part, by Thorsten Veblen and Pierre Bourdieu) are key to the argument. However, these are integrated into the analysis in a sensible and balanced way, without overshadowing the discussion of many other important literary and philosophical aspects. The section on Precepts of Health Care is particularly successful in this respect, because it brilliantly illuminates how Plutarch’s advice on dietetics takes into account a broader scene of professional competition between imperial doctors, teachers of gymnastics and philosophers, as well as affiliating with a prestigious medico-philosophical tradition that lent importance to the care of one’s body. The sections discussing the different works’ rhetorical texture are weaker: for example, the intriguing proposition that Plutarch’s writings of practical philosophy operate as ‘socially engaged speech acts’ (p. 11) requires substantiation through a more thorough analysis of the works’ rhetorical strategies (by integrating linguistic theory in a more systematic fashion, for example).

The book is well produced, with few typographical errors. There are three very usable indexes (general, Greek, locorum).

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ETHICS IN PLUTARCH’S LIVES

A. has written a compelling monograph about the exposition of ethics in Plutarch’s Parallel Lives. The book is a modern treatment of Plutarch in more than one sense: written in Modern Greek (and for that reason little noticed outside Greece), it engages with the most recent scholarship on and approaches to the Lives in order to address the question of which pairs of statesmen are presented as ‘positive’ (θετικά) and which as ‘negative’ (αρνητικά) examples. Ambiguity exists because Plutarch calls only one pair definitively negative, Demetrius–Antony, but he implies that others could be considered negative as well. T. Duff has discussed the scholarly debate over which other Lives should be so categorised (Plutarch’s Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice [1999], pp. 55–65), concluding that a strict classification according to these terms is misguided. A. does not challenge this conclusion. Rather, he uses it as a starting point for an attempt to detect a subtler trend toward increasingly negative presentations as the series progresses. The bases for his thesis are the suggestion that the now lost first pair, Epaminondas–Scipio, was most likely wholly positive, given Plutarch’s praise of Epaminondas in other Lives, and the generally accepted view that the explicitly negative Demetrius–Antony comes near the end. A.’s study consists of a substantial introduction, followed by close readings and analyses of seven pairs of Lives and a conclusion.

In the preface, A. states that he is writing for the specialist and non-specialist alike (p. 12). His introduction, which demonstrates broad engagement with the field of Plutarchan studies and skillful synthesis of prior scholarship, appeals to both groups by summarising some important interpretative trends, though it also lays the groundwork for A.’s larger analysis. In the first section of the Introduction, A.
explains Plutarch’s use of parallelism and *synkrisis*, underscoring principles that will be fundamental to his readings in the subsequent chapters. These principles include the interconnectedness of the *Lives* and *Moria*, the need to read each pair of *Lives* as a single book, and Plutarch’s reliance on *synkrisis* between the two subjects of a pair as well as between the subject of an individual *Life* and other historical figures. Despite identifying a consistent, comparative approach, A. highlights methodological variation in the *Lives*, such as differences in Plutarch’s criticism of his sources and the three cases where the biography of the Roman hero precedes that of the Greek. In light of this variation, A. suggests that the lost *Epanetionidas–Scipio* probably did not contain a preface that set out Plutarch’s plan for the full series (pp. 18–19). This suggestion is important for A.’s book as a whole, since he ultimately rejects the idea that Plutarch wrote the *Lives* according to a plan, preferring instead the view that his ethical interests evolved over time.

In the Introduction’s second section, A. provides a concise but lucid survey of the development of ancient biography and an overview of Plutarch’s ethical aims, drawing on scholarship from F. Leo (*Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form* [1901]) to the present. In the third section, he examines Plutarch’s use of his biographical subjects as ethical examples. Here A. makes the transition from establishing the background for his study to setting out his thesis. He begins by exploring precedents for Plutarch’s moralising biography, including Polybius’ lost work on Philopoemen, Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* and *Ageisilaus*, and Isocrates’ *Evagoras*. Then he turns to C. Pelling (‘Aspects of Plutarch’s Characterisation’, *ICS* 13.2 [1988], 257–74) for the terminology to explain Plutarch’s approach. The moralising found in the *Lives* can be either ‘protreptic’, urging readers to imitate or avoid certain types of behaviour, or ‘descriptive’, revealing behaviour but allowing readers to choose their own response. This characterisation leads A. to set out the three questions that form the basis of his investigation in the remainder of the book (p. 37): (1) To what extent does a classification of *Lives* as ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ match Plutarch’s intention? (2) If we can identify negative *Lives*, why does Plutarch not identify them as such, as he does with the *Demetrius–Antony*? (3) If the negative *Lives* come later in the series, does this represent an overall schematic development in the corpus?

In the chapters that follow, A. analyses seven pairs of *Lives* in a systematic way. Each chapter begins with a discussion of the prologue or, in the two cases where Plutarch has not included a prologue, a general outline of the *Lives*. He then examines each *Life* individually and concludes with a synopsis, where he discusses the characteristics of the pair as a whole. In attempting to identify a trend in the moralising, A. does not try to establish an exact chronology for the *Lives* that he examines. Rather, he depends on C.P. Jones (‘Towards a Chronology of Plutarch’s Works’, *JRS* 56 [1966], 61–74, reprinted in B. Scardigli, *Essays on Plutarch’s Lives* [1995], pp. 95–123) to fix the *Lives* in a relative chronological order, which becomes the order of his chapters. The *Lives* A. considers are *Cimon–Lucullus*, *Pelopidas–Marcellus*, *Themistocles–Camillus*, *Lysander–Sulla*, *Pericles–Fabius Maximus*, *Dion–Brutus* and *Demetrius–Antony*. Each chapter is marked by careful readings that illuminate ethical themes while continuing to engage with the interpretations of other scholars.

A. does not detect a trend toward increasingly negative examples as the series of *Lives* progresses. The questions raised in the Introduction serve primarily as
a vehicle for examining Plutarch’s methods in general and for arguing against overly simplifying formulations of his approach. In the conclusion, A. considers four main points, all of which emphasise the complexity of Plutarch’s ethics. First, Plutarch is not urging his readers toward simple mimesis of historical figures but rather inviting them to investigate their character. The examples of character presented to the reader, A. argues, are problematic rather than black and white. By ‘problematic’ A. means that Plutarch describes his heroes realistically, leaving the reader not with aporia but with a better understanding of the complexity of human nature. Second, A. argues that Plutarch did not create the Lives according to a rigid interpretative scheme. Instead, his biographies reflect the variety of his personal, scholarly interests and (once again) the complexity of his ethics. Third, each pair emphasises different themes, and the degree of synkrisis between the subjects of each pair varies. Finally, the primary aim of the Lives is the moral improvement of the reader, who can observe both positive and negative traits in all Plutarch’s biographical subjects.

In the process of drawing his conclusions, A. offers a lively, comprehensive set of readings that in total illustrate the ethical aims of Plutarch’s biographical project. A.’s book should appeal to both his intended audiences: it is a learned introduction to Plutarchan biography and a careful study of his use of historical examples for ethical instruction.

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THE GREEK NOVELS

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In this wide-ranging book W. presents readings of the five fully extant Greek romances; and while this review follows the central lines of argument, the map should not be mistaken for the territory. W. includes in his analysis examples and support from the broader literary context of the early empire, including non-romantic prose fiction as well as the romance fragments. W. proves himself equally familiar with modern theories of reading.

The Introduction establishes the context for W.’s analysis. This includes a survey of approaches in novelistic scholarship: Foucauldian and mystery-initiation readings that prioritise private selfhood in the context of empire; readings centring on the idealisation of conjugal ideology; and attempts to locate the romances within the broader cultural movement known as the ‘Second Sophistic’. Concomitantly, the limitations of each of these approaches are explored: the impulse to read alienation or isolation into the psyche of Greeks during the Roman Empire is rooted in a modern, existential mindset rather than in anything obviously identifiable in the ancient texts; while the romances have a tendency towards conjugal bliss, there are other types of erotic desire and praxis that need to be accounted for; and the Second Sophistic never was a movement as such, nor are its attributes found in all the extant texts. Any analysis of the romance is bound to have to tackle the