

Introduction

Xenophon is one of the truly distinctive writers of the ancient Hellenic world. Writing in the tradition of Greek historiographers, Xenophon actually arrested the trajectory of that tradition, specifically the Thucydidean inheritance of “scientific” historiography, by integrating philosophy and historiography. Xenophon expounded philosophy through historiography; in effect, he created a new type of discourse: philosophical historiography or historiographical philosophy. Through the form and method of historiography or similar forms and methods, such as historical biography and encomium, Xenophon communicated philosophies of the nature of sovereignty, leadership, and government. In the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, in particular, Xenophon articulates a philosophy of government, leadership, and sovereignty that centers on the body and the soul, education and justice, and *oikos* and *oikoumenê*.

The Structure and Content of the Agesilaus and the Cyropaedia

The *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia* can be only nominally considered historiography. While they center on historical people and recount some historical events, they each exhibit features that are inconsistent with historiography as it is traditionally understood. In both cases, the historical events, such as they are, are secondary to the overall aims of the respective works.

In the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon explains that his aim is to write a tribute (ἑπαινος) in honour of Agesilaus (1.1). As such, this work is best identified as an encomium. While this genre would become popular in subsequent generations, the *Agesilaus*, likely written shortly after the death of Agesilaus in 360 B.C.E., is one of our earliest examples of the genre in Greek literature.¹ Hirsch divides the work into three main parts: “a chronological Survey of Deeds (erga) of the Spartan king (1.6–2.31); a Catalogue of Virtues (aretai), illustrated by incidents selected from his long

¹ Most notably, Isocrates’ *Evag.*, which may have influenced Xenophon, preceeded *Ages*. On the relationship of these two works and also their relationship to Xenophon’s *Cyr.* see Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Expanded ed.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 48-57.

career (3.1–9.7); and a Summary of Virtues (11.1–16)."² These main parts are accompanied by a preface (1.1-5) and a transitional chapter from the catalogue to the summary of virtues (10).

While the genre of the *Agésilas* is readily apparent, the genre of the *Cyropaedia* is not nearly so easy to determine. In the opening chapter, Xenophon begins with a reflection on the volatility inherent in the rule of human beings, which he contrasts with the relative ease with which humans can command animals (1.1-2). Xenophon suggests this may lead some to conclude that it is an impossible task to rule humans but he immediately rejects this with an appeal to Cyrus in whom Xenophon finds a model for leadership and government (1.3-6). In the programmatic conclusion to this opening, Xenophon writes,

So on the grounds that this man was worthy of wonder, we examined who he was by birth, what his nature was, and with what education he was brought up, such that he so excelled in ruling human beings. Whatever we have learned, therefore, and think we have perceived about him, we shall try to relate. (1.6)

This programmatic statement suggests many different genres. The language of examination and report recalls Herodotus' program to set out the findings of his research on the wars between Greeks and barbarians (1.1). Yet, the subject is not historical events but a particular person, Cyrus, and in this respect Momigliano has referred to the *Cyropaedia* as the "most accomplished biography we have in classical Greek literature."³ This might be a satisfactory genre but for other aspects of the work that even Momigliano recognizes. Momigliano goes on to write that the *Cyropaedia* is "no biography at all, being a mixture of facts and fancies to communicate a philosophic message."⁴ Indeed, the work, while containing some historical facts and settings, is largely fictional.

² Steven W. Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1985), 39.

³ Momigliano, *Greek Biography*, 55.

⁴ Momigliano, *Greek Biography*, 56.

Alternatively, the programmatic statement and its preface suggests that the primary purpose of the work is not biographical but rather political; it aims to answer the leading problem of the work, i.e. the problem of ruling humans. In this respect, the *Cyropaedia* commends itself to the reader as a work political philosophy. Yet, it is hardly a typical political treatise given the elements of biography and story just mentioned that comprise the bulk of its narrative. The difficulty in determining a genre for the *Cyropaedia* points to its uniqueness and lack of continuity relative to earlier and even later works. Still, the *Cyropaedia* is probably best understood as political philosophy cast in the genre of historical, biographical fiction, or, as eluded to earlier, historiographical philosophy/philosophical historiography.⁵

The structure of the *Cyropaedia* is obviously more complex than the *Agésilas* by virtue of its greater length and, given the scope of this paper, it should suffice to draw attention to two proposals. Due divides the *Cyropaedia* into five main parts: the introduction (1.1), an account of Cyrus's birth and education to his first military command (1.2-6), Cyrus' military achievements (2.1–7.5.36), the death of Cyrus (7.5.37–8.7), and an epilogue (8.8).⁶ Gera, by contrast, provides a more innovative overview of the *Cyropaedia*, organizing it by three major genres: Socratic dialogues or speeches (1.3.15-18; 1.6; 3.1; 3.3.48-56; 5.5.5-37; 8.7), symposia (1.3.4-12; 2.2.1-3; 3.1; 5.2.5-22; 8.3.35-50; 8.4.1-27), and four discontinuous novellas on Panthea, Gobryas, Gادات, and Croesus (passim).⁷ These two proposals for the structure of the *Cyropaedia* reflect two different approaches to the book. Due's proposal emphasizes the biographical aspect of the work while Gera's proposal calls attention to a variety of internal genres and Xenophon's very Hellenic representation of the education of Cyrus.

⁵ Deborah L. Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: Style, Genre, and Literary Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 1, goes even further in contemplating the genre of this work, observing, "It can be described as a biography of Cyrus the Great, a history of the beginnings of the Persian empire, a romance, an encomium, a military handbook, a guide to the political administration of an empire, a didactic work on ethics, morals, and education, etc." Certainly, Gera is right in identifying the presence of all these genres in the work but it seems fair to conclude that the work's primary aim is to resolve the problem set forth in chapter one, that is the problem of ruling human beings. To this extent then, the work is political philosophy in the form of biographical fiction.

⁶ Bodil Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon's Aims and Methods* (trans. Catherine Brejnholt; Copenhagen: Aarhus University Press, 1989), 14.

⁷ Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia*.

Both the *Agésilau*s and the *Cyropaedia* share in common one central feature; these works center on rulers. The genres of encomium and historical, biographical fiction permit Xenophon to cast aside any notion of objectivity, a freedom Xenophon uses to advance paradigmatic visions of two rulers: Agesilaus and Cyrus. As the craftsman of these paradigmatic visions, Xenophon necessarily reveals his own political philosophies. The selectivity of the narratives, that is that which Xenophon chooses to write about in the *Agésilau*s and the *Cyropaedia*, is a witness to Xenophon's own predilections and interests. In this respect, these two works provide clearer insight into Xenophon's philosophies than the *Hellenica*, which is less overtly subjective and so more constrained by the heritage of Thucydidean "objectivity." The genre and content of the *Agésilau*s and the *Cyropaedia*, along with other minor works from Xenophon, therefore, lend themselves to an analysis of the fundamental concepts, implicit or explicit, that form the foundation of Xenophon's philosophy of government, leadership, and sovereignty.

The Body and The Soul

In these works, the health of the state is intimately related to the fitness of the body and the mind or soul of its leadership and citizenry. Ordered rule starts with the submission of the body to inspection and regulation and the application of the mind or soul to the cultivation of excellence in virtue. In the arts and literature of the fifth and fourth century Greek world, there is a marked movement towards greater specification of the individual in physical, moral, and intellectual terms. The emergence of the classical type in paintings and sculpture as well as the idealization of the virtuous man in Socrates or the body politic in Plato's *Republic* are manifestations of this movement. As a student of Socrates, it is not surprising that Xenophon should exhibit in his historiographical philosophy this same movement.

Inspection and Regulation of the Body

Although writing about the European “classical age,” Foucault might just as well have been referring to classical Greece when he wrote, “The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power. It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body—to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skilful and increases its forces.”⁸ In the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon bespeaks this attention to the body through attention to genealogies as well as emphasis on training and discipline.

At the outset of the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon roots his praise for Agesilaus and his paradigmatic vision of Cyrus in their births. Xenophon praises the nobility and excellence of Agesilaus’ lineage, who is a descendant of Heracles (1.2), consequently shares in the divinity present in Heracles, and is a scion of kings, “honoured above all in their fatherland” (1.3 LCL).⁹ Xenophon also writes that this Heracleian kingship is exercised, uninterrupted, over the very best state in Greece, Sparta, and the very best men in Greece, the citizens of Sparta (1.3-4). Similarly, Xenophon recounts that Cyrus is a scion of kings, through his father Cambyses, king of the Persians and from the “race of the Perseidae, who were so named after Perseus,” and through his mother Mandane, a daughter of the Median king, Astyages (1.2.1).¹⁰ Through these introductions, Xenophon sets out the importance of the genealogy of the body and stresses the links to kingship and divinity that are present in the respective lineages.

The greater mark of Xenophon’s attention to the body though is the emphasis in the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia* on training and discipline. Through training and discipline, the body is inspected and regulated with an aim to improve or simply glorify its outward appearance, enhance physical fitness, develop military skills, and cultivate self-control and temperance. In this

⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (trans. Alan Sheridan; 2nd ed.; New York: Vintage, 1995), 136. Of course, Foucault not only makes this observation within the age of eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe but also as a part of a discourse of discipline and punishment. In the argument I set forth here, the Greek city sets its gaze on the body for the purposes of strengthening and empowering the state.

⁹ On the Spartan kingship, in particular the divinity of the king, see also Xenophon, *Lac.* 15.2-9.

¹⁰ Xenophon also observes, “Cyrus is still described in word and song by the barbarians as having been most beautiful in form” (1.2.1). On the divinity of Cyrus, see Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.2.24.

way, the good citizen, good soldier, and above all the good ruler increases the skills and utility of the body for use by the state, which Xenophon frequently contrasts with the untrained body, characterized by weakness and effeminacy.

One of the distinctive aspects of classical Greek culture as compared to pre-classical Greece and the Near Eastern civilizations is its glorification of the body, particularly the nude male form. As Bonfante observes, the artistic representation of nudity in texts or art is common in the ancient Near East and pre-classical Greece but the representation of nudity in classical Greece marks a fundamental shift in perspective on the body.¹¹ In the ancient Near East and pre-classical Greece, public displays of nudity either imply "shame, vulnerability, death, and dishonor"¹² or, especially with religious or ritual nudity, signify something "special, monstrous, dangerous, and powerful."¹³ Consequently, public nudity, except in religious rituals, was generally a taboo in the ancient Near East and pre-classical Greece.¹⁴ In classical Greece, however, this changes and the male body, particularly public male nudity, assumes greater civic importance.¹⁵ The gaze of the sculptor and the general falls upon the Greek body; the sculptor sculpts the perfect, nude, male physique to capture the vitality, power, and beauty of Greece while the general cultivates this physique in the soldier through athletic games.

In the *Agésilas*, Xenophon reports that Agesilaus, in preparing for conflict with the satrap Tissaphernes, inaugurated a gymnasium at Ephesus in order to encourage the soldiers to attain to the highest level of physical fitness and develop their military skills (1.25-27). Although it is not explicit in this particular passage, the Greek readership would know that the Ephesian gymnasium involved the public display of male nudity and that this display of male nudity testified to Sparta's vitality, power, and beauty. Indeed, Xenophon opines that the "garlanded" Agesilaus and his soldiers must have been an "inspiring sight" (1.27 LCL). Xenophon contrasts the

¹¹ Larissa Bonfante, "Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art," *AJA* 93, no. 4 (1989): 543-570.

¹² Bonfante, "Nudity," 547.

¹³ Bonfante, "Nudity," 545.

¹⁴ Bonfante, "Nudity," 543-570.

¹⁵ See Bonfante, "Nudity," 543-570.

sight of Agesilaus and the Greek men with the parade of their enemy's "naked ... pale, overweight and unfit" bodies and records that the Greek men on seeing these bodies likened their enemy to women (1.27-28). The Other, who is the enemy, is emasculated and fails to meet the standards of excellence.

In the *Cyropaedia*, while education of Persian youths also involves a gymnasium (1.2.12), Xenophon focuses more on hunting as another form of military exercise that shares the same aim of the gymnasium to train the body in the skills of war (1.2.10; 8.1.34-38). Hunting—a topic to which Xenophon shows great affinity having written a separate work this topic—can be distinguished from the gymnasium, however, in that hunting also cultivates self-control, temperance, and endurance. The cultivation of self-control or temperance with respect to food, drink, and sex as well as the ability to endure hardships of cold and heat, expressed in the Greek by the lexemes ἐγκράτεια, σωφροσύνη, and σώφρων, are possibly the most important aims of the training and discipline of the body.¹⁶

In the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon frequently highlights any kind of hard work, or πόνος, as important to this aim.¹⁷ By cultivating virtue through πόνος, the skills and utility of the body are directed towards the needs of the state rather than self-gratification. This important principle is frequently highlighted by Xenophon through a juxtaposition of those who possess these virtues and those who do not. Throughout the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon engages in an extended contrast of Agesilaus' self-control, temperance, and endurance vis-à-vis the Persians and their Great King while, throughout the *Cyropaedia*, the Assyrians and the Medes serve as foils to Cyrus and the virtuous Persians. Also, it is the Persians' decision to adopt the effeminacy (μαλακία) and luxury (ἀβρότης) of the Medes that leads to Xenophon's rebuke of the post-Cyrus, Persian empire in the final chapter of the *Cyropaedia* (8.8).

¹⁶ On the importance of the theme of self-control, see esp. Due, *Cyropaedia*, 170-181.

¹⁷ The lexeme πόνος occurs five times in the *Ages.* (2.8; 5.3; 7.1; 10.1; 11.11) and twenty-six times in the *Cyr.* (1.2.1; 1.5.11, 12 [2x]; 1.6.25 [2x]; 2.1.29; 2.2.18, 22 [2x], 25; 3.2.5; 3.3.8, 9, 51; 4.2.1; 5.5.18; 7.2.11; 7.5.71, 78, 80; 8.1.36, 43; 8.4.14; 8.6.12; 8.8.8). The πόνος-concept, however, permeates the works even more than the number of occurrences would suggest. For an analysis of the concept in Xenophontic thought, though with emphasis on the *Cyn.* and *Oec.*, see Steven Johnstone, "Virtuous Toil, Vicious Work: Xenophon on Aristocratic Style," *CIPh* 89 (1994):219-240.

The Cultivation of Virtue

The theme of self-control, temperance, and endurance has a further, perhaps even deeper, psychological aspect to it. As Due notes, “It is a means to an end as it is supposed to lead to ἀρετή ... [b]ody and soul are inseparable.”¹⁸ In the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon explains that it is the virtues of the soul that underlie all of Agesilaus’ great achievements (3.1) and similarly, Cyrus treats the importance of ἀρετή, that is excellence in virtue, as essential to the preservation of Persian sovereignty (7.5.78). Virtue is the foundation of sovereignty. Without virtue, the state becomes corrupt and weak.

In the “Catalogue of Virtues,” Xenophon praises Agesilaus for virtues of piety and trustworthiness (3), honesty in financial dealings (4), courage, loyalty, and military acumen (6), patriotism (7), charm and good judgment (8), and modesty, approachability, and goodwill (9). Each one of Agesilaus’ virtues is measured in terms of its benefit to the state and often in contrast with the conduct of Persian rulers (see esp. 9). Similarly, in the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon summarizes the core virtues that Cyrus thought important to model to his men: piety (8.1.21-25), justice (8.1.26), respect (8.1.27-28), obedience (8.1.29), temperance (8.1.30-31), and self-control (8.1.32, 36-38). These virtues are complimented by others too throughout the narrative; certainly Cyrus exhibits all the same virtues as Agesilaus at one point or another.

The importance of virtue to the art of rule, therefore, is clearly apparent in even the most superficial reading of Xenophon’s works and as the basis of sovereignty makes self-evident Xenophon’s preference for hierarchal, non-populist forms of government. The best ruler strives to cultivate better people and so serves as a model or paradigm for his subjects. As such, rule must rest with the person recognized and acknowledged as the most virtuous, who then surrounds himself with similarly virtuous men. This body of virtuous men, the ruler and the leaders under him, model virtue to all citizens. For Xenophon, the mentorship of virtue proceeds through this hierarchal system.

¹⁸ Due, *Cyropaedia*, 179.

So then, in these ways, the body and soul figure prominently in Xenophon's political philosophy. The inspection and regulation of the body, through genealogy and training or discipline, forms a critical core component of successful sovereignty. The Greek city must inspire investment in the body as one of the vehicles through which its policies are attained. In the same vein, the Greek city must also inspire investment in the mind and/or soul as another of the vehicles through which its policies are attained. Moreover, this inspection and regulation of the body and the application of the soul to the pursuit of virtue for civic purposes suggests a philosophy of strict state control over the individual. This control is realized through state systems of education and justice.

Education and Justice

In Xenophon's writings, the development of the body and the soul is the preserve of education and justice. In contemporary western society, education and justice are infused with notions of equality and social rights; through universal access, education and justice are the great levellers. Xenophon, however, does not advance this type of interpretation and quite the contrary upholds ideas of social stratification and inherited worth. Xenophon's stress on education and justice is not an egalitarian concept but rather presented as a means to advance virtue and promote or guarantee ordered rule within a state.

Importance and Subject of Education

Although the *Agesilaus* touches on the training of the body and the mind, Xenophon deals much more extensively with this topic, particularly the formal structure of education, in the *Cyropaedia*.¹⁹ Xenophon's Persian school is characterized by communalism, hierarchy, and, above all, service to the state. The geography of the school is the "Free Square" at the center of political administration (1.2.3). The implications of this geography are self-evident. Politics and

¹⁹ cf. Xenophon, *Lac.* 2-3. Whether or not Xenophon's description of Persian education is accurate (and I am inclined to think it is not), it is nevertheless likely that Xenophon's advances it as a paradigmatic model for proper education.

government are the center of Xenophon's Persian school; the individual serves the state; and, the periphery comes to the center to receive its education from there.

The organization of the center is communal and hierarchical. The square is subdivided in four parts: one for the boys, one for the youths, one for adult men, and one for the elders (1.2.4). Xenophon lays significant emphasis on the communal aspects of this arrangement. The boys and adult men must present themselves at the "Free Square" throughout the day while the youths even spend their nights there, except for married youths who are allowed to spend their nights in their own homes; only the elders have some freedom not to attend each day (1.2.4). This communalism ensures the youths and adult men especially are always available to provide for the needs of the community (1.2.9, 13). Twelve leaders are appointed over each of the four parts. For the boys, elders are chosen; for the youths, adult men are chosen; adults for adults; and, elders for elders. The leaders are chosen according to their ability to best serve their students and encourage in their students the qualities of good citizenship (1.2.5). The hierarchy provides that each part may learn from the other and order is guaranteed through the inculcation of obedience; the leaders are required to exemplify what they aim to teach (1.2.8).

The subjects of education highlight service to the state. For the boys, the subjects are justice and temperance (1.2.6-8) and, for the youths, temperance, civil service, and hunting (1.2.9-12). The adult men are soldiers, magistrates, and teachers of the youths (1.2.13) while the elders are magistrates and teachers of the boys (1.2.14). Each of these disciplines emphasizes the needs of the community. The boys, who learn justice, are especially concerned to defend the integrity of the gods, parents, fatherland, and friends (1.2.7). Temperance is taught so that boys and youths might more easily endure the hardships of military service (1.2.8-11). Similarly, hunting is "the truest of the exercises that pertain to war" and teaches skill with weapons, temperance, close quarters combat, and the emotional aspects of conflict (1.2.10-12). Education, in all these respects, trains and disciplines the body and the soul for service to the state. Hunting improves the body while justice improves the mind; temperance improves both.

The Two Types of Laws

If education advances virtue and promotes ordered rule, justice guarantees them. In Xenophon's writings, there are two types of laws: divine laws and civic laws. Divine laws are unwritten or universal laws while civic laws are, as Hippias declares in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, "covenants made by the citizens whereby they have enacted what ought to be done and what ought to be avoided" (4.4.13). The best civic laws are consistent with divine laws, as evident in Xenophon's praise of Lycurgus' decision to submit his law code to the Delphic Oracle (*Lac.* 8.5). As Dillery observes in discussing order in Xenophonic thought more generally, "Xenophon asserts that the gods were the guarantors of order"²⁰ and so it naturally follows that justice, i.e. laws, divine or civic and consistent with the divine, would guarantee ordered rule.

All ancient cultures acknowledged the sovereignty of the gods in the course and outcome of events and, therefore, such cultures stressed the importance of divine justice as a necessary virtue of ordered and successful rule. In Xenophon's writings, this starts with the right to rule itself. Xenophon repeatedly calls attention to the notion of divine kingship and the semi-divine or divine status of kings. Agesilaus, as already mentioned, is a descendant from the gods through Heracles (1.2);²¹ Cyrus, in cultivating the support of the Persians to fight alongside the Median king Cyaxares, refers to Cyaxares as "descended from the gods" (4.1.24); Croesus refers to Cyrus as "sprung from gods" (7.2.24); and, Cyrus says to his son Cambyses that kingship is a gift from the gods (8.7.11). The representation of kingship as a gift from the gods, in particular, strongly suggests that Xenophon understands ordered rule as a consequence of divine kingship.

Xenophon also stresses the value of religious piety, which he construes as the observance of divine laws and so a virtue.²² In the *Cyropaedia*, Cyrus connects the principles of order and piety in an exhortation to his sons: "out of fear of the everlasting, all-seeing, and all-powerful gods, who hold even this order [τάξις] of the whole together unimpaired, without age,

²⁰ John Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times* (London: Routledge, 1995), 36.

²¹ See also Xenophon, *Lac.* 15.9 on the divinity of Spartan kings.

²² See esp. Xenophon, *Mem.* passim.

without defect, indescribable in both beauty and size, never either do or plan anything unholy or impious" (8.7.22). Stated positively, every action must begin and end with piety towards the gods who maintain the order of the universe. Xenophon sounds this principle in almost all his works but especially in those that address directly the theme of leadership, such as the *Agesilaus*, *Cyropaedia*, and *Hipparchicus*. Throughout these works, Xenophon either praises leaders who conform to standards of divine justice or he outright enjoins others to do this. In the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon repeatedly calls attention to the piety of Agesilaus, who makes sacrifices (1.31) and gives gifts to the gods (1.34), honours the gods (2.15, 17; 11.2), respects the sanctity of sacred places (2.13; 11.1), and keeps his bond (1.9-13; 3.2-5). The central observation here is that Xenophon's philosophy of ordered rule depends in large part on the piety of leaders. If the gods order the universe then piety towards the gods advances virtue and the ordering of the state.

Civic justice also ensures ordered rule. Xenophon's highest principle of civic justice is the benefit of the city. Civic justice accomplishes the greatest benefit by its two primary purposes. First, Xenophon identifies civic justice as a control on the power of leaders, including kings descended from gods.²³ He praises Agesilaus for obedience to city laws (1.36; 2.15-16; 7.1-3) and commends to readers a philosophy of civic justice akin to the rule of law. He calls Agesilaus a "servant of the laws" and asks rhetorically,

After all, how could anyone have been prepared to break the law when he saw how law-abiding the king was? How could anyone have attempted a coup out of dissatisfaction with his lot when he knew that the king put up even with restrictions to his power without turning against the laws? (7.2)

This principle is not merely one that Agesilaus alone practices but, according to Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemon*, was part of the laws of Sparta established by Lycurgus (15.7). Furthermore, in the *Cyropaedia*, Cyrus's mother Mandane warns Cyrus against the dangers of the

²³ contra Mickey G. Craig, "Politics or Philosophy: An Interpretation and Analysis of Xenophon's Agesilaos," (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1986), 179-180, who argues that Xenophon advocates that "the best regime is the absolute rule of a wise man" and that "consent of the governed" is a pragmatic concession.

Median tyranny, where kings do not submit to the law, and extols the Persian custom that their kings submit to the orders of the city and the law (1.3.18; cf. 1.6.21-22).²⁴ Considered from ancient Near Eastern or medieval European perspectives on divine kingship, Xenophon's philosophy that divine kingship should not equal absolute rule is quite remarkable.

Second, though related to this principle, Xenophon creates a correlation between the prosperity and strength of a city-state and the citizens' "peaceful observance of the laws" (7.3). Although Xenophon cites this as Agesilaus' philosophy, both the fact that Xenophon highlights it and that similar ideas are present in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (4.2.11; 4.4) and *Constitution of Lacedaemon* (1.1-2; 14.1-7) suggests that this is a principle Xenophon advocates. In the *Constitution of the Lacedaemon*, Xenophon attributes Sparta's greatness to the laws promulgated by Lycurgus. Socrates, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, rhetorically echoes this sentiment:

Lycurgus the Lacedaemonian now – have you realised that he would not have made Sparta to differ from other cities in any respect, had he not established obedience to the laws most securely in her? Among rulers in cities, are you not aware that those who do most to make the citizens obey the laws are the best, and that the city in which the citizens are most obedient to the laws has the best time in peace and is irresistible in war?" (4.4.15).

As Craig argues, "The crucial aspect of Xenophon's understanding of the relation between philosophy and politics ... [is that] men cannot live well together unless everyone obeys the rules or laws of conduct in the city."²⁵ In praising Lycurgus' laws, Xenophon advocates a system of civic justice that regulates the body and soul from marriage and the act of procreation (1.3-10) through education (2-3), daily life and the means of subsistence (5-7), governance and military affairs (4, 8, 10-13, 15), and even death (9). In this way, civic justice guarantees virtue and ordered rule.

²⁴ Xenophon, through the voice of Socrates, also contrasts tyranny and kingship in this way in the *Mem.* 4.6.12.

²⁵ Craig, "Politics or Philosophy," 182.

Oikos and Oikoumenē

So then, the body and soul is the object of ordered rule and education and justice are its source and guarantee. In advancing this argument, Xenophon places great emphasis on the constitution of a society as the safeguard against tyranny and the mechanism that ensures consent. Implied, however, in Xenophon's writings is also a relational model or paradigm of governance itself—an ideology of government. On the level of the city-state, the paradigm is the *oikos* while, on the level of empire and international affairs, the model is an inclusive *oikoumenē*.

The Oikos

In the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon affirms through Socrates that “the management of private concerns differs only in point of number from that of public affairs ... in other respects they are much alike” (3.4.12; see also 4.2.11) and likewise, in the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon opens with a reflection on the instability of governments, noting that “many in their very own private households ... were not able to keep even these few at all obedient for their use” (1.1.1). For Xenophon then, the management of the οἶκός forms a critical paradigm of civic governance; an οἶκός is a microcosm of the state. To this extent, the *Oeconomicus* could be considered Xenophon's most comprehensive treatise on civic governance.²⁶ The paradigm, however, permeates the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia* too; it is the subtle, always implicit but sometimes even explicit, presupposition that underlies Xenophon's philosophy of government.

Consistent with the patriarchal structure of the Greek household, Xenophon's favoured terms for a state employ the lexeme πατρίς, that is the land of one's fathers.²⁷ The term πατρίς transforms the conception of the state from an impersonal institution or abstract concept of governance to a possession and legacy of its citizens' ancestors. Just as a household is an inheritance from a father to a son so also the state is an inheritance from one generation to the

²⁶ See esp. Xenophon, *Oec.* 7-9, which is extended analysis of the management of the household using the Persian empire as a paradigm, and 21, which connects household management and rulership to describe the ideal ruler.

²⁷ e.g. see Xenophon, *Ages.* 2.1; 4.3; 6.4; 7.1-3; 11.16.

next. It is a possession passed on and as such, lays upon any present generation the responsibility to manage it with care.

The emphasis on communalism, as discussed already above in relation to education, is a further aspect of the οἰκός paradigm in Xenophon's writings. The role of the state in rearing and educating boys and youths expands the image of the state as πατρις. But, undoubtedly one of the most striking, though perhaps underappreciated, aspects of the *Cyropaedia* that relates to this paradigm is the attention Xenophon gives to Cyrus' childhood.²⁸ He provides, quite honestly, an endearing account of the young Cyrus in interactions with his mother, father, uncle, and peers. The account of Cyrus' development from a precocious, affectionate, naïve, and bold child into a Great King who is pious, generous, hard working, pragmatic, and compassionate testifies to the virtues of the education he receives and the quality of his family life. It is important to note that Xenophon's Cyrus is not simply a product of the Persian education system but Cyrus grows in knowledge through instruction by his mother Mandane (1.4.15-18), Socratic-type dialogues with his father Cambyses (1.6), and symposia (1.3.4-12; 2.2.1-3; 3.1; 5.2.5-22; 8.3.35-50; 8.4.1-27). The importance of this ongoing intellectual activity can not be underestimated in Xenophon's philosophy of education but it also brings into sharper relief the οἰκός paradigm and its fundamental importance to sovereignty. In Cyrus' speech to his men after the conquest of Babylon, he exhorts:

What, then, do I say that we must do? Wherein must we practice virtue? Wherein exercise care? It is nothing new, men, that I shall say. Just as in Persia the Peers pass their time at the government buildings, so also I say that all of us who are Peers here must practice the very things we did there ... And as for the children who may be born of us, let us educate them here. We ourselves will be better by wishing to provide ourselves as the best possible patterns for our children and our children could not easily

²⁸ Due, *Cyropaedia*, 152-156, calls attention to this and rightly observes, "We cannot know why the Greeks as a rule did not concern themselves with the feelings of children and young people in literature but ... [t]he important thing to note is the fact that Xenophon breaks the convention" (156).

become worthless, even if they wished to, spending their day in noble and good practices, not even seeing or hearing anything shameful. (7.5.85-86)

Xenophon's concern with education from youth through adulthood and his almost tangible love for children and their careful rearing, as apparent in this passage and the account of Cyrus' childhood, are clearly formulated as the foundation of sovereignty. Fatherhood is not merely a metaphor for the good ruler, it is the highest calling of every male citizen and the guarantee of good government.²⁹

Indeed, the patriarchal image of the state is matched by the patriarchal typology that Xenophon applies to rulers. In the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon identifies Agesilaus and Cyrus respectively as father-figures to their subjects. This is either accomplished through direct statements to this effect or, indirectly, through the narrative of their deeds. Xenophon refers to both Cyrus (8.8.1) and Agesilaus (1.37; 7.2) as fathers to their people; Cyrus and Agesilaus are protectors of the state and exercise a paradigmatic patriarchal relationship to its citizens. As Chrysantas observes in the *Cyropaedia*, "a good ruler is no different from a good father" (8.1.1). In the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon recounts how Agesilaus cared for children and the elderly while on his Asiatic mission (1.21-22). He also explicitly employs the metaphor of estate-manager when he writes of Agesilaus: "There is an essential difference between these qualities of his and those of someone who, say, discovers a treasure trove and so increases his wealth, but not his capacity to manage an estate [οἰκονομικώτερος]" (10.1). Throughout the *Agesilaus* and *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon draws attention to the careful management of financial matters, property, and animals. Both Agesilaus and Cyrus manage wealth on behalf of the state in order to increase its wealth rather than their own. The ruler, therefore, is charged to manage the state as his own household: to train and discipline its citizens, protect the state from harm, and extend the influence and power of the state through careful management of its resources. The

²⁹ Also notable in this regard is *Lac.* 6.1-3. In this passage, Xenophon praises the communal parenting of Sparta whereby fathers discipline children who are not even their own as a guarantee that children will become good citizens.

imperialization of the οἶκος in Xenophon's writings, however, segues into the second paradigm of the οἰκουμένη.

The Oikoumenê

The lexeme οἰκουμένη means inhabited or settled land. In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon has Cyrus observe that an οἰκουμένη "is a very valuable possession" while a χώρα "bereft of human beings becomes bereft of the good things as well" (4.4.5). Similarly, in the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon explains that Agesilaus recognized that "a devastated and depopulated" χώρα "would be unable to support an army for long" whereas an οἰκουμένη and a σπειρομένη "would be a permanent source of nourishment" (1.20). In these passages, through the juxtaposition of οἰκουμένη and χώρα, Xenophon presents an οἰκουμένη as the desirable object of sovereign power; successful kings, such as Agesilaus and Cyrus, desire, cultivate, or extend an οἰκουμένη.³⁰

This is where the οἶκος and the οἰκουμένη meet. In Xenophon's *Anabasis*, Cyrus the Younger marches from πόλιν οἰκουμένην to πόλιν οἰκουμένην (1.2.6-14, 20; 1.4.1, 4) and the Ten Thousand also do so on the return to Greece (4.7.19; 4.8-22; 5.6.20; 6.4.6). The πόλις is an institution that unites many οἴκοι within a defined geographical space and so the οἶκος is the foundation of any πόλις and in turn an οἰκουμένη. The order of well-managed οἴκοι, united in a well-managed πόλις, turns an uncultivated χώρα into an οἰκουμένη; it differentiates an οἰκουμένη from an uncultivated χώρα. The οἴκοι that characterize an οἰκουμένη institute order and it is the presence of order that makes the χώρα useful and valuable. As Xenophon has Isomachus say to his wife in *Oeconomicus*, "there is nothing so convenient or so good for human beings as order" (8.3). The relationship to sovereignty and imperialism is made explicit by Xenophon later on in the *Anabasis*. On the march back to Greece, Xenophon proposes to turn the Ten Thousand into a πόλις "to gain additional territory and power for Greece" (5.6.15). Territory and power are, therefore, accrued by the creation of a πόλις with specific emphasis on the inhabitants. As Dillery

³⁰ On the concept of οἰκουμένη more generally, see esp. Raoul Mortley, *The Idea of Universal History from Hellenistic Philosophy to Early Christian Historiography* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellon Press, 1996); Mark Munn, (forthcoming).

observes, “the character of a *polis*’ inhabitants, not its buildings or resources, constitutes the litmus test.”³¹

The paradigm, as it is employed in the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*, is remarkably inclusive and rests on the freedom that the justice and benevolence of the great ruler guarantee. The virtues of justice and benevolence cultivate and extend an οἰκουμένη. In the *Agesilaus*, Xenophon explains that Agesilaus’ desire for an οἰκουμένη leads him to enact lenient policies concerning enemies so that they might become friends. Xenophon writes that Agesilaus’ kindness towards abandoned children and elders and prisoners-of-war “gained him control even of strongholds which were impervious to brute force” because the Asiatics themselves came to desire his rule (1.21-22, 35-38). The portrait of Agesilaus in 1.35-38, in particular, is an archetypal one of the great ruler whose beneficence causes nations to overthrow their oppression and be attracted towards the effluent kingdom. Similarly, Cyrus also commands that captive inhabitants of an οἰκουμένη be released and permitted to live in “the same houses, work the same land, dwell together with the same wives, and rule over [their] own children” with the explicit goal that others will choose to “to obey rather than fight” (4.4.7-13) and indeed there are nations, most notably the Medes, that willingly submit. The goals of Agesilaus and Cyrus are essentially the same: to cultivate and extend an οἰκουμένη through the spread of freedom and the principles of ordered rule not only for their own people but all people.

Conclusion

Amidst the chaotic politics of fourth century Greece, Xenophon articulated a philosophy of government grounded in personal ethics. Throughout his writings, there is a profound interest in the cultivation of ordered rule in the individual and in traditional institutions. By subjecting the body to inspection and regulation, applying the mind or soul to virtues, stressing the importance of education and justice, and offering paradigms for governance such as the *oikos* and the

³¹ Dillery, *Xenophon*, 97.

oikoumenê, Xenophon advocates an approach to sovereignty and even imperialism that seeks order not through military force or even diplomacy but through the promotion of individual conduct and responsibility under the strict control of the state. For Xenophon, the virtuous man makes the state and the state makes virtuous men. Sovereignty can only be truly and legitimately achieved through virtue and imperialism can only be justified by it.

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