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SCRIPTA MINORA

Translated by

E. C. MARCHANT

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PSEUDO-XENOPHON
CONSTITUTION OF THE ATHENIANS

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XENOPHON

VII

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INTRODUCTION

"Well, Xenophon, I had been told that you are an Athenian; and that was all I knew about you: but now I praise you for your words and deeds, and I should wish as many as possible to be like you. That would be good for everybody."—Cheirisophus the Lacedaemonian, in *Anabasis*, III. i. 45.

Various modern writers have challenged the ascription to Xenophon of every one of the works included in this volume. The *Agesilaus* and the *Ways and Means* have suffered much from the onslaughts of the critics, the *Agesilaus* on account of its style, the *Ways and Means* for its subject matter It must suffice here to say that no case has been made out against any one of them, with the exception of (a) the *Hunting*; (and, even in this case, it is impossible to state with confidence that the main portion of the treatise was not written by Xenophon)[1]; and (b) *The Constitution of the Athenians*. This work is manifestly spurious, very interesting though it is.

Undoubtedly there is something unusual about the miscellany, when regarded as the product of one author. Most authors write only in one manner; and when we have read some of their works, we easily recognise their hand in the rest. With Xenophon it is not so; for there is an obvious difference of manner in different parts of the

[1] See below, VII (p. xxxvi).

Hellenica. Xenophon tried his hand at several kinds of prose literature—history, dialogue, the encomium, the technical treatise, the essay—and he had his ideas, gleaned from his reading, of the style appropriate to each kind. In the early part of the *Hellenica* we find him trying to write in the manner of Thucydides; in the rhetorical parts of the *Agesilaus* he clearly has the model of Gorgias before him. But of course for us it is not always possible to understand just *why* he regarded this or that manner as appropriate. Thus in the historical portion of the *Agesilaus,* he repeats passages of the *Hellenica* almost but not quite exactly; here he changes, there adds a word or two; but no modern reader can appreciate his reason for these minute alterations. But even in a translation, however inadequate, a reader must detect a difference in style between his rhetoric and his history.

More interesting for us is the variety of subjects that Xenophon knows and can expound. Of course he is better at some things than at others; but even about matters of which he is not a master he can tell us a good deal that is worth knowing. He flounders in the high finance; but even at that he is far from being such a duffer as some moderns have declared him to be. His speculations on forms of government and the secrets of national greatness are not profound, but they come from a singularly lucid, well-ordered mind. Of the theory of war he is a master. About horses, riding, the organisation and command of cavalry he knew everything that could be known in his day. His treatise on *Horsemanship,* especially, is in its way a masterpiece.

Like Socrates himself, he is continually trying to

make himself useful. Perhaps for us there is rather too much of the don about him: his books are too full of instruction, admonition and reproof; nor is it surprising that some think that he intended them to form a series of educational manuals for the use of his sons. What is abundantly clear to anyone who reads all his works is that his real purpose was to do good to everybody; and, generous man that he was, everybody meant to him the people of Athens—those by whom he had been driven into banishment. Exiles do not, as a rule, spend their time in heaping coals of fire on their fellow-countrymen. Happily his fellow-countrymen showed themselves not ungrateful; they annulled the decree of banishment, though too late to entice him back to Athens. He died at Corinth. In these lesser productions of a virtuous and versatile Athenian gentleman there is, even in our age, not a little that is worth reading, apart from the information about ancient Greek life and manners that we owe to them. Their brevity too is a merit; for owing to his pedantry, Xenophon in his longer works is apt to be tedious.

In style Xenophon is simple and natural; he avails himself, indeed, of the resources of rhetoric, but he uses them moderately, and, except occasionally in the *Agesilaus*, he uses them soberly and sensibly. By the Atticists and the later Sophists he was taken as a model of simplicity.

Few traces of these *opuscula*, with the exception of the *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*, occur in literature anterior to the Christian era; but the Atticist Demetrius of Magnesia, friend of Cicero's friend Atticus, included all of them in his list of

Xenophon's works.[1] They are not cited by name by any extant Greek or Latin author earlier than Cicero, who refers in laudatory terms to the *Agesilaus*, and has made use of its design in his *Pro Lege Manilia*. But echoes may be heard here and there by an attentive listener. The *Constitution* quickly attained an importance disproportionate to its merit. Isocrates in his *Panathenaicus* makes some combative remarks that certainly apply, though not perhaps exclusively, to Xenophon's *Constitution*. All those who wrote on the Spartan institutions, including Aristotle, and especially the early Stoics, Zeno and his followers, used it as an authority. Nor was its influence exerted solely on the compilers of such works. Thinkers who speculated on the balanced or mixed form of Constitution also found it serviceable. Plato, indeed, as we should expect, ignores it in his *Laws*; but Aristotle in his *Politics* does not; and Polybius, in his sixth book, is clearly indebted to it. From the *Hiero* Isocrates has borrowed the matter and even some of the language in his address *On the Peace* (§ III f.), and this is interesting, because Xenophon in the same year returned the compliment by borrowing from this address of Isocrates in his *Ways and Means*. We may safely hazard a guess that the *Hiero* was a favourite work with the Cynics, amongst whom the unhappiness of the despot was a common theme.[2] In the age of Polybius, the traveller Polemon of Ilium wrote a book with the curious title, *About the*

[1] It is inconceivable that Demetrius, as the text of Diogenes Laertius says, challenged the *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*. Most of what follows, and much more, may be found in R. Münscher's *Xenophon in der griechisch-römischen Literatur* (*Philologus, Sup.* xiii. 1920).

[2] The writer of [Diogenes] ep. 29, which is an onslaught on Dionysius II., drew from a Cynic source.

Car in Xenophon (*Agesilaus*, c. viii. 7), in which he gave an account of Spartan customs that is not to be found in Xenophon's *Constitution*.[1] Nepos used the *Agesilaus* in his life of the king.[2] The *Ways and Means* does not turn up once; but this is not surprising, since the brochure was written for a special occasion, and contains very little of general application. We may anticipate here by mentioning the adaptation of the passage (c. i. 2–8) on the nature of Attica by Aristides, the Sophist of the second century A.D., in his *Panathenaicus*.[3] About the earlier history of the *Cavalry Commander* and the *Horsemanship* there is a strange circumstance worthy of mention. Cato the Censor, as we know from Cicero, read, and highly esteemed Xenophon. The method of the opening of Cato's *de Re Rustica* has given rise to a suspicion that he had included these two treatises in his studies.[4] Considering the age at which Cato began Greek, he must have found the *Horsemanship* "a tough proposition," if he really tackled it. The *Horsemanship* did not oust Simon's work on the same subject from its position as an authority; but it is often impossible to be sure on which of the two treatises later writers draw.[5] Pollux came across a commentary on the *Horsemanship*; we cannot tell whether it was written before the Christian era. Probably Theophrastus already culled something from the

[1] Athenaeus iv. p. 138 E.

[2] It is now said that he did not use it directly; but I cannot believe this.

[3] A. Brinkmann, *Rhenisches Museum*, lxvii, 1912, p. 135. Among the Xenophontine works cited by Aristides are the *Agesilaus* and the *Hunting* (Persson, p. 74).

[4] Leo started this.

[5] Oder in his *Anecdota Cantabrigiensia*, credits to Simon all the repetitions of matter that is common to Simon and Xenophon.

Hunting.[1] It is not clear that Grattius, who wrote his poem between 30 B.C. and 8 A.D., owes anything to the *Hunting*; nor is it likely, since he did not go to Simon or to Xenophon for his treatment of the horse.

Into the complicated history of Xenophon's shorter works in the Christian era we cannot enter.

To speak generally, the *Hiero* and *Agesilaus* seem to have been most read by the Atticists and Sophists; while the Romans, for the most part, neglected all of them.[2] But mention of one Greek author cannot be omitted, owing to the unique position that he occupies in the history of Xenophontine literature. Dio of Prusa (fl. 90 A.D.) not only, like Arrian, took Xenophon as his model of style, but his mind is saturated with Xenophon's thoughts and words. There is much of the *Hiero* and *Agesilaus* in Dio's discourses on kingship and despotism (I, II, III, VI, LXII). There is also, I think, a clear echo of the *Hunting* in Dio III. 135–6. The *Agesilaus* is cited by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as the type of the encomium. To Roman encomiasts it furnished a model. Its influence is felt in the design of Nepos' *Atticus*, in the *Agricola* of Tacitus, in the *Panegyric* of the younger Pliny, and, according to Leo, in the balanced estimate of the Emperor Valentinian in Ammianus Marcellinus (fl. 370 A.D.), book XXX.[3]

[1] περὶ φυτῶν αἰτιῶν vi. 19–20 compared with *Hunting* v. and viii.

[2] Only the *Cyropaedia* and *Memorabilia* of Xenophon's works gained a strong footing among the Romans.

[3] I am not myself conscious of this. Resemblances are rather readily detected by keen investigators. Thus Rademacher says that Oppian used the *Hunting* in his *Cynegetica*, but I have waded through Oppian without detecting any reminiscence of it.

Finally, we may refer to an amusing passage in the *Apollonius* of the Athenian Philostratus (age of Caracalla), which appears to be a "dig" at the *Hunting*, as the scholiast says it is. "They (Apollonius and his companion in India) came in," writes Philostratus, "for a dragon hunt which I must tell about, for it is highly absurd that the devotees of hunting should have found so much to say about the hare, and how she is, or shall be, caught, and we should pass over the record of this noble and marvellous sport."[1]

I. *Hiero*

"Government of unwilling subjects and not controlled by laws, but imposed by the will of the ruler, is despotism."—*Memorabilia*, IV. vi. 12.

"Despotic rule over unwilling subjects the gods give, I fancy, to those whom they judge worthy to live the life of Tantalus, of whom it is said that in hell he spends eternity, dreading a second death."—*Oeconomicus, the end.*

The *Hiero* is an imaginary conversation between King Hiero, who ruled Syracuse from 478 to 467 B.C., and the poet Simonides of Ceos, one of the many famous strangers whom the hospitable despot entertained at his court. Its purpose is twofold—first to show that a despot, ruling without regard to the interests of his subjects, is less happy than the private citizen; and secondly, to show by what means a despot may succeed in winning the affection of his subjects, and, by so doing, may gain happiness for himself. This subject was a common topic of

[1] *Apollonius* III. 6, Phillimore's translation.

speculation among the Socratics[1]: it had been discussed by Socrates himself; and we are told that Plato during his first visit to the court of Syracuse had spoken his mind upon it to Dionysius the Elder. Had it been possible for Xenophon to bring Socrates and a great despot together, we might have found just such a conversation in the *Memorabilia*.[2] Isocrates, in his oration addressed to Nicocles (374 B.C.), says that many doubt whether the life of men who live virtuously or the life of a despot is preferable, and in the letter which he wrote to the children of Jason, the "tagus" of Thessaly (359 or 358 B.C.), he declares that the private citizen is the happier.[3]

Modern writers, anxious to discover the date at which the *Hiero* was written, have ransacked the records of the despots contemporary with Xenophon to find some special event or events that may have prompted him to compose it. Grote, for example, refers to an incident that occured at the Olympic Festival of 388 or 384 B.C. In one of those years the orator Lysias delivered his *Olympic* oration, in which he stirred up hatred of despots,[4] and incited the Greeks to unite in ridding Syracuse of Dionysius. The despot on that occasion was represented at the festival by a magnificent mission. The date of composition has therefore been placed at about 383 B.C. Another view is that Xenophon wrote his

[1] Dio of Prusa, in his third discourse, puts into the mouth of Socrates a discussion on the question of the happiness of the despot.

[2] Just as Dio (VI) brings Diogenes and the Persian king together.

[3] Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, p. 1325 A, and Stobaeus XLIX.

[4] The tone of Antisthenes' *Archelaus* was similar (Dümmler, *Akademika*, p. 13).

dialogue as a warning to Dionysius the Younger soon after his accession to the throne of Syracuse in 367 B.C. A third opinion is that the career of Jason of Pherae, who was assassinated in 370 B.C., was specially in Xenophon's mind; and a modification of this view is that our author had lately read the letter of Isocrates already referred to, and that his dialogue, like Isocrates' epistle, is a warning to Jason's children who now shared the power in Thessaly. This last opinion is supported by reference to the passage in which Hiero remarks that many despots have been destroyed by their own wives (iii. 8); for Jason's nephew, Alexander, joint "tagus" of Thessaly, was murdered by his brothers-in-law at the instigation of his wife Thebé in 359 B.C.

But it is surely unnecessary to suppose that Xenophon had any special purpose or event in mind when he wrote the *Hiero*. The thing is merely a "Socratic" dialogue on a theme that interested him. He thought of despots in general, as the Socratics supposed them to be; and of course, like Plato in the ninth book of his *Republic*, when he writes of despotism he has an eye on the career of Dionysius I.[1] All that can be said about the date of composition is that, to judge from the language and the rhetoric of the *Hiero*, it appears to have been written in the author's later years.

There is no attempt at characterisation in the

[1] There is a close resemblance between *Republic*, ix. p. 579 B and *Hiero*, c. i. 11. Were the *Hiero* the later work it would be impossible to resist the impression that Xenophon had lately read the *Republic*. This may be so, since the *Republic* was written between 380 and 370 B.C.

persons of the dialogue. Hiero is not in the least the historical Hiero whom we know from the Odes of Pindar and Bacchylides. He is not the great warrior nor the enlightened ruler; and of course there is no indication of the true basis of his power and of his constitutional position. He is just a despot of the better type. As for Simonides, Xenophon, in drawing his favourite analogy from the Choruses, once faintly alludes to his craft (c. ix. 4); but he makes no attempt anywhere to represent the courtier poet; had he done so he must have made Simonides bring in the subject of verse panegyrics on princes at c. i. 14. The remark of the poet at c. i. 22 is singularly inappropriate to a man who had a liking for good living. At c. viii. Xenophon discards the thin disguise, and Simonides stands clearly revealed as Xenophon himself. To some of the recommendations offered to rulers that he makes in these concluding chapters we have parallels in the *Cavalry Commander* and the *Ways and Means*.

The *Hiero* is a naïve little work, not unattractive: in this case, as in that of the *Banquet*, it is unfortunate for our amiable author that Plato has written on the same subject with incomparably greater brilliancy.

The gist of Xenophon's counsel to despots is that a despot should endeavour to rule like a good king. The same counsel is given by Isocrates in his *Helen*, which was written about 370 B.C.[1] No man, in Xenophon's opinion, is fit to rule who is not better than his subjects.[2]

[1] Aristotle in the *Politics* (p. 1313 A) agrees.
[2] *Cyropaedia*, VIII. i. 37.

II. *Agesilaus*

"What is government, and what is a governor?"—*Memorabilia*, I. i. 16.

"Government of men with their consent and in accordance with the laws of the State is kingship."—*Memorabilia*, IV. vi. 12.

Agesilaus became one of the two joint kings of Sparta in 398 B.C. Though over forty at the time of his accession,[1] he reigned for nearly forty years, and died on active service, probably in the winter of 361–60 B.C. His long career as a commander in the field began with his expedition to Asia Minor in 396 B.C. We do not know for certain when Xenophon joined Agesilaus in Asia, and it is impossible to say with confidence whether or not he was an eye-witness of the campaign of Agesilaus against Tissaphernes, the satrap of Lydia, in 395 B.C.[2] But he was certainly with Agesilaus in the following year, and returned with him from Asia to Greece. He fought under the king at the battle of Coronea in the summer of 394 B.C. against his fellow-citizens, and was banished in consequence. He spent some

[1] Xenophon calls him "still young" at the time of his accession, no doubt having in mind the great age to which he lived in full activity, and using the pardonable exaggeration of an "encomiast." Similarly Isocrates implies that Evagoras (who was really assassinated) died a happy death.

[2] Xenophon's account of the campaign is utterly different from that which may now be read in a fragment of another history. But even if Xenophon was in Greece in 395 B.C., he of course heard the facts from Agesilaus himself. Busolt has successfully defended the accuracy of his account. In one instance (c. i. 33) X. tacitly corrects the account he had given in the *Hellenica* (III. iv. 24). At c. ii. 7 he defends what he had said in *Hell.* IV. iii. 15.

time at Sparta, and thence removed to Scillus, near Olympia, to an estate that had been presented to him by the Lacedaemonians, doubtless at the suggestion of Agesilaus.

Xenophon, always a hero-worshipper, and an admirer of the ideal Spartan character and the institutions of Lycurgus, saw in Agesilaus the embodiment of his conception of a good king. Doubtless, he, like Isocrates,[1] regarded the Spartan kingship as the best form of monarchy. Shortly after the death of his hero he produced this tribute to his memory. In spite of its rhetorical embellishments, there are signs of hasty composition in the *Agesilaus*. Haste probably accounts for the extensive borrowing from the *Hellenica*. Now why should Xenophon be in a hurry? From some pretty strong hints that all did not consider the king to be above adverse criticism, we may conclude that there was adverse criticism[2]; quite possibly something had been writen about Agesilaus that was not entirely complimentary. The *Agesilaus*, in the main an encomium, is incidentally a defence.

A few years before, Isocrates had produced his encomium on Evagoras, king of Salamis in Cyprus, who was assassinated in 374 B.C. Isocrates says that he is the first to "praise a man's virtues in prose." If he means to say that nobody had written a prose encomium of an historical personage before him, it is very doubtful whether his claim can be sustained.[3] But perhaps he means only that he was the first to combine an account of a man's actions with praise of his character, pointing out the significance of

[1] Isocrates, *de Pace*, §§ 142–143.
[2] c. ii. 21; iv. 3; v. 6; viii. 7.
[3] Wilamowitz in *Hermes*, xxxv. p. 533.

the actions as indicating the virtues of his hero.[1] That is just what he does in the *Evagoras*. Now in the first portion of the *Agesilaus* (c. i.–ii.), Xenophon has clearly taken the *Evagoras* for his model. The king's exploits, judiciously selected, are narrated in chronological order, passages from certain portions of the *Hellenica* being repeated with trifling alterations of the language; and into the narrative are woven comments on the king's character, as it is illustrated by his deeds.

Having finished with the king's actions, Xenophon gives an account of his virtues (c. iii.–ix.). This portion of his work has no counterpart in the *Evagoras*. But even here Xenophon's idea is not original. The great virtues—piety, justice, self-control, courage, wisdom—are treated elsewhere in the same order. In Plato's *Banquet* the poet Agathon praises the justice, self-control, courage and wisdom of Love, and Socrates remarks that the encomium reminds him of Gorgias. Xenophon himself at the end of the *Memorabilia* writes of the piety, justice, self-control and wisdom of Socrates.[2] The order of the categories no doubt goes back to Gorgias. To these great virtues Xenophon adds patriotism, and several minor excellences. He rounds off his encomium with a formal epilogue (c. x.).

To the epilogue is appended a summary (c. xi.) of the king's virtues, and here again the categories are arranged in the same order.[3] The summary

[1] So Usener.

[2] In *Cyropaedia*, VIII. i. 23–33, Xenophon enumerates the piety, justice and self-control of Cyrus.

[3] The indications of the order are fainter, but they can be discerned. But the disposition does not agree closely with that of the second part of the work.