

*Xenophon and His Literary Project*

Those who obeyed him [Socrates] profited,  
but those who did not obey him regretted it.

(*Mem.* I.I.4)

## I.I Introduction

Xenophon's literary output is extraordinary for the number of genres it appears to cross, and we can agree on that even if we do not agree on how precisely to categorise some of his writings: *Sokratikoi logoi* (*Memorabilia*, *Apology*, *Oeconomicus*, *Symposium*), encomium (*Agesilaus*), history (*Hellenica*), autobiography (*Anabasis*), didactic treatise (*On Hunting*, *The Cavalry Commander*, *On Horsemanship*), economic pamphlet (*Poroi*), political philosophy (*Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*, *Hiero*, *Cyropaedia*).<sup>1</sup> He is not the only literary experimenter of his generation. Plato, though his generic framework is generally always the *Sokratikoi logoi*,<sup>2</sup> plays with and satirises other types of writings within his dialogues: for example, the funeral oration in the *Menexenus*, and encomiastic writing in the *Symposium*.<sup>3</sup> Likewise Isocrates, though broadly speaking his works are either oratorical or epistolary in form, explores manifold rhetorical approaches.<sup>4</sup>

Xenophon is, however, (on the basis of our limited knowledge) the only one of his contemporaries who attempts such radically different structural approaches in his writing. This fact is why we have such

<sup>1</sup> This rough categorisation is my own, though it will become clear that I think that Xenophon's works are more interconnected than this list implies. E.g., see Humble 2018a on the thread of Socratic elements running through his corpus. See also Humble 2020b, which explores Xenophon 'as a pioneer experimenter in biographical forms' (the quotation coming from Momigliano 1993: 47).

<sup>2</sup> Excepted by some is the *Apology* on the grounds that it is a (quasi-)historical document; see, e.g., Guthrie 1962–81: 3.349 and Kahn 1996: 88; arguing for its inclusion, see, e.g., Morrison 2000: 239; McCoy 2007: 24–5; and Dorion 2012: 419–20. There are many discussions of the nuances and problems of how to define *Sokratikoi logoi*. For a range of views, see, e.g., Clay 1994; Kahn 1996: 1–35; Rossetti 2004, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> The bibliography on this aspect of Plato's works is vast. Nightingale 1995 is particularly good; see also briefly Clay 1994: 41–7; more broadly and with different approaches, see, e.g., Kahn 1996 and Rowe 2007a.

<sup>4</sup> Nicolai 2004 and 2018.

difficulty finding an easy label for him: is he a historian, a (Socratic) philosopher, a rhetorician, a memoirist, a biographer? We have no such difficulty, by contrast, with Plato (a philosopher) or Isocrates (an orator). Whether or not Xenophon had an overarching purpose to his whole literary project is a question not always asked, partly of course because we look at his corpus in such a fragmented way. It has certainly been noted repeatedly that his works are united by an obvious interest in leadership,<sup>5</sup> but why he should be so interested in leadership is not usually addressed. Perhaps this is because for the most part we think the answer is obvious: he himself had experience as a leader; he was part of the Socratic circle and good leadership was one of the topics that circle debated; he was in close community with other leaders, Spartan and Persian and Athenian, so his observation of them in action led to further enquiry, etc. This may be as close as we can come to answering this question, though I am going to explore an additional reason below.

Two problems have hampered investigation of this sort of broad topic, one of our own devising, the other inherent in the study of most ancient literature. First is the fact that, at least until very recently, Xenophon's literary works have not been deemed particularly worthy by comparison with his seemingly more illustrious contemporaries, and that where we perceive references to the views of others (such as Isocrates or Plato) these are invariably thought to be Xenophon's reworkings, borrowings or responses rather than the other way around (i.e. that the conversation is viewed as being one-way). Secondly, there is no way of determining with any degree of certainty when he wrote most of his works and in what order.

Regarding the first problem, I think it is possible to show that Xenophon's literary project was both serious and also deemed so by his contemporaries (and this second task will be the particular focus of Chapter 7).<sup>6</sup> The second problem is not solvable, but it is difficult to avoid joining the debate since chronological speculation has played a key part in the study of Xenophon's view of Sparta in general. Understanding of works which contain significant Spartan material has frequently been predicated on elaborate dating schemas put in place to explain perceived shifts in focus or approach.<sup>7</sup> The following is a simple example of this

<sup>5</sup> Breitenbach 1950: 47–104 is still a classic. Recent explorations include Gray 2011a; numerous essays in Hobden and Tuplin 2012a; Sandridge 2013; Buxton 2016a and 2016b.

<sup>6</sup> Even if again issues of dating, particularly in the case of Plato, mean that it is important to examine perceived conversations from both sides.

<sup>7</sup> Delebecque 1957 has been the most detailed attempt to reconstruct Xenophon's life and works. It is an impressive construct, which includes suggestions that works were written piecemeal over numerous years with revisions at various periods, but it is far from unproblematic, not least

phenomenon: section 14 of the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* has been argued to have been written separately from the rest of the work, after Xenophon became disillusioned with Sparta, i.e. after the battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE, or possibly slightly earlier, after what are deemed the worst excesses of Spartan imperialistic *hybris*, Phoebidas' seizure of the Theban citadel in 382 BCE and Sphodrias' attempted invasion of Attica in 378 (as if there were no egregious acts of Spartan imperialistic *hybris* prior to this period, or Xenophon had somehow missed them).<sup>8</sup> It is, in fact, notable that it is the perceived shift in Xenophon's view on Sparta which is one of the key factors governing this tendency to split his works up and argue that portions of them were written at different times, and thus the works most affected are those which deal most with Sparta, primarily the *Hellenica* and *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*.<sup>9</sup>

In the end, we simply do not have enough information to be certain one way or another, and no definitive answer regarding the relative or actual chronological order of his works is going to be attempted here. It has, however, always struck me in reading his corpus that none of his discussions of Sparta or Spartans is consistently praiseworthy, apart from the *Agesilaus*, which we would expect to be so since it is an encomium. Thus, while I would not want to suggest that his opinion of Sparta was

because it is based on the twin assumptions that Xenophon is pro-Spartan and that he is less of an intellect than some of his contemporaries. Richer 2007: 429–32 has recently revived interest in Delebecque's chronology. Lipka 2002 surpasses Delebecque, however, for the complicated compositional schema he proposes for the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*.

<sup>8</sup> Hooker 1989: 137 is a classic example: 'Xenophon makes no secret of his partiality towards Sparta, but he is not the uncritical admirer of everything Spartan that his biography of Agesilaus might lead one to suppose. It is rather that he cannot help contrasting the present actions of Sparta with the ideal she formerly professed. In his narrative in the *Hellenica*, Xenophon regards the year 382 as the turning point. It was then that the Spartans seized the acropolis at Thebes, contrary to international law as enshrined in the Peace of Antalcidas, and in doing so they committed an act which (in Xenophon's view) led directly to their downfall eleven years later (V 4.1). A similar sense of disillusionment explains the apparent contradiction in Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*. This work ... is a paean of praise in 13 chapters for the whole Lycurgan system. The harsh indictment in chapter 14 is all the more telling.'

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 2.2.3 for further discussion of the problems of dating the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*. The unity and date of composition of the *Hellenica* have both been subjected to significant debate, with stylistic considerations being central. Generally, most would now (and see Henry 1966 for earlier and often more complex approaches) fall either on the side of viewing the work as a whole with a late date of composition (e.g., Gray 1991) or as composed in two parts (with the break most often being argued to come at *HG* 2.3.10), the first part written early in Xenophon's career, the second written later (e.g., Tuplin 1993: 11; likewise Dillery 1995: 12–15, who gives a good succinct survey of the different approaches). A perceived change from an Athenian to a Spartan point of view at the beginning of Book 3 is often part of the argumentation. The *Agesilaus* is safe from being split apart because it was obviously written after Agesilaus died, c. 360 BCE, and before Xenophon died, c. 354 BCE. Delebecque 1957: 199–206 argued that the *Anabasis* was composed in two halves with the break coming at *An.* 5.3.6, but his view has not gained any real traction.

completely static over time (something impossible to determine with certainty anyway under our current state of knowledge), it does not seem to me that we can regard him as ever having been, as some have put it, a naïve laconophile, but rather that he ought to be regarded as a critical external observer of a powerful *polis* which, during the course of his own lifetime, was first at war with his own *polis*, Athens, then in a position of hegemonic power over it, and finally in an uneasy off-and-on alliance with it as Thebes briefly took over the hegemonic role.<sup>10</sup>

## 1.2 The Autobiographical Approach

To turn to (auto)biographical details to help to clarify Xenophon's view of Sparta and the bigger question of what his literary project was all about is a task fraught with pitfalls. On the whole, despite his fourteen extant works and a *circa* third-century CE biography by Diogenes Laertius, we know rather less about Xenophon's life than most modern biographical sketches of him imply, and the risk of circular argumentation is high when we use his works and much later biographical details to fill out his life story.<sup>11</sup> Thus, for example, it is argued that because he campaigned under Agesilaus and wrote an encomium of him, Agesilaus is one of his heroes and above criticism – a line of argumentation which does not sit well with the frequently critical portrait of Agesilaus in the *Hellenica*. Or, similarly, Diogenes' comment that Diocles reported that Xenophon had his sons educated in Sparta<sup>12</sup> is used to support the argument that he was a committed laconophile who admired the Spartan education system, as shown in how he lays it out in the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* – a line of argumentation which requires glossing over the peculiar presentation of Spartan education in this work, with its focus on fear and punishment, educational techniques which are diametrically opposed to those Xenophon champions in other works such as the *Memorabilia* and *On Hunting*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See Rowe 2007a: 39–49 for a brief discussion about the dating of Plato's works as well as the 'developmental' reading of Plato's theory of forms, which Rowe rejects, and which can be compared to the 'developmental' reading of Xenophon's view on Sparta, which I am rejecting.

<sup>11</sup> See Humble 2002a for examples of how biographical details are manipulated to support readings of Xenophon's works, usually to his disadvantage.

<sup>12</sup> D.L. 2.54, where the first-century BCE *Lives of Philosophers* by Diocles is cited as the source; cf. also Plu. *Ages.* 20.2.

<sup>13</sup> See Humble 2004b for an examination of how easily this detail about the education of his sons could have been inferred from his writings at a later date and for different motives. Despite the problematic nature of this point, however, it is frequently accepted as fact: e.g., David 1989: 4; Cartledge 2001b: 83; and Richer 2007: 405.

We are, in fact, not really any better off than ancient biographers were and, as these two examples show, tend to rely just as heavily as they did on using his written works in one way or another to fill in biographical details and argue for points of interpretation.<sup>14</sup> The following example about a supposed antagonism between Plato and Xenophon is even more instructive. The notion that they were engaged in some sort of rivalry, like the notion that Xenophon had his sons educated in Sparta, is based not on any independent contemporary evidence that this is so, nor indeed on any direct statement one of them makes about the other, but on the following: (1) the observation that both wrote an *Apology* and a *Symposium*; (2) a reading of Plato's criticism of Cyrus the Elder's education in the *Laws* (3.694c–695b) as an implicit, and critical, response to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*; and (3) the observation that Plato never mentions Xenophon and Xenophon only mentions Plato once. These points are all adduced by three Imperial-era authors who, if not using one another, are certainly drawing on a common source: Aulus Gellius (*NA* 14.3.2–4), Athenaeus (504f–505a) and Diogenes Laertius (2.57). Interestingly, they all come to different conclusions. Gellius attributes the rivalry to later partisanship and considers Xenophon and Plato as rivals only on the field of virtue, being of equal eminence, 'two stars of Socratic charm'. Athenaeus, on the other hand, does believe there was a rivalry, but puts it down to Plato's jealous nature. Diogenes also agrees there was a rivalry and though he does not explicitly make the same judgement as Athenaeus, the place where he provides details is where he notes numerous rivalries of Plato (D.L. 3.34–6). Modern responses to the very same material have also produced a range of different conclusions, most of them less flattering towards Xenophon than the ancients were. J. K. Anderson, for example, dismisses Gellius' assessment of both men standing above rivalry as absurd not least because 'Xenophon himself probably knew that he was not in the same class as Plato'. This fits with Anderson's assessment that Xenophon stood only on the fringes of the Socratic circle, an assessment which happens not to be shared by any of these three Imperial-era sources.<sup>15</sup> Gabriel Danzig, however, finds that close reading of the respective *Symposia* of Plato and Xenophon does support the

<sup>14</sup> Lee 2016 is a good example of another common approach, which surveys the historical events during Xenophon's life (many described in Xenophon's more historical writings) and speculates where Xenophon fits into them, using later biographical details cautiously. This is an important exercise, however, since, even when we cannot be sure where he fits, to dehistoricise Xenophon gets us nowhere.

<sup>15</sup> Anderson 1974: 28–9. Holford-Strevens 2003: 268–9 likewise accuses Gellius of 'perverse ingenuity' on the grounds that it is clear that Xenophon had no partisans.

notion that they engaged in attacking one another, not by name but through literary responses to one another's views.<sup>16</sup> A. Swift Riginos, by contrast, argues that the supposed rivalry was a fabrication of Alexandrian scholars.<sup>17</sup> Though we are aware enough of how indiscriminately ancient biographers inferred personal details from literary works, that this assertion of rivalry comes solely from a particular reading of the works of Xenophon and Plato does not, of course, mean that it is not true. Yet the range of responses to the same details serves as an important reminder of the difficulties attendant upon engaging in this sort of biographical reconstruction.

Mindful of these difficulties,<sup>18</sup> I want to review here one type of (auto)biographical material, i.e. what Xenophon says about himself. Although no certain conclusions can be drawn, a different scenario can at least be proposed which sheds different light on his literary project as a whole and, therefore, will, by extension, problematise the traditional view about his relationship with Sparta.

### 1.3 Xenophon on Xenophon

Classical Greek authors do not tend to talk too much about themselves, or when they do, they frequently do so in the third person, which puts the modern reader, at least, in a bit of a quandary, wondering in what way they are being (mis)led by such a practice.<sup>19</sup> Xenophon does not give us anything substantial to go on in the first person, but he does, in two different works, present himself as a character. Almost all of the pertinent material can be found in the *Anabasis*, Xenophon's autobiographical account of approximately two years of his life (c. 401–399 BCE). Within this work he twice deviates notably from his chronological narrative to provide us with a brief snapshot of certain events in his life before the expedition (*An.* 3.1.4–7) and a brief snapshot of certain events after the expedition (*An.* 5.3.6–13).<sup>20</sup> Apart from this there is only one other occasion in his corpus where he provides any similar material: in the

<sup>16</sup> Danzig 2005, and also 2014, where he reads the negative portrait of Critias in the *Hellenica* as an attack on Plato's milder portrait of Critias in the *Charmides*. Johnson 2018b: 73, in discussing responses in Xenophon's works to Plato's works, does not commit to commenting on the tone of the literary conversation.

<sup>17</sup> Swift Riginos 1976: 108–10.

<sup>18</sup> Thus, like Cartledge 1987: 57, I am 'making assumptions explicit and confessing openly to speculation', as there is really no other viable approach.

<sup>19</sup> Most 1989 is still a useful and salutary discussion of the problems, and see Nicolai 2018: 201–3 for Isocrates' discussion in his *Antidosis* on the difficulties of, and his solutions for, how to self-eulogise.

<sup>20</sup> As well as a brief second reference near the end of the work to note that he is not yet exiled (*An.* 7.7.57).

*Memorabilia*, where he depicts his pre-*Anabasis* younger self in conversation with Socrates (*Mem.* 1.3.8–13).<sup>21</sup> It has not gone unnoted that the autobiographical nature of this material confers singular status upon it: when Xenophon chooses to put himself forward as a character within his own corpus of writing he is doing so for a specific purpose. What the purpose is, however, has been vigorously debated, and I will come back to it after some comments on this material.

### 1.3.1 Pre-401 BCE

It is not possible to know whether the *Memorabilia* preceded the *Anabasis* or not, but for my purposes it does not much matter, as the two glimpses Xenophon gives us of his life prior to the *Anabasis* were both probably written after he had been exiled and together they present a striking and coherent picture. In the *Memorabilia* Xenophon shows himself in conversation with Socrates about sexual passion (*Mem.* 1.3.8–13). Socrates asks him his opinion on the sanity of Critobulus, who has rashly indulged himself by kissing Alcibiades' son. Xenophon portrays himself as scoffing at the notion that kissing beautiful young boys is dangerous. Socrates then emphasises his point by means of an extended metaphor comparing such a kiss to the bite of a scorpion. Xenophon follows along but does not give us any evidence that he was convinced about the point, i.e. he does not give himself the last word in the conversation to show that he has learned the lesson Socrates intends.<sup>22</sup> Nor is there any indication that Critobulus learnt anything from this encounter, as other passages confirm (*Mem.* 2.6.32–3; *Smp.* 4.10–18).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> There are, of course, also the first-person assertions that he was present at certain conversations Socrates had with others both in the *Memorabilia* (1.3.1, 1.4.2, 1.6.14, 2.4.1, 2.5.1, 4.3.1) and, less assertively, in the *Symposium* (1.1), or at least this is how they are usually read, though Bevilacqua 2010: 18–20 argues for a distinction here between author and narrator. On this hermeneutic approach, see more broadly McCloskey 2017 (whose conclusions I generally agree with though I am not always convinced by the arguments which lead there) and Rood 2018: 186–90. See Johnson 2018b: 76 for reasons why we should regard the first-person narrator in the *Memorabilia* as Xenophon, despite the anachronisms. For the moment I want to deal only with how Xenophon presents the character Xenophon. See also the good discussion in Brown Ferrario 2012: 361–73 on the relationship between Xenophon the character and Xenophon the author *vis-à-vis* historical agency and historical memory.

<sup>22</sup> And, as Gray 1998: 95 notes, he fails also in a broader sense when compared with the role assigned to secondary interlocutors in conversations generally in the *Memorabilia*. Hindley 2004: 127 reads this passage in a completely different way: as evidence that Xenophon is publicly, and seriously, disagreeing with Socrates on this point of male love.

<sup>23</sup> Nails 2002: 18 suggests that the *Memorabilia* passage is 'Xenophon's own invention', which may of course be true, but the passage nonetheless presents a particular picture of Xenophon himself which is not particularly flattering.

In the *Anabasis*, at the point at which Xenophon starts to play a greater role in events (i.e. after Cyrus and three of the main Greek generals have been killed and the remnants of the Greek mercenaries find themselves abandoned deep inside Persian territory), we are transported back to events leading up to his departure from Athens and to another conversation with Socrates; in fact, we get a mini Socratic dialogue reported by the anonymous narrator (*An.* 3.1.4–7). Here we learn that Xenophon had asked Socrates about whether or not he should take up the offer of his friend Proxenus to pursue friendship with Cyrus. Socrates advised Xenophon that friendship with Cyrus might not be viewed favourably in Athens because Cyrus had supported the Spartans in their victory over Athens in the Peloponnesian War, and suggests that Xenophon ask the god at Delphi whether or not it would be advisable to head off with Proxenus. Xenophon, however, having made up his mind already that he wanted to take up Proxenus' offer, partially ignores Socrates' advice: he does go to Delphi but asks not whether or not he should go on the expedition but to which gods he should sacrifice and pray to ensure a good journey and a safe return. When he tells Socrates what he did, Socrates chastises him for not asking the correct question of the god but says he had better proceed on the basis of the question he had asked, so Xenophon sacrifices appropriately and heads off to join Proxenus in the camp of Cyrus.

In both these passages, Xenophon shows himself an intimate of Socrates, and in both, also, he shows himself to be rather headstrong in nature, asking for or listening to the advice of Socrates but reluctant to take it if it interfered with his youthful pleasures and ambitions. He represents himself, that is, as one of those clever young men who associate with Socrates but who are never quite reined in by him, not quite, perhaps, an Alcibiades (whom Xenophon does not actually present in conversation with Socrates in the *Memorabilia* but rather shows him taking the role of Socrates and brazenly cross-examining his guardian Pericles, *Mem.* 1.2.40–6), but equally not a Euthydemus (another handsome and ambitious young man whom Xenophon presents as thinking he is wise, but who, once he is shown by Socrates not to know as much as he thought he did, immediately becomes a devoted follower of Socrates, *Mem.* 4.2.1–40).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> It is worth pointing out that Diogenes Laërtius, who at the start of his biography characterises Xenophon as modest and exceedingly handsome (αιδήμων δὲ καὶ εὐειδέστατος εἰς ὑπερβολήν, D.L. 2.48), only draws on Xenophon's autobiographical anecdote from the *Anabasis* (2.49–50) and not that from the *Memorabilia*, preferring to cite an anecdote from Aristippus' *On the Luxury of the Ancients* which was not in fact originally about Xenophon at all (2.48–9).



Xenophon's portrait of his younger self thus revolves around his encounters with Socrates, and it is not particularly flattering: he does not depict himself as one who actually learns properly from or heeds the advice of Socrates.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.3.2 401–399 BCE

As a character in the *Anabasis*, Xenophon fares somewhat better overall. He appears only a few brief times in the narrative before Book 3. His first appearance shows that the aim of setting out – to pursue the friendship of Cyrus alongside his friend Proxenus (*An.* 3.1.4) – had been met:<sup>26</sup> just before the battle of Cunaxa, Xenophon depicts himself as on close terms with Cyrus; he approaches Cyrus as the latter rides up and down the drawn up battle lines and asks if he can do anything; Cyrus asks him to spread the word that the sacrifices and omens were in their favour (1.8.15).<sup>27</sup> After the battle of Cunaxa and the death of Cyrus comes Xenophon's second appearance in the work. Here he depicts himself on an evening stroll with Proxenus when a messenger comes with the news of Persian double-dealing (2.4.15). Not long after, he joins two other generals, Cleonor and Sophanetus, when they set out to find out what has happened to Clearchus, Proxenus and Menon, who have not returned from a meeting with Tissaphernes; Xenophon says he joined the other two out of concern for his friend Proxenus (2.5.37–41). They learn from the Persian Ariaeus that Clearchus has been killed on grounds of perjury, but that Proxenus and Menon are still alive and being treated well. Again, though Xenophon appears to have had no defined role within the mercenary group at this point (as he states at 3.1.4), his friendship with Proxenus, and hence with Cyrus, has clearly conferred upon him an acceptance among the highest echelon of the command structure of the whole group, and it is he who, after Cleonor rails at Ariaeus for his

<sup>25</sup> See Gray 1998: 95–8 for a discussion of these two passages in terms of how they fit in with the agenda to praise and excuse Socrates. Haywood 2016: 90 n. 17 reads both passages likewise as contrasting the naïveté of Xenophon with the wisdom of Socrates, but in arguing that Xenophon was 'unable to appreciate the nuances of oracular consultation' I think he underestimates Xenophon's deliberate manipulation of the oracle.

<sup>26</sup> Contrary to Tsagalis 2009: 451–2, who argues that Xenophon 'is nothing more than a mere name' and 'has deliberately erased his presence' in the early stages of the work. If that were the case, why bring himself into the picture at all? And why allocate himself direct speech, which is generally an indication of the importance of a scene?

<sup>27</sup> Further, later at *An.* 3.1.9 he reports that Cyrus, upon meeting him, had personally urged him to join in the campaign which was at that time said to be against the Pisidians.

double-dealing, urges the Persians to let the Greek generals return.<sup>28</sup> He thus gives himself the last and most important word in this diplomatic meeting.<sup>29</sup> Confirmation that his plea went unheeded is provided by the obituaries of Clearchus, Proxenus and Menon which follow directly in the narrative (2.6).

Only months after he left Athens, therefore, Xenophon found himself in a position he could not possibly have anticipated: both Proxenus and Cyrus are dead and he and a relatively small and not wholly united body of Greek mercenaries are isolated in the middle of the Persian Empire surrounded by hostile forces. Quite naturally they are all in a state of hopelessness. Yet Xenophon shows himself prising off the grip of despair by encouraging himself to take charge of affairs. His series of questions to himself shows him coming to the realisation that he is now actually in the sort of situation that he had hoped to find himself in one day (albeit more fraught and probably more dangerous than expected, since only a few sections before he reminded the reader that the expedition had been thought originally to be against the Pisidians, and with every chance of being successful and short, 3.1.9), i.e. in a position to take command (3.1.13–14).

Having already worked his way in an unofficial capacity into the commanding circle, he depicts himself shrewdly and confidently conferring with Proxenus' captains and promising either to follow where they lead or to take on a leadership role himself. They urge him to take over as general of their contingent (3.1.26), presumably swayed not just by this display of proactiveness, his keen assessment of the situation and his rhetorical skills but also by what they had experienced of him over the course of the expedition to this point. From now on Xenophon is front and centre in the events he recounts and he plays a significant role in guiding the Greek mercenaries out of the heart of Asia and back to Asia Minor again.<sup>30</sup>

It is not my intention here to go over all his actions in detail but rather to highlight a selection in order to show the complexity of the way in which he presents himself. It is certainly primarily a positive portrait, but

<sup>28</sup> See on this Lee 2007: 53–4, with his speculation that Xenophon might in reality have been Proxenus' *hypostrategos*.

<sup>29</sup> And, as Flower 2012: 121 notes, makes 'so clever an argument for Proxenus's and Menon's release that the Persians are unable to answer it'.

<sup>30</sup> Flower 2012: 120–30 has a good overview on how dominant the character Xenophon is in the narrative at this turning point. See also his pp. 130–40 on the positive aspects of Xenophon's presentation of himself as a leader.

not universally so.<sup>31</sup> In general the character Xenophon is highly adaptable, has a talent for innovative strategising, is a skilled rhetorician, accessible to the ordinary soldiers under his command and aware of the benefit of sharing in their burdens. He does not shrink from recording mistakes, though he tends also to show that he is able to learn from them. Thus, for example, early on when his contingent suffers significantly from a smaller group of Persian slingers, bowmen and cavalry, and his own response to try to retaliate fails dismally, he responds to reasonable criticism from his fellow generals by working out a way to create contingents of slingers and cavalry (3.3.6–20). But his mistakes are not always thus mitigated. His decision, while marching through Carduchia, to attack uphill to secure a safe route for his contingent and the baggage train only partially works (4.2.10–21). The enemy do retreat and allow the Greeks to capture three hills, but they are more cognizant of the overall situation and return to the first hill and defeat the Greeks who had been left behind there, killing two captains. Xenophon negotiates a truce, but more enemy gather and attack as the Greeks descend from the final hill. The episode ends better than it ought to have, given Xenophon's lack of foresight and overall planning, but equally he could, as Flower notes, easily have omitted this episode since it does not reflect well upon him.<sup>32</sup>

It is notable too that Xenophon's greatest successes as a leader occur when the army is in the direst of straits. This, it appears, is the lot that awaits commanders of all different styles.<sup>33</sup> Once the relative safety of the Black Sea region is reached, Xenophon is less able to influence how the army behaves, or they are less likely to obey without questioning his motives. Here, for example, he is accused of *hybris* by the soldiers, for striking them during the march across Anatolia (5.8.1–12).<sup>34</sup> Xenophon interrogates the first of his accusers and it turns out that the man had been struck because he was trying to bury a sick man in the snow.

<sup>31</sup> Many have argued that the character Xenophon is among his own ideal leaders (including myself in my 1997 dissertation, a view I have clearly now modified), e.g., Due 1989: 203–6; Cawkwell 2004: 60; and Gera 2007, or have tended in this direction even when seeing realism in other aspects of the work, e.g., Lee 2007: 16 ('Xenophon may have exaggerated his prominence amongst the Cyreans, but if he wanted to distort the realities of life on the march he could have presented in the *Anabasis* an army with perfect logistics and planning'), though he also notes that Xenophon does not disguise his limitations. As well as Tuplin 2003: 152–3 on the ambivalence of Xenophon's self-portrait, see also Tamiolaki 2012 for a salutary corrective to the prevailing view.

<sup>32</sup> Flower 2012: 131. See also Seelinger 1997 on Xenophon's successes and failures with Seuthes.

<sup>33</sup> Compare what Xenophon said about Clearchus' leadership style: his harshness was tolerated in times of danger, but troops would abandon him when the danger lessened (*An.* 2.6.11–12). In view of his own experience, this might be less of a criticism than usually thought.

<sup>34</sup> This episode is well unpicked, from two different angles, by Lee 2007: 102–3, 246–7 and by Brown Ferrario 2012: 372–3.

Xenophon manages to convince the soldiers that his behaviour was justified because it saved the life of one of their comrades. Again if we consider how he portrays his pre-*Anabasis* self, his ability to turn a situation to his advantage – and there are many other instances of this – is not surprising. Once the soldiers arrive back in the environs of the Greek world, however, his skills are insufficient to prevent the army from fragmenting. He has no special authority with the Spartan admiral, Anaxibius, or the Spartan harmosts at Byzantium, Cleander and Aristarchus, nor does he find any successful way of negotiating with them. His explorations into the possibility of founding a new colony along the south coast of the Black Sea go down like a lead balloon (5.6.15–8.26).<sup>35</sup> Certainly in many of these instances he manages to extricate himself from deeper trouble by means of his excellent rhetorical skills and his ability to reassess quickly the mood of the men around him. It is in this regard that he most excels. Though his rhetorical triumphs have traditionally been read as exaggerations or internal justifications to external pressures, we might equally view them as reasonably frank assessments of his strengths, which sit side by side with his reasonably frank assessments of his failures. I highlight the less positive aspects of Xenophon's self-portrayal here also to counter assessments that tend to downplay them, but there is no doubt that overall Xenophon has depicted himself as very capable of leadership in very difficult circumstances.

The work ends with Xenophon successfully conducting a raid for booty and then noting that the remains of the mercenary group was taken over by the Spartan Thibron who added it to his forces to make war on the Persian satraps, Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus. At the time the work ends, then, Xenophon has not yet been exiled. He has proved himself to be (or at least depicted himself to be) about as successful in the field as a young commander could be expected to be. Like Alcibiades, he has shown himself to be a headstrong but creative general, who has a knack for inspiring his troops partly by his ability to share in their experience when necessary, partly by siding with them when expedient. Unlike Alcibiades, he does not take offence when his views are not heeded. He can only at this point have been looking forward to translating this experience into political success back in his home *polis* of Athens, to which he repeatedly says he had tried to return (7.1.4; 7.1.38–40; 7.2.8–9; 7.8.55–7). That on the first three of these occasions he is thwarted by Spartan leaders needs to be read together with his repeated comments that the Spartans had to be heeded

<sup>35</sup> On this episode, see Flower 2012: 142–6.

because they were the hegemonic power in the Greek world: he turns down the offer of sole leadership of the mercenaries on these grounds (6.1.26–9); he states outright that ‘the Lacedaemonians ruled all the Greeks’ at the point when Cleander, the harmost at Byzantium, is threatening to forbid any *polis* to admit the mercenaries (6.6.9) and expands on the futility of crossing the Spartans in a speech following on this episode (6.6.12–14); and later, when the mercenaries overrun Byzantium, Xenophon restores order among them and reminds them again in a speech that it is futile to cross the Spartans (7.1.25–31; cf. *HG* 3.1.3).

### 1.3.3 *Post-399 BCE*

In the middle of Book 5, when he is discussing how some funds raised by selling prisoners of war were being divided up, Xenophon digresses to talk about how he later disposed of the booty that came his way (5.3.5–13). Here is the only real glimpse he gives us of his life after the circumscribed period of the *Anabasis*. We learn the following: (1) that he had the share of the booty which belonged to Apollo made into a dedication which had his own and Proxenus’ names inscribed on it and which was deposited at Delphi (5.3.5); (2) that when he returned to Greece with Agesilaus on his campaign against Boeotia (394 BCE), he left the portion of the spoils which was due to Artemis with one Megabyzus in Ephesus (along with instructions of how to dispose of it under various circumstances) because of the potential danger of the journey back to Greece (5.3.6); (3) that Megabyzus delivered the portion to him after he was in exile and living in Scillus, near Olympia, having been settled there as a colonist by the Spartans (5.3.7); and (4) that he spent the money by buying land and dedicating it to Artemis, building an altar and temple and instituting a festival (5.3.8–13). The festival and its location are described in great detail, ending with a verbatim recording of an inscription which was set up next to the temple. The majority of the digression seems designed to show that he fulfilled his duties to the gods (in terms of booty dedication) despite the difficulty of his own circumstances and even though it took many years. If he was slightly flippant in terms of his manipulation of the gods for his own purposes before the expedition, he is not so afterwards.<sup>36</sup> More importantly, long before the end of the text, Xenophon the author lets the reader know what the character Xenophon does not yet know, that he will end up being exiled from Athens, and

<sup>36</sup> His piety in this passage is ‘impeccable’, as Gray 1998: 103 n. 16 notes.

therefore acknowledges here in Book 5 that Socrates had been correct to warn him that associating with Cyrus might lead to trouble with the Athenian authorities, thus also neatly tying together the two extra-chronological passages in the work.

As Christopher Tuplin has well noted, the literary effectiveness of Xenophon's narrative here is seductive and as such fewer questions are asked about this digression than perhaps should be.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, one of the most startling aspects of Xenophon's enterprise, which Tuplin notes is rarely remarked upon, is just how striking his actions must have been: an individual establishing (for the first time as far as we can tell) a cult of Artemis in mainland Greece, the grounds of which mimicked the well-known sanctuary in Ephesus itself and lay only 20 miles or so from another of the Greek world's great sanctuaries at Olympia.<sup>38</sup> Insufficient interrogation also has been made of the two points which are important for deciphering the nature of his relationship with Sparta: that he returned to Greece with Agesilaus for the campaign against the Boeotians (5.3.6; i.e. the Battle of Coronea in 394 BCE); and that when he was in exile the Spartans established him as a colonist at Scillus (5.3.7).<sup>39</sup>

Within the broader context of the passage about his share of the spoils and how he disposed of them, these two points are subordinate, serving structurally in both cases as temporal markers. He could, however, have marked the time in less precise ways, or at least in ways which did not mention the Spartans, had he wanted to downplay completely his relations with them. Since he had control over what he included we need to ask why these two points were necessary. One way of answering this question is, of course, to say that his association with the Spartans was of singular importance to him, particularly his association with Agesilaus (which in turn explains the motivation later on for the *Agesilaus*),<sup>40</sup> and

<sup>37</sup> Tuplin 2004c: 251.

<sup>38</sup> Tuplin 2004c: 260.

<sup>39</sup> It is always assumed that Agesilaus was behind the granting of the estate (e.g., Higgins 1977: 76; Cartledge 1987: 56; and Tuplin 2004c: 266–8). While this is very likely, given that at this point Agesilaus' power in Sparta was undoubtedly in the ascendant, with the death of Pausanias in 395 and his successor, Agesipolis, being still underage, it is still notable, I think, that Xenophon here uses the generic 'by the Spartans' (ὑπὸ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων) rather than 'by Agesilaus'.

<sup>40</sup> Pontier 2010a, for example, argues that the two most important things in Xenophon's life were his campaigning with the mercenary army and 'la fréquentation du roi spartiate Agésilas à peu près à la même époque, lors de son expédition en Asie mineure et sans doute tout au long des années d'exil à Scillonte' ('his association with the Spartan king Agesilaus at nearly the same period, after his expedition in Asia Minor and without doubt during all the years of his exile at Scillus'). Cuniberti 2011: 74–7 in a different fashion presents a reading of *HG* 3–4.1 as revealing that 'the historian, or better the soldier, has found in the Lacedaemonian king the man who can realize a lawful amid faithful [*sic*] hegemony of Sparta towards the allies ... so Agesilaus' Sparta can reach

to regard these comments as marking significant and positive moments in his life. Equally, however, they may be marking other things, particularly if, as I am suggesting, he had had political ambitions in Athens. He specifically says that he returned with Agesilaus to campaign against the Boeotians, yet we know that the Athenians were part of the contingent opposing Sparta at the Battle of Coronea. The phrasing is marked, and presumably apologetic. Did Xenophon know that he would be opposing his own countrymen when he started back with Agesilaus? Or was Agesilaus perhaps acting in the same way that Cyrus had been when he had misled his Greek mercenaries as to the object of the expedition? Xenophon, after all, does note that while they were just reaching Boeotia, Agesilaus, upon hearing of the naval defeat at Cnidus of his brother-in-law Peisander by Pharnabazus and Conon, lied about the outcome of the battle to maintain troop morale (*HG* 4.3.13–14).<sup>41</sup> If it is an apology, it is certainly muted, but the reading is, nonetheless, possible, particularly given the repeated comments as the *Anabasis* progresses about the futility of crossing the Spartans in their hegemonic position in the Greek world. Secondly, the comment about being settled at Scillus by the Spartans could be read as reinforcing what must at the time have seemed an irreversible consequence of his youthful refusal to heed fully Socrates' advice about setting out on campaign with Cyrus: not only had he been exiled but he found himself in a situation where he had no option but to accept the terms offered him by the Spartans, the final nail in the coffin, as it were, to his political ambitions in Athens.

Once again the trajectory of this period of Xenophon's life shares elements with that of Alcibiades: as Alcibiades headed out against advice on the expedition to Sicily, so Xenophon heads off to join Cyrus despite Socrates warning him that such an action might be viewed unfavourably in Athens; like Alcibiades, he ends up exiled from his native *polis* and under Spartan patronage (if not quite in the same way). Xenophon, in fact, implicitly encourages us in this comparison later in the *Anabasis* when Seuthes promises to give to Xenophon three fortresses on the Propontis, two of which had belonged to Alcibiades (7.5.8).<sup>42</sup> The loose

freedom, *autonomia* and, in the end, *eudaimonia*.

<sup>41</sup> It may just be coincidental but when the anti-Spartan alliance is first mentioned it is simply said that the 'largest *poleis*' (τὰς μεγίστας πόλεις) had come together against the Spartans (*HG* 4.2.1; cf. 4.2.5, where they are said to be returning from Asia Minor to campaign 'against the Greeks' (ἐφ' Ἑλλήνας). It is not until the description of the battle itself that an Athenian force is singled out in the narrative (4.2.17).

<sup>42</sup> See Flower 2012: 153–4, who remarks that contemporary readers would have noticed the coincidence concerning the fortresses but does not pause to draw out potential implications of the

comparison ends there. Xenophon never gets possession of these for-  
tresses; he also does not find himself back in Athens participating in polit-  
ical life, unless possibly much later,<sup>43</sup> in a sort of elder statesman role.<sup>44</sup>  
Instead, as far as we are able to tell, he settles into his life in the NW of  
the Peloponnese on this estate given him by the Spartans,<sup>45</sup> and at some  
point starts writing and composes fourteen literary works, four of which  
are *Sokratikoi logoi*, in which in various ways he explicitly and vigorously  
defends Socrates, not least against the charge of corrupting the young.

#### 1.4 Re-evaluating the Purpose of the *Anabasis*

Apart from the one passage in the *Memorabilia*, the *Anabasis*, therefore, is  
the locus of Xenophon's presentation of himself. Why? And why specific-  
ally did he pick these two years of his life to write about as opposed to  
any other period? For example, if, as Pierre Pontier has argued,  
Xenophon's association with Agesilaus, along with his experiences in  
Asia, was a key, defining element in his life, why did he not write up an  
account of his campaigns with Agesilaus with himself as a character? We  
might agree that by the 'leader of the Cyreans' (*HG* 3.2.7) Xenophon is  
implicitly referring in the *Hellenica* to his own position under Dercylidas'  
command,<sup>46</sup> but if this is correct, he can hardly be said to be foreground-  
ing himself. Indeed, it looks far more as though he is downplaying his  
association with the Spartans in these years. At the same time,

comparison. Tuplin 2016: 341–2 also contemplates parallels between the character Xenophon and Alcibiades.

<sup>43</sup> Dreher 2004: 67 rightly notes that there are problems with the evidence for a formal end to Xenophon's banishment but also that the only other actual example is, again, that of Alcibiades.

<sup>44</sup> Even if it is not meant to be practicable but rather utopian philosophising (as Azoulay 2004a: 445 and Schorn 2012: 719, e.g., have concluded), the *Poroi* might still be read in this light, even possibly, it might be posited, in support of a particular political faction. The proposals do not all have to be implementable to be of use as political rhetoric; cf. Isocrates' *On the Peace*, which is another response to the same historical situation in Athens which is both practical and theoretical (see Davidson 1990). Cf. Cecchet 2015: 164–70 on both these works as working against the mainstream favouring of imperialism. Further, on Xenophon's potential Athenian political connection at this time with Eubulus (whose actual measures bear some resemblance to those proposed by Xenophon in the *Poroi*), and, further, the possibility that he sponsored the painting in the Stoa of Zeus of the cavalry battle at the Battle of Mantinea which featured Xenophon's son Gryllus (as described by Pausanias 1.3.4), see Humble 2008: 363–4. See also Chapter 7.2 and n. 61 there.

<sup>45</sup> Until at least 370 BCE, but the biographical information for this period of his life is fraught with problems. See Humble 2002a: 82–5.

<sup>46</sup> As a rule it is agreed that Xenophon is referring to himself here (e.g., Breitenbach 1967: 1574; Krentz 1995: 168; Cuniberti 2011: 73), and that he might also be referring to himself later as the 'one other' whom Agesilaus put in charge of the cavalry with Xenocles in 397 BCE, when command of the Cyreans was given to Herippidas (*HG* 3.4.20). Some (e.g., Krentz 1995: 189–90) are less certain that we are meant to understand a reference here to Xenophon.



complicating how we interpret the portrait of the character Xenophon in the *Anabasis* is the assertion in the *Hellenica* (3.1.2) that the *Anabasis* was actually composed by one Themistogenes of Syracuse (see further Chapter 6.1 and n. 6 there). As Roberto Nicolai notes, there is a ‘high degree of self-awareness’ here and by placing multiple filters between himself and the character Xenophon in the *Anabasis*, Xenophon is behaving much more in the fashion of Plato than of his historiographical forebears, Herodotus and Thucydides.<sup>47</sup> What to make of this may not be entirely clear, but it is important to keep in mind when trying to assess the significance of the self-portrait.

The purpose of the *Anabasis* has been long debated, and part of the difficulty in coming to any agreement may be of course because Xenophon had more than one motive and purpose.<sup>48</sup> Specific, practical motives have been suggested. For example, some argue that the *Anabasis* was written in response to another, now lost, account of the expedition by Sophaenetos, one of the older Greek generals in the group (*An.* 1.1.11, 1.2.9, etc.). This lost account, it is posited, did not portray Xenophon’s actions as favourably or correctly as he thought they should be portrayed so he composed his own version of the expedition to right the record.<sup>49</sup> It is simply not possible to be certain one way or another if this is true. The only evidence for an *Anabasis* by Sophaenetos comes from the sixth century CE, and it is as easy to imagine that these references come from a post-Xenophonic forgery (perhaps even a rhetorical exercise) as it is to accept the existence of an earlier work to which Xenophon is responding.<sup>50</sup> It has also been read as a sort of curriculum vitae, advertising Xenophon’s talents to a market no longer directly within our sights,<sup>51</sup> though if this was the case it was, as far as we can tell, a singular failure. Likewise, if it was meant as a manual of advice with important topographical information for potential expeditions against Persia, it seems not to have had an immediate take-up.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Nicolai 2018: 200.

<sup>48</sup> Flower 2012: 31. Flower also here gives a brief overview of the major interpretative streams.

<sup>49</sup> E.g., Stronk 1995: 7 and Cawkwell 2004: 60–2.

<sup>50</sup> See the speculations of Rood 2006: 54. Also, Westlake 1987: 251–2 argues that it was a forgery; Stylianou 2004 also argues against the existence of a work by Sophaenetos. Flower 2012: 32–3 treads a middle path, suggesting that an earlier account of the expedition by Sophaenetos did exist but that Xenophon would scarcely have bothered to address it so long after the fact on the grounds that it was a minor work.

<sup>51</sup> See, e.g., Robert 1950: 58–9, who argues that between the Battle of Leuctra and 365 BCE Xenophon thought there might be an expedition against Persia and wanted a part in it.

<sup>52</sup> See Luccioni 1947: 39 n. 60 for this theory, on which the repeated parasang measurements, details about well-stocked parks, the size of rivers, etc., are all meant to help others in a similar situation.

Common to most theories is the observation that there are elements of the work that suggest an apologetic or defensive aim of some sort.<sup>53</sup> For example, the fact that Xenophon repeatedly makes it clear that Clearchus was the only person in Cyrus' army who was privy to Cyrus' true intention to overthrow his brother (*An.* 3.1.10) is reasonably deemed to be his response to an accusation of working against Artaxerxes, who at the time was an ally of Athens.<sup>54</sup> Further, it has been argued that by showing that he did not receive pay and was true to aristocratic principles of *philia*, he is reacting to the accusation that he lowered himself to engage in mercenary service.<sup>55</sup> More pertinent still for the theme under analysis here is the fact, noted earlier, that he repeatedly comments on the Spartan hegemony and the inability to move freely without their cooperation. This can certainly be read as a defence against a charge of laconism,<sup>56</sup> though whether we read it as such because of Diogenes Laertius' later suggestion that laconism was one of the reasons he was exiled,<sup>57</sup> or because of the assumption that he has long been held by scholars to be a laconiser is a point that requires consideration. In any case apologising on this front stands rather at odds with the widely held view that the *Hellenica* and the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* are works of a committed laconophile.

More recently it has been recognised that there does seem to be an introspective element to the work. Attempts to categorise the *Anabasis* generically as a type of forerunner of the modern war memoir,<sup>58</sup> or of travel writing,<sup>59</sup> gravitate towards this element in the work, and even if

There is, however, on the one hand, too much that is singular to this expedition alone to make this stick as a primary motive, and on the other not enough precision of details to allow the *Anabasis* to be of much use as a guide, as Rood 2010: 63 notes, with the further added observation that the account might even be 'designed to deter invaders'. See McGroarty 2006 for arguments against the common modern assumption that Alexander knew well and used Xenophon's *Anabasis*.

<sup>53</sup> Erbse 1966 is a classic example of this viewpoint.

<sup>54</sup> Most recently Flower 2012: 124–5.

<sup>55</sup> Azoulay 2004b. This adds sophistication to an earlier strand of interpretation which read Xenophon (particularly *An.* 6.4.8) as responding to comments made by Isocrates that the mercenaries were an ignoble lot: i.e. at *Panegyricus* 4.146 (a speech dating c. 390–380 BCE) Isocrates describes the mercenaries as 'chosen not according to merit, but who, because of want (δὶ ἀφαισίου), were unable to live in their own *poleis*'. Flower 2012: 31 follows this line of argumentation. But the Xenophontic passage does not wholly dispel the notion that at least some of the mercenaries had signed up out of want (*An.* 6.4.8), and Isocrates' aims may not have been antagonistic; on which, see Humble 2018c: 57.

<sup>56</sup> Humble 2002a: 80.

<sup>57</sup> D.L. 2.51: 'around which time he was exiled by the Athenians for laconizing' (παρ' ὃν καιρὸν ἐπὶ Λακωνισμῷ φυγὴν ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων κατεγνώσθη). Diogenes also, however, later (2.58 = *Anth. Pal.* 7.98) quotes an epigram of his own in which he says friendship with Cyrus was the cause of exile.

<sup>58</sup> Laforse 2005 and Lee 2005; also Dan 2012.

<sup>59</sup> Roy 2007 and Humble 2011; briefly, Cartledge 2002b: 59 and Gray 2011b: 6–8. Rood 2010 is a thoughtful analysis of Xenophon's use of parasangs throughout the work which leads him in the

such approaches in the end are unsatisfactory as sole reasons for its composition – the work resists precise generic categorisation both by modern and ancient standards; indeed on the evidence available to us it appears *sui generis*<sup>60</sup> – their focus on the notion that an exploration of identity in one way or another is central to the work is important.<sup>61</sup>

I would like to take this notion that the work is introspective a bit further and suggest that Xenophon's self-portrait (including the important vignette in the *Memorabilia*) is a trenchant self-examination of the pivotal period in his life which sent him in a direction he could not possibly have predicted – exile from Athens – and which was wholly at odds with the future he had planned for himself. I cannot, of course, prove that before the start of his Asian adventure his general plan was not to *write about* political participation but rather to *practise* it, when the time was right, in Athens, but in the brief vignettes he provides of himself prior to the expedition he appears to be self-associating with the type of ambitious, headstrong young Athenians who, desirous of political success, gather around Socrates either because he has seen their potential (e.g., *Mem.* 4.1.2–5, along with the following example of Euthydemus, 4.2.1–40) or because they have ascertained his usefulness to their goals (e.g., Critias and Alcibiades, *Mem.* 1.2.13–16). In the *Anabasis* itself Xenophon reveals that he actually had a flair for leadership, and despite setbacks and failures, was capable of learning on the fly and had all the necessary rhetorical skills to succeed in Athenian political life. The sentence of exile, when it came, terminated any such aspiration. The precise cause and date of his exile, therefore, as well as being tricky to pin down,<sup>62</sup> are not strictly crucial. Whether campaigning with Cyrus was the sole or immediate reason for Xenophon's exile,<sup>63</sup> or was the reason

end to define the *Anabasis* as 'a complex travel narrative that is also a powerful work of political analysis' (p. 64).

<sup>60</sup> Or 'an untaggable work' as Nicolai 2018: 197 so aptly phrases it.

<sup>61</sup> Higgins 1977: 96 indeed pointed out that no further explanation for Xenophon's central role is really needed since the work is fundamentally about him. Cf. also Gray 1998: 94–104, especially 102: 'his process of memory comes close to being a kind of Socratic self-examination'. Flower 2012: 34–6 has an interesting discussion of the work as a 'memory place' in which Xenophon exerts control over how these events are remembered.

<sup>62</sup> As some discussions about it reveal: e.g., Rahn 1981; Tuplin 1987; Green 1994; Humble 2002a: 79–80 (following Tuplin's conclusion of a date c. 394, with laconism and association with Cyrus as likely charges); Dreher 2004; Brennan 2011: 60–4 (following Green, though for different reasons, with an early dating of 399 BCE).

<sup>63</sup> Some dismiss the connection between Socrates' warning about becoming a friend of Cyrus and the accusation against Xenophon, because Cyrus dies so soon after the expedition begins and so long before Xenophon is actually exiled. But Socrates of all people is aware of how early accusations can stick around whether they are true or relevant, as the recurrence of the comic portrait of Socrates by Aristophanes (*Clouds*), Plato (*Apology*) (18a–c, 19b–c) and Xenophon (*Sym.* 6.6, *Oec.* 11.3) shows.

insofar as it led to further campaigning with the Spartans and to Xenophon being on the wrong side at the battle of Coronea,<sup>64</sup> the more important point is that he set out on this expedition after not heeding Socrates' advice and that Socrates was quite right about it leading to trouble for him in Athens.<sup>65</sup> In light, therefore, of his own self-portrayal as a headstrong young man who was part of Socrates' circle and who clearly had leadership potential but who was not prepared yet to be reined in by Socrates' good advice, it is hard to think that Xenophon is not referring also to himself when he says at the beginning of the *Memorabilia* (1.1.4): 'those who obeyed him profited, but those who did not obey him regretted it'.

It has been noted that in the course of the *Anabasis* Xenophon shows that he has learnt the lesson Socrates was trying to teach about how to pose questions to the gods: for example, twice in the later books when he sacrifices on a question of staying or going he asks whether it is better to stay or better to go, and not to which god(s) to sacrifice for safety (*An.* 6.2.15, 7.6.44).<sup>66</sup> This certainly shows a maturity that he had not manifested at the beginning of the expedition, and is probably part of the introspection engaged in here. But while Xenophon the author can and does show how Xenophon the character matures during the course of the expedition, from his authorial vantage point he also knows that at this point it matters not how many times Xenophon the character now asks the correct question; the damage is already done and he will soon find himself in exile, confirming Socrates' foresight.<sup>67</sup> Once exiled, Xenophon was barred from full political participation in his home *polis*. Another way of reading the Scillus digression, therefore, is to note that it shows that the extent of Xenophon's participation in civic life in his new place of settlement is the hosting of a festival to Artemis, hardly what a man of his talents could have hoped for.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>64</sup> All possibilities still go back to the fact that he set out initially with Cyrus; see Rood 2006: 59 on the various permutations.

<sup>65</sup> By contrast, Rood 2006: 59 thinks that the 'continuing uncertainty over the circumstances of Xenophon's exile makes it hard to judge his presentation of Socrates' advice'.

<sup>66</sup> Flower 2012: 124 suggests that Xenophon shows he learnt the lesson Socrates was intending because he never again undertakes any important action without first consulting the gods (cf. also Haywood 2016: 90), but the point is not that he did not consult the gods or follow their advice; rather it is that he deliberately did not pose the question Socrates had advised. Further, it is notable that apart from this point there is often a striking lack of interest in Socrates' relationship with Xenophon in analyses of the *Anabasis*.

<sup>67</sup> Dreher 2004: 60 sees the pre-eminent function of the vignette as highlighting the wisdom of Socrates but downplays the importance of it for the question of Xenophon's exile.

<sup>68</sup> Higgins 1977: 98 in effect noted this too, i.e. that Xenophon's life at Scillus was in a word 'deficient', but he thinks that it is only after he has had to leave the 'contented peace of his estate' at

### 1.5 Re-evaluating Xenophon's Literary Project

What does all this have to do with his literary project? Everything, I think. Though we cannot date most of Xenophon's works with any certainty, and disagree radically when we do propose dates, there are few who place any of the corpus before the Battle of Coronea in 394 BCE. This may be completely wrong, of course, but there is no way at present of knowing for certain (though the position presented here works in favour of this scenario). But there is an argument to be made that Xenophon's literary turn is closely connected with his exile, and with his realisation that his flippant manipulation of Socrates' advice left him unable to pursue a political career in Athens (for which, as the *Anabasis* shows, he would have been well suited),<sup>69</sup> and also with his wider understanding of Socrates' own mode of guidance and constant exhortations towards self-examination and self-awareness.<sup>70</sup> Socrates, he repeatedly notes, was useful and beneficial to those who associated with him and encouraged others to be so also through his own example (*Mem.* 1.3.1):<sup>71</sup> 'it seemed to me that he [Socrates] also benefitted those who spent time in his company both by actually revealing the sort of man he was and through his conversations' (καὶ ὠφελεῖν ἑδόκει μοι τοὺς συνόντας τὰ μὲν ἔργῳ δεικνύων ἑαυτὸν οἷος ἦν, τὰ δὲ καὶ διαλεγόμενος).

From his position of exile Xenophon engages not only in a process of self-reflection in light of where his choices have led him, particularly because of his inattention to Socrates (as evidenced by the *Memorabilia* passage and the *Anabasis*), but also he sets out openly to defend Socrates further (most obviously in the *Apology* and *Memorabilia*, but also the *Oeconomicus*)<sup>72</sup> and to practise being useful and beneficial himself insofar as his circumstances allow him, i.e. through literary composition. His whole corpus, therefore, under the theory being proposed here, could be considered essentially a defence of Socrates, in the sense that it represents

Scillus and returned to Athens that the self-reflection contained within the *Anabasis* was possible. The argument being made here requires only the fact of exile to bring Xenophon to the realisation that Socrates' fears had been quite correct.

<sup>69</sup> Waterfield 2012: 297 leans in this direction; see also Humble 2018a: 589–91 for an earlier exposition of the views presented here.

<sup>70</sup> Griswold 2011 is good on this last aspect in Plato's presentation of Socrates. But it holds true also for Xenophon's Socrates; see, e.g., the exchange with Euthydemus (particularly *Mem.* 4.2.30; on which, see further n. 94).

<sup>71</sup> See, e.g., *Mem.* 3.1.1 (quoted on p. 30), 3.10.1, 4.1.1 ('Socrates was so useful in every situation and in every way', οὕτω δὲ Σωκράτης ἦν ἐν παντὶ πράγματι καὶ πάντα τρόπον ὠφέλιμος), 4.8.11.

<sup>72</sup> See Danzig 2010 for an extended look at this theme across Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, *Euthyphro* and *Lysis*, as well as Xenophon's *Apology*, *Memorabilia*, and *Oeconomicus*.

Xenophon's transformation of Socrates' lessons into action.<sup>73</sup> That one of the dominant themes throughout his works concerns the nature of leadership reflects, then, in part the transference of his own ambitions to a different sphere. Or to put it another way, he could not benefit others by actually engaging fully in political and civic leadership, but he could at least do so at one remove, through writing about aspects of such with reflective hindsight and philosophical intent.<sup>74</sup> Such a scenario, therefore, accounts for the fact that in all his works – notwithstanding any other aims they may have or the complexity of their generic affiliations – an interest in different aspects of leadership can be seen and all can be regarded as didactic in one way or another.<sup>75</sup> This is particularly clear in the non-Socratic works. *On Horsemanship* and *On Hunting* are addressed to future leaders and the latter in particular focuses on the applicability of skills learnt while hunting to good management of one's household and to usefulness in the civic sphere. *The Cavalry Commander* advises a theoretical leader on all aspects of leading successfully and improving the Athenian cavalry. *Poroi*, still concerning Athens, advises those in power (see further p. 31) on political and economic, rather than military, leadership. The *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* examines what lies behind the hegemony of Sparta, as indeed does the *Hellenica*, though the sweep there is wider and takes in the unsuccessful hegemonic ventures also of Athens and Thebes, and thus both works, among other things, examine not just individual contemporary leaders from various *poleis* but also *poleis* as leaders. The *Anabasis* also deals with issues of military leadership but from different angles again, examining mercenary, *polis*, and non-Greek leaders, most of whom Xenophon himself dealt with on a personal level.

<sup>73</sup> Brennan 2011, interestingly, also argues that the *Anabasis* is a defence of Socrates, but I would not go so far as he does in suggesting that Xenophon has done this 'by presenting the outstanding success and piety of one of his [Socrates'] pupils', i.e. Xenophon himself, and by Xenophon creating a character which embodies 'an ideal, philosophical form of leadership', as that line of thinking requires a more wholly positive reading of Xenophon's self-portrait in the *Anabasis* than I think can be sustained (both quotations come from pp. 246–7, but see also pp. 59 and 200).

<sup>74</sup> This is not to presume, of course, that he might not have turned to writing if he had not been exiled. Critias, for example, seems to have combined politicking with literary aspirations. Alcibiades did not. Plato, of course, does not appear to have pursued a political or military career, though our main evidence for this (*Ep.* 7.324b–326a) is problematic in terms of authorship (and regardless does not imply Plato completely refrained from political involvement). I think, too, that Morrow 1960: 42 is right to speculate that Plato, like Xenophon, served in the Athenian cavalry.

<sup>75</sup> That the *Anabasis* is didactic has long been noted, though there is not total agreement always about the message. For recent discussions, see, e.g., Tuplin 2003 (arguing that the work is more didactic than apologetic), Rood 2006 (suggesting part of the didacticism is seen in Xenophon's portrayal of himself as an ideal leader) and Brennan 2011 (taking this further in suggesting that the didacticism has apologetic ends, all tied in with the character Xenophon being the ideal philosophical leader).

The encomium, *Agésilas*, presents a wholly positive, rhetorically constructed model of a leader. Famous leaders from the past are also examined: the *Cyropaedia* examines what made the Persian Cyrus such a successful leader of a vast empire in the sixth century BCE and the *Hiero* confronts tyranny in early fifth-century BCE Syracuse. Even famous mythological leaders are given brief coverage in *On Hunting*.

The leadership theme is far from absent in the Socratic works as well and indeed Xenophon's understanding of Socrates' usefulness in this regard is key to his own investigation of leadership.<sup>76</sup> In the first place, Socrates embodies all the qualities necessary for possession by anyone who is going to be successful in any sphere, including leadership roles. Early in the *Memorabilia*, among the list of topics that Xenophon says Socrates conversed about are 'what a statesman is, what rule of men is, what makes one capable of ruling men' (*Mem.* 1.1.16), and in response to a question posed by Antiphon about Socrates' own avoidance of politics, Xenophon has Socrates answer: 'In which of these two ways, Antiphon, might I preferably engage in political affairs, by engaging in them by myself alone or by taking care that as many as possible should be competent to engage in them?' (1.6.15). Indeed, there are few conversations in the *Memorabilia*, quite apart from the opening section of Book 3 which presents seven conversations with leaders or would-be-leaders (*Mem.* 3.1–7; see further p. 30), which cannot be shown to relate in some way or other to this theme, whether directly or indirectly. For example, being a good leader is predicated upon the practice of virtues such as self-control (*enkrateia*), as the discussion with Aristippus at the beginning of Book 2 shows (2.1.1–34; cf. also 1.5.1–6), and prudence (*sôphrosynê*) and piety (*eusebeia*), as the conversation with Euthydemus in Book 4 shows (4.3.1–18). The *Oeconomicus* is all about leadership in a household setting (and its connection with civic leadership),<sup>77</sup> and even in the *Symposium*, which would at first glance seem to be deliberately eschewing all discussion of politics, political elements have been discerned.<sup>78</sup> This interest in leadership is actually characteristic of the Socratic circle more generally. It would, indeed, be wrong to under-emphasise how often the theme of leadership comes up in the works of the other Socratics, as Voula Tsouna has argued: 'no one can

<sup>76</sup> For different discussions about Socrates as a political educator, and/or thinker, see, e.g., Pangle 1994; Rowe 2007b (from the Platonic angle); Chernyakhovskaya 2008 (who approaches the discussion fruitfully from the opposite angle) and Tamiolaki 2010: 371–94.

<sup>77</sup> This connection between domestic and civic leadership is also made in the *Cyropaedia* and in *On Hunting*.

<sup>78</sup> See, e.g., Pangle 2010 and Alvino 2018.

quarrel with the historical claim that many members of the Socratic circle had a keen theoretical interest in city governance, the nature of the laws, and their relation to ethics'.<sup>79</sup> And though there has been some difference of opinion about whether or not Plato depicts Socrates' intimate companions as being active politically, Tsouna points out that 'several Socratics' evoked by Plato's fiction correspond to individuals with remarkable political careers': for example, Laches, Nicias, Critias, Alcibiades, Crito, Phaedrus, and Chaerephon.<sup>80</sup> Socrates himself (or at least the Socrates of the *Sokratikoi logoi*) does not strive after political leadership but he is certainly not apolitical,<sup>81</sup> and he is frequently depicted as leading his companions towards a particular vision of leadership.<sup>82</sup> David Wolfsdorf, too, has recently argued speculatively, but persuasively to my mind, that 'Socrates' practice of philosophy had a political goal'.<sup>83</sup>

The fact that Xenophon's works address issues of leadership in such a diverse number of ways and do not, like current management manuals, constantly highlight and summarise key points, but require their reader to think carefully about what lessons are being presented, points to a number of facets of Socrates' approach to teaching which Xenophon has absorbed.<sup>84</sup> Philosophical enquiry is a process, best approached through conversation, carefully tailored to suit the interlocutor(s) and audience and, above all, requires active engagement.<sup>85</sup> Xenophon shows Socrates in action thus in his *Sokratikoi logoi*,<sup>86</sup> but he also himself employs the same principles frequently in his other works.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Tsouna 2015: 9 (with a list of examples in n. 17).

<sup>80</sup> Again Tsouna 2015: 9–10, with 11–17 focusing on Critias and Alcibiades.

<sup>81</sup> See, e.g., Griswold 2011 on the political philosophy of Plato's Socrates.

<sup>82</sup> See Waterfield 2012: especially 296–7.

<sup>83</sup> Wolfsdorf 2017: 44.

<sup>84</sup> I am thus clearly of the opinion that Xenophon was a serious disciple of Socrates. Dorion 2000, especially xviii–xcix, exposes well the flimsiness of the arguments of those who doubt this relationship (and who come not just from the field of ancient philosophy: e.g., Stronk 1995: 4: 'he felt himself a pupil and friend of Socrates ... one of Socrates' intimate friends. It is doubtful, however, whether he really belonged to Socrates' intimates').

<sup>85</sup> Wolfsdorf 2017 likewise highlights these points and the fact that, even with the difficulties recreating Socrates' thought, it is clear that the process of employing dialectic and of using different strategies for different interlocutors were key behavioural features (which he further notes, p. 44, are, of course, much easier to do in conversation than in writing).

<sup>86</sup> It is always a challenge to know whether or not we are dealing with the Socratic Socrates, the Xenophonic Socrates or the Platonic Socrates – and there is much disagreement among scholars on this issue. It seems to me that, because these general characteristics are present in both Xenophon's and Plato's depictions of Socrates, there is a reasonable chance that they reflect at least approximately the real Socrates' practice, even when due regard is given to the fictional status of the conversations in the *Sokratikoi logoi* in general; see further Humble 2018a.

<sup>87</sup> Compare the broad assessment by Hobden and Tuplin 2012b: 16–17: 'leadership is thus a theme that pervades Xenophon's corpus, but ... its individual articulations are dialogic and interrogative. They interact with one another ... they invite the reader to question what they are shown.'



For example, it is a commonplace about philosophical enquiry that it stems from a sense of wonder. Plato has Socrates say in the *Theaetetus* (155d): 'this feeling, wondering, is a real token of the philosopher; for there is no other starting-point for philosophy than this' (μάλα γὰρ φιλοσόφου τοῦτο τὸ πάθος, τὸ θαυμάζειν: οὐ γὰρ ἄλλη ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας ἢ αὕτη);<sup>88</sup> and throughout their *Sokratikoi logoi* both Plato and Xenophon have Socrates employing the term θαυμάζω in this way.<sup>89</sup> Xenophon indeed has Socrates describe succinctly to Critobulus the whole philosophic process – observation leading to wonder, followed by consideration leading to discovery – in the *Oeconomicus* (2.17–18):

καταμαθῶν γὰρ ποτε ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τοὺς μὲν πάνυ ἀπόρους ὄντας, τοὺς δὲ πάνυ πλουσίους ἀπεθαύμασα καὶ ἔδοξέ μοι ἄξιον εἶναι ἐπισκέψεως, ὃ τι εἶη τοῦτο. καὶ εὗρον ἐπισκοπῶν πάνυ οἰκείως ταῦτα γιγνόμενα.

For having observed well once that as a result of the same sets of actions some men were very poor, while others were very rich, I was struck with wonder, and it seemed to me to be worthy of consideration why this might be the case. And through my consideration I discovered that these things came about quite naturally.

Further, Xenophon, in his own voice, employs this very pointed rhetoric at the opening of the *Memorabilia*, the *Cyropaedia*, *Poroi*, and, most pertinently for the discussion to hand, the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*.<sup>90</sup> The verbal similarities at the opening of all these works have not gone unnoticed, but what they signal – that these works should be understood as philosophical enquiry – has not, I think, been fully appreciated,<sup>91</sup> partly

<sup>88</sup> The principle is echoed in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (982b10–15): 'For it is because of wonder that men now begin – as they did at first also – to philosophize, from the outset wondering about the strange phenomena in front of their noses, and then little by little progressing thus and raising problems about larger issues' (διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν, ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν τὰ πρόχειρα τῶν ἀτόπων θαυμάσαντες, εἶτα κατὰ μικρὸν οὕτω προϊόντες καὶ περὶ τῶν μειζόνων διαπορήσαντες).

<sup>89</sup> For an earlier and more detailed exposition of these ideas, see Humble 2014.

<sup>90</sup> I will elaborate further on these passages in Chapter 3.1.

<sup>91</sup> It is true that the concept of wondering as 'a stimulant of deeper reflection' has a much broader pedigree: e.g., Baragwanath 2012: 631–3 argues for a strong Herodotean influence on Xenophon in this regard. There can be no doubt that Xenophon was influenced by Herodotus on a number of fronts, but there are many different layers to and levels of wonderment. It is one thing to record and ponder upon wonders and another to engage in philosophical enquiry in order to explain and even dispel wonder. It is not just the fact that at significant points in Xenophon's corpus observation, usually of something paradoxical, elicits wonder that is in turn followed by consideration and understanding, but also the fact that Xenophon (and Plato) has Socrates employ this sort of rhetoric, that distinguishes the Xenophontic from the Herodotean usage in these instances. (I owe thanks to David M. Johnson for his insights on this issue.)

because the radically different literary forms Xenophon uses in his non-Socratic works do not immediately suggest that they have some similarity of purpose. His deliberate use of this particular language signals, however, that he is approaching this material from a philosophical angle, using a framework of enquiry that he acquired from Socrates.<sup>92</sup>

Secondly, dialectic is the fundamental method Socrates uses to pursue philosophical inquiry, and though in Plato's works Socrates' dialectic appears more often to break down his interlocutors' pretensions than in Xenophon's, overall dialectic, elenctic or otherwise, is characteristic of Socrates' method,<sup>93</sup> and a key procedure in the process of self-examination.<sup>94</sup> But Xenophon himself also uses dialectic in novel ways, outside his *Sokratikoi logoi*,<sup>95</sup> as one of a number of different tools to encourage active, thoughtful reading. The *Hiero* is the fullest example. It looks like a Socratic dialogue but Socrates makes no appearance, and the two interlocutors, Hiero and Simonides, are each given a turn at driving the questioning.<sup>96</sup> The choice of an epinician poet, whose very livelihood depended on his ability to convince tyrants to employ him, to argue ways in which a tyrant might become more beloved, is not an accident,<sup>97</sup> and the aporetic ending highlights the applicability of the dialogic form for philosophical enquiry in the sense that it encourages the active engagement of the audience to continue the dialogue about the issues raised.<sup>98</sup>

Dialectic plays a role in other ways in his more narrative works. Like Plato, Xenophon understands the limitations of writing,<sup>99</sup> so he makes full use of a number of literary techniques to encourage active reading,

<sup>92</sup> McCloskey 2017 argues from a different angle (Xenophon's use of anonymous narrators) for Xenophon's corpus to be viewed as primarily philosophical rather than historical.

<sup>93</sup> Most discussions of Xenophon's use of dialectic focus on the *Memorabilia*: e.g., Johnson 2005b and Gourinat 2008. Gera 1993: 27–44 likewise starts from the *Memorabilia* but ranges further across Xenophon's other Socratic works and, of course, the *Cyropaedia*. For useful expositions of approaches to understanding Plato's use of dialectic that in turn provide helpful ways for analysing Xenophon's use, see Gill 2002: especially 150, and Rowe 2007a: 7–15. Rossetti 2004: 89 tends towards viewing elenchus as closer to the approach of the real Socrates and argues that there are more examples of elenchus in Xenophon than meet the eye. See also Rossetti 2008.

<sup>94</sup> As again the example of Socrates' conversation with Euthydemus shows (*Mem.* 4.2). See in particular Dorion in Dorion and Bandini 2011b: 96–7 on *Mem.* 4.2.30–1, building on Johnson 2005b: 66.

<sup>95</sup> And even within the *Oeconomicus* he experiments. Socrates is not always leading the discussion. In the inner portion of the work Ischomachus takes over and uses all the common dialectical techniques that Socrates uses: hypothesis, analogy, maieusis, etc.

<sup>96</sup> See Gera 1993: 44–7.

<sup>97</sup> Thus I would argue, *contra* Gray 2007: 34, that Simonides is meant to be understood as a specific individual rather than as a generic wise man. See further n. 104.

<sup>98</sup> Gill 2002: 148 argues for this in respect of Plato's dialogues. See also Rossetti 2004: 86 for arguments that a hermeneutical approach was characteristic of *Sokratikoi logoi* in general.

<sup>99</sup> Johnson 2005b: 50–5.

dialectic being but one of these.<sup>100</sup> So, for example, there is the complex dialogue, which has everything to do with leadership, between Cyrus and Cambyses early in the *Cyropaedia* (1.6.1–46), in which Cambyses employs a number of Socrates' dialectical approaches, including elenchus.<sup>101</sup> While this dialogue has its natural place in the context of the early life of Cyrus, it also discusses many issues that Xenophon presents Socrates taking up with various figures in the *Memorabilia*. This rehashing of topics of importance (dealing with the gods, how to rule men, etc.) is a feature of Xenophon's work that has long been observed, usually to his detriment. The point, however, is that engaging in dialectic on the same issues in entirely different settings with different interlocutors allows for different angles to be examined. Since this approach is one found also in Plato's dialogues, it is likely to have represented a key aspect of Socrates' methodology.<sup>102</sup> A dialectical approach is also, I would argue, employed in a novel way in the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*. Along with signalling at the start that he has subjected the nature of Spartan power and renown to philosophical analysis, Xenophon frequently interrupts the narrative by posing questions or by anticipating objections or questions from imaginary interlocutors. In this way he recreates his own dialectical process and at the same time more ably encourages his audience to engage actively with the subject under discussion.<sup>103</sup>

Thirdly, Xenophon shows that Socrates was careful to tailor his approach to each individual to try to lead his interlocutors to see for themselves the lessons he was trying to impart.<sup>104</sup> The first half of Book 3

<sup>100</sup> That he had plenty of other literary strategies to accomplish this goal is apparent. On competing synchronic narrative strands, see Bradley 2001; on structuring the narrative so that his choices of events 'speak for themselves', see Tuplin 1993: 77. Cf. also Johnson 2005a: especially 204: 'Xenophon recognized, following Socrates, that his audience would best learn lessons by having to think them through for themselves.'

<sup>101</sup> Gera 1993: 50–72 provides an insightful analysis. Even more complicated are the dialogues concerning the Armenian sophist (*Cyr.* 3.1.14–40).

<sup>102</sup> Again Gill's (2002: 156–61) analysis of Plato's use of the dialogic form is instructive, particularly his emphasis that each dialectical encounter be viewed on its own terms. Thus further exploration is needed not just of the similarities between the topics discussed by Cambyses and those Socrates discusses in the *Memorabilia*, but also of the differences, not least because none of Xenophon's Socrates' other interlocutors goes on to lead a vast empire. See also Rowe 2007b: 29.

<sup>103</sup> See on this Humble 2014. And compare Schofield 2006: 17–18 (following Sedley 2003: 1–2) for the idea that the Platonic dialogues may 'constitute externalizations of Plato's own thought processes', i.e. that they are, therefore, essentially 'Plato thinking aloud', but that they do not automatically represent his final views.

<sup>104</sup> 'But Socrates did not approach everyone in the same way' (*Mem.* 4.1.3). Plato likewise has his Socrates adapt his message and approach for different interlocutors. There is, however, a considerable divide among scholars as to whether Plato's interlocutors, even when named, are individuals or types. For example, Rowe 2007a: 11–12 argues that they are types (thus Laches is *a* general, not *the* Athenian general active during the Peloponnesian War). This is a feature of some analyses of

of the *Memorabilia* (3.1–7) reveals this particular practice on a small scale particularly well, since it comprises seven conversations with different interlocutors about various aspects of leadership.<sup>105</sup> Xenophon leads into this section of the work with the following remark (*Mem.* 3.1.1): ‘that he benefitted those who were aiming at noble ends by making them take a great deal of care about the kinds of ends at which they were aiming, I will now describe’ (ὅτι δὲ τοὺς ὀρεγομένους τῶν καλῶν ἐπιμελεῖς ὧν ὀρέγοντο ποιῶν ὠφέλει, νῦν τοῦτο διηγήσομαι). The seven conversations which follow are first with three anonymous interlocutors (a would-be general, an ex-general, a cavalry commander), then with four named figures (Nicomachides after he had failed to be elected general; Pericles the younger, who had just been elected general; a young Glaucon, brother of Plato and desirous of political leadership; and Charmides, Plato’s uncle, a man of political experience but who did not want to engage publicly).<sup>106</sup> Each conversation is about a different aspect of leadership (some broad, some specific) and each interlocutor has a recognisably different character and blind spot concerning his own leadership capacity. Although a composite picture of the varied skills needed by leaders in general emerges, in each individual case Xenophon has depicted Socrates leading (or attempting to lead, at least) his companion to a self-awareness of the particular weaknesses in his skill base.

In those of Xenophon’s works where we can determine at least with some certainty the audience addressed, we can see Xenophon likewise tailoring his approach to them and showing an understanding of the

Xenophon’s *Hiero* too. For example, Gray 1986 argues that the characters Hiero and Simonides are simply meant to represent a wise man and his advisor, not the actual Syracusan tyrant and the poet from Ceos with the reputation for being both wise and mercenary (for a contrasting view, see Zuolo 2018: 574–5). It seems to me, however, that, even if it is hard for us to reconstruct, we cannot dismiss the possibility that Xenophon knew his audience would bring certain preconceptions about these two characters to a reading of the work, preconceptions which Xenophon was free to play with and/or adhere only loosely to according to his literary intentions. Thus I agree essentially with Blondell 2002: 34–6 (replacing ‘Plato’ with ‘Xenophon’): ‘Plato’s characterizations do not exist in a historical vacuum ... his original audience not only knew in advance what would happen to the principal characters, but also knew much more than we do about his *mise en scène*. ... He must have assumed that his audience was aware of, for example, notorious political events in the lives of such famous (or infamous) characters as Alkibiades or Kritias or Charmides, some of which he alludes to more or less directly. But that does not mean he expects his representations to be read as careful portraits that would cohere with every other shred of ancient evidence.’

<sup>105</sup> See, above all, Johnson 2018a: 482–90 for a clear overview and assessment of this set of conversations. Also see Chernyakhovskaya 2008: 38–40 on the conversation with Charmides.

<sup>106</sup> Apropos the point in n. 104, I think it is no coincidence that the personalities of Xenophon’s Charmides and Glaucon are easily compatible with the portraits of both found in Plato’s *Charmides* and *Republic*.

blind spots particular to each. If he intends his works to be useful, as I think he does, he needs to be persuasive and win over his audience, and different audiences need different means of persuasion.<sup>107</sup> For example, in the *Poroi* the audience is a group of Athenians with some power over the management of the *polis* (*Vect.* 6.2).<sup>108</sup> Those he wishes to convince of his analysis of the best way for Athens to pursue a path to prosperity are the very ones who are pursuing destructive and unjust policies. In order to gain their good will he must temper his criticism; otherwise he loses them from the start. Including himself, through the frequent use of the first person, as a member of the group who are responsible for the problems and for finding solutions is one way he manages this (e.g., *Vect.* 4.39).<sup>109</sup>

In the *On Hunting*, too, Xenophon keeps the real aim of his exhortation of the benefits of hunting from taking centre stage until he has won the goodwill of his audience of young men,<sup>110</sup> whose attention, Xenophon notes elsewhere, is prone to wander.<sup>111</sup> To attract their attention he does not start with the dull proposition that hunting will make them good estate managers and citizens<sup>112</sup> but with a reminder that all the great heroes of the past had studied hunting under the guidance of Chiron (1.1–18). More particularly he notes the rewards these heroes received: women, great victory in battle, great fame, and immortality dominate the list. Not all, to be sure, are as a result of the heroes' hunting skills (nor does Xenophon actually suggest this), but mention of these heady rewards is meant to ensure that he gains the attention of his youthful audience. Once he has their attention he can deal with the practical

<sup>107</sup> See Johnson 2016: 119–20 on how the way in which Xenophon goes about defending Socrates in the *Apology* and *Memorabilia* shows that he had two distinct audiences in mind.

<sup>108</sup> There is considerable disagreement over whether a specific body is to be understood, such as the *ekklesiá* or *boulé*, or even an imaginary group of Athenians. For a summary of views, see Schorn 2012: 691 n. 12.

<sup>109</sup> Jansen 2007: 56–104 has an astute examination of the complex rhetorical structure of this work, and, though he does not consider the opening rhetoric of examination and reflection in terms of signalling philosophical enquiry, it is interesting that he concludes from his own analysis that the work was meant to stimulate dialogue.

<sup>110</sup> See *Cyn.* 1.18, 13.17, though there is disagreement about who these young men (*οἱ νέοι*) are: young men in general? Athenian youths? Xenophon's sons?

<sup>111</sup> E.g., *Mem.* 1.2.16, 4.1.3–4; *Lac.* 3.1–2. Compare Morrison's (1994: 185–91) analysis of how Xenophon shows Socrates carefully leading Euthydemus to the point where he can actually start engaging him profitably in dialectic *Mem.* 4.2.

<sup>112</sup> Though Xenophon does not ignore his overall aim in his opening salvo ('through the heed they [the heroes of old, Chiron's pupils] paid to hounds and hunting and *the rest of their education* they excelled greatly and were admired for their virtue', *Cyn.* 1.5; and 'therefore I urge the young not to despise hunting or *any other education*', 1.18), he keeps the focus firmly on hunting until he has his audience well and truly hooked (my italics).

matters of hunting (2.1–11.4). Only at this point, and by focusing first on how hunting is good training for war (12.1–9), does he then get to the broader, more fundamental points that hunting is, in fact, good training for being a useful citizen, being an excellent manager of a household, being law-abiding, and, above all, being in possession of great virtue (12.10–22). In the final section Xenophon reiterates how skill in hunting benefits the *polis*, and is unusually explicit about his aims, particularly about his desire to be ‘useful’ (13.7):<sup>113</sup>

καίτοι γέγραπται γε οὕτως, ἵνα ὀρθῶς ἔχη καὶ μὴ σοφιστικούς ποιῆ, ἀλλὰ σοφούς καὶ ἀγαθούς· οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν αὐτὰ βούλομαι μᾶλλον ἢ εἶναι χρήσιμα, ἵνα ἀνεξέλεγκτα ἦ εἰς αἰεῖ.

And yet I have written in this way, so that my work might be correct and make people not just wise-seeming but really wise and good. For I do not want this work to *appear* rather than actually to *be* useful, so that it may remain for ever unrefuted.

Finally, Xenophon repeatedly shows that the benefits of Socrates’ company could not be reaped from simply associating with him: learning from Socrates required active and self-aware engagement. This is revealed clearly at the beginning of the *Memorabilia* not only with the examples of Critias and Alcibiades but even through that of Xenophon himself, who, as noted earlier, gives us no indication that his younger self was really listening at all to what Socrates had to say. Compare, for example, the light-bulb moment which comes to Euthydemus in Book 4 of the *Memorabilia* when Socrates succeeds in making him see what has been holding him back (*Mem.* 4.2.40).

Throughout Xenophon’s whole corpus, therefore, there is an engagement with the theme of leadership from multiple vantage points broadly following Socratic methods of enquiry, i.e. he makes use of a philosophical process of observing, wondering and examining, which ideally would be carried out by means of conversations which are always individual to the specific interlocutors involved and which require active engagement and self-awareness for advances to be made, but which he adapts to his own circumstances. One way, therefore, of explaining his literary experiments and adaptations of genres can be to see them as attempts to explore different ways of addressing complex problems for different audiences in an effort to be as useful as possible. Xenophon’s own self-portrait

<sup>113</sup> See L’Allier 2012: 493 particularly, for a different (but I think complementary) reading of this passage.

is key to understanding his aims. It centres around Socrates and his younger self's flippancy in the presence of Socrates. The autobiographical *Anabasis* both excuses Socrates for Xenophon's behaviour (as he himself excuses Socrates in the *Memorabilia* for the behaviour of Critias and Alcibiades) and is a perceptive self-examination of the pivotal moment in his life where his flippancy led to exile and the inability to participate in an active political life. It shows that he would have made an able politician back in Athens, not without flaws, but with an ability to learn from his mistakes under pressure. It, and indeed his whole corpus, thus shows every evidence of a sort of delayed appreciation and understanding of what Socrates was trying to impart to his companions, and a desire to be, like his mentor, as useful as he could to others. It is Socrates and Athens, therefore, and not Sparta and Agesilaus, who are central to his own self-portrait.<sup>114</sup> On the scenario posed above Xenophon saw himself as aiming at political life in Athens; where he found himself was in exile under Spartan patronage.

### 1.6 Integrating the Spartan Material

To be sure, in proposing a different framework for trying to assess what Xenophon thought he was doing with his literary project as a whole, I am using material within this very literary project as evidence, and indeed using his own complexly layered, autobiographical outpourings which concern almost exclusively his pre-exile days to interpret his post-exile views as expressed in the very corpus of writings itself, which probably belongs to the post-exile period. I am far from unaware of the precarious nature of this type of argumentation, but in the end all we have is Xenophon's writings, so any approach, even the most entrenched and traditional, is doing the same thing – only we sometimes forget to interrogate long-held views because they are so entrenched. This applies, in particular, to Xenophon's view of Sparta. There is a far greater tendency among modern scholars, for example, to label Xenophon a laconophile based on the facts that he campaigned with the Spartans, received an estate from them, and wrote three works in which Sparta dominates (and which, by extension, many would say praise Sparta), as well as the *Anabasis* in which there is a constant Spartan presence, than there is to call him a Socratic based on the facts that Socrates is central to his

<sup>114</sup> See also Rood 2018: 188 for the interesting narrative techniques Xenophon uses in the *Anabasis* to present himself as Athenian.

self-portrait – two reported conversations, one in which Socrates aptly predicted the trouble that eventually caught up with Xenophon – and that he wrote four *Sokratikoi logoi* in which there can be no doubt he is praising and defending Socrates. If the reading proposed above can be sustained, then his whole corpus is, broadly speaking, a type of defence of Socrates since it shows that upon mature reflection he has learnt the lessons Socrates was trying to teach and himself is trying to practise being useful in turn in the best way he can be, by writing.<sup>115</sup>

Sparta, by contrast, figures in Xenophon's self-presentation quite differently. Within the time frame of the period narrated in the *Anabasis* Xenophon shows himself interacting with several Spartan commanders, both within the mercenary group (Clearchus and Cheirisophus) and external to it (Anaxibius, Aristarchus and Cleander). He certainly reports conversations he had with them, but he also reports conversations he had with non-Spartans, all of which are integral to and situated within the chronological period of the *Anabasis*, unlike his extra-narrative reporting of the pre-expedition conversation with Socrates. Further, he makes it perfectly clear in the *Anabasis* that the Spartans control the Greek-speaking world and that he, even with, or perhaps especially with, an army at his disposal, is at the mercy of their whims. Until the Spartans can find a use for this armed force, with Thibron and the campaign in Asia Minor, the mercenaries have a difficult time surviving in the Spartan-dominated world. The post-expedition passage gives us evidence of a closer relationship with Sparta than the actual events recorded in the *Anabasis*, but the way in which Xenophon records this is laconic to say the least. As noted on p. 16, the key pieces of information are presented as temporal markers subordinate to the bulk of the passage which focuses on the disposal of booty to the gods and the festival Xenophon set up on his estate. The description of that estate does not include any statement of indebtedness to the Spartans or even to Agesilaus (though it has been read that way), nor any mention of biographical details which emerge in the much later tradition: for example, a bestowal of *proxenia* by the Spartans, or that his sons participated in the Spartan education system.<sup>116</sup> Again this does not mean that these things did not happen, though I would argue that the last point in particular is probably an invention of the biographical tradition surrounding Xenophon,<sup>117</sup> but it seems to me significant that very little of Xenophon's self-presentation points towards

<sup>115</sup> See Hobden and Tuplin 2012b: 7–8 for a suggestion along these lines.

<sup>116</sup> Both the latter points are mentioned in Diogenes' biography (D.L. 2.51 and 2.54).

<sup>117</sup> See n. 13.



his relationship with the Spartans being central to his own understanding of himself.

How then do his Sparta-dominated works fit into this proposed explanation of and focus for his literary project, i.e. that one of its main aims is to be useful to others who are striving for positions of leadership, and that Xenophon does this by writing about it from different angles in a philosophically engaged way in order to get his readership thinking about the complexities of the subject and improving themselves through active engagement with his works? I realise that suggesting such an overarching aim for the three works under question might be met with some raised eyebrows. After all, whatever is thought about the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*, the *Hellenica* is generally considered a straightforward politico-military history of events in the Greek world between 410 and 362 BCE, following on, if not as smoothly as we might like, at least fairly obviously, from where Thucydides left off his history, and the *Agesilaus* is quite clearly an encomium, even if the generic features of both types of writing, history and prose encomia about recently deceased historical figures, are still in flux in this period.<sup>118</sup> Neither of those observations, however, needs exclude either work from being part of an overall project of the sort I am speculating about. Xenophon's strength and calling card are the fact that he explores his ideas not just from different angles but also using manifestly different literary forms.

If we consider some of the analysis which has been done on the *Hellenica*, for example, it is only a small step to see that it fits quite well with the proposed aim even if it looks generically the least like some sort of philosophical enquiry. It would be agreed, I think, that despite the frustrating lack of programmatic statements, there are many didactic elements in the work and that it was not written for purely annalistic reasons.<sup>119</sup> Some would restrict the didactic element to particular episodes, but Tuplin has ably shown that the examination of *poleis* in pursuit of

<sup>118</sup> See, e.g., Nicolai 2006: 693–9 for a review of different assessments of how to define the *Hellenica*. His overview is a salutary reminder that generic distinctions were still very fluid at this period even in the broad field of historiography. Regarding encomia, we are hampered by the fact that we know of a significant number of other contemporary encomia which are no longer extant, so there is a temptation simply to judge the *Agesilaus* solely in light of Isocrates' *Evagoras* (see, e.g., Hägg 2012: 30–51). Humble 2020a offers a different approach to the assessment of the generic features of the *Agesilaus*.

<sup>119</sup> All the major works on the *Hellenica* in the past thirty years have commented in one way or another on its didactic elements, e.g., Gray 1989; Tuplin 1993; Dillery 1995. See also Pownall 2004: 65–112. Some indeed have gone as far as either denying or at least questioning the work's historical status – for an overview of these strands in the scholarship, see Tamiolaki 2008, sections 1–3 – but most of these would still argue for some moral or didactic strand in the work.

hegemonic power is a larger theme in the work. That Sparta dominates is, therefore, hardly surprising, since she competed for, held, and tried to regain hegemonic status during this period. Yet, as Tuplin points out, 'there continues to be a surprisingly strong tendency to confuse this bias in selection of material with a partisan bias in favour of Sparta', particularly given that throughout the work there is 'a consistent lack of interest in praising Sparta's record'.<sup>120</sup> It is not difficult, I think, to imagine that Xenophon, observing Greek *poleis*' struggle for hegemony and seeing how some managed to achieve it but mismanage and then lose it, wondered about this issue and considered it closely. That he chose, in this instance, to explore the issue in a historical narrative which carried on from where Thucydides left off is a feature of his literary inventiveness, and requires us to examine the work both as it stands within that tradition of writing – for he certainly shows awareness of his predecessors in this genre of writing even if he has no programmatic statement to that effect to compare with Thucydides 1.21–2 – and as it stands within his own literary project with its basis in Socratic forms of inquiry.

There has been growing agreement with Tuplin's view that Spartan behaviour in the *Hellenica* is more often than not depicted in a critical way, but with this agreement has come a corresponding entrenchment in viewing Agesilaus as exempt from this criticism, with the encomium of the king being held up as proof of Xenophon's partisanship.<sup>121</sup> If this was a literary tribute from a grieving friend or a commission by the Spartan *polis* (or even by Agesilaus' son Archidamus), it might be argued that we ought to view this work apart from the rest of the corpus.<sup>122</sup> Yet even if this is the case and even though Xenophon is constrained by generic principles – encomia are not known to be critical documents – it can hardly be that he was not assessing Agesilaus' leadership while composing it, given the length of Agesilaus' reign and the fact that when he came to power Sparta was at the height of her hegemonic status, whereas at his death she had lost that as well as half her territory. In particular we should not overlook the different portrait he draws of Agesilaus and his actions in the *Hellenica*.<sup>123</sup> Whatever the actual impetus for its composition, it is not difficult to speculate on how Xenophon might have viewed the work

<sup>120</sup> Tuplin 1993: 163. Much of the material in this paragraph draws from his conclusions.

<sup>121</sup> See, e.g., Hodkinson 2000: 25–6.

<sup>122</sup> There is no way of being certain what the impetus for its composition was. There are no unequivocal clues inside or outside the text to help on this front. It may even just be a literary exercise with a particular didactic/philosophical purpose. On this hypothesis Xenophon could be showing how to spin the career of a successful but ruthless and not always scrupulous commander to present a model for imitation.

<sup>123</sup> The issue of which work was composed first (or which parts of each work were composed in what order) is complicated. Tuplin 1993: 193–7 is a judicious overview of the problems.

as useful. For example, if the scenario that the encomium was commissioned by the Spartans is correct, the fashioning of standard encomiastic features to present in a positive way the virtues valued in Sparta (even though Xenophon realised that they were inculcated in a negative fashion, as the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* shows) could be Xenophon's way of attempting to be useful to and educate the primary Spartan audience, given that the broader aim of prose encomia of historical figures in general seems to have been to provide ethical paradigms for imitation.

The problem of the nature of the encomium with respect to the rest of his corpus may not be solvable, but it is crucial to examine it for any discussion of Xenophon's view of Sparta because it is primarily from the encomium that evidence is drawn to maintain the view that Xenophon is loath to criticise Agesilaus. A good example of this approach can be found in an article by G. Schepens, who though he concedes that there is more balance in the portrait of Agesilaus in the *Hellenica*, nonetheless argues that Xenophon's overall view of Agesilaus is positive: one page of general comments about why the *Hellenica* is as flattering as the encomium is then followed by a detailed historiographic analysis of the encomium.<sup>124</sup> Given the wholly positive nature of the encomium, it is not surprising that Schepens reaches the conclusion he does. By contrast, Tuplin uses passages from the encomium not to supplant the negative picture of Agesilaus in the *Hellenica*, but to highlight how critical Xenophon has actually been in the *Hellenica* by showing how the particular event could have been presented in a more positive manner.<sup>125</sup> Only occasionally does a scholar make mention of the lack of truthfulness of the encomiastic genre in general as a warning not to supplant the version in the historical work with the version in the encomium,<sup>126</sup> even though, of course, truth is often a casualty in historical writing as well.

<sup>124</sup> Schepens 2005: 31, 50–1, though he is far from the first to use this type of approach. See, e.g., Hamilton 1991: 7–39, who in fact argues that we have to look to Plutarch's *Life of Agesilaus* to find a balanced account of the personality of the king, Xenophon either not understanding his complex personality or ignoring aspects of it. See Humble 2020a: 291–2 for a deconstruction of this approach, and p. 307 n. 3 for other examples of scholars privileging the narrative in the encomium over that in the *Hellenica* to support the view that Agesilaus is one of Xenophon's heroes (to which list can also be added Cuniberti 2011: 75 with n. 34). See further also Chapter 6.2.

<sup>125</sup> See Tuplin 1993: 52–3, 57, 84, etc. For other examples of this interpretative strategy, see, e.g., Higgins 1977: 106; Proietti 1987: 96–7; Dillery 1995: 114–18; Laforse 1997: 216–61; Humble 2020a. Hirsch 1985: 164 n. 19: 'even a casual reading of the *Hellenica* proves that he [i.e. Xenophon] was aware of Agesilaus' failings'.

<sup>126</sup> For a fine example of this second interpretative method, see Henry 1966: 150–2, who carefully and easily picks holes in W. Meyer's interpretation of Xenophon's opinion about the Battle of Coronea. Henry does not, however, undertake a sustained, close analysis of the *Agesilaus* in terms of generic considerations since his primary aim is discussing the composition of the *Hellenica*. Laforse 2013 is also sensitive to this issue.

But even more of a sticking point towards conceding that Xenophon is not biased towards Sparta has been the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*, even though of the three ‘Spartan’ works this is the one which most clearly signals philosophical intent by the language in the opening sentences. It is a short treatise – fifteen sections (less than twenty-three pages in the *Oxford Classical Text* edition) – which opens with Xenophon wondering at how such a thinly populated *polis* as Sparta attained such great power and renown. He says that upon investigation he discovered how this happened and so ceased to wonder: it was accomplished because the Spartans followed the institutions of Lycurgus, which were opposite those in other *poleis* (*Lac.* 1.1). There follows then an account of these particular institutions which were exceptional to Sparta and the topics seem naturally to fall into the following main divisions: (1) *Lac.* 1, which, after the opening statement, discusses specific regulations concerning women and child-production; (2) *Lac.* 2–4, which deal with the public practices in place for males from around the age of seven to the age of thirty; (3) *Lac.* 5–10, which deal with certain aspects of the daily life of Sparta’s male citizens (with a summary of the general effect of and principles behind the peculiar practices in the second half of *Lac.* 10); (4) *Lac.* 11–13, which deal with the army on active service; (5) *Lac.* 14, which points out that Lycurgus’ ordinances are no longer obeyed and Spartan hegemony is under challenge; and finally, (6) *Lac.* 15, which lays out what has not changed over time: the honours accorded the kings and the compact sworn between the kings and the *polis*. The penultimate section of the work, which contains explicit censure of contemporary Spartan behaviour at home and abroad, presents, in most readings, an unsettling contrast to the rest of the work, which is more or less always regarded as praise of the Spartan practices described. Problems of interpretation have tended to centre on how to explain the critical section (*Lac.* 14) since it appears so at odds with the rest, what with Xenophon’s lauding of Sparta elsewhere (and here we come back circularly to the *Agesilaus* and *Hellenica*, even when some of the latter is admitted to be less positive towards Sparta than previously allowed).<sup>127</sup> There are other problems, too, but I will address these in the next chapter.

The text looks somewhat different and less problematic, however, if we shift our starting point and take Xenophon’s opening rhetoric to mean not that he is a wholehearted supporter of the Lycurgan practices which

<sup>127</sup> Higgins 1977: 66 noted long ago (as Farrell 2012: 18 recently emphasised) how circular argumentation dominates interpretation of the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia*.

brought Sparta to such a point of power and renown, but simply that he is embarking upon a philosophical (and hence critical) enquiry into a phenomenon he has observed and which he knows also no longer holds true in order to impart some useful lessons to an audience not made explicit.<sup>128</sup> One lesson is certainly similar to that found also in the *Hellenica* in that both works show how and why Spartan hegemony failed, despite her power and renown.<sup>129</sup> Thus in good Socratic fashion Xenophon examines the same phenomenon from different angles: the *Hellenica* from a politico-military angle and Spartan behaviour in the Greek world at large; the *Lacedaimoniôn Politeia* by examining internal social practices and Spartan behaviour at home. As I will show in Part II, Xenophon's opening rhetoric, the strategic use of imaginary interlocutors mimicking at least in part a dialectical process, as well as the narrative patterns throughout are all signals to read actively and attentively, signals which his original audience would undoubtedly have recognised.

<sup>128</sup> There are no obvious clues as to who the audience for the work is and, therefore, there have been numerous different suggestions. To the list of possibilities and their proposers presented by Farrell 2012: 18–19 can be added Cuniberti 2007, who argues for a Spartan audience. Farrell's own view of the work is closer to that presented here in that he reads it as didactic and Socratic and argues that the audience is 'young Athenians aspiring to advise and lead the Athenian democracy' (p. 11), but in general he reads many passages in a more positive light than I will be doing.

<sup>129</sup> Thus the works complement one another, although not in the way Proietti 1987 argued (see further Chapter 2.3).