the writings of Cicero that Antony is figured as a madman but not yet as a man who is mad because of love. The explicit association of Antony's transgressive behavior with *amor* comes about through the decisive influence of Octavian's propaganda campaign in the

²¹⁰ Examples of such treatments include Syme (1939), Bengston (1977), Huzar (1978), D. Roller (2010), and Halfmann (2011).

late 30s BC, as we shall see. The conceit of Antony as a man “captured by love” (*captus amore*) is developed by the Latin-language authors Propertius, Livy (as seen in the *Periochae*), and Florus into a portrait of Antony that emphasizes his personal responsibility for his defeat and downfall. Greek-language treatments, in contrast, tend to emphasize the decisive influence of Cleopatra’s flattery, love potions, and enchantments in bringing about Antony’s erotic madness. Plutarch’s treatment of Antony’s erotic madness is the most sophisticated presentation among our sources and the most well-researched by modern scholars, but the influence of medical discourse on Plutarch’s conceptualization of Antony’s erotic madness has been largely left in the background. Cassius Dio seeks to demonstrate that Antony’s *eros*, in combination with his drunkenness, rendered him unfit to rule, and made Octavian’s rise to power preferable. The composite picture that emerges from my analysis in this chapter challenges a tacit assumption in the scholarship that the representation of Antony’s erotic madness for Cleopatra is uniform across all our ancient sources. Antony, his *eros*, and his madness change and are changed whenever they are incorporated into any new literary/cultural context.

Part One: The Ciceronian Background

In the previous three chapters, we have seen how post-Ciceronian authors, both Greek and Roman, have utilized Cicero’s writings as a model for characterizing Antony as a theatrical performer and as a tyrant. These later authors introduce new elements into their portrayals and refashion Cicero’s versions of Antony to suit their own purposes, but there are still continuities between Cicero’s version of Antony and the later receptions that reveal the indebtedness of the latter to the former. When these later authors shift focus to Antony’s relationship with Cleopatra and his love-induced madness, however, a fundamental disjuncture opens up. Cicero’s account

of Antony's madness lays the basis for the evolution in how Antony is characterized as an insane lover in our major ancient sources for his life.

To get an approximate sense of how Cicero defines madness in relation to love,²¹¹ I would like to consider first an excerpt from his *Tusculan Disputations*, a philosophical work written around 45 BC. Cicero has his two anonymous interlocutors discuss how *amor*, closely related to *libido*, produces a deleterious *furor* (4.75-6):

Etiam novo quidam amore veterem amorem tamquam clavo clavum eiciendum putant; maxime autem, admonendus <est>, quantus sit furor amoris. Omnibus, enim ex animi perturbationibus est profecto nulla vehementior, ut, si iam ipsa illa accusare nolis, stupra dico et corruptelas et adulteria, incesta denique, quorum omnium accusabilis est turpitudine, - sed ut haec omittas, perturbatio ipsa mentis in amore foeda per se est.

Haec inconstantia mutabilitasque mentis quem non ipsa pravitate deterreat? Est etiam illud, quod in omni perturbatione dicitur, demonstrandum, nullam esse nisi opinabilem, nisi iudicio susceptam, nisi voluntariam. Etenim si naturalis amor esset, et amarent omnes et semper amarent et idem amarent, neque alium pudor, alium cogitatio, alium satietas deterreret.

Some people even think that an old love can be driven out by a new love just as one nail is pushed out by another. Yet [a man in love] must be vociferously warned how great the madness of love is. Out of all the disturbances of the mind there is none more violent, so that even if you demur from blaming it for rapes, depravities, adulteries, and, finally, incest, the baseness of all of which things is blameworthy – but even if you leave these things out – the disturbance of the mind in love is base in itself.

Does this inconsistency and mutability of mind deter anyone by its own depravity? It must be demonstrated, as we said in respect to every disturbance, that there is no disturbance but that it is opinion-based, conceived through judgment, and willful. For if love were natural,

²¹¹ The most comprehensive collation of the available evidence for how madness is conceptualized in extant Latin literature has been undertaken by Peter King (2000) as part of a project on the treatment of madness in Roman legal texts. See Toohey (2013) for a complementary treatment. Although King focuses his attention on the writings of the Roman jurists (who flourished mostly in the second to third centuries AD), his inquiry into conceptualization of madness encompasses the full range of classical Latin literary texts. He identifies a number of symptoms that Roman authors of the classical period consistently associate with madness and, by so doing, typify the figure of the madman (2000: 17-36). Among these symptoms are flight and withdrawal to a place of solitude, blanching and pallor, blazing eyes, a fierce countenance, uncontrolled emotions, behavior that produces social, familial, or political disorder, strange religious beliefs and impiety, and pursuing impossible or illogical goals. The aetiologies for madness are similarly diverse. Our concern, though, is confined with madness that is caused either exclusively by love or by love in combination with alcohol or love potions.

everyone would be in love and would always be in love and would love the same object, nor would shame deter one, consideration another, and satiety another.

These passages show that Cicero conceives of *amor* as a superlative kind of *furor* (madness) and is prepared to recognize *amor* as the motivating factor behind a wide range of pathological sexual behaviors. In this respect, Cicero's philosophical account of the pathologies produced by *amor* anticipates the aetiologies that later Greek and Roman authors will formulate in order to explain how Antony's behavior results from his erotic attachment to Cleopatra. Yet Cicero himself, though he has occasion in the *Philippics* to charge Antony with madness and to touch upon Antony's relationships with Fulvia and Cytheris, does not apply the diagnostic framework he develops in the *Tusculan Disputations* to the task of linking Antony's alleged madness to *amor*.

The first occasion in his public speeches where Cicero refers to Antony as *furiosus* is at *Phil.* 2.1.9-11. This assertion of Antony's madness has a programmatic significance insofar as it compares Antony unfavorably to an infamous erstwhile target of Ciceronian invective, the tribune Clodius: "You, who have never been injured even by one of my words – how much more brazen than Catiline, how much more insane than Clodius you seem! – have spontaneously attacked me with insults" (*Tu ne verbo quidem violatus, ut audacior quam Catilina, furiosior quam Clodius viderere, ultro me maledictis lacessisti*). Cicero invites his readers to compare his presentation of Antony to his earlier portrayals of Catiline and Clodius, and he creates the expectation that his invective against Antony will surpass the intensity of his attacks on these earlier adversaries in proportion to how Antony's boldness and madness exceeds theirs. For all the emphasis Cicero lays on Antony's alleged madness at the beginning of the *Second Philippic*, however, direct references in this series of speeches to Antony's *furor* and *insania* are deployed in piecemeal fashion. They also do not cohere together to form a thematic portrait in the way that

Cicero's characterization of Antony as a tyrant does, for example. Over the course of the *Philippics*, Cicero refers to Antony's "mad drinking" (*furiosa vinolentia*, 2.101); calls him a "mad gladiator" (*furiosus gladiator*, 13.16) who leads a band of thieves against the fatherland, the gods, and four consuls; and terms him "mad" (*furiosus*, 13.39) when he claims that Antony characterized civil war as just an innocuous difference of opinion among politicians. Cicero also argues that nothing is more mad (*dementius*, 2.19) than taking up arms against the Republic; that Antony was the cause of Julius's Caesar's "very mad plan" (*dementissimum concilium*, 2.53) to do so; that no other man but Antony was so impious (*impius*, 2.64) and mad (*demens*, 2.64) as to place a bid in the auction of Pompey the Great's property; that even after the Battle of Mutina Antony is so mad (*demens*) that no set-back can compel him to cease to rage (*furere*) and continue his downward spiral (*ruere*, 3.31); that inflamed by anger and madness (*ira dementiaque inflammatus*, 12.26) Antony will never keep his sacrilegious hands away from his enemy Cicero;²¹² and that Antony is too mad (*demens*, 13.19) to realize that all the charges he levels against Octavian are merely the recollections of his own dissipated youth.

A survey of the occasions in the *Philippics* where Cicero deploys the terminology of madness to characterize Antony does not form a coherent picture of madness. The Antony portrayed by Cicero displays a very generalized lack of logical thinking, a consistent disrespect for the gods, and an incorrigible unwillingness to submit to the Senate. Cicero is not as concerned as post-Ciceronian authors are to furnish an aetiology that accounts for Antony's madness. In no instance does Cicero ever causally link *amor* to any of Antony's mad actions. The one occasion where Cicero does cite *amor* as a motivating factor behind Antony's behavior is at *Phil.* 2.77-78, where, as seen in chapter 1, Cicero tells how a disguised Antony surprised

²¹² *Phil.* 12.26. The *Twelfth Philippic* was an attempt to persuade the Senate not to come to a negotiated settlement with Antony, and one of Cicero's arguments is that the safety of Antony's enemies could not be guaranteed if the Senate came to terms with him.

Fulvia with a love letter detailing how he had cast out his love (*amor*) for the mime-actress Cytheris.²¹³ Antony's escapade, so Cicero says, had caused alarm throughout the city "because of love" (*causam amoris*). Yet Cicero is explicit in stating that this anecdote is an illustration of Antony's "frivolity" (*levitas*); there is no mention of madness.

The only occasion in the *Philippics* where there is even a hint of a collocation of erotic indiscretion and madness is *Phil.* 6.4. This *Sixth Philippic* was delivered in response to the Senate's decision to send envoys to Antony to attempt to bring about a negotiated settlement to his siege of Decimus Brutus at Mutina, and here Cicero offers the most extended treatment on the motivating factors behind Antony's behavior to be found in this series of speeches:

Quamquam, Quirites, non est illa legatio, sed denuntiatio belli, nisi paruerit; ita enim est decretum, ut si legati ad Hannibalem mitterentur. Mittuntur enim, qui nuntient, ne oppugnet consulem designatum, ne Mutinam obsideat, ne provinciam depopuletur, ne dilectus habeat, sit in senatus populi que Romani potestate. Facile vero huic denuntiationi parebit, ut in patrum conscriptorum atque in vestra potestate sit, qui in sua numquam fuerit! Quid enim ille umquam arbitrio suo fecit? Semper eo tractus est, quo libido rapuit, quo levitas, quo furor, quo vinulentia; semper eum duo dissimilia genera tenuerunt, lenonum et latronum; ita domesticis stupris, forensibus parricidiis delectatur, ut mulieri citius avarissimae paruerit quam senatui populoque Romano.

Although, Quirites, it is not an embassy [we send] but a declaration of war if [Antony] does not obey. So it has been decreed, as if envoys were being sent to Hannibal. For they are sent in order to demand that he not attack the consul-designate, that he not besiege Mutina, that he not despoil the province, that he not hold a levy, that he put himself under the control of the Senate and the Roman people. How easily indeed he will obey this declaration, that he put himself under your control and the control of the Senate, he who has never had control of himself! What in fact has that man ever done through his own faculty for judgment? Always has he been dragged whichever way his lust, his lack of seriousness, his madness, his drunkenness has grabbed him! Always have those two quite dissimilar types of people, thieves and pimps, kept him close. He so delights in private adulteries and public parricides that he obeys more readily a most greedy woman than the Senate and the Roman people.

Cicero's central claim in this passage is that Antony will refuse to submit to the control (*potestas*) of the Senate and the Roman people because he has never had control (*potestas*) over himself. Antony is seized by *libido*, *levitas*, *furor*, and *vinulentia* and is incapable of exercising

²¹³ See above, pp. 34-7.

his rational will in a way that will allow him to oppose the dictates of these passions. It would be overstating the case, though, to say that Cicero's diagnosis of Antony's mental state is systematic and precise. The logical leap from Antony's delight in parricides and adulteries to his obeying a woman rather than the Senate and the Roman people is not itself cool or logical, and the parallel relationship between *libido* and *furor* in this passage is difficult to reconcile with the causal relationship they exhibit in Cicero's philosophical works, particularly in *Tusculan Disputations*. The tenuous connections between these assertions can be explained as the product of a rhetorical strategy that prioritizes dramatic effect and entertainment value over rigorously logical argumentation. Providing an array of causes for Antony's behavior is also advantageous to Cicero because his audience will be able to latch onto the reason for distrusting Antony that appears most plausible to them without necessarily having to assent to the others.

Cicero's decision to conclude this discussion of Antony's mental state with the pointed reference to Antony's alleged subservience to his wife Fulvia does, however, lend it an air of emphasis that is not so apparent in Cicero's reference in the same passage to the pimps and thieves that keep Antony company. There is a distinct implication in the structure of Cicero's argument that Antony's failure to exercise control over his appetites and emotions – that is, his persistence in a state of irrational madness – leads ultimately and, perhaps even inevitably, to being enslaved to the will of a woman. Again, reading this passage in this way could result in the imposition of a logical progression onto Cicero's scattershot rhetorical attack that Cicero did not intend to suggest, but it is certainly the case that the later biographical tradition seizes on references by Cicero to Antony's erotic proclivities and treats them as prefigurements of the dynamic that will be operative in his relationship with Cleopatra. *Phil.* 6.4 and *Phil.* 2.77-8 readily provide a basis for Plutarch's famous remark that "Cleopatra owed Fulvia for teaching

Antony obedience to a woman” (Κλεοπάτραν διδασκάλια Φουλβία τῆς Ἀντωνίου γυναικοκρασίας ὀφείλειν).²¹⁴

At the same time, however, it would be misleading to present Cicero’s diagnosis of Antony’s character and the diagnoses of later authors like Plutarch as essentially similar. Cicero regards Antony’s erotic indiscretions as merely one of a number of character flaws that are caused by his inability to master his emotions and appetites. *Libido*, not *amor*, is a motivating factor, along with more mercenary considerations such as Antony’s need as a young man to acquire money and social capital. For this reason, Cicero declares, Antony submitted sexually to the younger Curio.²¹⁵ Antony’s transgressive behavior with Cytheris is likewise shown to be as much a symptom of a lack of respect for social decorum as it is a particular problem with controlling an erotic appetite.²¹⁶ That is to say, there is no explicit collocation of *amor/libido* and madness in any of the passages in the *Philippics* describing Antony’s relations with Cytheris, only denunciations of Antony’s behavior that leave aetiologies to the imagination of the audience, or, as in the case of *Phil.* 2.77-8, refer to *amor* in an offhand way. The origin of Antony’s transgressive behavior is effectively diffused over a general disposition to cede control over his behavior to the irrational impulses of appetite.

Section 2: Propertius, the Livian *Periochae*, and Florus

The Latin-language authors who emerge in the post-Actium cultural milieu of Augustan Rome take a very different approach to configuring the madness of Mark Antony. In Cicero’s *Philippics*, Antony’s madness takes the form of a generalized inability to exercise control over

²¹⁴ Plutarch, *Ant.* 10.6.

²¹⁵ *Phil.* 2.44-7.

²¹⁶ *Phil.* 2.57-58, 61, and 69.

his body and appetites. In the elegies of Propertius (2.16), the *Periochae* for books 130-33 of Livy, and the Roman history of Florus, Antony's madness is configured as a specific subtype of insanity with a single focus of mad obsession: Cleopatra. This characterization of Antony as an insane lover originated in the propaganda campaign waged by Octavian against Antony in the 30s BC. The evidence for this campaign is scattered among sources written by a wide range of different authors working in different cultural contexts. As we pull apart the traces of Octavian's propaganda against Antony, we will uncover variations in the portrayal of Antony's erotic madness that have more to do with authorial reconfiguration of Octavian's and Antony's characters than they do with the content of the historical Octavian's propaganda.

There are, however, a few slivers of epistolary material relating to Octavian's propaganda campaign preserved in Suetonius's (c. 65 – 122 AD) biography of Augustus that can be more or less securely dated to the 30s BC. Suetonius was a Hadrianic court official who, as Wallace-Hadrill has shown (1984: 1-25), set out to collect material and write biographies that did not conform to the conventions of traditional Roman historiographical writing. In practice, this means that Suetonius preserves material that, on account of its relative banality or obscenity, is not incorporated into conventional ancient historiography. Comparing Suetonius's Antony-related material to the rest of the historio-biographical tradition is, I think, analogous to comparing the graphic epigram that Octavian wrote against Fulvia (Martial 11.20) to the negative yet sexually non-suggestive portrayal of Fulvia by Cassius Dio.²¹⁷ It would be easy to overstate the relevance of Suetonius's material to the larger historio-biographical tradition in ancient Greco-Roman literature. However, because this material provides some evidence for when and how the caricature of him as an insane lover developed, it is worth looking at them first.

²¹⁷ See above, pp. 174-5.

The earliest post-Ciceronian document that characterizes Antony as a madman takes the form of reported speech in Suetonius's *Divus Augustus* (86) that discusses Augustus's theory and praxis in the matter of oratorical style:

M. quidem Antonium ut insanum increpat, quasi ea scribentem, quae mirentur potius homines quam intellegant; deinde ludens malum et inconstans in eligendo genere dicendi iudicium eius, addit haec: 'Tuque dubitas, Cimberne Annius an Veranius Flaccus imitandi sint tibi, ita ut verbis, quae Crispus Sallustius excerpserit ex Originibus Catonis, utaris? An potius Asiaticorum oratorum inani[bu]s sententiis verborum volubilitas in nostrum sermonem transferenda?'

And [Augustus] reviled Antony as insane for writing things that men were meant to marvel at rather than understand. Then, making fun of his bad and inconsistent judgment in choosing a style of speaking, he adds these words: 'Do you doubt whether you should imitate Annius Cimber or Veranius Flaccus, so that you employ words which Sallust plucked from Cato's *Origines*? Or should rather the whirling of the Asiatic orators with their meaningless words be translated into our language?'

Note that, according to Suetonius, Augustus found elements of insanity in texts that Antony had written (*M. quidem Antonium ut insanum increpat, quasi ea scribentem*). There is no evidence that Antony ever circulated his orations in a written form.²¹⁸ The only *scripta* of Antony for which we have evidence are: *epistulae* preserved in the correspondence of Cicero, the *epistulae* excerpts preserved by Suetonius, the pamphlet *De Sua Ebrietate* published (according to Pliny the Elder)²¹⁹ shortly before the Battle of Actium, and a few pseudepigraphical letters preserved in Josephus. Eleanor Huzar (1982), in her comprehensive study of the remains of Antony's prose works, has evaluated this small sample in order to uncover places where Antony has adopted a markedly unconventional prose style that tallies with his convention-defying reputation. In Huzar's estimation, none of the specimens of Antony's prose that have come down to us exhibit any strikingly unusual features that could be unquestionably associated with an innovative or marked prose style. Because Suetonius states that the direct quotation is an

²¹⁸ See Mahy (2013) for an overview of Antony's oratorical career.

²¹⁹ *Nat. Hist.* 14.147-8.

addition to the sentiment expressed in the indirect statement, we can be reasonably confident that Suetonius has taken all of the above material from a single text written by Octavian and that *insanus* is a word that Octavian himself used in it.

The basis of Octavian's claim that Antony is *insanus* is that Antony's writing excites wonder but is incapable of being understood. The inconsistency attributed to Antony in his tentative imitation of the archaizers Annius Cimber, Veranius Flaccus, and Sallust also contributes to Antony's characterization as an unstable figure.²²⁰ The association of Antony with the florid, Asiatic style of oratory is well-attested in our sources and can be adduced, depending on the political orientation of the author or his source material, either as a key asset or as a key deficiency in his political toolbox.²²¹ Only Octavian, though, goes so far to find symptoms of insanity in Antony's prose style, and it would be useful to know whether this criticism dates from the period of conflict between Octavian and Antony in 44-43 BC or from the lead-up to the Battle of Actium in the late 30's BC. Unfortunately, neither the mention of Annius Cimber nor that of Veranius Flaccus allows us to date this letter to any particular point in time, although Annius Cimber is mentioned by Cicero as an active partisan of Antony in 43 BC. The reference to Sallust is also not decisively helpful for dating Augustus's text given that the *Bellum Catilinae*, which is generally regarded as Sallust's first published work, could have been in circulation as early as 44 BC.²²² Even so, references to figures like Annius Cimber and Sallust,

²²⁰ Cicero makes a joke about the style of Annius Cimber at *Phil.* 2.6.14, and Quintilian (*Inst.* 8.28) claims that the pseudo-Vergilian epigram *Cata.* 2 is about the same person. As for Veranius Flaccus, this is evidently our only reference.

²²¹ Cf. Cicero, *Phil.* 2.42-3 and *Phil.* 5.19. Plutarch, *Ant.* 40.5 makes a favorable assessment of Antony's eloquence. For assessments of Antony's rhetorical skill, along with catalogues of known occasions when Antony delivered a speech, see Huzar (1982: 649-54) and Mahy (2013). It is unlikely that any of our extant ancient assessments of Antony's oratorical skill derive from first hand acquaintance with specimens of his oratory, apart from the opinions of Cicero and Augustus, which of course take a very biased view.

²²² Ramsey (1984: 6).

whose literary efforts were both in the public eye in 44-43 BC, suggests that Augustus's letter dates from this time. Indeed, Kenneth Scott (1933: 12ff.), whose essay on the various propaganda wars of Antony and Octavian waged from 44-30 BC remains the standard work on the subject, agrees that a fair amount of the epistolary material preserved by Suetonius was originally produced during the conflict of 44-43 BC. It appears unlikely, then, that Octavian's characterization of Antony as *insanus* is directly related to a campaign on Octavian's part to vilify Antony on the basis of his erotic madness for Cleopatra.

Suetonius quotes from several of these Antonian *epistulae* in the course of his biography of Augustus, first a brief and unflattering account by Antony of Octavian's performance at the Battle of Philippi (*Aug.* 16.2),²²³ and then (*Aug.* 69.2), more significantly for our purposes, an excerpt from a letter by Antony defending his relationship with Cleopatra:

Quid te mutavit? Quod reginam in eo? Uxor mea est. Nunc coepi an abhinc annos novem? Tu deinde solam Drusilla inis? Ita valeas, uti tu, hanc epistulam cum leges, non inieris Tertullam aut Terentillam aut Rufillam aut Salviam Titiseniam aut omnes. An refert, ubi et in qua arrigas?

What has changed you? The fact that I have sex with the Queen? She is my wife. Did I start doing this now or nine years ago? Do you then only have sex with Drusilla? Good for you if, when you read this letter, you have not had sex with Tertulla or Terentilla or Rufilla or Salvia Titisenia or all of them. Does it really matter where or in whom you put it in?

The tone of this letter is crude and dripping with sarcasm. This excerpt has attracted a great deal of attention from scholars interested in the nature of Antony's marriage to Cleopatra.²²⁴ For my purposes, however, the interesting aspect of this letter is neither its *prima facie* shock value nor the insight it offers into Antony's marital arrangements but a subtext that

²²³ *Aug.* 7 also includes a reference to a letter of Antony attacking Octavian's lineage, which Scott (1933) dates to the propaganda campaign of 44-43 BC. *Aug.* 70 refers to a letter criticizing Octavian for dressing up as Apollo at a banquet when Rome was suffering a famine, events that Scott (1933) dates to December 40 BC or January 39 BC.

²²⁴ See Ager (2013) and Huzar (1986). Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 36.5) takes *Uxor mea est* as a question that in effect denies that Cleopatra is his wife. Yet if the text were punctuated *Uxor mea est?* Antony's next question becomes something of a *non sequitur*. It hardly seems logical for Antony to deny that Cleopatra is his wife and then proceed to emphasize his multi-year attachment to her.

the hyperbolic crudeness of Antony's tone conceals. Antony's opening questions *Quid te mutavit? Quod reginam in eo?* suggest that his relationship with Cleopatra only became a hot-button issue around the time that the letter was written. If we count nine years from the time Antony's relationship with Cleopatra began, this would date this letter to around 32 BC. Antony might well have felt justified in calling Cleopatra his *uxor* if his divorce from Octavia had already been finalized. Antony's *Quid te mutavit?* also suggests that Octavian had not criticized Antony's relationship with Cleopatra at all before this point in time.

Antony's focus on sex in his response to Octavian's first critique of his relationship to Cleopatra is telling. Antony in effect goes out of his way to stress that there is no great emotional significance to the fact that he has sex with Cleopatra: *An refert, ubi et in qua arrigas?* The litany of sexual partners that Antony ascribes to Octavian invites the latter to view Antony's sex with Cleopatra as a sexual relationship on par with his own casual sexual exploits. To my mind, the only reasonable explanation for Antony's rhetoric – apart from a general disposition to engage in crude humor, which, in the end, cannot be ruled out – is that Octavian *had* insinuated that Antony had an emotional attachment to Cleopatra that was affecting his judgment. Antony's insistence that his attachment to Cleopatra was both legal and entirely sexual only makes sense as a defensive maneuver against such a critique. Of course, it would not at all be surprising for such a critique to have originated with Octavian. In both Plutarch's (*Ant.* 58-60) and Dio's (50.3-7) accounts of the outbreak of war between Octavian and Antony, Octavian is depicted claiming that Antony suffers from madness on account of Cleopatra's love potions and bewitchment. Although this material is from centuries later than 32 BC and, as we shall see, tinged by Plutarch's and Dio's authorial manipulation, it still constitutes corroborating evidence that there was at least a long tradition of ascribing to Octavian the credit for bringing Antony's *amor/eros*

for Cleopatra into Roman public discourse. What dating the beginning of this aspect of the propaganda campaign to around 32 BC allows us to see, though, is that vivid representations of Antony's erotic madness prior to this date – such as, for example, Plutarch's account of Antony falling in love with Cleopatra at Tarsus in 41 BC (*Ant.* 26-8) or the notice in the Livian *Periocha* (131) for 36-34 BC that Antony was “captured by love” (*captus amore*) – probably represent, at least in part, a retrojection of Octavian's 32-31 BC-era attacks on Antony's *amor* onto the previous nine years of Antony's and Cleopatra's relationship. For the Latin-language authors writing in the post-Actium Augustan cultural milieu, there was thus scope for invention in recasting the early years of Antony's relationship with Cleopatra. The fact that the crude, sex-driven Antony of the letter preserved in *Aug.* 69.2 is not the Antony who has been preserved for us by these authors attests to their commitment to refashioning Antony into a man driven by love.

The defining feature of the approach of authors like Propertius, Livy, and Florus to conceptualizing Antony's erotic madness is that, when Antony's *amor* for Cleopatra is explicitly mentioned, they tend to attribute the origin of (and the blame for) Antony's *amor* to Antony himself. Greek-language authors, in contrast, emphasize the role that Cleopatra's flattery, love potions, bewitchment, and seductive charm played in twisting Antony into a state of servile enthrallment to her. The earliest explicit statement in Latin literature that Antony's *amor* for Cleopatra was the primary impetus behind his behavior in the 30s BC occurs in a poem of Propertius (2.16).²²⁵ This poem, treating chiefly the poet's despair because one of his rivals for Cynthia's affection has returned from abroad,²²⁶ takes a topical turn when the poet compares the

²²⁵The text and line numbers used are those of Barber's OCT edition.

²²⁶ Contrast Catullus 11, where the poet is figured rather as the cuckolded Roman official abroad.

folly of his own grief at Cynthia's betrayals (2.16.29-34) to the plight of Mark Antony during the Battle of Actium (2.16.35-42):

at pudeat certe, pudeat! – nisi forte, quod aiunt,
turpis amor surdis auribus esse solet.
cerne ducem, modo qui fremitu complevit inani
Actia damnatis aequora militibus:
hunc infamis amor versis dare terga carinis
iussit et extremo quaerere in orbe fugam.
Caesaris haec virtus et gloria Caesaris haec est:
illa, qua vicit, condidit arma manu.

But indeed what a source of shame, what a shame! – unless perhaps
it is as they say: vulgar love usually has deaf ears.
Look at the general who recently filled the Actian seas
with futile groans and condemned soldiers:
Ill-famed love ordered this man to turn tail with turned-about ships
and seek his escape at the ends of the earth.
This is the merit of Caesar, and the glory of Caesar is this:
He sheathed his weapons with the same hand with which he conquered.

The adverb *modo* in line thirty-seven announces this elegy's setting in the immediate aftermath of Actium. The composition of Book 2 is believed to have followed close on the heels of the publication of the *Monobiblos* sometime in 30-28 BC and its publication is traditionally placed sometime in the years 26-25 BC.²²⁷ The caricature of Antony presented here, that of a man so besotted with love for Cleopatra that he abandoned the fight at Actium to follow her in flight to Egypt, had thus already become well-established by this point.²²⁸

Jasper Griffin (1977) argued in an influential article that Antony is not just a point of comparison for the Propertian narrator but a veritable doublet. However, the idea that Propertius closely identifies himself with Antony has been contested in subsequent scholarship on this poem. Robert Gurval (1995: 183-5) has argued that the pejorative, shame-focused language that

²²⁷ The commentators Butler and Barber (xxvii) suggest a date of mid-25 BC and Camps (6-7) a date of 26 BC. See Dzino (2008) for additional discussion and bibliography.

²²⁸ Plutarch *Ant.* 66.4 subscribes to a similar aetiology for Antony's supposed flight from Actium. Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 64-5, and 66.4-8) highlights the romanticized and fictionalized nature of Plutarch's and others' accounts of the battle itself and Antony's and Cleopatra's flight from Actium.

Propertius attaches to *amor* in lines thirty-six (*turpis*) and thirty-nine (*infamis*) has the effect of distancing the poet's idealized notions of both himself and of the kind of *amor* that he desires to feel from the baser variety that instigates Antony's betrayal of the Roman soldiers under his command and the deadly consequences that follow. The irony that *amor* was able to command (*iussit*) a Roman *dux* to turn tail (*dare terga*) is also formulated in such a way, I would argue, as to elicit shock with its accusation of cowardice and to lay emphasis on Antony's identity as a military figure, a characterization that Propertius elsewhere renounces for himself.²²⁹ Yet Griffin is right, I think, to suggest that the personification of *amor* and its role as the central imperative force in Antony's decision-making represents an innovative assimilation of a figure of Antony's stature to the well-established paradigm of a besotted lover. The *fuga* of Antony to the ends of the earth (*extremus orbis*), to the wilderness as it were, is an image that is evocative of a long poetic tradition of despondent lovers retreating from civilization to lament the ill-feelings and misfortunes that love has produced for them.²³⁰ The *amor* from which Antony suffers, although it is *turpis* and *infamis*, nevertheless is not, in Propertius's eyes at least, the product of Cleopatra's drugs and enchantment.

The other reference to Antony in the elegies of Propertius also figures him as an individual who is responsible for his own plight. This poem (3.9), a long *recusatio* addressed to Maecenas that explores the suitability of various themes to Propertius's poetry, presents the reader with an image of the suicidal Antony that stresses Antony's personal agency (3.9.53-6):

prosequar et currus utroque ab litore ovantis,
 Parthorum astutae tela remissa fugae,
 castraque Pelusi Romano subruta ferro,

²²⁹ Cf. Propertius 1.6.

²³⁰ See King (1999: 18-20) for a discussion of madness-induced flights to the wilderness. Relevant references in Latin literature cited by King include Terence, *H. Tim.* 257ff.; Ovid, *Am.* 3.11.25; Propertius, 1.1.11-12; Cicero, *Aratea* 420ff.; Juvenal, *Sat.* 10.166; and Apuleius, *Met.* 8.6, to which I would add Vergil, *Ecl.* 2 and Propertius 2.19.17ff.

Antonique gravis in sua fata manus.

I will describe the triumphal chariots from either shore,
The shafts of the Parthians' cunning flight now laid down,
And the encampments of Pelusium subverted by the Roman sword,
And the hands of Antony heavy towards his own fate.

The final line, “the hands of Antony heavy towards his own fate” (*Antonique gravis in sua fata manus*), presents the reader with an Antony experiencing the fatal consequences of his own agency, symbolized by his hands. We might reasonably imagine that Antony's hands are weighted by the sword with which he will kill himself (cf. Plutarch, *Ant.* 76). In this way, Antony renounces his life in parallel with Parthians renouncing their arrows.

Propertius's image of Antony, silent yet embodying an eloquence in his hands, recalls the tenor of Horace's similar picture of Antony renouncing his identity as a Roman general in *Epode* 9 (27-32).²³¹ These versions of Antony are neither heroic nor sympathetic, but the defeated Antony is nevertheless imbued with a grandeur that stands in sharp contrast with these poets' treatment of Cleopatra.²³² Propertius's characterization of Cleopatra as an over-sexed *regina meretrix* (3.11.39) and Horace's as a *fatale monstrum* (*C.* 1.37.21) display none of the restraint of their treatments of Antony. There are some features of Horace's description of Cleopatra in *C.* 1.37 that could reflect on Antony, however. Horace envisions Cleopatra preparing “mad ruins” (*dementis ruinas*, 1.37.7) for the *Capitolium*, calls her “drunk with sweet fortune” (*fortuna dulci ebria*, 1.37.11-12), and notes that she “did not fear the sword” (*nec expavit ensem*, 1.37.23). In light of our other sources' emphasis on Antony's insanity, perhaps Cleopatra's drunken, suicidal madness in *C.* 1.37, and her depiction elsewhere in Augustan poetry, are designed to evoke

²³¹ See above, pp. 13-14. Cf. Vergil, *Aeneid* 8.685-8.

²³² On Cleopatra's depiction in Augustan poetry, see Becher (1966: 23-58) and Wyke (1992).

Antony as well.²³³ In any case, the version of Antony that we encounter in Propertius, at least, is a lover who is weighted with the consequences of his inability to resist the dictates of *amor*. As we turn to the representation of Antony's erotic madness in Latin historiography, we will see that such resistance is not only theoretically possible, but is configured as a defining feature of an idealized Roman.

Although the relevant books of Livy's *AUC* for the years 42-30 BC are lost, the author of the *Periochae* of Livy has preserved unambiguous clues as to how Antony was characterized in this section of the history,²³⁴ as the following excerpts from the *Periochae* show:

M. Antonius dum cum Cleopatra luxuriatur, tarde Mediam ingressus bellum cum legionibus XVIII et XVI equitum Parthis intulit, et cum duabus legionibus amissis, nulla re prospere cedente retro rediret, insecutis subinde Parthis et ingenti trepidatione et magno totius exercitus periculo in Armeniam reversus est XXI diebus CCC milia fuga emensus. Circa VIII hominum tempestatibus amisit. Tempestates quoque infestas super tam infeliciter susceptum Parthicum bellum culpa sua passus est, quia hiemare in Armenia nolebat, dum ad Cleopatram festinat.²³⁵

While Mark Antony was living in luxury with Cleopatra, he finally invaded Media and waged war against the Parthians with eighteen legions and sixteen-thousand cavalry, and after he turned back having lost two legions and with not one endeavor turning out well, he returned to Armenia in great anxiety and at great risk to the whole army with the Parthians in hot pursuit, covering three thousand miles in twenty one days in his retreat. He lost about eight thousand men in those times. Through his own fault he suffered terrible weather as well – in addition to his having so unfortunately taken on the Parthian War – because he refused to spend the winter in Armenia in his haste to go to Cleopatra.

²³³ It is a *topos* of literary criticism on the Dido and Aeneas episode in *Aeneid* 4 to note the obvious parallels with Antony and Cleopatra. Yet I am aware of no treatment that explores whether Dido and her erotic madness/suicide is an evocation of the feminized/orientalized Antony, rather than of Cleopatra. Because analyses of *C.* 1.37 and *Aeneid* 4 would involve intense engagement with the characterization of Cleopatra, such a study lies beyond the scope of this project. However, this is an example of the kind of further research that a metabiographical study of Mark Antony's characterization could promote.

²³⁴ The standard work on whether the *Periochae* are reliable guides to what Livy wrote is the study of William Bingham (1978). Bingham's method is to compare surviving Books of *AUC* to their corresponding *Periochae*, ascertain the accuracy of the summarization, and extrapolate the *Periochae* author's principles of composition. Bingham (pp. 389ff.) identifies 124 instances where information in the *Periochae* conflicts with Livy's text, and while a portion of these seem to reflect the intrusion of a variant tradition, most appear to be errors caused by carelessness. Bingham concludes that the *Periochae* are generally accurate summaries made by a competent individual working directly from Livy's text, and, most significantly for my purposes, that the *Periochae* for the lost Books appear to have been composed according to the same principles as the *Periochae* for the surviving Books.

²³⁵ *Periocha* of Book 130 (36 BC). The Latin text of the *Periochae* is taken from Schlesinger's Loeb edition.

Antonius Artavasden Armeniae regem fide data perductum in vincula conici iussit, regnumque Armeniae filio suo ex Cleopatra nato dedit, quam uxoris loco iam pridem captus amore eius habere coeperat.²³⁶

Antony ordered Artavasdes the king of Armenia to be thrown into chains after he had been induced to come to him by a sworn promise, and he gave the kingdom of Armenia to his son who had been born from Cleopatra, whom Antony had begun to treat as his wife, although he had been seized by love for her a long time before this.

Cum M. Antonius ob amorem Cleopatrae, ex qua duos filios habebat, Philadelphum et Alexandrum, neque in urbem venire vellet neque finito IIIviratus tempore imperium deponere bellumque moliretur, quod urbi et Italiae inferret, ingentibus tam navalibus quam terrestribus copiis ob hoc contractis remissoque Octaviae sorori Caesaris repudio, Caesar in Epirum cum exercitu traiecit.²³⁷

Because Mark Antony, on account of his love for Cleopatra, by whom he had two sons, Philadelphus and Alexander, wished neither to come into the City nor, with the term of office of Triumvirate expired, to lay down his command, and because he was preparing to bring war to the City and Italy with massive naval and land forces having been contracted for this purpose and after he had a notice of divorce sent to Octavia the sister of Caesar, Caesar crossed over into Epirus with his army.

M. Antonius ad Actium classe victus Alexandriam profugit; obsessusque a Caesare in ultima desperatione rerum, praecipue occisae Cleopatrae falso rumore impulsus se ipse interfecit.²³⁸

Mark Antony fled to Alexandria after he was conquered at sea at Actium. When he was besieged by [Octavian] Caesar, in a state of utter despair for his affairs, he killed himself, having been impelled to do so especially by the false rumor that Cleopatra had been killed.

In the above passages, *amor* is explicitly cited twice as the motivating force behind Antony's behavior, and in one case the *Periochae* author employs the conventional conceit that Antony is the prisoner of love (*captus amore*).²³⁹ Antony's love for Cleopatra is furthermore characterized explicitly as the root cause of Antony's refusal to lay down the office of triumvir

²³⁶ Excerpt from *Periocha* of Book 131 (36-34 BC).

²³⁷ Excerpt from *Periocha* of Book 132 (34-31 BC).

²³⁸ Excerpt from *Periocha* of Book 133 (31-29 BC).

²³⁹ Cf. Sallust, *Cat.* 15, where Catiline is said to have been "captured by love" (*captus amore*) for Aurelia Orestilla.

and return to Rome and of his alleged plan to invade Italy, and implicitly as the root cause of Antony's mismanagement of the Parthian War, his treatment of Cleopatra as his *uxor*, and his decision to commit suicide. There is also a suggestion in *Periocha* 130 that Antony's wallowing in luxury with Cleopatra exerted a corrupting influence on him, which suggests that Livy viewed Antony's lifestyle as a contributing factor in his downfall. The *Periochae*-author's emphasis on *amor* and his claim that Antony suffered what he did "through his own fault" (*sua culpa*) bear marked affinities with the poetic ideology of Propertius 2.16 and 3.9, as well as with the language and themes of an earlier, extant episode from Book 30 of Livy recounting the love affair of Masinissa and Sophoniba. This short narrative, compared with the *Periochae* of Books 130-33, perhaps facilitates a reconstruction of how Livy treated the love affair of Antony and Cleopatra in his narrative.

Livy's account (30.12.11-15.14) of the Numidian King Masinissa's relationship with Sophoniba, the Carthaginian-born wife of the recently deposed king Syphax, is summarized in the *Periochae* as follows: "Masinissa immediately fell in love with the captured Sophoniba, wife of Syphax and daughter of Hasdrubal, and, when the wedding was concluded, had her as his wife. Censured by Scipio he sent poison to her, and when she had consumed it, she died" (*Masinissa Sophonibam, uxorem Syphacis, filiam Hasdrubalis, captam statim adamavit et nuptiis factis uxorem habuit. Castigatus a Scipione venenum ei misit, quo illa hausto decessit*). Even in this short notice the decisive role of *amor* is featured, and in Livy's extended narrative the role of *amor* is even more pronounced. Upon entering the Numidian royal palace ahead of his victorious Roman allies, Masinissa catches sight of Sophoniba and immediately falls in love (30.12.17ff.). Livy observes that the Numidian race is particularly susceptible to sexual desire and remarks of Masinissa that "the victor was captured by love of his captive woman" (*amore*

captivae victor captus). Such language is a marked evocation of a conventional conceit of Roman love poetry, and it confirms that the description of Antony in the *Periocha* of Book 131 as *captus amore* includes phraseology that is at least in Livy's repertoire, if it is not the actual phrase Livy used to describe the triumvir. Masinissa's love for Sophoniba and his illicit marriage to her, like Antony's love for Cleopatra, is an explicit betrayal of Rome, given that Masinissa's Roman backer Scipio Africanus regards Sophoniba as part of the spoils of war to be turned over to the Senate (30.14.4-11). Syphax, who, like Masinissa, was once similarly enchanted by Sophoniba, is accused by Scipio of madness (*furor*) and insanity (*insanisse*) for having broken his allegiance to Rome by taking her into his house (30.13-10-11). Sophoniba's eventual suicide, committed with assistance by Masinissa as a last-ditch effort to prevent her from being handed over to the Romans, underscores the lengths to which Masinissa will go to fulfill his marriage vows to his new wife.

The erotic element in this narrative, coupled with the royal suicide, has prompted Shelly Haley (1989) to posit a direct influence of the recent history of Antony's love affair with Cleopatra on the composition of the Masinissa-Sophoniba episode. The similarities between the general outlines of both narratives are undeniable: Cleopatra's and Sophoniba's status as foreign queens, their keen aversion to turning themselves over to Roman custody, and their eventual suicides establish key points of connection between them. However, there are several key differences that problematize such a reading. In terms of the development of their erotic relationships with Masinissa and Antony, respectively, there is little that they have in common. Sophoniba meets Masinissa when she is completely powerless, without any resource or ally to help her avoid capture by the Romans. Cleopatra, on the other hand, meets and seduces Antony while she is at the height of her power. Sophoniba's relationship with Masinissa only lasts a

matter of days, but Cleopatra's and Antony's lasts for over a decade and produces a number of children. Yet it is interesting, however, to note that the *amor* Sophoniba inspires in Masinissa occurs spontaneously, without any hint in the narrative that she has employed any means other than her natural charm to induce it. The *Periochae* for Books 130-133 also assign all agency in the relationship to Antony and his *amor* and do not ascribe to Cleopatra any actions or behaviors at all that influence Antony's decision-making.

The differences between Antony and Masinissa are much more stark than those between Cleopatra and Sophoniba. Masinissa is configured as a barbarian whose non-Romanness is cited as the key factor in inducing his feelings of *amor* for Sophoniba. Nevertheless, by the end of the narrative Masinissa is rehabilitated into his close friendship with Scipio Africanus (30.15.11-14). Scipio's pardon of Masinissa draws on a convention in Roman love poetry, particularly in the genre of comedy, of a young man receiving pardon for his erotic indiscretions.²⁴⁰ The folly of love is ultimately pardonable if the man in love eventually imposes a limit to his behavior. The plight of Masinissa, torn as he is between his *amor* for Sophoniba and his loyalty to Scipio and Rome, inspires sympathy in the reader through its evocation of these elegiac and comedic conventions. If the Masinissa-Sophoniba episode served as a template of sorts for Livy's treatment of Antony and Cleopatra, one might be tempted to infer that Livy's treatment of the lovelorn triumvir was similarly sympathetic. However, I do not think that this was the case. Part of Masinissa's appeal as a character is his willingness to compromise on the demands made by *amor* in order to maintain his loyalty to Rome. Sophoniba's suicide, assisted by Masinissa, allows everyone involved to save face; Masinissa keeps his marriage vow never to turn

²⁴⁰ No less than eight extant comedies conclude with a character, usually an *adulescens*, receiving a pardon (*venia*) and being forgiven (*ignoscere*) for his transgressions, erotic or otherwise. See Plautus, *Aulularia* (731ff.), *Bacchides* (1195ff.), *Mercator* (995ff.), and *Mostellaria* (1152ff.); Terence, *Andria* (900ff.), *Adelphoe* (958ff.), *Eunuchus* (875ff.), and *Self-Tormentor* (1045ff.).

Sophoniba over to the Romans, and he also exhibits his loyalty to Rome by giving up possession of a captive whom Scipio regards as the Romans' spoils of war. Antony, as far as we can gather from the *Periochae*, never made such a compromise and maintained his absolute fidelity to Cleopatra to the end. In Livian terms, the Numidian Masinissa, who is effectively Romanized at the end of the narrative through Scipio's honoring him with the right to wear Roman triumphal garb (30.15.11-14), shows himself to be Roman to an extent that Antony could not match. For this reason, to the extent that the Masinissa-Sophoniba episode prefigured Livy's lost Antony and Cleopatra narrative, I argue that the earlier episode was used to create a contrast that displayed Antony and Cleopatra in a more unfavorable light. Antony suffered from erotic madness, but the *exemplum* of Masinissa demonstrates that this irrationality can be overcome even by a barbarian and that loyalty towards Rome can be maintained.

The brief treatment of Octavian's war with Antony and Cleopatra in the Hadrianic-era historian Florus (c. 74-130 AD) offers a useful parallel to the material in the *Periochae*. Although based on Livy's historical narrative, Florus's account is so colored by his own thematic concerns that it demands treatment as a fully separate version. In general, Florus's history exhibits a preoccupation with Rome's foreign wars and internal civil strife.²⁴¹ His project of glorifying Rome's military past is motivated in part by a dissatisfaction with the "inactivity of the Caesars" (*inertia Caesarum*, Intro.8) in undertaking new campaigns of conquest in the present:

A Caesare Augusto in saeculum nostrum haud multo minus anni ducenti, quibus inertia Caesarum quasi consenuit atque decoxit, nisi quod sub Traiano principe movit lacertos et praeter spem omnium senectus imperii quasi reddita iuventute reviruit.²⁴²

²⁴¹ Den Boer (1965: 371-7).

²⁴² The Latin text of Florus is taken from Forster's Loeb edition.

From the time of Caesar Augustus to the present day, there has been a period of just under two hundred years when [the Roman People] effectively grew old and wasted away because of the inactivity of the Caesars. This was until it began to move its limbs when Trajan was emperor and, against all expectation, rejuvenated the dotage of empire as if its youth had been restored.

For Florus, abandoning the mandate to conquer new territories is akin to embracing old age, the stage of development just one step away from death. Antony, in this light, represents the worst kind of Roman. He is an indolent *imperator* so devoted to pleasure that he is willing to sell the Roman Empire to purchase Cleopatra's sexual favors (2.21.1-3):

Furor Antonii quatenus per ambitum non poterat interire, luxu et libidine extinctus est. Quippe cum Parthos exorsus arma in otio ageret, captus amore Cleopatrae quasi bene gestis rebus in regio se sinu reficiebat. Hunc mulier Aegyptia ab ebrio imperatore pretium libidinum Romanum imperium petit; et promisit Antonius, quasi facilius esset Partho Romanus. Igitur dominationem parare nec tacite; sed patriae, nominis, togae, fascium oblitus totus in monstrum illud ut mente, ita habitu quoque cultuque desciverat. Aureum in manu baculum, ad latus acinaces, purpurea vestis ingentibus obstricta gemmis: diadema deerat, ut regina rex et ipse frueretur.

The madness of Antony, seeing that it could not perish by means of the satisfaction of his political ambitions, was snuffed out instead by his extravagance and sexual immorality. After his Parthian expedition, he developed a hatred for war and lived a life of leisure. Having been captured by love for Cleopatra, he ensconced himself in her royal lap as if all his affairs had turned out well. This Egyptian woman asked for the Roman Empire from the drunken general as the price of her sexual favors. And Antony promised it, as if the Roman would be a less formidable adversary than the Parthian. Therefore, he aimed at absolute power, and not at all secretly. Having forgotten his country, his name, his toga, and the emblems of his office, he had degenerated completely into that monster he became, both in terms of his mind and also in terms of his disposition and dress. There was a golden scepter in his hand, a scimitar at his side; he wore a purple garment studded with large gems. Only a crown was lacking that he might, as a king himself, enjoy the queen.

This passage encapsulates many of the quintessential images of Antony that are portrayed in our other sources. He suffers from "madness" (*furor*); he is "captured by love for Cleopatra" (*captus amore Cleopatrae*); he renounces wars of conquest to pursue a life of pleasure; he indulges in drunkenness although he is a general (*ebrius imperator*); aims at tyranny (*dominatio*); exchanges his native Roman dress for eastern garments and accoutrements; and presumably covets the crown (*diadema*) that he presently lacks. Antony's agency and personal

responsibility are emphasized. There is no hint that the *amor* he bears for Cleopatra has arisen as a result of any flattery, seduction, drugs, or enchantments on her part. Antony is “captured by love” only after he has devoted himself to a life of leisure after his disastrous Parthian expedition. Antony’s own military failure is thus figured as the cause of his renunciation of his role as a Roman general, not his love for Cleopatra. The hyperbaton in the relative placements of *hunc* and *pretium* creates anticipation for the revelation of what the price for Cleopatra’s sexual favors (*libidinum*) will be. It is the Roman Empire itself, and the fact that Antony promises it to her effects his transformation from a Roman general into a tyrannical and orientalized monster (*monstrum*).

Florus’s sex-crazed Antony makes the kind of deal with Cleopatra that Masinissa made with Sophoniba. But whereas Livy’s Masinissa was able to find a middle way to satisfy the terms of both his loyalty to Rome and his fidelity to Sophoniba, Florus’s Antony displays an inability to restrain his sexual impulses. This results in his complete alienation from Rome. Later in his account, Florus stages an encounter between Octavian and Cleopatra that shows how Antony’s behavior was not an inexorable consequence of Cleopatra’s irresistible charms. *Amor* can be successfully resisted, as Florus’s Octavian illustrates (2.21.9):

Prior ferrum occupavit Antonius, regina ad pedes Caesaris provoluta temptavit oculos ducis. Frustra quidem; nam pulchritudo infra pudicitiam principis.

Antony took up the sword of suicide first. The queen, throwing herself at the feet of [Octavian] Caesar, tried to seduce the attention of his gaze. But she did so in vain, for her beauty was beneath the self-control of the *princeps*.

Cleopatra’s beauty is no match for Octavian’s self-control. Octavian models the proper response of a Roman general towards the temptation embodied in a figure like Cleopatra. Florus’s Octavian exemplifies how it is the personal responsibility of a Roman general to resist erotic entanglements that are against *pudicitia* and that would threaten the Roman Empire. In any

case, it is not in his nature to succumb. In this way, Florus's attitude towards Antony's *amor* is on par with the other Latin-language authors that we have discussed in this chapter. This attitude is also manifested by Greek-language authors like Plutarch who are roughly contemporary with Florus, but as we turn to an examination of Antony's erotic madness in Plutarch and Cassius Dio, we will see that their treatment of the topic is more complex. Plutarch in particular fashions an intricate interplay between Antony's susceptibility to erotic madness and the external factors – Cleopatra's flattery and charms chief among them – that draw out this latent character defect. In Plutarch's treatment, Antony still bears personal responsibility for his own defeat and downfall, but in contrast to the Latin-language tradition, this responsibility is mitigated by Antony's exposure to influences that are beyond his ability to resist.

Part Three: Plutarch

By far the most sophisticated treatment of Antony's erotic madness in ancient literature is Plutarch's *Life of Antony*. In part this is a function of Plutarch's incorporation of his philosophical interests into the *Lives*. The central role that *eros* plays in the *Life* as the cause of much of Antony's objectionable behavior has long been recognized and has recently been examined by Jeffrey Beneker (2013). Beneker shows how Plutarch's conception of *eros* owes a pronounced debt to the writings of Plato and Aristotle on the subject, and he also demonstrates how philosophical discourse permeates Plutarch's construction of Antony's erotic character development. Yet the focus in much of the scholarship on the *Life* on the psychology of Antony's erotic madness has, I think, obscured Plutarch's less pronounced but thematically significant concern with the physical causes of Antony's pathology. Plutarch's approach to these physical factors is also conditioned by his philosophical outlook insofar as medical discourse is

implicated in his philosophy. The physical causes of Antony's erotic madness – which include the absence of a strong father figure, exposure to the influence of flatterers and men of corrupt character, and Cleopatra's drugs and enchantments – play just as significant a role in inducing his affliction as the inherent defects in his character do.

The influence of medical discourse on Plutarch's *Life of Antony* is prefigured in its companion piece, the *Life of Demetrius Poliorcetes*; Plutarch, after all, formulates these *Lives* as two parts of a single, integrated work.²⁴³ Given that the *Life* of Demetrius is the first of the pair, Plutarch's ideal reader would have perused this part of the text immediately before reading the *Life of Antony*. As with Antony, one of Demetrius's salient characteristics in Plutarch's portrayal is a predilection for erotic liaisons, although none of Demetrius's affairs impacts his career so deleteriously as Antony's relationship with Cleopatra ruinously affects his.²⁴⁴ The most direct discussion of the nature of eros in this *Life* occurs in a digression (*Dem.* 38) that tells the story of Stratonice, the daughter of Demetrius, and her marriages to Seleucus Nicator and, subsequently, his son Antiochus. Plutarch reports that Stratonice had been married to Seleucus for some time and had even borne him a child when Antiochus fell in love with her.²⁴⁵ Antiochus, who refuses to entertain the possibility of consummating his illicit love, keeps silent about it. The language Plutarch (*Dem.* 38.2) uses to characterize Antiochus's plight is revealing:

συνέβη γάρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸν Ἀντίοχον ἐρασθέντα τῆς Στρατονίκης νέας οὔσης, ἤδη δὲ παιδίον ἐχούσης ἐκ τοῦ Σελεύκου, διακεῖσθαι κακῶς καὶ πολλὰ ποιεῖν τῷ πάθει διαμαχόμενον, τέλος δ' ἑαυτοῦ καταγνόντα δεινῶν μὲν ἐπιθυμεῖν, ἀνήκεστα δὲ νοσεῖν, κεκρατῆσθαι δὲ τῷ

²⁴³ Pelling (1988: 18-26).

²⁴⁴ The erotic relationships of Demetrius and their impact on the course of his career are discussed in detail by Beneker (2013: 157-71).

²⁴⁵ This anecdote was famous in Antiquity and also survives in versions by Appian (1.408), Julian (*Misopogon* 347c), Lucian (*The Syrian Goddess* 17), and Valerius Maximus (5.7.3). For a discussion of the relationship of this anecdote to the ancient medical literature on diagnosing eros and erotic melancholy, see Pinault (1992: 105-14), Beneker (2013: 170-1), and Zadorojnyi (1999: 521-9).

λογισμῶ, τρόπον ἀπαλλαγῆς τοῦ βίου ζητεῖν καὶ παραλύειν ἀτρέμα καὶ θεραπείας ἀμελεία καὶ τροφῆς ἀποχῆ τὸ σῶμα, νοσεῖν τινα νόσον σκηπτόμενον.

For it happened that, as it would seem, when Antiochus fell in with Stratonice, who was then a young woman but had already had a little child with Seleucus, fell into a bad state and did many things to fight his passion. But, in the end, condemning himself for having desired wicked things, he became incurably sick, he became overmastered with respect to his reason, he sought some means of casting away his life, and he took leave of his body gradually by taking no care for maintaining it and by abstaining from food, pretending that he was sick with some other illness.

Being “incurably sick” and “overmastered with respect to his reason” because of *eros*,

Antiochus disguises his real affliction by pretending he has some other wasting disease.

Fortunately for Antiochus, love and its symptoms fall within the purview of the doctor who

comes to diagnose his condition. This doctor, who bears the thematically resonant name

Erasistratus (“Love-Army”),²⁴⁶ recognizes immediately that Antiochus is suffering from a case

of unrequited love (*Dem.* 38.3). He then proceeds to devise a method for ascertaining the object

of Antiochus’s erotic desire. Erasistratus has each of the women of the court come into

Antiochus’s presence, and when Erasistratus observes certain physical symptoms manifesting in

Antiochus at the arrival of Stratonice – among which are “all the markers that Sappho mentions:

a stammering voice, fiery fevers, blindness, sudden sweats, and heart palpitations” (τὰ τῆς

Σαπφοῦς ἐκεῖνα περὶ αὐτὸν πάντα, φωνῆς ἐπίσχεσις, ἐρύθημα πυρῶδες, ὄψεων ὑπολείψεις,

ἰδρῶτες ὀξεῖς, ἀταξία καὶ θόρυβος ἐν τοῖς σφυγμοῖς, *Dem.* 38.4)²⁴⁷ – Erasistratus determines that

Stratonice is the object of Antiochus’s desire. He then sets out to implement a course of

treatment, ultimately convincing Seleucus to divorce Stratonice and have her marry Antiochus

(*Dem.* 38.5-9). In this way, the narrative ends on an unambiguously positive note.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Antony’s slave named Eros at Plutarch *Ant.* 76.

²⁴⁷ Beneker (2013: 170-1) and Zadorojnyi (1999: 521-9) argue that the allusion to Sappho 2 carries with it an additional allusion to Plato *Phdr.* 254a-d.

The story of Antiochus is an illustration of medical technique in action. As a paradigm for how erotic desire should be diagnosed and treated, it represents an ideal case study. The lover, Antiochus, is acutely conscious of his duty; he is capable of exercising restraint and making an honorable self-sacrifice to fulfill this duty. A capable medical professional, Erasistratus, accurately diagnoses the symptoms of *eros* and prescribes an effective remedy that is endorsed by all parties with an interest in the case, including Seleucus, who might reasonably be expected to oppose his son's marriage to his own wife. The circumstances surrounding Demetrius's love affairs, and of course Antony's, are far less favorable to happy outcomes. Even so, I would still contend that the story of Antiochus is an important *comparandum* for Plutarch's treatment of Antony's erotic madness. This story demonstrates that *eros* is effectively a disease that affects the mind's rational faculty and that manifests recognizable physical symptoms. Erasistratus's success in treating Antiochus through the consummation of his erotic desire invites the reader to interrogate the remainder of the text in order to determine why, in the cases of Demetrius and Antony, the consummation of erotic desire does not serve to eliminate the pathologies associated with *eros*. The obvious answer to this question is that Antiochus's illicit erotic desire is retroactively legitimated by Seleucus's magnanimous gesture of renunciation, while the erotic desires of Demetrius and Antony are never stamped with the imprimatur of social respectability. The irredeemable illicitness of Antony's *eros* for Cleopatra is a key component of why this particular expression of *eros* is pathological, but there are other aggravating factors in Plutarch's portrayal as well, not least of which is the fact that there is no love doctor like Erasistratus in his circle of retainers. But perhaps the most decisive factor in Antony's development of erotic madness is his lack of a strong father-figure like Seleucus or Antigonus Monophthalmos to guide his ethical development.

In chapter 1, I discussed how the anecdote about the generosity of Mark Antony's father, Marcus Antonius Creticus (*Ant.* 1.1), prefigures Antony's own characterization. Christopher Pelling (1988: 22, *ad Ant.* 1.1) notes that Creticus's generosity and his cravenness towards his wife prefigure Antony's own generous nature and his subservient posture towards the women in his life. Pelling also draws a parallel between the programmatic emphasis on Antony's father and the importance of Demetrius Poliorcetes' relationship with his father Antigonus Monophthalmus. Like Seleucus and Antiochus, Demetrius and Antigonus enjoy an extremely close relationship that Plutarch contrasts with the usual practice among the Diadochi of fathers and sons fighting with one another in pursuit of political supremacy. After the young Demetrius suffers a disastrous defeat at the hands of the more seasoned Ptolemy I in the Battle of Gaza, Plutarch reports that a key factor in Demetrius's development as a leader was Antigonus's willingness to allow Demetrius to retain command and engage Ptolemy near Myus in Caria (*Dem.* 5-6). On this occasion Demetrius defeated Ptolemy, and when the time came to make arrangements for the spoils of victory, Demetrius is reported to have deferred to his father and asked him for permission before taking any action. The *simpatico* between Demetrius and his father thus regulates the young man's behavior and ethical development. When Demetrius is allowed to live and act entirely independently of his father, however, he proves unable to resist the corrosive influence of flatterers who exalt him as a king and god.²⁴⁸

Plutarch relates that Antonius Creticus died during Mark Antony's childhood, and shortly thereafter Antony is also bereft of his stepfather Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura, who was one of the Catilinarian conspirators executed by Cicero in 63 BC. Plutarch argues that the execution of Lentulus Sura was the "origin and cause" of Antony's enmity with Cicero, a claim that Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 2.2) traces back to the *Second Philippic*. There, Cicero alludes to a claim made by

²⁴⁸ Plutarch, *Dem.* 12-13, 17-18, and 23-24.

Antony that the body of Lentulus Sura was not returned to the family for burial.²⁴⁹ Yet it would hardly have been in the historical Antony's interest to give any hint that he was framing his opposition to Cicero as a program of personal vengeance on behalf of his stepfather. Indeed, in a letter to Cicero (*Att.* 14.13a) that Antony wrote ostensibly on behalf of his stepson Clodius, Antony specifically disclaims the ideological position that one should use political influence to settle personal scores. Here, Antony encourages Cicero to clarify for the young Clodius that "you carried on your enmity with his father for the sake of the Republic, not because you had contempt for his family" (*te pro re publica videri gessisse simultatem cum patre eius, non contempsisse hanc familiam*). Of course, the remainder of the letter leaves no doubt that Antony is being more than a little disingenuous, but the cunning Antony thereby displays makes it all the more improbable that he would ever have run the risk of letting his own enmity with Cicero appear to be the result of a personal vendetta.

Plutarch's inference that Antony bore Cicero ill-will because of his stepfather's death therefore has all the markings of an exaggeration on Plutarch's part to heighten the importance that the absence of a father had on Antony's development. Without the guiding influence of a father-figure like Antigonus or Seleucus, Antony's ethical education comes under the corrupting influence of Curio, whose relationship with Antony, in Plutarch's account, is stripped of the pederastic overtones with which Cicero infuses it in the *Second Philippic*.²⁵⁰ Plutarch (*Ant.* 2.4) remarks merely that the "undisciplined" (ἀπαίδευτος) Curio rendered Antony more "submissive" (χειροήθης) by "throwing him into drinking, the enticements of women, and rich, unrestrained banqueting" (εἰς πότους καὶ γύναια καὶ δαπάνας πολυτελεῖς καὶ ἀκολάστους ἐμβαλόντος).²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ *Phil.* 2.17.28-9.

²⁵⁰ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 2.4-6). The relevant portions of the *Second Philippic* are sections 44-8.

The character quality of “submissiveness” produces disastrous consequences for Antony in Plutarch’s narrative when he comes under the influence of Fulvia and Cleopatra. At *Ant.* 10.6, Plutarch states that Cleopatra owed it to Fulvia that she found Antony “submissive and already taught to obey women from the outset” (χειροήθη καὶ πεπαιδαγωγημένον ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ἀκροᾶσθαι γυναικῶν παραλαβοῦσαν αὐτόν). Plutarch’s repetition of the word χειροήθης in this remark harks back to Antony’s sentimental education at Curio’s side, and the reader is thus invited to make the logical inference that Fulvia in fact owed Antony’s submissiveness to Curio.²⁵² Even if we do not read an erotic subtext into Plutarch’s account of Antony and Curio’s relationship, this is not to say that Plutarch regards an erotic liaison between an older man and a younger man as inherently a cause of moral corruption. As Jeffrey Beneker shows (2013: 1-3), for example, Plutarch’s account of the relationship of Solon and Peisistratus in the *Life of Solon* posits that Solon’s erotic attraction and goodwill towards the younger Peisistratus tempered the worst of his tyrannical impulses. The key to Antony’s corruption is not the absence of a father-figure coupled with an erotic relationship with an older man, but rather that the men like Curio with whom the young Antony associates tend to force Antony into a posture of subservience and expose him to corrupt modes of living.

After Antony was banished from Curio’s house (*Ant.* 2.6), Plutarch remarks that he proceeded to take up an association with Clodius, whose destabilizing political program is said to have likewise exerted a destabilizing influence over Antony. At length, “having become sated with the madness of [Clodius]” (ταχὺ δὲ τῆς ἐκείνου μανίας μεστὸς γενόμενος, *Ant.* 2.6),

²⁵¹ The word “submissive” (χειροήθης) is applied frequently in the *Lives* to people to denote their “tameness” or “submissiveness,” but for Plutarch the word does convey a certain degree of pejorativeness because it is also associated with the same quality in animals (e.g. *Alex.* 2.5 and *Ages.* 1.2), barbarians (e.g. *Mar.* 16.2) or natural phenomena like rivers (e.g. *Luc.* 24.5).

²⁵²Xenophon (2012: 612).

Plutarch reports that Antony withdrew to Greece in order to immerse himself in military life.

After an illustrious beginning to his career as part of the staff of Gabinius, Plutarch interrupts the narrative to sketch out a description of Antony's physical appearance and general character (*Ant.* 4.3),²⁵³ the portion of which dealing with the young Antony's erotic life is excerpted below:

ἦν δέ που καὶ τὸ ἐρωτικὸν οὐκ ἀναφρόδιτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτῳ πολλοὺς ἐδημαγώγει, συμπράττων τε τοῖς ἐρῶσι καὶ σκωπτόμενος οὐκ ἀηδῶς εἰς τοὺς ἰδίους ἔρωτας. ἡ δ' ἐλευθεριότης καὶ τὸ μηδὲν ὀλίγη χειρὶ μηδὲ φειδομένη χαρίζεσθαι στρατιώταις καὶ φίλοις ἀρχὴν τε λαμπρὰν ἐπὶ τὸ ἰσχύειν αὐτῷ παρέσχε, καὶ μεγάλου γενομένου τὴν δύναμιν ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἐπῆρεν, ἐκ μυρίων ἄλλων ἀμαρτημάτων ἀνατρεπομένην.

And his eroticism in a certain sense was not unappealing, and it even made him popular with many people insofar as he was an ally in many love affairs and endured teasing about his own without being disagreeable. Furthermore, his liberality and his propensity for giving favors to soldiers and friends unstintingly with a far from parsimonious hand also produced a shining beginning for his growing strength, and when he had become great it raised his power all the more, although this power was later subverted by countless other faults.

Antony's liberality here recalls the anecdote about his generous father Creticus with which Plutarch begins the *Life*. Plutarch thus gives us a glimpse of what Antony might have become had he avoided the corrupting influence of Curio, Clodius, and others. Antony's eroticism and generosity are configured not as faults in and of themselves but as resources for securing leadership and power, resources that will be corrupted by other faults. Antony's *eros* towards Cleopatra is, in Plutarch's estimation, the primary cause of his downfall (cf. *Ant.* 25.1), but in other Plutarchan contexts, *eros* can instead be an impetus for virtuous action.²⁵⁴ It is Antony's submissive posture, his irrational willingness to submit to the control of other people, that renders his particular manifestations of *eros* and generosity harmful.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ See above, pp. 45-8, for a discussion of the theatrical elements of Plutarch's physical description of Antony.

²⁵⁴ Beneker (2013: 39-43) delineates the virtue-inspiring *eros* of Porcia for her husband, the tyrannicide Brutus, as a case study in how Plutarchan *eros* can produce positive effects.

²⁵⁵ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 24.9-12).

At *Ant.* 28.1, Plutarch reports that as early as 41 BC Antony was again pursuing the same lifestyle of heavy drinking, feasting, and extravagant expenditures with Cleopatra that he had first been exposed to by Curio:

ἐκεῖ δὲ μαιρακίου σχολὴν ἄγοντος διατριβαῖς καὶ παιδιαῖς χρώμενον, ἀναλίσκειν καὶ καθηδουπαθεῖν τὸ πολυτελέστατον ὡς Ἀντιφῶν εἶπεν ἀνάλωμα, τὸν χρόνον. ἦν γὰρ τις αὐτοῖς σύνοδος Ἀμιμητοβίων λεγομένη, καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν εἰστίων ἀλλήλους, ἄπιστόν τινα ποιούμενοι τῶν ἀναλισκομένων ἀμετρίαν.

And there, conducting his leisure in the manner of a young man with amusements and sports, he wasted and squandered in luxury what Antiphon calls the most costly expenditure, namely, time. For they had an unusual society called the Peerless Lives, and they feasted one another day after day making an unbelievable outlay of resources.

Plutarch's continued emphasis on Antony's drinking, feasting, and expensive habits should not, I argue, be read simply as the introduction of parallel pathologies to Antony's erotic madness. Ancient philosophical and medical writers, as well as many authors writing in more literary genres, theorize that wine and certain types of expensive food inflame erotic passion.²⁵⁶ The pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* (953a ff.) is particularly interesting in this regard since it links alcohol consumption with melancholy, a condition of humoral imbalance that can produce symptoms ranging from excessive eroticism, to depression, to fits of violent madness. The *Problems* also cites Hercules as an exemplary sufferer of this condition. Plutarch's introduction (*Ant.* 4.3) of the Hercules comparison therefore also bears important implications for the diagnosis of Antony's erotic madness. Hercules' reputation as a drunkard and his violent periods of madness presage Antony's own behavior. At the point in the narrative where the Hercules comparison is introduced, the chief resonance between the *Lives* of Antony and Demetrius is located in the formative influence that the presence or absence of father-figures bears on the behavior of Demetrius, Antiochus, and Antony. The figure of Hercules too could be a further nod to the thematic importance of paternal influence, given that Hercules is represented in surviving

²⁵⁶ See (pseudo) Aristotle, *Problems* 953a-957b; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 14.19; Ovid, *Rem. Am.* 2.805-10.

literature as suffering negative consequences as a result of being separated from his father Zeus.²⁵⁷ But Hercules also serves as a shorthand for the particular behavioral paradigm that Antony enacts over the course of the narrative. As Sappho 2 on the symptoms of *eros* vividly encapsulates the precise condition of Antiochus at *Dem.* 38.4, so too does Antony's likeness to Hercules invoke the vast literature about the Greek hero to illuminate Antony's own pathology. Hercules is an important cipher that Plutarch uses to indicate the extent to which Antony's erotic madness is conditioned not only by innate psychological factors but also by the environmental stimulants of wine, feasting, excessive luxury and eroticism, and mental illness.

A comparison that Plutarch makes between Antony and Julius Caesar in the *Life of Antony* (6.3) is also telling. According to Plutarch, Caesar's decision to embark upon civil war was motivated by a powerful combination of *eros* and madness:

ἦγε δ' αὐτὸν ἐπὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους, ἃ καὶ πρότερον Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ πάλαι Κῦρον, ἔρωσ ἀπαρηγόρητος ἀρχῆς καὶ περιμανῆς ἐπιθυμία τοῦ πρώτον εἶναι καὶ μέγιστον·

The insatiable love of power and the exceedingly mad desire to be first and greatest led [Caesar] against all humankind, things which had driven on Alexander and Cyrus long before.

This passage is crucial for understanding Plutarch's approach to *eros* and madness in the *Life*. Plutarch acknowledges that *eros* and madness alone do not produce the character traits to be observed in Antony. Caesar also had an erotic relationship with Cleopatra (*Caes.* 48-49) and aimed at absolute power like Antony. Yet even though Caesar was captivated by Cleopatra, he nevertheless possessed the ability to exercise sobriety and leave Alexandria when circumstances called for it. Antony's corrupt upbringing and his extravagance are decisive in differentiating the outcome of Antony's life and career from Caesar's.

²⁵⁷ E.g. Euripides, *Herakles* 339-47, 1127, 1255ff. For a discussion of this and other manifestations of this theme in tragedy, see Galinsky (1972: 40-75).

The change in Cleopatra's maturity between the time of her liaison with Julius Caesar and the period of her involvement with Antony is also configured by Plutarch as a significant external factor in inducing Antony's erotic madness. At the point in his narrative when Cleopatra departs for Cilicia to have her momentous first meeting with Antony (*Ant.* 25), Plutarch states that she was in the bloom of beauty and at the height of her intellectual powers. She is a person of a different order than she was when Julius Caesar and Gnaeus, son of Pompey, knew her "as a girl, inexperienced in politics" (ἐκεῖνοι μὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν ἔτι κόρην καὶ πραγμάτων ἄπειρον ἔγνωσαν, *Ant.* 25.4-5). Antony thus encounters Cleopatra at a moment when the height of her beauty is also coupled with an extraordinary political acumen. The influence of this encounter is decisive and marks a watershed moment in Plutarch's narrative and Antony's character development (*Ant.* 25.1):

τοιούτῳ δ' οὖν ὄντι τὴν φύσιν Ἀντωνίῳ τελευταῖον κακὸν ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρωσ ἐπιγενόμενος καὶ πολλὰ τῶν ἔτι κρυπτομένων ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀτρεμούντων παθῶν ἐγείρας καὶ ἀναβακχεύσας, εἴ τι χρηστὸν ἢ σωτήριον ὅμως ἀντεῖχεν, ἠφάνισε καὶ προσδιέφθειρεν.

And when upon Antony, who was of such a nature [as Plutarch just described], the terminal bane came: the love for Cleopatra. It awakened and drove to frenzy many of those passions that were yet hidden and undisturbed in him, and it obliterated and destroyed any beneficial or saving quality that checked it.

The reference to Bacchic frenzy in this passage underscores the irrationality and irresistibility of Antony's erotic passion. The verb ἀναβακχεύω is rare in surviving Greek prose,²⁵⁸ and the only other attestation of the verb in Plutarch occurs in the *Life of Crassus* (33.3), where it is used appropriately enough to describe the emotional state of the actor Jason of Tralles as he plays the role of Agave in a performance of Euripides' *Bacchae* for the Parthian king. As part of this performance, he carries around the head of the slain Roman general Crassus on a stake. In spite of the fact that Plutarch customarily rationalizes the miraculous incidents

²⁵⁸ Apart from the occurrences in Plutarch's *Lives*, this verb is used only at Euripides, *Orest.* 339 and *Bacc.* 864, and Aelius Aristides, *Orat.* 45.15.

traditionally associated with his biographical subjects,²⁵⁹ Plutarch here chooses to typify Antony's *eros* with language that recalls a divine affliction sent by Dionysus, another divinity that Plutarch associates with Antony in the *Life* (24.3-4, 26.3, and 60.2-3), as seen in chapter 1. This tragic language prefigures Antony's downfall and death.

Yet for all that Plutarch emphasizes the overriding power of the *eros* originating within Antony himself, the calculated seduction of Antony by Cleopatra is still a prominent theme in the *Life*. Even after the rendezvous on Cleopatra's barge in Cilicia, Antony's erotic madness is not fully operative but must be continually cultivated by the Egyptian queen. As Plutarch asserts (*Ant.* 31.2), the death of Antony's wife Fulvia presents an opportunity for Antony's and Cleopatra's relationship to be legitimized, but Antony cannot bring himself to take such a step:

ἔδόκει δὲ καὶ Φουλβίας ἀποικομένης χηρεύειν Ἀντώνιος, ἔχειν μὲν οὐκ ἄρνούμενος
Κλεοπάτραν, γάμῳ δ' οὐχ ὁμολογῶν ἀλλ' ἔτι τῷ λόγῳ περὶ γε τούτου πρὸς τὸν ἔρωτα τῆς
Αἰγυπτίας μαχόμενος.

Antony was held to be a widower after Fulvia died. He did not deny that he had relations with Cleopatra, yet he did not consent to a marriage but still, in his reckoning about this, he battled with his love of the Egyptian.

Plutarch represents Cleopatra's control over Antony as incomplete. For much of the early part of the relationship, in fact, Cleopatra must manipulate Antony in order to keep his attention, and Christopher Pelling (1988: 9-10, 181-3, 196-7, 245-6 and *passim*) has shown how Cleopatra's schemes and the way Plutarch describes them have strong affinities with ancient philosophical notions – expressed by Plato and others – about the nature and characteristics of flattery and the figure of the flatterer. At the same time that Antony is afflicted by the madness of love and by the various pathologies within his own character, he is also subjected to a subtle campaign of manipulation at Cleopatra's hands.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Plutarch's rationalizing take on the alleged apotheosis of Romulus (*Rom.* 28).

Nevertheless, Plutarch accords Antony's reasoning faculty some power as a counterweight both to *eros* and also to Cleopatra's influence even as the narrative builds towards Antony's ultimate defeat and downfall. We can see this internal battle within Antony taking place in Plutarch's account of the aftermath of the so-called conference of Tarentum in 37 BC (*Ant.* 36.1):

Εὔδουσα δ' ἡ δεινὴ συμφορὰ χρόνον πολὺν, ὁ Κλεοπάτρας ἔρωσ, δοκῶν κατευνάσθαι καὶ κατακεκληθῆσθαι τοῖς βελτίοσι λογισμοῖς, αὐθις ἀνέλαμπε καὶ ἀνεθάρρει Συρία πλησιάζοντος αὐτοῦ. καὶ τέλος, ὥσπερ φησὶν ὁ Πλάτων τὸ δυσπειθὲς καὶ ἀκόλαστον τῆς ψυχῆς ὑποζύγιον, ἀπολακτίσας τὰ καλὰ καὶ σωτήρια πάντα, Καπίωνα Φοντήιον ἐπεμψεν ἄξοντα Κλεοπάτραν εἰς Συρίαν.

But the dreadful bane that had been sleeping for such a long time, namely, his love of Cleopatra, having appeared to be put to bed and charmed to rest by the better forces of reason, again blazed up and took fresh strength as [Antony] approached Syria. And in the end, just as Plato says in reference to the disobedient and undisciplined beast of the soul, having kicked away all that was good and productive of salvation, he sent Fonteius Capito to bring Cleopatra to Syria.

The “disobedient and undisciplined beast of the soul” refers to the horse described by Plato in the *Phaedrus* (254a), and this allusion is by far the most commented upon aspect of this passage.²⁶⁰ Plutarch goes on to say that Antony was inspired by Cleopatra's arrival in Syria to make her gifts of various Roman dependencies in the Near East (*Ant.* 36.3-4). Plutarch gives no indication that this was anything but a spontaneous gesture on Antony's part. In this respect, Plutarch offers us a point of contrast with Josephus's account of the same event (*AJ* 15.93-5). As seen in chapter 3,²⁶¹ Josephus configures Antony's grant of territories taken from the client-kings

²⁶⁰ See Beneker (2013: 187-9) for discussion and bibliography. Plato writes: “And [the other horse] is guided neither by the goads nor the whip of the charioteer but instead carries itself along by force, jumping. Making all manner of difficulties for his yoke-mate and the charioteer he compels them to go to the boy-beloved and makes them mindful of the joy of sex. The two oppose him to start with out of shame because they are being obliged to do terrible and unlawful things, but yielding in the end they agree to do what is being commanded” (ὁ δὲ οὔτε κέντρων ἡνιοχικῶν οὔτε μάστιγος ἔτι ἐντρέπεται, σκιρτῶν δὲ βία φέρεται, καὶ πάντα πράγματα παρέχων τῷ σύζυγί τε καὶ ἡνιόχῳ ἀναγκάζει ἰέναι τε πρὸς τὰ παιδικὰ καὶ μνειῖαν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς τῶν ἀφροδισίων χάριτος. τῷ δὲ κατ' ἀρχῆς μὲν ἀντιτείνετον ἀγανακτοῦντε, ὡς δεινὰ καὶ παράνομα ἀναγκαζομένῳ· τελευτῶντε δέ, ὅταν μηδὲν ἢ πέρας κακοῦ, πορεύεσθον ἀγομένῳ, εἷξαντε καὶ ὁμολογήσαντε ποιήσειν τὸ κελευόμενον).

²⁶¹ See above, pp. 136-7.

Herod and Malchus as a compromise gesture. Cleopatra had desired the whole of her rivals' kingdoms, but Antony only transfers portions of their kingdoms, Josephus says, because he did not want to commit a serious injustice against the other client-kings and because he did not wish to be perceived as a man who fulfilled Cleopatra's every demand. Josephus's Antony thus exercises a relative degree of restraint in this instance, while Plutarch configures the same event as an expression of Antony's unrestrained erotic madness.

Plutarch also claims that Cleopatra drugged and/or bewitched Antony, introducing another external factor into his assessment of the causes of Antony's behavior. While discussing Antony's preparations for his ill-fated Parthian campaign in 37 BC, Plutarch remarks (*Ant.* 37.4):

ἀνόνητον αὐτῷ διὰ Κλεοπάτραν γενέσθαι λέγουσι. σπεύδοντα γὰρ ἐκείνη συνδιαχειμάσαι, τὸν πόλεμον ἐξενεγκεῖν πρὸ καιροῦ καὶ πᾶσι χρήσασθαι τεταραγμένως, οὐκ ὄντα τῶν ἑαυτοῦ λογισμῶν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ φαρμάκων τινῶν ἢ γοητείας παπταίνοντα πρὸς ἐκείνην αἰεὶ, καὶ πρὸς τὸ τάχιον ἐπανελθεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς τὸ κρατῆσαι τῶν πολεμίων γενόμενον.

They say [Antony's preparations for the invasion of Parthia] were made useless to him on account of Cleopatra. For in his eagerness to spend the winter with her he began the war before the right time and managed everything haphazardly. He was not in command of his reasoning faculties but, under the influence of some drugs or magic, constantly looking towards her and thinking about going to her as quickly as possible rather than about mastering the enemy.

Plutarch unequivocally draws a direct connection between Cleopatra's use of drugs or magic and Antony's mismanagement of the Parthian campaign. He adduces another exacerbating factor for Antony's erotic madness that is external to his own character flaws, and Antony's personal responsibility for the Parthian campaign debacle is thus mitigated. Plutarch reiterates this point later in the narrative by putting the claim that Cleopatra had drugged Antony into the mouth of Octavian (*Ant.* 60.1):

Ἐπεὶ δὲ παρεσκευάστο Καῖσαρ ἱκανῶς, ψηφίζεται Κλεοπάτρα πολεμεῖν, ἀφελέσθαι δὲ τῆς ἀρχῆς Ἀντώνιον ἧς ἐξέστη γυναικί· καὶ προσεπέειπε Καῖσαρ, ὡς Ἀντώνιος μὲν ὑπὸ φαρμάκων οὐδ' αὐτοῦ κρατοῖη, πολεμοῦσι δ' αὐτοῖς Μαρδίων ὁ εὐνοῦχος καὶ Ποθεινὸς καὶ Εἰρὰς ἢ Κλεοπάτρας κουρεύτρια καὶ Χάρμιον, ὑφ' ὧν τὰ μέγιστα διοικεῖται τῆς ἡγεμονίας.

And when [Octavian] Caesar had made sufficient preparations, a decree was voted to wage war on Cleopatra and to take away the office from Antony that he had yielded to a woman. [Octavian] Caesar also said that Antony was under the power of drugs rather than himself, and that they were waging war against Mardion the eunuch and Potheinus and Iras the hairdresser of Cleopatra and Charmion, by whom the regime's greatest affairs were managed.

In his essay *Conjugal Praecepta* ("Advice to Bride and Groom"), Plutarch vouches for the sinister efficacy of the love-potions and magic that Cleopatra uses on Antony.²⁶² Plutarch also asserts that a side-effect of these potions and magic is that men who are subjected to them become "unstable, senseless, and weakened" (ἐπιτεχνώμενοι τοῖς ἀνδράσι καὶ χειρούμενοι δι' ἡδονῆς αὐτοὺς ἐμπλήκτοις καὶ ἀνοήτοις καὶ διεφθαρμένοις συμβιοῦσιν). The proficiency in poisons that Plutarch ascribes to Cleopatra (cf. *Ant.* 71.6-8) also helps build a picture of Cleopatra as a figure who is capable of exerting the type of decisive influence through drugs that Plutarch ascribes to her.

Plutarch's sophisticated aetiology for Antony's erotic madness thus includes distinct chemical components that complement Antony's psychological afflictions, but I have not been able to isolate in the *Moralia* or elsewhere any passage that would specify what Plutarch means by the term γοητεία. It is impossible to say with certainty whether this term encompasses the full panoply of sympathetic magic – effigies, potions, rituals, and incantations – envisioned in Vergil's *Eclogue* 8 or Theocritus's *Idyll* 2. The word that Plutarch uses to represent the yearning desire induced by γοητεία in *Ant.* 37.4, παπταίνω, is a poetic verb that is especially marked when

²⁶² *CP* 139 (trans. Babbitt): "Fishing with poison is a quick way to catch fish and an easy method of taking them, but it makes the fish inedible and bad. In the same way women who artfully employ love-potions (φίλτρα τινὰ) and magic spells (γοητεία) upon their husbands, and gain the mastery over them through pleasure (δι' ἡδονῆς) find themselves consorts of dull-witted, degenerate fools. The men bewitched by Circe were of no service to her, nor did she make the least use of them after they had been changed into swine and asses, while for Odysseus, who had sense and showed discretion in her company, she had an exceeding great love."

it occurs in prose.²⁶³ It denotes an intense, searching gaze directed at a specific object. It is telling, given Plutarch's earlier assessment of the nature of Cleopatra's erotic appeal, that a desire to see her is specifically what is induced in Antony by Cleopatra's drugs or magic.

Plutarch's description of Cleopatra at *Ant.* 27 claims that her physical appearance was not especially noteworthy or beautiful,²⁶⁴ and he locates the source of her charm and attractiveness in her voice, conversation, and speaking ability. Without necessarily suggesting that Plutarch regards Cleopatra's intellectual attainments as negative qualities, I would draw attention to the vast literature in the ancient world that investigates the question of the physical process by which love is naturally induced. The consensus, of which Plutarch himself is a part, is that love is naturally induced by the image of the beloved object entering the eyes of the lover and producing inflammatory effects in the blood.²⁶⁵ Cleopatra's initial seduction of Antony through the medium of her voice is a markedly unnatural act that contributes to Plutarch's overarching argument that Antony's *eros* was induced in part by external factors. By establishing Cleopatra's voice, intellectual attainments, and charms as the basis of Antony's initial attraction to Cleopatra, Plutarch draws attention to the decisive influence of Cleopatra's drugs and/or magic in transforming Antony's *eros* into a desire to gaze upon her.

By the time that Plutarch's narrative reaches the Battle of Actium, Antony's ability to exercise any restraint over his erotic impulses has become so eroded by his lifestyle and the influence of Cleopatra that Antony takes complete leave of his reason in the midst of the battle (*Ant.* 66.4):

²⁶³ Pelling (1988: *ad Ant.* 37.4).

²⁶⁴ At *Ant.* 57.3, Plutarch notes that Octavia's appearance was not inferior in any respect to Cleopatra's.

²⁶⁵ See Plutarch, *Table-Talk* 5.681a-c; Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1167ff.; Propertius 1.1.1-4 and 2.16.12; Theocritus, *Ecl.* 2.82; Vergil, *Ecl.* 8.41; and Plotinus, *Enn.* 3.5.

ἐνθα δὴ φανερόν αὐτὸν Ἀντώνιος ἐποίησεν οὔτ' ἄρχοντος οὔτ' ἀνδρὸς οὔθ' ὅλως ἰδίῳις
λογισμοῖς διοικούμενον, ἀλλ'—ὅπερ τις παίζων εἶπε τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἐρῶντος ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ
σώματι ζῆν—ἐλκόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς ὥσπερ συμπεφυκὸς καὶ συμμεταφερόμενος.

Then Antony made clear that he was managed by the reasoning faculties neither of a
commander or a man, or even by his own, but – just as some wag said: the soul of a lover
dwells in another's body – he was dragged away by the woman just as if his nature was
shared with hers and he had to go wherever she went.

Once he and Cleopatra return to Alexandria, Antony's inability to be apart from the
object of his erotic fixation leads to Cleopatra's final, fatal manipulation of the erstwhile
triumvir. Believing that Octavian will accord her more favorable treatment if Antony were dead,
Cleopatra withdraws to her tomb and commands her courtiers to announce to Antony that she
has died (*Ant.* 76). Antony's decision to commit suicide stems directly from his belief that the
object of his erotic desire is now beyond his reach. Antony finds himself in the same position in
which Antiochus found himself when the Seleucid prince fell in love with his father's wife
Stratonice. Antiochus's erotic melancholy is so intense that he resolves to kill himself through
starvation.²⁶⁶ As we have seen, Antiochus would have succeeded had not the physician
Erasistratus intervened and used diagnostic medicine to ascertain the cause of Antiochus's
sickness and then prescribe a cure. The parallelism between Antony and Antiochus is heightened
by the appearance on the scene of a slave with the thematically resonant name Eros (*Ant.* 76.4-5),
whom Antony commands to assist him in ending his life. Antony thus looks to *eros* as an
eminently final cure for his melancholic despair. The slave Eros, however, does not obey Antony
but instead turns the sword on himself rather than kill his master. A rationalist reading of the
symbolism of this gesture is that the cure for Antony's despair is to master and uproot the
feelings of love that he still has towards the duplicitous Cleopatra; to recognize the trap she has
sprung to induce suicidal despair and take steps to counteract it. But Antony performs a different

²⁶⁶ See above, pp. 211-12.

reading, seeing an invitation in his slave's act of self-destruction to reject assisted suicide and perform the act entirely himself. Antony's solitude – the fact that he has no physician, father, or friend to intervene in his best interest – is the decisive factor that brings about his death.

Antony's suicide represents the complete mastery that erotic madness exerts over him. The aftermath of Antony's fatal sword thrust confirms this. As Plutarch (*Ant.* 77) reports, having stabbed himself in such a way that he is forced to endure a slow, lingering death, Antony at last learns that Cleopatra had set up a ruse to deceive him and that she is in fact still alive, holed up in her tomb. Antony reacts to this news with joy and demands that he be taken to his beloved. As he is hoisted up into the tomb, Antony raises his arms longingly towards Cleopatra, and once he is in the tomb with her he dies in her arms. Antony's mad refusal to find fault with Cleopatra anticipates Dio's treatment (51.50) of the same event, and like Dio, Plutarch sketches Antony in such a pathetic pose to illustrate the extent of his mental degradation. His *eros* has made him so delusional that he desperately longs to embrace a woman who he knows has betrayed him. Plutarch's Antony, unlike Propertius's, does not keep his dignity in defeat. Nor does Plutarch's Antony, like Florus's, become so monstrously un-Roman because of his enthrallment to Cleopatra that he moves beyond the reader's sympathy. The circumstances of his death render Plutarch's Antony a pitiable figure; one whom his readers should strive to avoid emulating in their own erotic lives. Over the course of his portrayal of Antony as an insane lover, Plutarch diagnoses the causes of his erotic madness. The reader is equipped by Plutarch with the knowledge that despite the latent character flaws and erotic susceptibilities within Antony himself, erotic madness can be avoided (or at least mitigated) by the influence of a strong father figure, a robust moral education in youth, training in how to recognize flattery, avoiding alcohol

and extravagant banquets, and caution around women like Cleopatra who have seductive charms, love potions, and enchantments at their disposal.

Part Four: Cassius Dio

Cassius Dio's treatment of the motivations behind Antony's policy choices and decisions reveals broad affinities with the program of discrediting Antony through appeals to his love-induced madness that we have already traced out in a number of earlier sources.²⁶⁷ Cassius Dio's treatment of Antony's erotic madness is particularly worth investigating because a number of its features are idiosyncratic. Chief among these is an implicit comparison of Julius Caesar's love for Cleopatra with Antony's. Dio highlights the sustained, degrading influence that Cleopatra exerts over both men. Dio (42.35.1) reports that Caesar was "straightaway enslaved" (εὐθὺς ἐδουλώθη) to Cleopatra when he met her for the first time,²⁶⁸ and later (43.27.3) remarks that Caesar incurred the greatest blame at Rome for indulging in his *eros* for Cleopatra in the city itself. Dio is fond of the *servitium amoris* conceit when describing Antony's love for Cleopatra as well (e.g. 51.9.5). The fact that Dio presents Cleopatra exercising this power over both Julius Caesar and Antony indicates that he recognized a particular catalytic quality within Cleopatra herself that played a role in inspiring this specific kind of love. Dio, like the Latin-language

²⁶⁷ My decision to pass over Appian in this chapter stems chiefly from the fact that his narrative breaks off in 36 BC, well before many of the watershed events in Antony's and Cleopatra's relationship. This is unfortunate because Appian begins Book 5 of his *Bella Civilia* with a programmatic statement that announces the importance of Antony's *eros* in the remaining narrative. Appian asserts (BC 5.1.1) that "this *eros* brought the extremity of ruin upon them both and upon all of Egypt besides" (ὁ δὲ ἔρωσ ὅδε αὐτοῖς τε ἐκείνοις ἐς ἔσχατον ἔληξε κακοῦ καὶ ἐς ὅλην Αἴγυπτον ἐπ' ἐκείνοις). The few subsequent notices in what survives to Antony's *eros* make no use of the terminology of madness, but it is impossible to say whether the discourse of mental illness might have been employed as the narrative moved closer to Actium. One unusual detail in Appian's account worth mentioning is that he claims (BC 5.1.8) that Antony fell in love with Cleopatra at first sight during his sojourn in Egypt on the staff of Gabinius in 55 BC. Appian thus situates the beginning of Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra much earlier than any of our other sources do.

²⁶⁸ On the *servitium amoris* conceit, see Lyne (1979). Reinhold (1988: *ad* 51.9.5) notes the prevalence of this conceit in Dio's treatment. Cf. 48.24.2, 49.33.4, 50.5.1, and 50.26.5.

authors we discussed earlier, also advocates the importance of character strength and personal responsibility in resisting erotic temptation. As an example, Dio describes (51.12-13) how Octavian was proof against Cleopatra's charms, to her great surprise and chagrin.

The beginning of Antony's descent into erotic madness in Dio's narrative coincides with his taking up the administration of Rome's dependencies in the eastern Mediterranean. Antony's *eros* for Cleopatra is linked by Dio to the mismanagement of these dependencies and the arbitrary killing of Cleopatra's siblings (48.24.1-3):

κάν τούτω τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἐν Κιλικία οἱ ὀφθείσης ἐρασθεῖς οὐκέτ' οὐδεμίαν τοῦ καλοῦ φροντίδα ἐποιήσατο, ἀλλά τῇ τε Αἴγυπτία ἐδούλευε καὶ τῷ ἐκείνης ἔρωτι ἐσχόλαζε. καὶ ἄλλα τε διὰ τοῦτο πολλὰ καὶ ἄτοπα ἔπραξε, καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ Ἀρτεμισίου ἀποσπάσας ἀπέκτεινε. καὶ τέλος Πλάγκον μὲν ἐν τῇ Ἀσία τῷ ἔθνει, Σάξαν δὲ ἐν τῇ Συρία καταλιπὼν ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἀπῆρεν. ὄθενπερ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα ἄλλα τε ταραχώδη πολλὰ ἐπεγένετο, ὥστε καὶ τοὺς Ἀραδίους τοὺς νησιώτας μήθ' ὑπακοῦσαι τι τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς σφᾶς ἐπὶ χρήματα πεμφθεῖσι, καὶ προσέτι καὶ φθεῖραί τινας αὐτῶν, καὶ οἱ Πάρθοι καὶ πρὶν κινούμενοι, τότε δὴ καὶ μᾶλλον τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ἐπέθεντο.

And at this point, because he had fallen in love with Cleopatra when he saw her in Cilicia, [Antony] gave no thought for any good thing but instead was enslaved to the Egyptian woman and devoted his time to his love for her. He did many out-of-place things on account of this, and in particular he killed Cleopatra's siblings after dragging them out of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus. In the end, he left Plancus in the province of Asia and Saxa in Syria, and he departed for Egypt. On account of this, a number of disorders arose, namely that the people of the island of Arados no longer obeyed at all the men who were sent to them by Antony to collect revenue. Some of them were even killed, and the Parthians, who even before this had been active, then more than ever made inroads against the Romans.

No other extant author uses the word *ἄτοπα* to describe Antony's behavior, although there is ample precedent for using it as a word to describe mad behavior going back at least as far as Plato, whose dialogues frequently describe the unusual behavior of Socrates as *atopos*.²⁶⁹ It is employed here by Dio to draw a close connection between Antony's emerging love for Cleopatra and his mismanagement of eastern affairs. Later, according to Dio (48.24.6-8), Antony's decamping to Egypt for love's sake prompts the rogue Roman general Labienus to persuade the

²⁶⁹ Cf. *Sym.* 215a and *Gor.* 494d.

Parthian king to launch an attack on Roman positions in the Levant, prompting Dio to elaborate on the point raised above (48.27.1-2):

Ἀντώνιος δὲ ἐπυθάνετο μὲν καὶ ταῦτα ὥσπερ πού καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ δρώμενα (οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν τὸ παράπαν ἠγνόει) οὐ μέντοι καὶ κατὰ καιρὸν οὐδετέροις ἤμυεν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τε τοῦ ἔρωτος καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς μέθης οὔτε τῶν συμμάχων τι οὔτε τῶν πολεμίων ἐφρόντισε. τέως μὲν γὰρ κάτω τε ἐτέτακτο καὶ τῶν πρωτείων ἐφίετο, ἐντόνως τοῖς πράγμασι προσεῖχεν· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐν τῷ κράτει ἐγένετο, οὐκέτ' οὐδενὸς αὐτῶν ἀκριβῶς ἐπεμελήθη, ἀλλὰ τῇ τε Κλεοπάτρᾳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Αἰγυπτίοις συνετρύφα, μέχρις οὗ παντελῶς κατελύθη.

Antony kept abreast of these matters [i.e. the Parthian war] as well as what was happening in Italy (indeed, he was not at all ignorant of these things), but in neither case did he take defensive countermeasures in time. Instead, on account of his love and his drunkenness he did not give a thought to his allies or his enemies. In point of fact, as long as he had been in a subordinate position and was striving after preeminence he devoted himself eagerly to political affairs, but after he came into supreme power he no longer cared a fig for them. Instead, he devoted himself to hedonistic pursuits with Cleopatra and the rest of the Egyptians until he was completely debauched.

Two major points arise here. First, Dio's assessment of Antony's lack of drive: the claim that Antony devoted himself eagerly to political affairs while he was still striving for preeminence, but then lost his focus and drive when this was attained, anticipates a prominent theme in the summary character assessment that Dio makes after he finishes his account of Antony's death (51.15). At that point, Dio deploys a series of antitheses that each reflects the opposition between greatness of soul and servility. He concludes that although Antony went from poverty and powerlessness to wealth and power, he derived no profit from either one (ἰσχυρότατός τε ἐξ ἀσθενεστάτου καὶ πλουσιώτατος ἐξ ἀπορωτάτου γενόμενος οὐδετέρου αὐτῶν ἀπώνητο). Dio thus propounds a thesis that attaining supreme power was in and of itself a key factor in inducing behavior that rendered Antony unworthy of that supreme power. I would argue, though, that we need not read this fairly blunt indictment of the corrupting influence of supreme power on Antony as a critique of monarchical government *per se*. Elsewhere (52.2-40), Dio formulates elaborate arguments for why monarchy is the best system of government for the Roman state, and in Octavian's case at least Dio praises his fitness to wield supreme power and his industry in

attending to politics even after acquiring it, in contrast with Antony.²⁷⁰ Government by one man is not the problem, in Dio's eyes. Rather, Dio envisions Antony's lack of fitness for supreme rule as the product of a combination of factors that are distinct from each other but are also reactive with one another. Supreme power provided the ideal environment in which Antony's susceptibility to *eros* would produce negative consequences. This is a problem that Octavian does not have in Dio's narrative, given his evident imperviousness to Cleopatra's charms. Antony's *eros* (coupled with his drunkenness) becomes, in Dio's hands, a means of accounting for why Antony was unfit to wield supreme power and Octavian was capable of doing so.

There is one additional factor that Dio explicitly configures as a decisive factor in inducing Antony's erotic madness: the witchcraft of Cleopatra. At 49.34.1, in the context of Antony's giving gifts of territory to his children with Cleopatra and his refusal to meet with his wife Octavia as he prepared to campaign against Phraates the King of Armenia in 35 BC, Dio remarks that "[Antony] was more than ever enslaved to his love and to the witchery of Cleopatra" (ὁ μὲν ἔτι καὶ μᾶλλον τῷ τε ἔρωτι καὶ τῇ γοητεία τῇ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἐδούλευε). Whether Dio actually means that Cleopatra employed some love potion or magic spell to seduce Antony or whether *γοητεία* here is more of a metaphor for Cleopatra's erotic charms is difficult to determine. The belief in the efficacy of love potions and magic is pervasive enough in our sources that an appeal to the leading role of either one in Antony's case would not necessarily have appeared implausible to an ancient readership. However, Dio's reference to the role of Cleopatra's *γοητεία* in enslaving Antony is more likely to be a metaphor or perhaps even an artifact of Dio's source,

²⁷⁰ Dio's eulogy of Augustus (56.44) praises the first emperor for ending factional discord and acknowledges the violent means Augustus utilized to do this, although Dio blames circumstances for inducing Augustus to commit violent acts rather than Augustus himself. See Gowing (1992: 248ff. and *passim*) on Dio's and Appian's attitude towards Octavian/Augustus.

given how Dio qualifies the alleged role of magic in Antony's seduction later in his narrative (50.5.1-3):

οὕτω γάρ που αὐτὸν ἐδεδούλωτο ὥστε καὶ γυμνασιαρχῆσαι τοῖς Ἀλεξανδρεῦσι πείσαι, βασιλῆς τε αὐτῆ καὶ δέσποινα ὑπ' ἐκείνου καλεῖσθαι, στρατιώτας τε Ῥωμαίους ἐν τῷ δορυφορικῷ ἔχειν, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς πάντας σφᾶς ταῖς ἀσπίσιν ἐπιγράφειν. ἔς τε τὴν ἀγορὰν μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐσεφοίτα, καὶ τὰς πανηγύρεις οἱ συνδιετίθει, τὰς τε δίκας συνεζήταζε, καὶ συνίππευε καὶ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν, ἢ καὶ ἐκείνη μὲν ἐν δίφρῳ τινὶ ἐφέρετο, ὁ δὲ Ἀντώνιος αὐτοποδὶ αὐτῆ μετὰ τῶν εὐνούχων ἠκολούθει. καὶ τό τε στρατήγιον βασιλείου ὠνόμαζε, καὶ ἀκινάκην ἔστιν ὅτε παρεζώννυτο, ἐσθῆτί τε ἔξω τῶν πατρίων ἐχρήτο, καὶ ἐπὶ κλίνης ἐπιχρῦσου δίφρου τε ὁμοίου καὶ ἐν τῷ κοινῷ ἐωρᾶτο. συνεγράφετό τε αὐτῆ καὶ συνεπλάττετο, αὐτὸς μὲν Ὅσιρις καὶ Διόνυσος ἐκείνη δὲ Σελήνη τε καὶ Ἴσις λέγοντες εἶναι. ἐξ οὐπὲρ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα ἔκφρων ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐκ μαγανείας τινὸς γεγονέναι ἔδοξεν.

Indeed, [Antony] had been so enslaved that [Cleopatra] persuaded him to perform the role of gymnasiarch at Alexandria, and to call her Queen and Mistress, to post Roman soldiers in her bodyguard, and to inscribe her name on all their shields. She would go to the agora with him, join him in arranging the festivals, sit with him when he was hearing lawsuits, and ride together with him even in the cities, or she would be carried on some couch while Antony followed along on foot with the eunuchs. [Antony] named his general's quarters "the palace" and there were times when he wore a Persian short sword in his belt. He wore clothing that was untraditional for his country, and was seen in public on a golden chair or a couch of that sort. He posed for portraits and statues with her, he as Osiris and Dionysus and she as Selene and Isis. From this act especially he seemed to have gone out of his mind because of some bewitchment she had cast.

Dio's use of the qualifiers ἔδοξεν and τις in the final sentence of this excerpt creates a measure of distance between Antony's seemingly mad behavior and Dio's endorsement of bewitchment as the correct aetiology for Antony's actions, but the rallying speech that Dio puts into Octavian's mouth before the Battle of Actium leaves no doubt that Dio intends for his readers to diagnose Cleopatra's artificial methods for inducing *eros* as the cause of Antony becoming ἔκφρων. In the excerpt from this speech given below (50.26.3-27.2), Octavian justifies his policy decision to declare war on Cleopatra and, by implication, on Antony:

αἴτιον δὲ ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν ἐνόμιζον οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν δεῖν τρόπον πρὸς τε τὴν Κλεοπάτραν καὶ πρὸς τὸν Ἀντώνιον προσφέρεισθαι· ἐκείνην μὲν γὰρ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀλλοφύλου πολεμίαν εὐθὺς οἷς ἔπραττεν εἶναι, τοῦτον δέ, ἅτε καὶ πολίτην, ἐνδέχεσθαι σωφρονισθῆναι. ἔπειτα δὲ ἠλπίζον ὅτι εἰ καὶ μὴ ἐθελούσιος, ἀλλ' ἄκων γε ἐκ τῶν ἐπ' ἐκείνη ψηφισθέντων μεταγνώσεται. διὰ μὲν δὴ ταῦτα οὐδένα αὐτῶ πόλεμον ἐπήγγειλα· ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὑπεριδὼν αὐτὰ καὶ καταφρονήσας οὐτ' ἀφιέντων αὐτῶν ἡμῶν ἀφεθῆναι οὐτ' ἐλεούντων ἐλεηθῆναι βούλεται, ἀλλ' εἶτε ὡς ἀλόγιστος εἶθ' ὡς μαινόμενος (καὶ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἐγὼ ἀκηκοῶς πεπίστευκα, ὅτι ὑπ' ἐκείνης τῆς καταράτου μεμάγευται) τῆς μὲν ἡμετέρας εὐεργεσίας καὶ

τῆς παρ' ἡμῶν φιλανθρωπίας οὐδέν προτιμᾷ, τῇ δὲ γυναικὶ δουλεύων τόν τε πόλεμον καὶ τοὺς κινδύνους τοὺς ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἀθαιρέτους καὶ καθ' ἡμῶν καὶ κατὰ τῆς πατρίδος ἀναρεῖται, τί λοιπὸν ἄλλο πλὴν ἀμύνασθαι καὶ τοῦτον μετὰ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἡμῖν προσήκει; μὴτ' οὖν Ῥωμαῖον εἶναι τις αὐτὸν νομιζέτω, ἀλλὰ τινα Αἰγύπτιον, μὴτ' Ἀντώνιον ὀνομαζέτω, ἀλλὰ τινα Σαραπίωνα· μὴ ὕπατον, μὴ αὐτοκράτορα γεγονέναι ποτὲ ἠγείσθω, ἀλλὰ γυμνασίαρχον. ταῦτα γὰρ ἀντ' ἐκείνων αὐτὸς ἐθελοντῆς ἀνθείλετο, καὶ πάντα τὰ πάτρια σεμνολογήματα ἀπορρίψας εἰς τῶν ἀπὸ Κανώβου κυμβαλιστῶν γέγονε.

And this is the reason that I at first did not think it necessary to take the same approach towards Cleopatra and towards Antony, for I thought that she was an enemy because of her foreignness, as exemplified by the things she did. But because he was a citizen, I believed that Antony might be brought back to reason. Later I hoped that he might change his mind, if not eagerly, at any rate under constraint because of the decrees voted against her. On account of these considerations I did not declare war against him. But since he has turned up his nose at these actions and thought them of no account, and since he does not consent to be pardoned (although we pardon him) or consent to be pitied (although we pity him), but because he is either irrational or suffering from madness – for I have heard this and believed it: that accursed woman has bewitched him – he accords no honor to our benefaction or kindness, and being instead a slave to that woman he takes up war and self-chosen dangers on her behalf and against us and our country, what else should we do but defend it against Antony and his companion Cleopatra? Therefore do not let anyone think that he is a Roman, but instead think of him as some Egyptian. Let no one name him Antony, but name him Serapion. Let no one ever think that he has been a consul, a general, but rather a gymnasiarch. For he himself willingly chose these titles instead of those others, and throwing away all the revered titles of his own country has become one of the cymbal players from Canopus.

The rhetoric that Dio composes for his Octavian takes as its central conceit that declaring war against Cleopatra is designed as a therapy to bring Antony back to reason from the madness that infects him, the symptoms of which include siding with Cleopatra against Rome and adopting an Egyptian identity.²⁷¹ The focus on the bewitchment perpetrated by Cleopatra absolves Antony from responsibility for his alleged transgressions against Octavian, but it also delegitimizes Antony opposition to Octavian and authorizes an intervention by Octavian to take control of Antony's affairs. Dio decides to have Octavian deny Antony any agency at all, and this decision cleverly authorizes sympathy towards Antony by laying all the blame on Cleopatra. Antony's rejection of Octavian's offer of a pardon creates the impression that a good faith effort was expended in trying to bring about the rehabilitation of Antony. Even without acknowledging

²⁷¹ Antony's assimilation to an Egyptian is an especially pejorative characterization in Dio. On the virulence of Dio's ethnic prejudice against Egyptians, see Reinhold (1988: *ad* 50.24.6).

eros, Dio's Octavian nevertheless enacts a conventional paradigm in Roman poetry whereby a wayward lover is customarily shown a gesture of pardon that brings him back into the social fold.²⁷²

The oration that Dio puts into Antony's mouth prior to the Battle of Actium (50.14-22) is much less rhetorically dense and colorful than Octavian's, and its failure to achieve its desired effect is made apparent in the sentence immediately following Antony's last word. Here, Dio states (50.23.1) that Antony stationed his most prominent associates in such a way as to make any potential mutiny or defection to Octavian more difficult. This is an unsubtle indication that Antony's oration was not persuasive. Dio's narrative unambiguously portrays Octavian as the better, more clear-thinking leader. Dio locates the source of Antony's irrationality in his own predisposition to enslave himself to *eros*, alcohol, and the abuse of absolute power. Antony's madness is prominently on display at the crucial moment of Dio's narrative when Cleopatra, in the hope that Antony will be inspired to commit suicide, allows Antony to believe that she has killed herself.²⁷³ Dio's delineation (51.50.5) of Antony's state of mind while this ruse is happening serves as a vivid authorial statement about the influence that *eros* wields over Antony's perception of reality:

ὑπετόπει μὲν γὰρ προδίδοσθαι, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἐπίστευεν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔρωτος, ἀλλὰ καὶ μᾶλλον ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐκείνην ἢ ἑαυτὸν ἠλέει.

Indeed, [Antony] suspected that he was being betrayed. However, he refused to believe it because of the influence of love, and instead he, so to speak, pitied her more than himself.

The paradox that Antony perceived that he was being betrayed but did not believe it, instead pitying Cleopatra all the more, is the capstone of Dio's argument that Antony was hopelessly enslaved to Cleopatra and therefore ill-suited to exercise supremacy over the Roman

²⁷² See above, pg. 205.

²⁷³ Cf. Plutarch, *Ant.* 76-7.

state. *Eros* is the key factor that differentiates Antony from Octavian, and the outcome of Antony's indulging in *eros* justifies Dio's authorial favor towards Octavian. As I argued in chapter 3,²⁷⁴ Dio's configuration of Antony as a tyrant is not substantially different from the characterizations that he projects onto other Roman dynasts whom he depicts aiming at supreme power, with the result that the insane lover becomes the key component in Dio's repertoire of personae that accounts for Octavian's rise and Antony's downfall.

Yet in stressing the decisive influence of Cleopatra's enchantments in inflaming Antony's *eros* to the point of insanity, Dio makes Antony a more sympathetic figure than he appears in the Latin-language authors discussed in this chapter, who instead stress Antony's personal responsibility for not resisting the dictates of *amor*. Dio exhibits a greater affinity to Plutarch in this respect. Both Plutarch and Dio also create an Antony whose body is subject to the complete control of wine, love potions, enchantments, and erotic appetites. Antony's unstable mind is dismissed as an insignificant factor in his decision-making. This characterization of Antony's persona as an insane lover complements his characterization as a theatrical performer and tyrant. All three personae rely on the body and the visual signs that it expresses to manifest their defining features. This is not an inherent quality of these three personae, however. The lines from Dryden's *All for Love* at the head of this chapter display an Antony who suffers from erotic madness while being acutely cognizant of his affliction. His ability to articulate his own plight in words displays a depth of character that ancient depictions of the triumvir lack. A thorough reading of this play through the lens of metabiography would reveal other ways that Dryden's version of Antony's erotic madness draws from the earlier historio-biographical tradition while refashioning this material into innovative forms. Of course, any post-classical treatment of the life and career of Antony could be subjected to this same metabiographical analysis, and there is

²⁷⁴ See above, pp. 171-82.

no reason that a metabiographical inquiry on Antony the insane lover – or Antony the theatrical performer or tyrant – must be limited to ancient literature. To illustrate the potential for insights into antiquity and modernity that such an analysis can provide, I will turn now to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a text that demonstrates its deep engagement with the ancient tradition concerning Antony through its inversion of Antony's conventional characterization.

**Chapter 5: ‘I am no orator, as Brutus is’: The Unstable Identity of Mark Antony
in *Julius Caesar***

BRUTUS

Words before blows; is it so, countryman?

OCTAVIUS

Not that we love words better, as you do.

BRUTUS

Good words are better than bad strokes, Octavius.

ANTONY

In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good words.
Witness the hole you made in Caesar’s heart,
Crying ‘Long live! Hail, Caesar!’

CASSIUS

Antony,
The posture of your blows are yet unknown;
But, for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.

ANTONY

Not stingless too?

These lines, delivered before the climactic Battle of Philippi in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (5.1.27-36), bring to the fore one of play’s central tensions.²⁷⁵ Words and actions – or, more specifically, what characters say for the sake of flattery or deception and what their actions reveal about their true beliefs and intentions – are often incongruous with one another. No character in this drama is more emblematic of this tension than Antony. Immediately after Caesar’s assassination, Antony’s servant comes onstage and tells the conspirators that “Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead / so well as Brutus living, but will follow / the fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus / thorough the hazards of this untrod state / with all true faith” (3.1.133-7). Alone onstage later in the scene, Antony himself confides his true intentions to Caesar’s corpse, saying “O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth / that I am meek and gently with

²⁷⁵ The text and line numbers of *Julius Caesar* are taken from Arthur Humphreys’s (1984) edition for the Oxford Shakespeare series.

these butchers!” (3.1.254-5). He also predicts that violence will soon rage through Italy (3.1.263-75). Antony thus belies the posture of peaceful reconciliation that he had just exhibited to Brutus and the other conspirators. His subsequent eulogy of the dead Caesar famously evinces a surface meaning of deep reverence for Brutus while articulating an inflammatory critique of the conspirators. Cassius’s double-edged comment in the quotation above that Antony’s words “rob the Hybla bees / and leave them honeyless,” attests to the decisive role that Antony plays as the paragon of eloquence in *Julius Caesar*. Antony’s reply (“Not stingless too?”) hints at the power that words themselves possess to inflict harm. “The posture of [Antony’s] blows” is unknown to Cassius because Antony does not need to perform physical actions himself to inflict violence. The Antony of *Julius Caesar* uses oratory to set his resistance to the conspirators in motion, and there is an over-determined use of irony in Antony’s so-called “Forum speech” to the Roman Plebeians when he claims (3.2.210-16):

I am no orator, as Brutus is,
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man
That love my friend, and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him.
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech
To stir men’s blood; I only speak right on.

Shakespeare’s Antony achieves his objectives precisely through the power of speech to stir men’s blood. By being a master manipulator of words, Antony inspires the Plebeians to begin a violent reign of terror that chases the conspirators out of Rome (3.2.250-3.3.37). Shakespeare’s Antony is not a “plain blunt man.”

The elusiveness of Antony’s identity in *Julius Caesar* makes his portrayal in this play an especially suitable subject for a case study in applying the metabiographical methodology to a post-classical literary text. Moreover, like all the ancient authors discussed in previous chapters, Shakespeare wrote in a cultural milieu where politics and literature were entangled in a way that

could entail great personal risks for authors whose work engaged with the ideology of the ruling regime. First performed in 1599 during an especially fraught period in the reign of Elizabeth I, *Julius Caesar* and its depiction of a would-be monarch's assassination have a provocative contemporary relevance.²⁷⁶ The question that this final chapter will address is what function Shakespeare's portrayal of Mark Antony performs in a work of literature whose central figure, Julius Caesar, straddles an exceedingly fluid line between oppressive tyrant and benevolent king.

Antony's character development in *Julius Caesar* emblemizes the instability of identity that drives so much of the action in the play. Antony's chameleon-like ability to inhabit so many different roles renders him a much more influential political player than characters like Julius Caesar and Brutus, who both insist on the fixed immutability of their character traits. This chapter will argue that Shakespeare's version of Antony constitutes a commentary on the ancient historio-biographical tradition on Antony (not just exploiting it as a source) and that Shakespeare uses this tradition to make a statement about the role of the artist in Elizabethan England. I will argue that Shakespeare, as a reader, recognizes Plutarch's configuration of Antony's external appearance and behavior as a more accurate signifier of his interior character than his speech. Furthermore, Shakespeare rejects this visual-centric paradigm in Antony's case while incorporating it elsewhere in the play in order to display the power that the author has to manipulate the representation of character through language. The malleability and the openness to varying interpretations that Shakespeare's Antony and his speeches exemplify is a model for how a master of eloquence can thrive in a politically dangerous environment. By embracing a shifting identity to suit the political exigencies of the moment and by exerting influence through words and writing rather than through bloody acts of violence performed with his own hands,

²⁷⁶ A major rebellion against Elizabeth's rule would be staged just two years later by the Earl of Essex, and many prominent literary figures were implicated as supporters. For an overview of this aspect of *Julius Caesar*'s historical context, see Daniell (1998: 22-38).

Shakespeare's Antony overcomes the conspirators and proves to be a more adept political player than Caesar.

Over the course of *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare's Antony consistently belies the traditionally dismissive assessment of his character as a frivolous hedonist. In this respect, I would argue that he symbolizes resistance to the constraints imposed on the author by his source tradition. This reading of Shakespeare's Antony, dependent as it is on establishing his traditional characterization and marking Shakespeare's thematically significant divergences from it, emerges from the portraits of Antony that I have drawn in the first four chapters. This chapter will thus serve as a test case for extending the metabiographical analysis of Antony undertaken in the first four chapters to a text produced in a non-classical context. My model for approaching the thorny issue of Shakespeare's engagement with the classical tradition is Heather James's (1997: 119-50) work on a similar dynamic operative in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Here too, according to James, Shakespeare alters the conventional characterization of Antony in order to stage an exhibition of active resistance to a source tradition. On the character of Antony in this play and its relationship to the *Aeneid*, James writes (1997:119):

Unlike *Titus Andronicus* or *Troilus and Cressida*, moreover, the play employs multiple and contrasting images of Antony, Cleopatra, and even Octavius to enrich rather than undermine the characters and the values they espouse. This view seems generally right, and so it comes as a surprise that Antony defends his value of erotic love and protects his heroic exemplarity by directly resisting the *Aeneid*. Traditional source criticism is at a loss to explain the political dimensions of *Antony and Cleopatra's* relations to textual authority. As Antony's revision of the *Aeneid* indicates, the play's principal characters are intensely aware of their duties to promote or disrupt the stories in which their meanings will be recorded.

My aim in this chapter is to uncover a similar dynamic of resistance and disruption at work in *Julius Caesar* that is played out through Antony's characterization. Ultimately, Antony's masterful control over the interpretation of political events and political language points the way to Shakespeare's authorial control over Antony's malleable character. Both of these performative

roles, consummate speaker and author, manifest an exemplary force. Antony's *exemplum* pushes the play's audience towards a praxis of successfully producing politically engaged art and literature under politically dangerous conditions.

The characterization of Antony as an orator of superlative eloquence and shrewd political acumen is not paralleled in other extant contemporary sixteenth century dramas featuring Antony,²⁷⁷ and it is also out of step with most ancient accounts of his oratorical skills.²⁷⁸ Antony's ineptness as an orator is, first of all, a prominent point of attack in the *Philippics*, where Cicero frequently disparages Antony's public speaking abilities and characterizes him as the mere pupil of a hack rhetorician (*Phil.* 2.8-9, 42-3). As seen in chapter 3, Suetonius (*Aug.* 86) preserves a particularly unfavorable comment by Augustus on Antony's style. While it is impossible to say whether Shakespeare had access to works of Cicero or Suetonius when composing the play, there is no doubt that he did make extensive use of North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*. Much ink has been spilled cataloguing and explicating the occasions in *Julius Caesar* when Shakespeare adapts material directly from North's Plutarch into his text.

Sometimes the result is so faithful an adaptation that it would be perfectly reasonable to term the

²⁷⁷ The dramas and other prose sources (including contemporary translations of relevant ancient sources, such as the works of Plutarch and Appian) that potentially influenced Shakespeare's treatment of Antony in *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* are collected by Bullough (1964). The dramas that feature Antony in a speaking role include Mary Herbert's 1592 translation of Robert Garnier's 1578 play *Marc-Antoine*, the *Il Cesare* of Orlando Pescetti of 1594, Samuel Brandon's *The Virtuous Octavia* of 1598, and the anonymous *Caesar's Revenge* printed in 1607 (but possibly first performed much earlier). The characterization and discourse of Antony in these plays certainly prefigures Shakespeare's treatment of him as a tragic, love-driven figure in *Antony and Cleopatra*, but there are no overt hints of the masterful orator and consummate political schemer whom we encounter in *Julius Caesar*. However, the existence of other non-extant contemporary dramatic influences on Shakespeare's treatment of Antony in *Julius Caesar* cannot be ruled out. Daniell (1998: 11) notes, for example, *testimonia* for a play by Fulke Greville about Antony and Cleopatra that the author destroyed fearing that it could be read as veiled criticism of the ruling regime.

²⁷⁸ For assessments of Antony's rhetorical skills and style, along with catalogues of known occasions when Antony delivered a speech, see Huzar (1982), Calboli (1997), and Mahy (2013). On Antony's *laudatio funebris* for Julius Caesar specifically, see additionally Kennedy (1968) and Kierdorf (1980: 149-57).

resulting poetry a paraphrase.²⁷⁹ We shall see that Shakespeare is an adept reader of Plutarch's *Life of Antony*. There are occasions in Plutarch's narrative, though, where Antony momentarily transcends his avowed characterization as "a plain man without subtilty" (*Ant.* 24.6) to exert a decisive influence on political affairs using his eloquence.²⁸⁰ It is upon these references (and particularly Plutarch's account of Antony's *laudatio funebris* for Julius Caesar) that Antony's characterization in *Julius Caesar* as a consummately effective orator is founded.

Yet a survey of these scattered references in North's translation – situated like small islands in a sea of drunken debauchery, political missteps, and erotic enthrallment – reveals a picture of Antony *qua* orator that is still inconsistent with the polished rhetorician whom Shakespeare depicts onstage. On Antony's early-life education in the study of oratory (*Ant.* 2.4-5), North translates:

Thereupon he left Italy, and went into Greece, and there bestowed the most part of his time, sometime in wars, and otherwhile in the study of eloquence. He used a manner of phrase in his speech, called Asiatic, which carried the best grace and estimation at that time, and was much like to his manners and life: for it was full of ostentation, foolish bravery, and vain ambition.

The continuity between Antony's character and the negative qualities of his oratory is stressed in this passage. Yet no one by any stretch of the imagination could reasonably say that Antony's Forum speech in act three of *Julius Caesar* is characterized by "ostentation, foolish bravery, and vain ambition." The eloquence of Shakespeare's Antony is not latent in this passage of North's Plutarch.

²⁷⁹ Cf. *Life of Brutus* 168 and *Julius Caesar* 5.4.21-5. See especially Green (1979), Humphreys (1984: 8-28), McMurtry (1998: 11-28), Daniell (1999: 79-95), Miola (1988 and 2000: 98-109), and Roe (2004: 173-82) for discussions of Shakespeare's use of Plutarch and other ancient sources. Appian's account of Antony's *laudatio funebris*, translated into English and printed in 1578, is also adduced by these scholars as a possible influence on Antony's Forum speech in *Julius Caesar*. However, the absence of any clear intertextual echoes of Appian in the play means that this potential influence must remain little more than a tentative conjecture.

²⁸⁰ All English translations of Plutarch cited in this chapter are by Thomas North, with modernized orthography.

A likelier candidate is the account of Antony's *laudatio funebris* for Julius Caesar (*Ant.*

14.3-4):

And therefore, when Caesar's body was brought to the place where it should be buried, he made a funeral oration in commendation of Caesar, according to the ancient custom of praising noblemen at their funerals. When he saw that the people were very glad and desirous also to hear Caesar spoken of, and his praises uttered, he mingled his oration with lamentable words, and by amplifying of matters did greatly move their hearts and affections unto pity and compassion. In fine, to conclude his oration, he unfolded before the whole assembly the bloody garments of the dead, thrust through in many places with their swords, and called the malefactors cruel and cursed murtherers. With these words he put the people into such a fury, that they presently took Caesar's body, and burnt it in the market-place with such tables and forms as they could get together.

Apart from the fact that Antony takes advantage of Caesar's bloody garments as an inflammatory prop, there is little in this account that readily suggests the particular style and content in which Antony's Forum speech is cast in *Julius Caesar*. At most, the word "amplification," a technical term in Elizabethan rhetoric denoting an abundance of rhetorical figures,²⁸¹ authorizes putting a speech of rhetorical sophistication in Antony's mouth. but Plutarch's crowd is already amenable to believing and acting upon Antony's straightforward message. In Plutarch's account, Antony does not have to win over a hostile crowd. There is no Brutus-figure who had already won the Plebeians over to the belief that Caesar had been a tyrant who deserved to be killed, as there is in *Julius Caesar* (3.2.1-61). Plutarch's Antony, as mediated through North, pursues a simple rhetorical program of praise, then blame, followed by inflammatory gesture.

It is hard to argue with the conclusion that Shakespeare has had to invent much and elaborate upon the few details Plutarch provides in order to fashion the Forum speech as we have it, and scholarship on the play has long recognized this.²⁸² There are two other passages in North's Plutarch that might also have supplied small kernels of inspiration for Shakespeare in

²⁸¹ Kraemer (1991: 165-6).

²⁸² For overviews of the rhetoric, structure, and sources of Antony's Forum speech, see Greene (1980), Fuzier (1981), Kraemer (1991), and Daniell (1999: 70-3). On the influence of Elizabethan rhetorical handbooks on the technical features of the speech, see Wills (2011: 79-112).

constructing his eloquent Antony, but the Antony of these passages is, on close inspection, not particular congruous with the Antony of *Julius Caesar* either. In his account of Antony's relationship to his soldiers during his ill-fated Parthian expedition, Plutarch describes the reasons why Antony was popular among his soldiers (*Ant.* 44.3):

But divers things were cause thereof, as we have told you before: Antonius' nobility and ancient house, his eloquence, his plain nature, his liberality and magnificence, and his familiarity to sport and to be merry in company: but specially the care he took at that time to help, visit, and lament those that were sick and wounded, seeing every man to have that which was meet for him: that was of such force and effect, as it made them that were sick and wounded to love him better, and were more desirous to do him service, than those that were whole and sound.

Earlier, however, Plutarch had recounted an occasion where Antony is called upon to deliver the customary rallying speech to his troops but is too overcome by despondency to do so (*Ant.* 40.5):

But though he had an excellent tongue at will, and very gallant to entertain his soldiers and men of war, and that he could passingly well do it, as well or better than any Captain in his time: yet being ashamed for respects, he would not speak unto them at his removing, but willed Domitius Ænobarbus to do it.

In the first passage, Antony's eloquence is buried in a litany of good qualities and is not described in any great detail. Moreover, its juxtaposition with "plain nature" works against the suggestion that Antony's eloquence possesses any great rhetorical sophistication. In the second passage, Plutarch unequivocally vouches for Antony's oratorical talent, but only in the particular context of addressing his troops. This qualification implicitly contrasts him with the tribune Curio, whose oratorical talent for enthraling the Roman people is earlier cited by Plutarch in terms which indicate that this is a specific talent that Curio possesses and Antony does not.²⁸³

Yet even Antony's oratorical talent in addressing the troops does not come across as an especially likely source of inspiration for his Forum speech in *Julius Caesar*. As we see in the

²⁸³ *Ant.* 5.1: "[Curio] wan [*sic*] Antonius, and so handled the matter, partly through the great credit and sway he bare amongst the people by reason of his eloquent tongue, and partly also by his exceeding expense of money he made which Caesar gave him, that Antonius was chosen Tribune, and afterwards made Augur."

passage quoted above, Antony does not rise to the occasion when this talent is called upon and instead assigns the duty of the addressing the troops to his lieutenant. In sum, Plutarch's Antony, as mediated through North, displays only glimmers – and faint ones at that – of a talent for eloquence. Shakespeare's portrayal therefore represents a major innovation relative to his major source.

Shakespeare does not endow Antony's physical appearance in *Julius Caesar* with any marked significance in the way that virtually all ancient authors who write about him do. However, the playwright does thematize the idea that costume can act as a defining signifier of character and identity. Changes in external appearance can therefore signal a potentially dangerous instability in these facets of characterization. The very first scene of the play offers a programmatic illustration of this principle in action. Here, the anti-Caesarian tribune Flavius rebukes commoners for dressing and acting as if the occasion of Caesar's return to Rome after defeating Pompey's sons were a holiday, "Hence! Home, you idle creatures, get you home! / Is this a holiday? What, know you not, / being mechanical, you ought not walk / upon a laboring day without the sign / of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?" (1.1.1-5). To the tradesman's reply that he is a carpenter, Flavius asks him "Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?" (1.1.6-7). His question establishes a convention within the play that there is something transgressive about dressing in a way that obscures one's true identity or changes it in a way that defies traditional norms.

Later in the scene, this convention is applied to the higher echelons of Roman society as well. Flavius exhorts his companion Marullus to disrobe the images of Caesar "if you find them decked with ceremonies" (1.1.61-75). This is presumably a reference to the crowns and ornamental "scarves" (1.2.281-3) with which Caesar's statues were adorned upon his return from

his victory over Pompey's sons at Munda. The diadem/crown is a transformative signifier in the play, the symbolic focus of whether or not Caesar means to embrace kingship/tyranny. The opening lines of Brutus's soliloquy on his reasons for plotting against Caesar (2.1.10-17) make this symbolism explicit:

It must be by his death; and, for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general: he would be crowned.
How that might change his nature, there's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
And that craves wary walking. Crown him that,
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him
That at his will he may do danger with.

Brutus's suspicions that the mere acquisition of a crown will effect a transformation in Caesar's character are given some weight later in the play, when the conspirator Decius must convince Caesar to attend the Senate meeting earmarked for his assassination (2.2.1-31).²⁸⁴ It is Decius's disclosure that the Senate intends to offer Caesar a crown during the meeting of March fifteenth (2.2.92-104) that finally induces Caesar to attend it. Decius cautions Caesar that if he does not attend the Senate and accept the crown that day, "their minds may change" (2.2.96). Caesar thus attests to the appeal the visible symbol of legitimate kingly authority holds for him. This is an authority that in the context of *Julius Caesar* is in tension with – and often conflated with – illegitimate tyranny. Caesar's dealing with the tribunes Flavius and Marullus by ominously and perhaps fatally putting them "to silence" (1.2.280-4) and his uncompromising

²⁸⁴ For reasons of space and because the focus of my inquiry in this chapter is on Antony and on the ways that character is manifested through language, gesture, and personal appearance in *Julius Caesar*, I must give only occasional attention in this chapter to the conspicuous role that prodigies, astronomical and weather events, dreams, prophesy, and other supernatural elements play as a semiotic field that articulates and reinforces the play's thematic program. In general, the signs that are manifested through nature and divine/supernatural intervention reflect the violence and chaos that loom from the conspiracy and Caesar's assassination, and work by Charney (1961: 37-53) and Moynihan (1977) has traced out how these signs remain inherently ambiguous to the characters in the play even as their signification is more or less patent for the omniscient audience. Important studies by Paster (1989) and Marshall (1994) likewise illuminate how Shakespeare configures Portia and Calpurnia and the female body/experience as ciphers that disclose the male characters' loss of gender-intactness and masculinity as a result of having been penetrated and made to bleed.

refusal to recall Publius Cimber from exile despite the united intercession of Metellus, Brutus, and Cassius (3.1.31-73) are moments in the play where Caesar prefigures the adder's "sting" that Brutus, in the passage above, associates with the crowned autocrat.²⁸⁵ The "sting" that Antony claims for his honeyed words in the lines that open this chapter draws Antony into the tyrannical orbit as well.

There is thus a continuity of meaning between the crown, the visible sign of absolute power, and the expression of this power in Caesar's behavior towards other Romans. Other characters in the play and the visible emblems of their identity and inner character enact this phenomenon as well. Tellingly, these emblems are all headgear of various kinds and so act as parallels to Caesar's crown. Cicero's "silver hairs" are regarded by the conspirators as a valuable commodity that will purchase legitimacy and support for the assassination (2.1.144-9). Ligarius dons a sick man's kerchief in order to disguise his identity while in transit to meet the other conspirators (2.1.311-35), and once he is among them casts it off with the declaration, "I here discard my sickness" (2.1.322). Cassius's lieutenant Titinius is crowned with laurel to signify his victory over the troops of Octavius and Antony in a skirmish (5.3.50). All of these visual markers are suggestive of costumes, props, and stage effects that could be deployed physically onstage. It is not at all surprising that a theatrical text like *Julius Caesar* should display such an overt thematization of the importance of visual symbols to convey poetic meaning. What is noteworthy, however, is that this play's emphasis on symbolic clothing and apparel should so closely align with how Shakespearean source texts such as Plutarch's *Lives* and, possibly, Appian's *Bella Civilia* configure the significance of physical appearance as a key indicator of character and identity, as seen in chapter 1.²⁸⁶ Shakespeare recognizes and exploits an

²⁸⁵ Daniell (1998: 35-6).

immanently theatrical quality in his source texts' foregrounding of the visual aspects of their subjects' self-expression that fits well into his own dramaturgical program. But in translating this ancient material to the Elizabethan stage, Shakespeare often infuses the ancient connection of physical appearance and inner character with an element of ambiguity that is generally absent in the ancient sources.

It is frequently the case in *Julius Caesar* that outer appearance does not signify inner reality, and that outer signs are subject to more than one valid interpretation of their meaning. The numerous portents, both natural and divine, that are cited throughout the play offer the audience concise illustrations of how meaning is often contingent upon the perspective, knowledge, or rhetorical aims of a given interpreter. The interpretation of Calpurnia's ominous dream stands as the most salient example of this phenomenon (2.2.71-92). Caesar recounts Calpurnia's dream that his statue spouted blood and that "lustful Romans" smiled and bathed in it. Caesar draws the conclusion that the dream signifies "evils imminent" that would make it prudent for him to remain at home. Decius turns this interpretation on its head:

This dream is all amiss interpreted.
It was a vision fair and fortunate:
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.
This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.

Each interpretation of the prophetic dream is valid and convincing until the moment when the dream becomes reality. Revealing the openness to interpretation inherent in any sign is Shakespeare's point. This thematization of the beguilingly ambiguous nature of signs is also prominent in Shakespeare's treatment of gesture in the play and especially in his portrayal of

²⁸⁶ See above, pp. 64-5.

Antony. The ancient authors whom I discussed in the first four chapters unequivocally cite Antony's clothing, physical appearance, gestures, and equipage – rather than his speech and discourse – as the most accurate index of his true character and intentions. However, in *Julius Caesar* there is frequently a profound disconnect between the apparent meaning of the visual signs that its characters manifest and the reality of these characters' aims and inner thought-worlds. Antony, in many respects, is the character who exemplifies this phenomenon the best.

The short scene featuring Ligarius and his kerchief that I have already mentioned can stand as a representative illustration of the principle that physical appearance frequently belies true character. His sick man's kerchief is a way to disguise his identity and intentions while he is in transit to meet the other conspirators. In this, Ligarius proves himself to be an exceptionally adept manipulator of visual signs, given that the other conspirators who attend the meeting of the conspirators evidently only go so far as to don veils, as Brutus observes at 2.1.77-85:

O conspiracy
Sham'st thou to show thy dang'rous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O then, by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability;
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.

These garments leave their wearers simultaneously hidden and revealed. Their identities are kept from view, but the veil conveys the message that a dark purpose lies behind the need for a concealment, a circumstance that Portia draws attention to when she questions Brutus later in the scene about the nature of the meeting (2.1.230-310). Brutus does not intend for his wife to take any notice of the conspiracy, but she is prompted to do so by the ominous sight of men who “did hide their faces / even from darkness.” (2.1.278-9). Portia's easy recognition of the significance of the conspirators' dress underscores how advisable it is to employ a more effective

disguise than a veil. Ligarius's sick man's kerchief does the trick, but the best disguise of all might be, as Brutus chillingly suggests in the passage above, a smile.

There is a running motif in the play of characters reflecting on the significance of both the veil and the smile and on how the latter can often be an effective instantiation of the former. At 1.2.30-62, Cassius exploits Brutus's unaccustomedly dour expression, the lack of "gentleness and show of love" in his eyes, as an opening to sound him out as a partner in opposing Caesar. Brutus responds to Cassius's observation about his expression with the admission, "Cassius / be not deceived. If I have veiled my look, / I turn the trouble of my countenance / merely upon myself" (1.2.36-9). Again, these lines highlight the idea that a veil, while it conceals true reality, nevertheless reveals that an act of concealment is taking place. This idea is brought dramatically to the fore again when Popilius Lena accosts Brutus and Cassius on the day on which the assassination is to take place, and, before taking his leave of the pair to go talk to Caesar, reveals that he knows about the plot (3.1.13-22). Brutus attempts to assuage Cassius's unease that Lena may be about to expose the plot by remarking, "Cassius, be constant. / Popilius Lena speaks not of our purposes, / for look, he smiles, and Caesar doth not change" (3.1.22-4). Here in practice, the smile is an effective means of concealing the truth without drawing attention to the fact that an act of concealment has been perpetrated. This scene thus proleptically confirms Octavius's later observation, "And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear, / millions of mischiefs" (4.1.50-1).

The passage that best encapsulates the issues I have been discussing thus far is an exchange between Caesar and Antony that takes place at 1.2.192-214. Since this passage also works to establish Antony's characterization, it will serve as a transition into the main topic of analysis in this chapter. Before this exchange, the audience's only glimpse of Antony had taken

place at 1.2.1-24, where he makes an appearance dressed to participate in the Lupercalia. When Caesar admonishes him not to forget to touch the barren Calpurnia as he runs the course, Antony says, “I shall remember. / When Caesar says ‘Do this’, it is performed” (1.2.9-10).²⁸⁷ Antony is depicted here as the perfect instrument of Caesar’s will, a characterization that Caesar himself seems to confirm in their subsequent exchange:

CAESAR

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights.
Yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
He thinks too much. Such men are dangerous.

ANTONY

Fear him not, Caesar, he’s not dangerous;
He is a noble Roman, and well given.

CAESAR

Would he were fatter! But I fear him not.
Yet if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much,
He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music.
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit
That could be moved to smile at anything.
Such men as he be never at heart’s ease
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,
And therefore are they very dangerous.
I rather tell thee what is to be feared
Than what I fear; for always I am Caesar.
Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
And tell me truly what thou think’st of him.

Caesar here relies on physical appearance as an indicator of inner character, declaring that Cassius seems dangerous because he has a “lean and hungry look” and “thinks too much.” This contrasts with men whose innocuousness is signified by their relative fatness and, in Antony’s case, a love of plays and music. Furthermore, Caesar interprets Cassius’s smile in a

²⁸⁷ On Julius Caesar’s assimilation to Romulus in this scene, see Miola (1983: 80).

way that highlights the potential ambiguity of meaning implicit in this gesture. He posits that Cassius is a man who uses the smile neither as a flatterer's veil nor as a marker of genuine affection, as other characters do,²⁸⁸ but as a rueful acknowledgment of a weakness in controlling his physical demeanor. However, although Caesar does in fact accurately gauge the threat that Cassius poses to him, even he does not manage to interpret fully the range of possible meanings Cassius's smile is capable of conveying. Brutus's final farewell to Cassius in the fifth act includes the lines "If we do meet again, why, we shall smile. / If not, why then this parting was well made" (5.1.118-19). Homosocial affection, so prominent and crucial in sustaining political bonds in this play,²⁸⁹ can be signaled with a smile. It is an indication of the complexity of Cassius's character that he can methodically scheme against Caesar while simultaneously evincing a palpable affection for his co-conspirator. The Cassius the audience sees over the course of the play confounds Caesar's assessment of his character as completely cold-blooded.

Cassius is, in this sense, the character in the play whose role and developmental arc are closest to those of Antony. Obfuscating his envy of Caesar,²⁹⁰ Cassius relies on potent rhetoric

²⁸⁸ The baneful influence of flattery is a prominent thematic component of Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, and although its appropriation is more conspicuous in *Antony and Cleopatra*, this is another example of Shakespeare threading more abstract features of his ancient source material into the thematic texture of *Julius Caesar*. See Pelling (1988: 37-45 and *ad Ant.* 4.2, 24.9-12, 53.5-9) for an analysis of this theme in Plutarch's *Life* and its relationship to Shakespeare's treatment.

²⁸⁹ There are no fewer than fifty occasions in the play where a male character expresses his esteem for another using the word "love," and the relationship of Brutus and Cassius is cast unequivocally in these terms (1.2.162-7). On this aspect of the play, its direct indebtedness to Plutarch, and its possible erotic undertones, see Smith (1991: 57ff.).

²⁹⁰ Alone onstage, Cassius declares (1.3.304-10):

Well, Brutus, thou art noble, yet I see
Thy honourable mettle may be wrought
From that it is disposed. Therefore it is meet
That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?
Caesar doth bear me hard, but he loves Brutus.

The final line probably alludes to a section in Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* (8) that describes how Cassius's enmity with Caesar was the result of a private quarrel and jealousy, as opposed to his pursuing pure republican principles.

and the ploy of disseminating anonymous pamphlets to manipulate Brutus into joining the conspiracy,²⁹¹ and he is the member of the conspiracy who is most adept at judging other characters' intentions and predicting their behavior.²⁹² This is a role that Antony fulfills as well. For example, in the moments before the Battle of Philippi begins, Antony reassures a worried Octavius that the tactics of their opponents are born of desperation rather than confidence with the lines, "Tut, I am in their bosoms, and I know / wherefore they do it" (5.1.7-8). Were it not for Brutus overruling Cassius's suggestion that the conspiracy also mark Antony for death (2.1.160-90), there is an implication that the conspiracy might well have achieved its revolutionary aims. Cassius, unlike Antony, is hampered by his accountability to a group that acknowledges the reluctantly violent and guileless Brutus as its implicit leader. Caesar's failure to act on his suspicions of Cassius is a comparable oversight, and there is a certain irony in the fact that Caesar's death provides his less scrupulous subordinate Antony with the freedom of speech and action that he needs in order to bring about the fulfillment of the Caesarian agenda and the defeat of Brutus's and Cassius's reactionary republicanism. For all that Caesar aims to consolidate monarchical rule over Rome and accurately interprets the meaning of Cassius's "lean and hungry look," he still is unable to get "in the bosoms" of his adversaries in the way that Antony can. Otherwise, the conspiracy might have been thwarted.

Shakespeare lifts Caesar's sentiments about Cassius directly from Plutarch (cf. *Caes.* 62.9-10) and appropriates much of the ancient author's wording as well as Plutarch's thematic preoccupation with using physical appearance as an indicator of character and intention. This preoccupation extends, in the *Life of Antony*, to unambiguously configuring Antony's bluntness,

²⁹¹ 1.2.304-19.

²⁹² E.g. 2.1.156-90, where Cassius correctly predicts that Antony will become a threat in the aftermath of Caesar's death.

Herculean physique, and hedonistic lifestyle as manifestations of his true character.²⁹³ In contrast with the mistrusted Cassius, Caesar directs Antony to speak “on my right hand,” suggesting the intimacy of his trust of Antony. In a certain sense, Antony becomes Caesar’s right hand as he takes his position there. In the lead-up to Caesar’s assassination, further characterizing references to Antony are made by Brutus, who remarks, “I am not gamesome. I do lack some part / of that quick spirit that is in Antony” (1.2.28-9); by Casca, who describes Antony’s offer of a crown to Caesar after running the Lupercalia (1.2.215-72); by Caesar, who reinforces the characterization of Antony as a playboy by greeting him with the remark, “See Antony, that revels long a-nights, / is notwithstanding up. Good morrow Antony” (2.2.116-7); and by Cassius, who admonishes the other conspirators that Antony should be killed along with Caesar because “we shall find of him / a shrewd contriver” (2.1.156-62). Finally, Brutus again speaks of Antony, responding to Cassius’s suggestion with a counter-argument (2.1.163-6, 182-4, 186-90) that ultimately carries the day:

Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off and then hack the limbs,
Like wrath in death and envy afterwards,
For Antony is but a limb of Caesar.

And for Mark Antony, think not of him,
For he can do no more than Caesar’s arm
When Caesar’s head is off.

Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him.
If he love Caesar, all that he can do
Is to himself – take thought, and die for Caesar:
And that were much he should, for he is given
To sports, to wildness, and much company.

Brutus’s unwitting echo of Caesar’s corporeal direction to Antony from 1.2.213

consolidates a continuity of characterization for Antony in the first two acts that cuts across both the Caesarian and conspiratorial factions in the play and that in turn aligns very closely with the

²⁹³ See above, pp. 46-8.

ancient tradition of characterizing Antony as essentially unsophisticated and pleasure-driven. Particularly for an audience member unversed in the ancient and contemporary conventions of characterizing Antony, there is little in the first two acts of *Julius Caesar* (apart from Cassius's warning) to indicate that Antony is anything other than what Caesar, Brutus, and the other characters profess him to be; except, perhaps, one very subtle hint that I will discuss below. Even for an audience member familiar with the relevant ancient sources and contemporary staging practices, Shakespeare's portrayal of Antony would evince fidelity to the traditional characterization and to the Plutarchan practice of establishing a continuity between inner character and outer appearance and behavior. In this way, Shakespeare shows that he is a careful reader of his source material and, to all appearances, establishes Antony as a stable character in full agreement with conventional expectations for how he should be characterized in the years of his career before he met Cleopatra.

Antony's transformation in the third act from Caesar's henchman to the play's political mastermind is among the more dramatic character shifts in Shakespeare's *oeuvre*. There is one subtle clue in the first two acts that such a transformation will take place, and it is embedded in the exchange between Caesar and Antony at 1.2.192-214. To Caesar's suggestion that Cassius is dangerous, Antony replies, "Fear him not, Caesar, he's not dangerous; / he is a noble Roman, and well given" (1.2.196-7), an assessment that Caesar rightly dismisses immediately as erroneous. Antony's assessment would constitute *prima facie* evidence of Antony's characteristic simplicity and lack of insight into others were it not for what Caesar says at the end of the exchange as the two exit the stage, "Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf, / and tell me truly what thou think'st of him" (1.2.213-14). Antony's suitability for this role as Caesar's confidant is at first glance not especially credible. His avowed status as a hedonist, one who, as

Caesar says earlier in this speech, loves plays and listens to music, would seem to undercut Antony's perceived effectiveness as Caesar's preferred informer. Yet Caesar's deafness could make someone who had a predilection for listening to music and theatrical speeches particularly useful and even indispensable. The decision to juxtapose the reference to Antony's love of music and plays to Caesar's characterization of Cassius as one who "reads much," "is a great observer," and "looks quite through the deeds of men" (1.2.201-3) also sets up a contrast between a distinctly visually-inclined Cassius and an aurally-inclined Antony.

Antony is thus set apart from the other characters in the play, who exhibit an overriding preoccupation with symbolic visual signs and actions. Antony is prefigured here as the exceptional expert on theatrical speech and discourse that he becomes much later in the play. Particularly if the actor playing Caesar were to emphasize the word "truly" as he exits, an astute audience member would be able to recognize that what Caesar has implied is that Antony's unequivocally positive and therefore completely erroneous assessment of Cassius's character at 1.2.196-7 does not in fact represent Antony's true opinion. Caesar thus calls Antony out for the kind of bald dissimulation that he will practice in act three when he makes a show of aligning himself with the conspirators while intending all the while to turn all of Italy against them. It is not clear why Antony should not be initially forthright with Caesar at this point in the play. I would suggest, however, that the motive for Antony's dissimulation is less important than the fact that he has been accused of engaging in such dissimulation. Caesar casually shows the audience that there is literally more to Antony than meets the eye, and as he does so, the way is prepared for Antony's transformation from bit player in the first two acts to the most influential figure in the final three.

The portrayals of Mark Antony seen in my first four chapters almost invariably envision an out-of-control character: tactless in his choice of apparel, unrestrained in satisfying his appetites, and heedless of the visual signs conveyed by his body and behavior. In *Julius Caesar*, until the moment Antony's servant appears onstage in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination, this characterization of Antony remains operative. The bravura performance he then gives when he comes into the midst of the conspirators – swinging between angry grief for Caesar and conciliatory goodwill towards his assassins – makes a risky display of what appears to be emotional authenticity and offers compelling, if ultimately false, evidence for his honesty. Antony is, in this way, exhibited as a master of eloquence for the first time. When Antony is subsequently left alone onstage with Caesar's mutilated body, he reveals to the audience that his expression of goodwill towards the conspirators has been a deceptive act. In his apostrophe to Caesar's corpse, Antony makes a statement (3.1.259-62) that is emblematic of the role he is to play in the remainder of the drama:

Over thy wounds now do I prophesy –
Which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby lips
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue –
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men.

In one sense, the “voice and utterance” of Antony's tongue that Caesar's wounds demand refers to the very apostrophe that Antony is in the process of delivering, but his earlier insistence that he be permitted to speak at Caesar's funeral (3.1.226-30) suggests that his plan for inciting the bloodshed and mayhem he prophesies at 3.1.254-75 is already well-formed in his mind. Antony is going to use the voice and utterance of his tongue to turn the Roman people against the conspirators.²⁹⁴ There is a certain element of reciprocation, then, in Antony employing deception

²⁹⁴ Mooney (1991) makes a convincing case for the centrality of rhetorical persuasion and its effect on groups of people in the thematic program of *Julius Caesar*, and he argues that the play invites the Elizabethan audience to identify with the Plebeians and, by so doing, to attain an awareness of their susceptibility to pernicious rhetoric.

in order to subvert the position of men who had carried through a conspiracy, but Antony differs from the conspirators insofar as he is going to rely on his voice and rhetoric to do so, rather than on direct violence administered by his own hands.

It is significant, I think, that Caesar's wounds beg only for the voice and utterance of his tongue and do not call specifically for violent actions. The assassination of Caesar begins with Casca's cry, "Speak, hands, for me!" (3.1.76), and Brutus is induced to commit to the conspiracy through the influence of Cassius's anonymous pamphlet urging him to "speak, strike, redress!" (2.1.55). For the conspirators, political action is primarily effected through meaningful acts. Speech and action collapse into a single symbolic gesture, such as bathing their hands in Caesar's blood and displaying them for all to see (3.1.103-110). Antony is acutely aware of the meaning and importance of such gestures. As Antony makes his duplicitous peace with the conspirators, Brutus attempts to placate a seemingly distraught Antony with the lines (3.1.164-9):

O Antony, beg not your death of us!
Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,
As by our hands and this our present act
You see we do, yet see you but our hands
And this bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful.

Antony makes a point of grasping each man's bloody hand to signify his acquiescence to Brutus's interpretation of the assassination itself and of the resulting bloodied hands as manifestations of a motive to redress wrongs that Caesar had committed against Rome (3.1.170-90). Antony himself draws attention to the inconsistency of this symbolic act of grasping hands

Much of the evidence that Mooney cites to demonstrate this thesis overlaps with the material I have incorporated into this chapter, but my aim is to investigate what *Julius Caesar* communicates to an audience member who can identify with the pretensions to eloquence and political acumen illustrated by Antony, rather than with the nondescript Plebeians.

with his professed allegiance to Caesar. By doing so, he makes a convincing show of his sincerity, acknowledging how he must appear to those around him (3.1.192-9):

That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
Either a coward or a flatterer.
That I did love thee, Caesar, O, 'tis true!
If then thy spirit look upon us now,
Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death
To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
Most noble! In the presence of thy corpse?

In order to articulate the signal enormity of his symbolic action, Antony goes so far as to conjure from beyond the grave the pathetically ideal witness for his apparent betrayal, a rhetorical flourish that would come across as hyperbolic if Caesar's ghost did not figure so visibly in the latter half of the play (4.2.325-36).

In this scene, both Brutus and Antony stress the significance of what can be seen with the naked eye and attempt to persuade those around them that there is a complete continuity between how their actions appear and what they intend their actions to signify. In Brutus's case, at least, there is no hint that his motive for killing Caesar is anything other than his opposition to tyranny, as he professes. What the conspirators (and particularly Brutus) fail to appreciate – but Antony does – is that the person who performs a symbolic gesture is less powerful than the person who uses rhetoric to interpret the meaning of that gesture. Brutus is acutely aware, as we observed in his address to Antony on the heels of Caesar's assassination, that without an accurate understanding of the motives behind the conspirators' assassination of Caesar, the spectacle of his mutilated corpse and the conspirators' bloody hands will appear as only a "savage spectacle" (3.1.223). Brutus thus anticipates a powerful rhetorical strategy that Antony adopts in his funeral oration, namely, performing a reading of Caesar's tattered mantle and mutilated body that puts Caesar's death in the most pathetic light (3.2.166-223). Antony first describes the mantle as the

one Caesar put on for the first time when he conquered the Nervii (3.2.169-70), marking it as a symbol of Caesar's successful campaign against the Gauls on behalf of Rome. Antony notes three rents in the garment made by Cassius, Casca, and Brutus, and contrasts the latter's "unkindest cut" with the love Caesar bore him (3.2.172-80). Antony proceeds then to read Caesar's "muffling up his face" in his mantle at the base of Pompey's statue as a gesture signifying Caesar's becoming "vanquished" at Brutus's "ingratitude" (3.2.183-5). Antony draws attention to how the mere spectacle of Caesar's "wounded vesture" has drawn tears from the crowd before removing the mantle and revealing Caesar's body (3.2.190-3). The Plebeians' cries of "O piteous spectacle!" and "O most bloody sight!" accentuate the crucial visual component of Antony's rhetorical strategy.

Antony's reading of Caesar's mantle and body relies on manipulating his audience into believing that the meaning of the rents and wounds is self-evident. Antony even goes so far as to make this point explicit by metaphorically attributing the capacity of speech to Caesar's very wounds (3.2.217-24):

I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Caesar that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

The irony in Antony's speech is prominent and readily apparent to the theatre audience, and the idea that Antony is telling the Plebeians what they already know is among his more baldly ironical statements, given that he is relating his own interpretation to them, not objective knowledge. The idea that Caesar's wounds almost literally speak for themselves is likewise among the most patently interpretive judgments dressed up in Antony's artifice of objectivity. Antony's rhetorical strategy of relying on props is a feint, using crafted speech to create the

appearance of an objective, visible reality. Because Brutus offers no interpretation of Caesar's bloodied remains beyond an abstract articulation of the conspirators' motive for assassinating him, Antony's interpretation is allowed to become the definitive version. The distinction between subjective interpretation and objective reality is effectively erased by Antony's rhetoric.

The most conspicuous example of this principle in Antony's Forum speech, apart from the readings of Caesar's clothing and body, occurs when Antony recounts Caesar's behavior at the Lupercalia (3.2.95-9). This description, although short in length, represents the moment in the play when Shakespeare's inversion of the conventional ancient characterization of Antony is most visible:

You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And sure he is an honourable man.

To confirm the persuasiveness of Antony's reading of the events of the Lupercalia, one of the Plebeians says, "Marked ye his words? He would not take the crown; / therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious" (3.2.112-13). It is hard to argue with Antony's interpretation of the scene, least of all because the offer of the diadem is only ever envisioned in the play in reported speech.²⁹⁵ The audience, just like the crowd of Plebeians, is not in a position to evaluate the truth of what Antony asserts, although, as I noted above, Caesar's decision to attend the Senate on the Ides despite the many portents of danger – all because Decius led him to believe that it would be his only chance to receive a crown from the Senate – affords the audience privileged insight into Caesar's intentions that problematizes, if not invalidates, Antony's interpretation. It is impossible for us to know to what extent Shakespeare had Cicero's *Philippics* in mind as he composed this

²⁹⁵ Cf. 1.2.215-284 and 3.2.95-7.

play, and most treatments of the sources of *Julius Caesar* discount the speeches as a direct influence.²⁹⁶ To my mind, the only compelling piece of evidence that Shakespeare exploited the *Philippics* in the composition of *Julius Caesar* is the passage quoted above (3.2.95-9). It is ironic that Antony should be cast in the roles of both orator and the interpreter of Caesar's rejection of the offer of the crown, when Cicero plays this same role to such dramatic effect at *Phil.* 2.84-7. As I argued in chapter 1, Cicero performs a reading of Antony's physical reactions as he proleptically alludes to the events at the Lupercalia of February, 44 BC, interpreting Antony's perspiration and pallor as signs of acute shame that confirm his joint guilt with Caesar.²⁹⁷ Shakespeare, in contrast, presents the audience with an Antony who communicates entirely through controlled speech rather than through unguarded body language. Antony's words build a picture of Caesar rejecting kingship; he supplies a seemingly self-evident interpretation of that picture, one that moves the crowd of Plebeians to reject Brutus's assessment of Caesar's character and turn against the conspirators.

In a fundamental sense, then, Shakespeare has constructed a version of Antony set in March 44 BC that bears striking affinities with the figure of Cicero as he is presented in his own works and in the historical tradition from March 44 to December 43 BC.²⁹⁸ Whereas Cicero's Antony must maintain his position of power through the deployment of bodyguards and mercenaries (*Phil.* 2.19, 108, 112), the manipulation of Caesar's memoranda (*Phil.* 2.16, 24), and

²⁹⁶ See above pg. 240, n. 277.

²⁹⁷ See above, pp. 19-20.

²⁹⁸ There is a long-running debate in scholarship on *Julius Caesar* over the extent to which various characters are intended to exemplify the styles of specific ancient orators, with Antony marked as a Demosthenic speaker and Brutus tagged as a Ciceronian, for example. See Kraemer (1991) and Vawter (1976) for discussion and bibliography. These arguments frequently take place at the micro-level of diction and phrasing, but a macro-level consideration of broad strokes of characterization in the play more readily suggests the direct comparison of Antony with Cicero. It strikes me too that if one thinks about the question in terms of what any audience, including the most learned among them, could reasonably be expected to apprehend in the course of a live performance, then it seems unlikely that anyone would be undertaking the kind of close reading that a micro-level analysis would need.

judicial and legislative threats justified by his consular authority (*Phil.* 2.2), Shakespeare's Antony exerts influence on events entirely through his own voice, his pen, and his interpretation of events and visual signs. It is a telling gesture that Shakespeare inverts Cicero's traditional characterization as well and makes his version of Cicero one of the few characters in the play who demur from propounding interpretations as if they were objective truths. By doing this, Cicero effectively removes himself from any position of influence over events. To Casca's account of the ominous portents to be seen in the city of Rome, which serves as a tacit invitation for Cicero to link these prodigies to an impending change in the political landscape and express solidarity with the conspiracy, Cicero disclaims any interest in fixing the meaning of these events (2.3.33-5):

Indeed it is a strange-disposed time.
But men may construe things after their fashion,
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.

Men may indeed construe things so, and the Cicero of the *Philippics* uses writing to construe much about Antony in the worst possible light. The other characters in the play also discount Cicero's traditional characterization. When the conspirators are discussing whether to invite Cicero into the plot, they make no mention at all of Cicero's considerable oratorical skills. It is Cicero's "silver hairs," not his silver tongue, that the conspirators see as the potential asset to be gained through him (2.1.141-52). From *Julius Caesar* alone, an audience member with a limited education would not be able to ascertain that Cicero was one of the foremost orators of the ancient world. On the contrary, such a viewer might well conclude that Mark Antony had such a reputation.

Writing in *Julius Caesar* occupies a liminal space between speech and action. Antony's revelation of Caesar's will presents the Plebeians with an apparent, self-evident proof of Caesar's goodwill towards the Roman people (3.2.134-60, 231-51) much in the same way that he pushes

Caesar's rejection of the diadem as an expression of his lack of tyrannical pretensions. During the Proscription scene (4.1.1-11), Antony uses the mark of a pen to slay his political enemies, exclaiming "These many, then, shall die; their names are pricked," and "He shall not live. Look, with a spot I damn him." What in Plutarch, Appian, and the broader historical tradition is a symbolically pregnant display of dismembered bodies and drunken, tyrannical excess is here stripped down to the bloodless, clinical act of putting pen to paper.²⁹⁹ Among the conspirators, murder takes the form of dagger thrusts into a living, visible man and a symbolic coating of the hands in blood; here Shakespeare stages among the triumvirs a less grotesque but equally deadly placing of a visual mark next to a written name.

Antony's choice of the word "pricked" to describe the action of making this mark (in addition to its obvious suggestion of a sword thrust) also displays an element of triumphant condescension towards the conspirators, given that its only other appearance in the play apart from this scene occurs when Cassius asks Antony, "Will you be pricked in number of our friends, / or shall we on, and not depend on you?" (3.1.216-17). At the time, Antony answers in the affirmative. Considering Cassius's statement retrospectively in light of the meaning that "pricking" takes on during the Proscription scene, what Antony does by answering Cassius's question affirmatively is to make "pricking" the dominant symbolic gesture in the play's semiotics of political action, a discursive act more potent even than hacking at Caesar with

²⁹⁹ The exciting theatrical possibilities suggested by North's translation of the relevant section of Plutarch's *Life of Antony* make it all the more marked that Shakespeare has chosen to emphasize the detached nature of Antony's acts of political murder rather than stage them – or at the very least recount them in monologue. Compare this with the bloody spectacle that Plutarch (*Ant.* 20.1-2) describes: "And Antonius also commanded them to whom he had given commission to kill Cicero, that they should strike off his head and right hand, with the which he had written the invective Orations (called Philippics) against Antonius. So, when the murtherers brought him Cicero's head and hand cut off, he beheld them a long time with great joy, and laughed [30] heartily, and that oftentimes, for the great joy he felt. Then, when he had taken his pleasure of the sight of them, he caused them to be set up in an open place, over the pulpit for Orations (where when he was alive he had often spoken to the people) as if he had done the dead man hurt, and not blemished his own fortune, shewing himself (to his great shame and infamy) a cruel man, and unworthy the office and authority he bare."

daggers. This elevation of writing and of speech (as in Antony's Forum speech) over symbolically fraught violence is characteristic of the rhetorical programs of Cicero and the Latin-language authors who took him as their inspiration, as seen in chapter 2.³⁰⁰ Antony, however, is configured by these ancient authors as an emblem of a competing discourse of using symbolic violence and visual display to supersede the rhetorical power of writing and speech. Configuring Antony as the champion of oratory therefore represents an alignment of a traditionally anti-Ciceronian figure with a quintessentially Ciceronian ideology and praxis. As I argued in chapter 2, Cicero exemplifies the belief that political acumen coupled with masterful rhetoric could prove superior to the machinations of men who have armies at their command and make their influence felt through bloody violence that literally stains their own hands. Shakespeare's Antony exemplifies this same principle in relation to the violent conspirators, and in the fourth act Shakespeare even accords Antony a remarkable self-awareness of the power of language and rhetoric and its relationship to the power of physical force.

The way that Shakespeare's Antony characterizes his relationship to Lepidus during the lead-up to the Battle of Philippi heightens the contrast between the Antony of ancient literature and Shakespeare's version. To Octavius's claim that Lepidus is "a tried and valiant soldier" (4.1.28), Antony replies (4.1.29-40):

So is my horse, Octavius, and for that
I do appoint him store of provender.
It is a creature that I teach to fight,
To wind, to stop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion governed by my spirit,
And, in some taste, is Lepidus but so.
He must be taught, and trained, and bid go forth:
A barren-spirited fellow; one that feeds
On objects, arts, and imitations,
Which, out of use and staled by other men,
Begin his fashion. Do not talk of him

³⁰⁰ See above, pp. 104-20.

But as a property.

There is, again, an element of irony in Antony's view on Lepidus, given that he himself had earlier been characterized in the play as Caesar's mere instrument – the limb of a body with a tyrant for a head. Antony's condescension, however, comes across as more credible, because the audience has already seen him move a crowd to destructive action by his rhetoric alone and because Lepidus, both in history and in the immediate context of the play, does not in fact amount to much compared to his partners in government. The spirit-body dichotomy that Antony posits in this passage maps well onto the speech-action dichotomy that I have been tracing through *Julius Caesar*. Just as Antony says that his spirit trains his horse, one can hardly envision the manifestation of the spirit Antony talks about in Lepidus's case as anything other than the verbal commands Antony gives Lepidus earlier in the scene to go to Caesar's house and fetch his will (4.1.6-8). Antony characterizes Lepidus as a man who is only "meet to be sent on errands" (4.1.13). The implication is that "barren-spirited"-ness must be remedied by the training performed by a superior intellect, not through "objects, arts, and imitations." By crafting a putatively powerful but eminently suggestible figure like Lepidus, Shakespeare offers yet another illustration of the power of language over mere physicality.

At this point, we can take stock of the close readings that I have undertaken so far and address the question of why Shakespeare inverts the traditional characterization of Antony and fashions him into an unlikely champion of the power of rhetoric and speech to overcome a powerful cabal of influential political figures. It seems unlikely that Shakespeare has merely elaborated upon Plutarch's (and possibly Appian's)³⁰¹ account of Antony's funeral and has then based Antony's characterization on his one great success as a public speaker. Shakespeare's

³⁰¹ A translation of Appian's *Bella Civilia* into English by 'W.B.' was published in 1578. Humphreys (1984: 25-6) identifies a number of slight echoes of Appian's language in Antony's Forum speech, but the line between intertext and coincidence is very fine in this case.

references in the first two acts to Antony's fondness for revelry show that he knows the tradition that Antony is a frivolous hedonist who shares little with his contemporaries beyond an ambitious desire for power. Shakespeare's pervasive appropriation in *Julius Caesar* of Plutarch's thematic emphasis on symbolically resonant clothing, gestures, bodies, and other visual signs also shows that he knows the kind of visual, body-centric portrayal of Antony that could be crafted out of his source material, and that he has implicitly rejected it. The close alignment of Shakespeare's version of Antony in the last three acts of *Julius Caesar* with a distinctly Ciceronian paradigm suggests, I would argue, a solution to this problem. Although I do not think there are any sufficiently strong intertextual parallels between *Julius Caesar* and the *Philippics* to conclude that Shakespeare consulted them as a source during the play's composition, I would nevertheless hold that Shakespeare's characterization of Antony is evocative enough of a generalized Ciceronian orator that a close identification of Antony with Cicero is a valid interpretive move that emerges from a reading of the play.

The transfiguration of Antony between act two and act three into an avatar of Ciceronian eloquence fits well within the play's thematic preoccupation with the fluidity of identity. It would be one thing if the transposition of Antony's traditional characterization into that of his early nemesis were the only case in *Julius Caesar* of two traditionally distinct personae becoming inverted, but in fact the instability of identity is a recurring feature of the play. We have already seen Antony cleverly muddle the true distinctions that differentiate him from Brutus in terms of their public speaking abilities (3.2.219-23):

But were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Caesar that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

The irony of course is that Brutus's short, benign prose speech (3.2.12-46) gives no indication that he is capable of ruffling anyone's spirits with oratory alone. Antony's speech, of course, is designed to achieve the exact effect that he asserts himself incapable of producing. The success of this rhetoric is predicated on a cloudiness in the minds of the Plebeians in differentiating Antony from Brutus, and vice versa. Antony claims the identity of Brutus momentarily, and for the play's internal audience, at least, he succeeds in making them buy the impersonation. There is no hint that the Plebeians do not take Antony entirely at his word when he asserts, "I am no orator, as Brutus is" (3.2.210) and "I only speak right on" (3.2.216). Antony's rhetorical irony can only be effective if he and Brutus are interchangeable in the Plebeians' estimation.

Similar slippages among identities are attested elsewhere in the play as well. Cassius opines early in the play that "If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius, / [Caesar] should not humor me" (1.2.311-12).³⁰² This creates a kind of paradox: Cassius implies that if he were in Brutus's body, he would be able to resist Caesar's gestures of friendship. Yet for Cassius to be in the position of Brutus would require abandoning the posture of hostility that has caused Caesar to "bear him hard" (1.2.310) and love Brutus. As the conspirators are washing their hands in Caesar's blood (3.1.111-16), Cassius and Brutus remark:

CASSIUS
Stoop, then, and wash. How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!

BRUTUS
How many times shall Caesar bleed in sport,
That now on Pompey's basis lies along,
No worthier than the dust!

Shakespeare softly breaks the fourth wall by calling attention to fact that the scene being enacted before the audience is performed by actors who have taken on the personae of historical

³⁰² On the meaning of "humor" in this line, see Humphreys (1984: *ad loc.*).

figures.³⁰³ Shakespeare's incorporation of such a metatheatrical gesture into the text of the play highlights the actor-identities of the men on stage, and the instability of these identities would have been additionally disclosed in performance by the fact that several of the actors onstage would have portrayed different characters over the course of the play.³⁰⁴ Brutus's angry retort, "Go to! You are not Cassius" (4.2.85), delivered in the course of an argument between the two leaders that occurs before the Battle of Philippi, when Brutus accuses Cassius of bribery and corruption, reinforces the fragility of identity and moral character that typifies the play's thematic texture. At the same time, it might again play with the reality that several of the actors currently onstage would have doubled other roles in the original performance context. The point is hammered home as the conversation continues. Cassius responds to Brutus's denial of his identity with a straightforward "I am," to which Brutus insistently responds, "I say you are not" (4.2.86). Brutus's questioning of Cassius's identity in this scene also harks back to the first conversation between them in act one, where Cassius likewise takes advantage of an opportunity to interrogate Brutus's identity, saying (1.2.142-7):

'Brutus' and 'Caesar': what should be in that 'Caesar'?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name.
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well.
Weight them, it is as heavy. Conjure with 'em,
'Brutus' will start a spirit as soon as 'Caesar'.

Cassius's suggestion that the names "Caesar" and "Brutus" carry the same weight and signification in the public mind undermines the notion that there should be a power and prestige

³⁰³ O'Dair (1993: 295-99) elucidates how Brutus's and Cassius's self-awareness as actors extends to the crafting of the plot against Caesar, of which they are, in a metaphorical sense, the authors, putting together a play to bring about the assassination of Julius Caesar within a play about the assassination of Julius Caesar.

³⁰⁴ As Dessen (1992) observes, there is an obvious division in *Julius Caesar* in the first scene of the third act where a host of characters with speaking parts in the first two acts cease to appear onstage, indicating, presumably, that the actors who played them took on different speaking parts for the final three acts. Booth (1979) is a representative exploration of Shakespeare's possible use of doubling as an instrument for creating thematic resonances and theatrical play.

differential between the two. More than that, however, Cassius speaks of the names as if they have an essence apart from the people who carry them. Again, the idea that the identities of “Brutus” and “Caesar” are personae to be inhabited hints both at the theatricality of *Julius Caesar* and at the essential interchangeability of the identities of its characters. There is also a certain element of egalitarian ideology undergirding Cassius’s statement. If there really is no essential difference between Caesar and Brutus politically or socially speaking, then any marks of distinction that would differentiate them are false and unacceptable. The remainder of the play presents the audience with a number of scenarios that put this ideological hypothesis to the test.

The final three acts of *Julius Caesar* offer two illustrations of the dangers inherent in insisting on either the fixedness of identity or on its complete fluidity. The first is Caesar himself, who is the only character to proclaim spontaneously the unchanging stability of his identity. To prove (wrongly, as it turns out) why he has nothing to fear from Cassius, Caesar indicates to Antony that his identity as Caesar will protect him: “I rather tell thee what is to be feared / than what I fear; for always I am Caesar” (1.2.211-12). Later in the play, Caesar’s intransigence in refusing to recall Publius Cimber from exile, despite the pleas of Brutus and others, is couched in terms that establish the claim to a stable identity as the marker of a tyrannical temperament, one that goes too far in asserting its uniqueness (3.1.58-73):

I could be well moved, if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me.
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks,
They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
But there’s but one in all doth hold his place.
So in the world: ‘tis furnished well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshaked of motion; and that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this –

That I was constant Cimber should be banished,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

Immediately after Caesar delivers this monologue, the conspirators kneel and then begin to stab him. The effect created by this monologue is that the audience is better prepared to accept the ensuing violence as justified, for they have just seen a compelling display of Caesar's tyrannical arrogance. This arrogance consists in refusing to engage in behavior that would in any way alter the identity that he has crafted for himself as a man of infallible and therefore inflexible judgment. Caesar attempts to fix his own meaning, but by so doing he only assures that he will become a bloodied body, signifying something very different from the stability of kingly power.³⁰⁵

At the other end of the spectrum, the scene depicting the slaughter of Cinna the poet by a mob of Caesarian partisans (3.3.1-37) shows the dangers of having an identity that is too fluid. The thematic impact of this scene is produced by the mob's reaction when it realizes that they have mistaken Cinna the poet for Cinna the conspirator. With a panache composed of equal parts dark comedy and thematically resonant earnestness, one of the Plebeians replies to Cinna's protestations of his identity by saying, "Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his bad verses!" (3.3.30). Cinna, not yet realizing the indiscriminate nature of the murderous intent of the Plebeians, protests, "I am not Cinna the conspirator" (3.3.31), to which the same Plebeian replies, "It is no matter, his name's Cinna! Pluck / but his name out of his heart, and turn him going" (3.3.32-3). Cassius's musings on the equality and interchangeability of the names

³⁰⁵ Alessandro Serpieri (1985), in a semiotic reading of *Julius Caesar* that defines the Caesar/Antony and Brutus/Cassius pairings as representative of two competing models of formulating language, the former as semantically absolute and the latter as relative, views the conflict between the Caesarians and the conspirators as a conflict between two different systems for formulating the meaning of language. Serpieri concludes that the deaths of Caesar and of Brutus and Cassius betoken Shakespeare's ambivalence when it comes to disclosing which system prevails within the play and to which system Shakespeare himself is committed. However, I would suggest that the overwhelming focus in this article on Caesar and Brutus/Cassius overlooks the extent to which Antony typifies and exploits the relativism of language as well and resolves the ambivalence by the end of the play.

“Brutus” and “Caesar” earlier in the play take on an ominous tinge when the audience is at length confronted with the spectacle of a man being killed because his name – and the identity it signifies – is held to be interchangeable with another’s. The collapsing of distinctions between separate identities carries with it as much danger as the insistence that one’s identity is unique and fixed. Yet, according to the text, it is not Cinna’s name alone that seals his fate, for the mob also cites an aesthetic judgment that Cinna writes “bad verses” as a justification for slaying him. It is absurd that Cinna should be killed in the midst of a major political upheaval merely for writing shoddy poetry. However, if we read this scene in light of the reality of government oversight and the occasional suppression of speech in the theatre that prevailed in Elizabethan England, the politically motivated murder of the poet takes on a much more serious significance, particularly given that Antony’s inflammatory rhetoric is the proximate cause of the mob’s murderous rage.³⁰⁶

There is, I think, a connection between Cinna’s “bad verses,” Antony’s eloquence, and the play’s preoccupation with the fluidity of identity, a connection that helps to explain what others have termed the superfluity of Cinna’s death in *Julius Caesar*.³⁰⁷ Cinna’s insistence on the stability of his own identity and his inability to persuade the Plebeians mark him as an unusually inept figure relative to other characters in the play. Even Brutus, who himself does not measure up to Antony as an orator or to Cassius as a politician, manages initially to win over the fickle Plebeians by his act of tyrannicide. They even attempt to reward him with a name and an identity that signify his power over them and their submission to his will. Upon Brutus’s arrival to

³⁰⁶ On Antony’s role in bringing about the death of Cinna, see Roe (2004: 180-2). For a discussion of Cinna’s death as both a manifestation of a recurring cultural myth of poet-killing (cf. Orpheus) and also as an incident that has broad symbolic implications for the position and safety of the poet/author in Elizabethan England, see Taylor (1992).

³⁰⁷ As most commentators on the play note, Plutarch’s account of the aftermath of the assassination in his *Life of Caesar* (68.6-7) is slightly different. Cinna’s death is the event that prompts the tyrannicides to flee Rome, while in Shakespeare’s version Cinna’s death has no direct bearing on any of the plot developments which follow.

deliver his Forum speech, the Plebeians shout, “Let him be Caesar!” (3.2.49) and “Caesar’s better parts / shall be crowned in Brutus!” (3.2.50-1). These sentiments display a remarkable misunderstanding of the conspirators’ zeal to abolish the power that Caesar’s name and crown represent. When these sentiments are compared with the Plebeians’ equally fervent reactions to Antony’s speech, it reveals again how easily manipulated the Plebeians are. I would argue, then, that Cinna’s failure to deflect the Plebeians’ murderous rage is less a reflection on the Plebeians’ mindset, which is easily re-directed, than on Cinna’s abject ineptitude as a persuasive speaker. Cinna represents the pitfalls that await an author who cannot establish a rapport with the audience. In his case, Cinna needed to establish an identity as a poet that distinguished him enough from Cinna the conspirator to convince the Plebeians to spare his life – for the quality of his verses.

The threat to Shakespeare and his literary contemporaries from political upheaval was in fact especially acute around the time of the first production of *Julius Caesar* in 1599. This play, with its staged assassination of a presumptive tyrant, would have been of much more than historical interest to a theatre-going audience that held a wide range of opinions on the question of whether or not Elizabeth I merited a similar fate. Dissatisfaction with her regime would prompt a faction under the leadership of the Earl of Essex to attempt a coup in 1601, and many prominent literary figures were implicated in supporting his opposition to the regime in the years leading up to it. John Drakakis (1992: 71), in an essay that interrogates the relationship of *Julius Caesar* to the political *zeitgeist* of its time, writes the following about Shakespeare’s allusions to the theatre as a political space:

This representation of the workings of political power, irrespective of intention, discloses an unstable institution proceeding gingerly into a terrain fraught with considerable political danger. Cast in a subversive role, confronted with the demands of official censorship, but nevertheless seeking legitimation, the actual choice of dramatic material would have been crucial. In *Julius Caesar* the Chamberlain’s Men could displace their

own professional anxieties onto a narrative which, by virtue of its very ambivalence, offered a space for the exploration of the ideology which governs the exchange of representations which take place between society and theatre, centre and margins.

Ambivalence, as Drakakis implies, is a characteristic feature of the play that creates a dedicated space for the exploration of potentially controversial subject matter that could bear real-world ramifications. The world depicted in *Julius Caesar* is not just linked to Elizabethan England by its language and the elements of staging that have more of London about them than Rome,³⁰⁸ but Caesar himself can be read as both good king and evil tyrant, straddling the political division that fractured the Elizabethan audience when it came to their own monarch.³⁰⁹ The advantage of such ambivalence as a means of protecting the playwright and his company from government interference is fairly obvious. If, hypothetically, Shakespeare were to be accused of fashioning the character Julius Caesar as a veiled criticism of the tyrannical pretensions of the reigning monarch, his accusers would have to align Elizabeth with Caesar's tyrannical flaws rather than with his more redeeming, kingly qualities. By using ambivalence to compel the audience/reader to make the interpretive connections between Rome and London rather than making these connections explicit and unambiguous himself, Shakespeare allows a political critique to emerge whose creation becomes the ultimate responsibility of the viewer/reader instead of the author.

The character of Antony, I would suggest, serves as a model within the play for how a playwright can exploit the inherent ambiguities of language and the persuasive power of interpretation to be a successful player in the dangerous game of creating politically engaged

³⁰⁸ See D'Amico (1982) and Humphreys (1984: 48-53) for a discussion of Shakespeare's use of classical costume, with relevant bibliography. Such costume probably consisted of a mixture of classical and Elizabethan elements, a combination that Humphreys and others note would have induced a heightened awareness in the audience of the applicability of the play's themes to contemporary circumstances.

³⁰⁹ A recurring feature of mainstream scholarship on *Julius Caesar* – and certainly of much of the scholarship cited in this chapter – is that the attitude of the play to both Julius Caesar and the conspirators is one of ambivalence, with neither being entirely virtuous or villainous. See especially Miola (1985) for a detailed treatment of this issue.

theatre. Antony becomes such a player by exercising a virtuoso's control over language and the perception of his own identity. We have seen how Antony deploys a show of objectivity in his Forum speech. He presents the "facts" of Julius Caesar's life and death to push the Plebeians to reach the interpretation he intends them to reach. Antony furthermore adopts an ironic posture of respect towards Brutus that distances his own stated judgment of the assassination from the judgment that he inspires the Plebeians to make. We saw too how Antony exploits the visual symbolism of taking the conspirators' bloody hands and exhibits plausible grief at the sight of Caesar's body in order to persuade the conspirators of his honesty and thus put himself in a position to deliver the eulogy over Caesar. Shakespeare's Antony is a master of staging scenes that readily and almost inexorably induce the interpretive leaps that he wishes his audience to take, and this is a function both of his superlative eloquence and the fluidity of his identity.

Antony's turn from a mindless henchman in the first two acts to a consummate orator and political schemer in act three instantiates the way a chameleon-like persona can protect a person from harm. As we noted previously, Antony's life is spared by the conspirators because Brutus believes that Antony is innocuous without Caesar's guiding intelligence. Antony is the author of his own rhetoric, and he is also an author of his own identity. He does not insist on the stability of his identity as Caesar does, nor does he allow his identity to become so malleable, so insubstantial, that he becomes an empty name to be filled in by other characters who wish to fix his meaning, as Cinna the poet does. I thus disagree with the assessment that the audience's lack of access to Antony's motive, the lack of soliloquies to illuminate Antony's inner thoughts, means that Antony lacks a characterization and is little more than a mouthpiece for Shakespeare,

a prop to advance the plot.³¹⁰ Antony is not an authorial mouthpiece. He is, I would contend, an authorial presence in his own right.

Antony's rhetorical exploitation of the ambiguity of events (e.g. the offer of a crown to Caesar) and of objects (e.g. Caesar's mantle, body, and will) is only possible because Antony has, in a certain sense, created these events and objects. He recounts the details of the Lupercalia while omitting any revealing (and potentially unflattering) insights into Caesar's or his own motivations (3.2.95-7). He charges Caesar's mantle with the glamour of victory over Rome's adversaries (3.2.166-93), and he connects the wounds on Caesar's body and Caesar's supposedly friendly, even loving, relationships with the men who inflicted them (3.2.217-23). As we have also discussed, Antony kills his enemies through proscriptive writing alone (4.1.1-10), he claims to animate a fearsome soldier like Lepidus with his thoughts and words alone (4.1.29-47), and he asserts a veritable omniscience in understanding the plans and intentions of his enemies during the Battle of Philippi (5.1.7-8). Shakespeare's Antony illustrates authorial power in action. Yet, at the same time, he himself is also an illustration of Shakespeare's authorial power in action.

Shakespeare, as I said at the outset, echoes his sources' deployment of personal appearance and visual signs/actions as key indices of character. Like the histories and speeches he read in school, *Julius Caesar* is pervaded by a dense array of symbolic apparel, gestures, and visual markers. In ancient literature, Antony is a prime example of a character whose appearance conveys a meaning that is often more revealing and more conspicuous than the tenuous signification of his speech and writings. To invert this paradigm as Shakespeare does, transforming Antony into a character who relies on clever speech acts to overcome adversaries who themselves rely instead on symbolic actions, is in itself an exemplary instantiation of an author wielding the creative power of language. Shakespeare's Antony disrupts the traditional

³¹⁰ For such an assessment, see Green (1979: 114-23).

paradigm that conventionally determines his characterization and demonstrates that it is the author who exerts control over the representation of character, not source tradition or even reality. The conspirators, who insist on the continuing relevance and truth of traditional paradigms of morality and behavior in order to justify their opposition to Caesar and his associates,³¹¹ reveal the relative weakness of this approach when Cassius insults Antony by calling him “a masquer and a reveler” (5.1.62) in the verbal sparring that takes place before the Battle of Philippi. Cassius’s insult rings hollow in light of the virtuoso displays of oratory and political maneuvering that the audience has witnessed Antony perform in the previous act, and it serves as a striking reminder of how markedly Antony’s characterization in the latter three acts differs from that in the first two and in the ancient source tradition. Antony’s reply, “Old Cassius still!” (5.1.63), at the most basic level of interpretation is an expressive of contempt for Cassius’s abrasive personality. Read through the lens of the interpretive framework that I have been developing, however, this retort signifies that Cassius has not evolved as a character over the course of the play to the extent that Antony has, and that this failure to change and adapt is a cause for reproach.

Brutus’s similar refusal to diverge from his accustomed characterization as a plain-speaking political idealist likewise prevents him from being a match for the more adaptable and less scrupulous Antony. The fatal stability of Brutus’s character is divulged and tellingly incorporated into the play’s final dramatization of the theme of unstable identity at 5.4.7-25. Here, Brutus’s friend Lucilius takes advantage of the heat and confusion of battle to pretend to Antony’s soldiers that he is Brutus, thus giving the real Brutus the opportunity to avoid capture by taking his own life. When he is presented to Antony, Lucilius says of Brutus, “When you do

³¹¹ One of Cassius’s strategies for inspiring Brutus to take part in the conspiracy is encouraging Brutus to assimilate himself to the anti-monarchical paradigm of his ancestor Brutus, who helped drive out the last kings of Rome and establish the Republic (1.2.154-61).

find him, or alive or dead, / he will be found like Brutus, like himself' (5.4.25). For all the nobility of Brutus's death, he and the other conspirators do not succeed in ultimately ridding Rome of tyranny. Like Caesar himself, ironically, Brutus and Cassius in particular hew to a fixed identity that leaves them vulnerable to the machinations of Antony. His ability to control both the creation of speech and its interpretation is founded upon the openness of his character to adopting different personae depending upon the needs of the political moment. Antony exemplifies in microcosm the ambiguity and openness to a multiplicity of different yet equally valid interpretations that Shakespeare builds into the structure of *Julius Caesar* in macrocosm.

Even as he presents us with an innovative version of Antony, Shakespeare still exhibits continuity with a long tradition of authors, beginning with Cicero, who have used their authorial discretion to mold Antony's character to suit their own idiosyncratic purposes without paying much regard to historical reality or to other historio-biographical traditions. Throughout this dissertation, I have drawn attention to how authors' invocations of the same personae – theatrical performer, tyrant, insane lover, and orator – can nevertheless result in strikingly divergent portrayals of Mark Antony. Plutarch's comedic, Herculean Antony is a different sort of performer from the actor of Appian who diminishes the majesty of the Roman state by displaying the spectacle of the mere man underneath the mask of high office. The tyrannical Antony of Velleius Paterculus functions to justify the radical measures employed by Augustus to save a Republic that was already being transformed into the principate, while the tyrannical Antony of Josephus and Plutarch embodies critiques of the Romans' exploitation of non-Roman subject peoples. The tragic lover depicted by Propertius lays the groundwork for a powerful symbol of love's supremacy over worldly ambitions, but the love-crazed madman of Plutarch

and Cassius Dio serves as a cautionary tale of what happens when a statesman lets the flattering enticements of *eros* hold sway over his judgment. For first century BC Rome, Cicero's Antony is an emblem of anti-intellectualism; lacking any oratorical skill, this version of Antony communicates only through the vulgar motions of a body whose appetites and gestures he cannot control. For Elizabethan England, Shakespeare's version of Antony as a paragon of oratorical eloquence models how to be successful as a politically engaged author. Shakespeare's inversion of the ancient tradition is therefore, paradoxically, in keeping with this tradition's configuration of Antony as a malleable cultural touchstone. In the history of the idea of Mark Antony in literature, Shakespeare's Antony is another stage in an ongoing and still unfinished play of representations and receptions.

Afterword

To 31 π.Χ. στην Αλεξάνδρεια

Απ' την μικρή του, στα περίχωρα πλησίον, κόμη,
και σκονισμένος από το ταξίδι ακόμη

έφθασεν ο πραγματευτής. Και «Λίβανον!» και «Κόμμι!»
«Άριστον Έλαιον!» «Άρωμα για την κόμη!»

στους δρόμους διαλαλεί. Αλλ' η μεγάλη οχλοβοή,
κ' η μουσικές, κ' η παρελάσεις πού αφίνουν ν' ακουσθεί.

Το πλήθος τον σκουντά, τον σέρνει, τον βροντά.
Κι όταν πια τέλεια σαστισμένος, «Τι είναι η τρέλλα αυτή;» ρωτά,

ένας του ρίχνει κι αυτουνού την γιγαντιαία ψευτιά
του παλατιού – που στην Ελλάδα ο Αντώνιος νικά.

In Alexandria, 31 BC

From his little village near the outskirts
and still covered with the journey's dust,

arrived the peddler. 'Incense' and 'Gum!'
'Excellent Oil!' 'Perfume for the hair!'

he cries through the city streets. But amid the great hustle,
the music and the parades, how can he be heard?

The crowd jostles him, carries him along, jolts him violently
and when, in total bewilderment, he asks: 'What's all this madness?'

someone hurls at him too the monstrous lie
of the palace – that Antony is victorious in Greece.

– C.P. Cavafy (trans. Evangelos Sachperoglou)

There is perhaps no other twentieth century author whose work is so deeply implicated in the myth of Mark Antony as C. P. Cavafy. A man who is both an integral thread in the cultural fabric of cosmopolitan Alexandria yet also paradoxically so alien to it, it is no wonder that Cavafy finds Antony to be an evocative subject. Cavafy is the preeminent poet of displacement, alienation, and nostalgia, and few historical figures are as conspicuously resonant with these qualities as Mark Antony is. “In Alexandria, 31 BC” situates Antony in a specific place and a

specific moment in much the same way that I have endeavored to contextualize Antony in the specific thematic program of each of the authors that I have covered in this dissertation. But however rigorous any scholarly treatment of the varied representations of Mark Antony in ancient literature professes to be, the truth is that the best outcome that anyone can hope to achieve is an accurate map of a mirage. The essence of Mark Antony is elusiveness, and Cavafy understands this better than anyone.

We are as the peddler within this poem: confronted by a parade of distorted sources and confounded by a colorful array of shifting personae, we hew to hawking the tangible minutiae that are our stock-in-trade. To attempt to comprehend the full scope of the material now visible before us is madness for anyone from the outskirts; for anyone who must traverse the temporal distance of millennia to sojourn in Antony's Alexandria. However, recognizing the mad confusion of inconsistencies within this material is the path to apprehending something real about it. The peddler perceives that the pageantry in front of him is madness, and there is an enduring value in questioning collective consensus in this way. The peddler only lacks accurate information to know that what he sees is madness precisely because Antony has not in fact been victorious in Greece. The monstrous lie authored by the palace is too pervasive, too entrenched to be refuted. There is no entry for a poor peddler into a palace, and there is no perspective from which we can objectively assess the true significance of the images of Antony that parade through western art and literature. At most, we can measure the effects that these images produce in writers, readers, and cultures. This is the essence of metabiography.

Cavafy's vision of an Alexandria convulsed by the celebration of Antony's victory in the Battle of Actium represents the extremity to which the inversion of the historio-biographical tradition can be taken. However, Cavafy does not present us with an alternate reality, or even an

alternate history, so much as an alternate way of thinking about how history, biography, and identity work. The Antony who is an implicit but palpable presence in “In Alexandria, 31 BC” is defined by a monstrous lie, and we, as the readers of the poem, are in a position to appreciate its irony fully. Yet by focalizing this Alexandrian scene through the eyes of the ignorant peddler, Cavafy tempers the savor of irony with a subtle flavor of pathos. Earnest jubilation founded on misapprehension, unrestrained joy at witnessing a dawn of victory that is actually a twilight of defeat: these are not images of emotion that induce mocking smiles in readers. We perceive instead a pathetic Alexandria soon to be rocked to its foundations by the tragic downfall of Mark Antony. Cavafy defines his Antony with a fabricated lie, and by so doing he creates an emotional truth. Cavafy makes us experience a frisson by illustrating how the certainties that undergird all our lives – certainties such as the identity of the victor of the Battle of Actium, for example – themselves rest on assumptions that have the potential to be proven wrong in an instant. It is not just a question of life suddenly changing. As we have seen in this metabiographical study of Mark Antony, what awaits any life that is inscribed in the record of memory is its fragmentation into many different lives. Each of these new lives is only a pale reflection of the original, but the elements of originality in each new life reflect the creative impulses that shape life into art, that give old lives new meaning.

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