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*Published:* January 1, 2000
*Last Updated:* July 17, 2013


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**XENOPHON** (ca. 430-353 BCE), Greek historian and essayist from Athens, who served among the Greek mercenaries of Cyrus the Younger (see CYRUS vi) and then led them back home, a set of events which he described in the *Anabasis*, one of his major works.

Apart from Socratic links and presumed service in the Athenian cavalry, little is known of Xenophon until he joined the mercenaries of Cyrus the Younger in 401 and became involved in Cyrus's unsuccessful rebellion against his elder brother Artaxerxes II, who had ascended the throne after the death of their father, Darius II (see DARIUS iv). When Tissaphernes, the satrap of Caria, arrested the Greek generals two months after Cyrus's defeat and death at the battle of Cunaxa, Xenophon was one of the replacements and played a major role in the homeward trip through Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Armenia, and north Anatolia. After a winter in Thrace, the mercenaries joined Sparta's defense of the freedom of Asiatic Greeks from Persian rule. Xenophon thus came into close contact with leading Spartans, and when the commander Agesilaus returned to Greece to confront resistance to Spartan hegemony, Xenophon found himself fighting fellow-Athenians at Coronea (394 BC). Whether this caused or reflected formal exile is disputed, but exiled he certainly was. For over 20 years he lived at Scillus (near Olympia) until the collapse of Spartan power in 371 forced him to move to Corinth. Eventual reconciliation with Athens is evident from a sympathetic concern with her problems in *Hipparchicus* ("On the Cavalry Commander") and *Ways and Means* (see *Scripta minora*) and from the fact that his son Gryllus died fighting

as an Athenian cavalryman at Mantinea (362), but it is not known whether he ever returned permanently to his native city. His experiences in 401-394 gave Xenophon unusual exposure to parts of the Persian empire and turned him into a premier contemporary source for its history and institutions.

Xenophon wrote 14 works, all extant, of varying genre, extent, and content. Four of them (*Hiero*, *Spartan Constitution*, *Apology*, *Cynegeticus*) contain no explicit allusion to Persia. *Ways and Means* (3.11) imagines "kings, tyrants and satraps" investing in the Athenian economy; the fact that satraps are a distinct type of powerful barbarians either reflects a mid-4th-century perception of their semi-autonomous tendencies (the work was written late in the Satraps' Revolt era) or simply the fact that Greeks had more dealings with satraps than with the king. The technical treatises on horsemanship recommend the Persian method of mounting (*On Horsemanship* 6.12; *Hipparchicus* 1.17) and mention Persian (and Thracian) downhill racing (*On Horsemanship* 8.6), though other material about weaponry and armor lacks explicit reference to Persian associations (*On Horsemanship* 12). There are several allusions to the king's power and wealth in *Symposium* (3.13, 4.11) and *Memorabilia* (2.1.10, 3.5.11), as well as to Mysian and Pisidian resistance to Persia (*Memorabilia* 3.5.25; cf. *Anabasis* 3.2.23) and the deportation of *sophoi* to the Persian court (*Memorabilia* 4.2.34). Another Socratic work, *Oeconomicus*, contains allusions to the king's horse (12.20), his willingness to reward virtue as well as punish vice (14.6), and his promotion of productive vigor and rivalry among subordinates (12.20, 21.10), besides a suggested analogy between him and Ischomachus's wife as "king"-bee (Pomeroy, 1984). But it is most remarkable for its lengthy section on agriculture. This argues that royal concern for the protection and cultivation of imperial land is proved by the parallel institutions established to ensure both (and to appraise the activities of the responsible authorities) and tells a story of the Spartan Lysander's surprise at discovering that Cyrus the Younger regularly spent time gardening in his Sardis *paradeisos*. This story, like the king's interest in *paradeisoi*, of which we also hear, is further proof of the Persian valuation of agriculture. This passage offers interesting generalizations about military occupation (4.5-11; cf. *Cyropaedia* 8.6.1-16; Tuplin, 1987, pp. 167-74) and has been thought to disclose an imperial ideology under which the king benefits his subjects by promoting agriculture and ensuring that its products are not damaged or diverted by criminal or seditious forces—a win-win situation in which economic well-being means that subjects can satisfy their tributary obligations and the king can protect his power without seeming overly oppressive. This reading goes

well beyond anything Xenophon actually says: the only explicit cross-connection, as distinct from parallel, between agriculture and war lies in the relatively banal statements (*Oeconomicus* 4.15-16) that plowing land is useless if you cannot protect it and that even brave men cannot live without workers (to produce their food). But, even without ideological gloss, the data are interesting, and the fact that, in a Socratic dialogue set in Athens, Xenophon valorizes agriculture by adducing the Persian empire demonstrates his confidence in the validity of what he thinks he knows about the matters in question.

Unlike *Oeconomicus*, in which Persian details are somewhat tangential to the main theme (Greek estate management), the rest of Xenophon's works consist of narratives in which Persians play a direct role.

As treatments of Greek history during a fifty-year period in the middle to later classical period, *Agesilaus* (an encomium of the Spartan king who ruled ca. 400-359; see LYSANDER) and *Hellenica* (an account of 410-362) embrace various episodes of Greco-Persian conflict. *Agesilaus* partly overlaps in content with *Hellenica*, but it also contains distinct material in 8.3-9.7 about the great king's greed, luxurious life-style, avoidance of public gaze, and arrogant procrastination in the conduct of business. He serves as a foil for Agesilaus, and the excuse for deploying this foil is that Agesilaus refused Artaxerxes II's suggestion that they become guest-friends (*xenoi*; 8.3-4)—not the only evidence that Persians and Greeks could make this characteristically Greek relationship (*xenia*, "guest-friendship") but unusual in involving the great king (cf. *Hellenica* 2.1.14, 4.1.29,39, 4.8.28).

Xenophon's treatment of the Persian dimension of Greek politico-military history in *Hellenica* is notable for the almost total absence of material after the King's Peace of 386 BC (5.1.29-36), a peace that reclaimed Anatolia for the empire and sought to confine future inter-Greek conflict outside imperial borders (see, e.g., CARIA, DASCYLIUM); in this it was comparatively successful, but a balanced narrative would have more Persian components after 386 than the 368/7 peace conference narrated in 7.1.33-38. The narrative deftly pictures Artaxerxes' confrontation with the Athenian ambassadors and reports Greek disdain for the pretensions of royal wealth, exemplified by the golden plane tree that was too small to shade a cicada, but it does not even specify the royal palace at which the gathering took place. The first half of *Hellenica* (1.1.1-5.1.36) provides a version (lacunose and viewed from a Greek vantage point) of the tortuous path leading from the last phase of the Peloponnesian

War to re-establishment of Persian rule in western Asia Minor, and a little light is thrown on the imperial environment. The best moments are vignettes of place or episode: Tissaphernes summoning everyone to Ephesus to "defend Artemis" against Athenian attack (1.2.6); Cyrus promising the silver and gold of his throne for the Spartan war effort (1.5.3); Dascylium's palace, river, villages, and *paradeisoi* (4.1.15, 33; Xenophon is the first Greek author to speak of *paradeisoi*); Zenis and Mania, Greek "satraps" in Aeolis, supplying soldiers, tribute, and advice to Pharnabazus, the Persian satrap of Dascylium (3.1.10-13, 26); Pharnabazus himself, surrounded by concubines and courtiers (3.1.10), but able to dispense with pomp and sit on the grass with Agesilaus (4.1.30); unexpected encounters with better-armed Persian cavalry (3.4.14) or a satrapal army (3.2.15) consisting of Greek mercenaries, Carian White-Shields, and "the Persian contingent" (*to Persikon strateuma*), whatever exactly that might be; the noble Spithridates (4.1.6) with his 200 cavalrymen (3.4.10), driven to rebellion by Pharnabazus's demand for his daughter as an unmarried sexual partner (*Agesilaus* 3.3); cities given to the families of prominent Medizers (3.1.6; cf. *Anabasis*7.8.8,17-18), and other cities which (it could be claimed) managed to avoid subjection to the king altogether (4.8.5).

While in *Hellenica* Persia represents one strand in the story, in *Anabasis*, which deals with Cyrus's attack on his brother and the subsequent fate of his Greek mercenaries, it dictates the story. Much of what happened after Cunaxa took the Greeks beyond the effective reach of Persian power; that was true in Carduchia (*Anabasis* 4.1-3) and more or less everywhere between Armenia and Bithynia, where they attracted Pharnabazus's attention (6.4.24, 6.5.7,30, 7.2.7). At Sinope, they were next to a region owing allegiance to Artaxerxes (5.6.8), but northern Anatolia's relations with the empire remain a difficult question (Tuplin, 2007, pp. 24-28). In the final chapter, their re-entry into Persian Anatolia prompts a remarkable sketch of the Caicus River valley (7.8.8-23), disclosing Iranian settlement, donation of land to favored non-Iranians, and the presence of various types of soldiery. Books I-III and the Armenian section of IV perhaps contain nothing that outdoes this (though the Armenian village described in 4.5.22-36, with its underground houses and a village chief responsible for collecting horse tribute, is on a par and, as narrative, even more colorful), but there is much of interest to the Achaemenid historian, even if it is often in the puzzles Xenophon has created rather than the provision of clear objective data (for a full discussion see Tuplin, 2004). Beside the Caicus valley and Armenian village descriptions, highlights include: Parysatis' villages in Syria and Mesopotamia (1.4.9, 2.4.27)

and, more generally, a landscape of villages, sometimes with associated *basileia*; a framework of *parasang*s (a measure of distance) measuring progress through imperial territory and perhaps reflective of on-site information (cf. Tuplin 1997, pp. 404-17); an unexpected definition of "Media" (3.5.15; cf. Tuplin, 2003) and revelations about discontinuous control of territory (Lycaonia: 1.2.19; Mysia: 3.2.23); a non-Iranian satrap (Belesys: 1.4.10), an Iranian *neokoros* of the Ephesus Artemisium (5.3.6-7), and other distinctive officials, for instance: *phoinikistes* (secretary; 1.2.21), *skeptoukhoi* (1.6.11, 1.8.28; cf. *Cyropaedia* 8.1.38, 8.3.15, 8.4.2), or the man uniquely empowered to assist the king in mounting his horse (4.4.4); dignitaries in fine apparel even on campaign (1.5.8); the trial of Orontas, remarkable as an event and for the preceding history of pardoned duplicity (1.6.1-11; see Keaveney 2012); various *militaria*, including the only proper battle narrative involving a royal army between the Persian Wars and Alexander (1.8.1-29, 1.10.1-19).
Some see *Anabasis* as validating the Panhellenist view that Greeks could and should combine to attack and dismember the Persian empire; but Xenophon's sympathy for this view is heavily qualified by context and a sense of Greek weakness (Tuplin, 2004; Rood, 2004).

As an account of the life of Cyrus II the Elder (see CYRUS iii), *Cyropaedia* is unlike any of the works mentioned above in being wholly focused on Persia. It is also more controversial than any of them because of the problematic historicity of its contents. The work (once greatly neglected, now much studied by Achaemenid specialists and classicists) presents itself as a historical case study on the question of what enables someone to exert authority over large numbers of people (*Cyropaedia* 1.1.1-2). This agenda has several consequences. One is a text whose pace, circumstantiality and profusion of conversation are more reminiscent of Socratic literature than historiography; the number of discrete episodes from Cyrus's long life is very small for a work of 357 pages. Another is the final chapter, in which the extravagant depiction of a contrast between the morally and physically enfeebled mid-fourth century Persians and their ancestors provides a sort of corrective editorial gloss to the main text, stressing that the Persians from whom lessons might be learned are not contemporary ones. A third consequence is Xenophon's choice of a radically un-Herodotean story line, in which Cyrus co-operates with the Median King Cyaxares against Assyria and its allies (including Lydia), wins an empire ruled from Babylon, acquires Media by marrying Cyaxares' daughter, and dies in his bed of old age. Herodotus said that many stories were told of Cyrus (1.95), and Xenophon's narrative may reflect things that

could have been heard in Persian circles (Tuplin, 1997b), but it is understandable that few regard it as a valid alternative to Herodotus.

But this is not the end of the story: one must discriminate about degrees of historicity. At the opposite end of the scale from the narrative framework are numerous references to practices that obtain "even now" (e.g., *kaì nûn gàr 'éti,* 8.2.4: the king still marks a person with public favor by sending food from the royal table). It does not serve Xenophon's agenda that these references should be less valid or accurate than claims by any other Greek sources to describe Persian social or political *mores*. (In the light of the final chapter, the chronological horizon of "even now" is that of a text putatively composed before Artaxerxes II's reign.) Somewhere in between is the long description (8.1-7) of Cyrus's establishment of a court and other imperial military and administrative institutions. Many individual features are marked as applicable "even now," but others are not, and it is perhaps arguable that the desire to illustrate points about leadership sometimes drives Xenophon to deform what he knows or thinks he knows about the matters in hand: the line between a legitimate, if consciously selective, view of reality and agenda-driven misstatement will be drawn in different places by different readers and historians. Statements about satrapal *imitatio regis* (8.6.10) are widely accepted; but one is on trickier ground with, for example, armed eunuch guards, the uncertain ethnic purity of the imperial ruling class, promotion of rigorously meritocratic principles (and systematic competitive dissent) within that ruling class, the odd position of Persia itself within the imperial structure, or the concept of a law both applied and embodied by the king (Tuplin, 2009). Those unsympathetic to Xenophon assume that the capacity for arbitrary choice and invention suggested by the story line extends into this part of the text (which is constructed as narrative, not as synchronic description of a system). Others may feel that the very conception of *Cyropaedia* depends upon Xenophon's belief that Persia really provided an example of the acquisition and organization of power that could (despite potential Greek prejudices) provide a legitimate object of inspection. This is not to say that Xenophon idealized the Persia that he personally knew or that Cyrus's story lacked any ambiguities (Carlier, 1977); it *is* to say that, as is also evident in other works, he was innocent of stereotype prejudice, and his knowledge about, and informed sense of, the Persian set-up was what drove the project. Any historian who trusts *Oeconomicus* 4 (where Xenophon could have had no reason to adduce Persia save a belief that what he says was true and pertinent) should be prepared to give *Cyropaedia* the benefit of many doubts.

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