Polis and *Politēs* in Xenophon's *Hellenica*: Regimes and Souls

Almost thirty years ago, a disagreement between Vivienne Gray (1989) and Christopher Tuplin (1993) opened up an important line of inquiry. Gray argued that the *Hellenica* was philosophical and moralizing; its purpose was to provide exempla of virtue and vice that the reader was encouraged to imitate or shun (cf. Pownall 2004). Tuplin objected that Gray had focused too much on individuals and had missed the forest for the trees. He proposed as the *Hellenica*'s major theme a properly historical concern: the consistent failure of imperial expansion in the fourth century. The Gray-Tuplin debate signaled two different ways of reading the *Hellenica*: as a tableau of exempla written against a historical background or as an attempt to understand the true causes of events in the first four decades of the fourth century (i.e., as a true successor to Thucydides). Dillery (1995) advanced the discussion by treating Xenophon's historical writing as a philosophical and, at the same time, widening the scope of paradigmatic material to include city-states, alongside individuals. But the question remains: is Xenophon more concerned with international politics or individuals, with *polis* or with *politēs*?

In this presentation, I will push this line of inquiry a step further, arguing that Xenophon portrays individual and collective as microcosm and macrocosm, and the reader must understand both to understand either. The premise under which the *Hellenica* operates is therefore similar to that of Plato's Socrates in the *Republic*. After the initial question (what is justice?) is raised, Socrates suggests in Book 2 that he and his interlocutors use constitutional forms as a metaphor for the states of the human soul. If we can describe the constituent elements of a just state, we ought to be able to apply the principles to the human soul. The *politeia* ("regime") of a polis and

the soul of a human being are, therefore, related as macrocosm/microcosm, and the ethical demands on the one ought to mirror the ethical demands on the other.

To substantiate the relevance of this theory to the *Hellenica*, I will discuss two major themes. The first comprises the linked concepts of *pleonexia* ("greed" / "grasping for more") and divine vengeance. On the macro level, the *Hellenica* goes through at least two major arcs of this motif. First, Athenian hubris and greed during the Peloponnesian War lead to their fall: Athenians suffer what they had inflicted on weaker cities (2.2.4). Hegemony then passes to Sparta, whose crimes and overreaching likewise occasion its downfall. Xenophon links this explicitly to the work of the gods (5.4.1). On the individual level, Critias provides a parallel example of the connected vices of overreaching and impiety, which are eventually punished by divine retribution (see Pownall 1998). His career, therefore, is an echo of Athens' imperialist greed during the preceding war; what the Athenians had done to other Greeks, the wicked oligarchy of Critias does to them.

The second theme is the Xenophontic ideal of leadership. Gray (2011; cf. Ferrario 2016) has delineated the fundamental principles of Xenophon's theory of leadership but has not considered the application of these principles to city-states. In the second half of the *Hellenica*, it gradually becomes clear that Sparta and Athens are natural leaders of the Greek world, and in a moving speech (6.3.10–17) Callistratus pleads that these two great cities put aside their differences, abstain from unjust interference with the internal politics of other poleis, and bring order to the Greek world. For Xenophon, Panhellenism meant more than fighting the Other; it meant finding an appropriate relationship among rulers and ruled on the international level, just as a successful regime must find an appropriate relationship among rulers and ruled on the civic level.

These are only two examples of a theme that permeates the *Hellenica*. Xenophon explores the virtues and vices of both individuals and constitutions through his historical frame, and the reader is to see the interplay between the two levels.

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