

Praising Agesilaus: the Limits of Panhellenic Rhetoric

Bruce Laforse

Shortly after the death of the Spartan king Agesilaus c. 360, Xenophon wrote an encomium of his old friend and patron. As one of the two kings in the unique Spartan dual kingship, Agesilaus had played a crucial role from 400 to 360 BC, a period which saw Sparta both rise to the pinnacle of power and then collapse. The *Agesilaus* is one of the earliest surviving examples of a prose work written in praise of an historical figure.¹ In such an encomium the object was not to present a strictly accurate portrait of the subject; rather it was to praise his character, glorify his achievements and, on the other hand, to anticipate or defend against any potential detractors.² Omission, exaggeration and bending of the truth were not only allowed but, indeed, expected. Its purpose, therefore, was far different from that of a modern biography; nor, despite the idealization of the subject's character, did it attempt primarily to uplift and instruct, as did Plutarch's later moralizing biographies, by presenting positive and negative models to emulate or avoid.³ It was designed to praise, to put the best possible face on the subject's life, career, background and character.⁴ It is not, then, strictly speaking, a work of history, and thus scholars must exercise caution when using it as an historical source.⁵

Supplying conclusive proof that Xenophon himself regarded the purpose of the *Agesilaus* as fundamentally different from history is the fact that he wrote a much fuller and (comparatively) more balanced account of Agesilaus' career in the *Hellenica*, his history of the years 411 to 362.⁶ The two works date to the same period, and share, with very minor alterations, a number of passages. Internal references indicate that Xenophon was writing

¹The *Evagoras* of Isocrates is generally thought to predate the *Agesilaus* by a decade or so. At this early date the shape and format of the prose encomium was in no way formalized. Xenophon did not slavishly follow Isocrates' format, but focused more on his subject's actual career, and organized his material differently, separating deeds from virtues. For an excellent treatment of the genre of encomium and its development see Noreen Humble, forthcoming, "True History: Xenophon's Agesilaos and the Encomiastic Genre," in A. Powell and N. Richer, eds., *Xenophon and Sparta* (Swansea and London). I am grateful to the author for letting me read a version of this article before publication. See also Momigliano, 1993, 49-50; Cawkwell, 1982, 319; Burgess 1902, 105 n. 4, 126 n. 4; and Stuart 1928, 60-90. Still useful, too, are Bruns 1896, Leo 1901.

²Hirsch 1985, 49 argues that the *Agesilaus* was primarily apologetic, not encomiastic.

³Cf. Plut. *Alex.* 1.1-3.

⁴Xenophon referred to his work as praise (*epainon*), (*Ages.* 1.1). Note, too, that he distinguished between a funeral dirge and a eulogy/encomium (*Ages.* 10.3).

⁵A brief survey of scholars, in addition to Hirsch, who see the *Agesilaus* as something other or more than encomium: Luccioni 1947, 192-200, an encomium of Sparta as well as of Agesilaus; Dihle 1956, 28, a portrait of the ideal military commander; Delebecque 1957, 462-70, a panhellenic diatribe dating to circa 355 warning the Greek states to stand up to Artaxerxes III Ochus; Breitenbach 1967, cols. 1702-7, arguing that the panhellenism of the *Ages.* was a romantic ideal, not a political program, a rhetorical device to popularize Agesilaus; Higgins 1977, 76-82, a study of the nature of true royalty.

⁶On the *Hellenica* see recent major scholarship including Dillery 1995, esp. 3-16; Tuplin 1993, 11-18, who includes a brief history of modern scholarship on the *Hellenica*; and Gray 1989. Also of interest is the chapter on Xenophon's use of moral exempla in the *Hellenica* in Pownall 2004, 65-112.

the corresponding sections of the *Hellenica* in the 350s.⁷ He must have written the two works in more or less the same conditions, with much the same mindset. The differences in detail, scope and tone between the two are therefore most likely deliberate.⁸

The major difference between the encomiastic *Agésilas* and the *Hellenica* is the former's use of panhellenic rhetoric to dress up Agesilaus' career. One of the few relatively recent critiques has concluded that this was a deliberate whitewash, that Agesilaus was viewed by the rest of Greece as consistently medizing, as were the Spartans.⁹ There is an element of truth in this, but the characterization is far too simplistic. Nor is the emphasis on Agesilaus' panhellenism the only exaggeration in the encomium. Xenophon indulged in other types of distortion.¹⁰ For example, there is no mention of Lysander, despite the fact that he played a key role in the first part of Agesilaus' reign, not least in engineering his ascent to the throne. Xenophon wanted to focus attention on Agesilaus' achievements; there was no room in the spotlight for anyone else, unless it was to cast an even brighter light on Agesilaus by comparison (e.g., with the Persian Great King in the catalogue of virtues, 9.1-5).¹¹ Indeed, Xenophon omitted from the encomium most of Agesilaus' career. Spartan rule had not been popular with the rest of the Greeks, and Agesilaus had played a major role in directing Spartan foreign policy. His campaigns in Asia, since they were against *barbaroi*, offered the safest material for praise, and the most likely to win a receptive audience among non-Spartan Greeks.¹² Panhellenic rhetoric could present this aspect of Agesilaus' career in the strongest or at least the most palatable light.

Throughout Xenophon's writings panhellenism rarely takes the form of the full-blown ideal of a united and cooperative Greek attack on Persia, as often advocated by Isocrates.¹³

⁷Xenophon was working on 6.4.37 after 357 but before 353: he says that the Thessalian king Tisiphonus was on the throne while he was writing that section. According to Diod. Sic. (16.14.1; 16.35.1) Tisiphonus reigned from 357 to 353. See Dillery 1995, 257 n. 32 for a discussion.

⁸Scholarship on the relationship between the two works includes: Dillery 1995, 114-17; Momigliano 1993, 50; Cartledge 1987, 65-6; Hirsch, 56; Hamilton 1982, 67-78; Henry 1967, 107-133.

⁹Hirsch 1985, 39-55.

¹⁰For an excellent introductory discussion of Xenophon's skills at shaping a narrative see Flower 2012, 81-116, on the *Anabasis*.

¹¹Unless otherwise specified all references to an ancient text are to the *Agésilas*.

¹²At the time Xenophon wrote the encomium he was most likely living in or near Athens, and the Athenians were probably his primary intended readers. Athens and Sparta were allies in the late 360s, so the prospect of putting before Athenians a piece praising Agesilaus was not impossible. The Athenians had even supported, if reluctantly, the Spartan effort against Persia in 399 -- they sent three hundred horsemen to Thibron, commander of the Spartan expedition in Ionia, thinking it would benefit the democracy if they never returned (cf. *Hell.* 3.1.4). Still, even this was more than some of Sparta's other allies did. But the Athenians would probably not have appreciated reminders of the Corinthian War (395-387), and the humiliating terms dictated to them by the King's Peace that followed it.

¹³Flower 2012, 170-194, in his recent book on the *Anabasis*, largely supports this view of panhellenic rhetoric. He notes that while Xenophon draws on stock panhellenic themes in many of his speeches, in their actions the Cyreans typically take a pragmatic approach: any people who supply them a market they regard as friends. The scholarship on panhellenism is extensive. The most recent comprehensive treatment is Mitchell

Nor is it an official policy championed by one faction of Greeks against another. Ostensibly, *all* Greeks were panhellenists—a key to understanding the strength of its appeal; but the appeal was one thing, the practical situation quite another. One does not find a general or politician fervently adhering to a panhellenic policy regardless of its practical consequences; and rarely, if ever, are practical issues or questions of policy decided solely on panhellenic grounds.

Thus, in Xenophon, panhellenic sentiment appears most often in a broadly and vaguely defined way as “working for the good of the Greeks.” The vagueness was essential. Competitiveness and the propensity for strife, both within a *polis* and between *poleis*, formed central elements in the Greek character. Patriotism operated at two, and frequently three, levels. These include loyalty to: (a) one’s class or faction within the *polis*, (b) one’s *polis*, and (c) Greece, or often simply, “the Greeks.” These loyalties, patently, were frequently in direct conflict. The desire for hegemony within the Greek world prompted a strong rivalry for Persian support. Similarly, despite the stereotypes of Persian weakness that grew up after the Persian Wars, empathy between Persian and Greek aristocrats was not uncommon. Nor was panhellenic sentiment directed solely at *barbaroi*. Greeks often deployed such rhetoric against other Greeks. In short, panhellenism often had little or no *logical* basis, relying instead on emotionalism fed by nostalgia.

Yet panhellenic rhetoric was pervasive and influential, so much so that it cannot be dismissed as mere cynical manipulation by politicians and rhetoricians. Its appeal was genuine, and it had real power over Greek audiences. A speaker typically used panhellenic rhetoric to persuade his listeners, regardless of whether it had any real bearing on the issue at hand. The cultural superiority of the Greeks to *barbaroi*, an invocation of the victories over Xerxes, or variations on any of the stock Greek stereotypes of Persians, usually formed the basis of the appeal. The political or military realities of the situation were often, with good reason, ignored. Greeks by and large responded strongly to this emotional appeal. Thus a speaker might, among many other reasons, use panhellenic themes to justify attacking another Greek or making an alliance with barbarians; to belittle a rival Greek’s actions; and to persuade Greeks to help a barbarian.¹⁴ It is on this emotional appeal of panhellenism that Xenophon draws in praising Agesilaus in his encomium. What follows is a detailed examination of the way Xenophon thus deploys panhellenic themes and rhetoric in the *Agesilaus*. Often a comparison with corresponding passages in the *Hellenica* will help illuminate the effect Xenophon creates in the encomium.

Xenophon divides the encomium into two parts; the first purports to recount Agesilaus’ military and political achievements (1.6-2.31); the second offers a catalogue of his personal virtues, complete with illustrations of each (3.1-9.7). Not surprisingly, panhellenic language and motifs pervade both parts. Acting for the good of the Greeks, being a *philhellen* and a *misoperses* were activities or stances that one could safely and effectively praise. This is in keeping with the way in which this kind of rhetoric appears in Xenophon’s other works. To

2007. A brief selection of other recent and useful works includes Rood 2004; Flower 2000; LaForse 1998; Dillery 1995, esp. 41-62; Georges 1994; Green 1996. Also helpful are J. Hall 2002 and 1997; Malkin 2001; E. Hall 1989.

¹⁴ See, for example, *An.* 6.2.1-8; 6.6-.34; 5.5.7-12.

attribute a panhellenic motive to an action, deed or policy was to give it, or attempt to give it, a seal of approval.¹⁵

The encomium's account of Agesilaus' military and political deeds is highly selective. Xenophon omitted all but a brief period of the Spartan's career, and what he did include, compared to the more sober account of the same events in the *Hellenica*, he enhanced with panhellenic coloring and details. Indeed, he focused almost exclusively on the expedition to Asia Minor, a campaign, it should be remembered, belonging to only the fourth through sixth years (396-394) of a reign that lasted some forty years. The only other event from Agesilaus' career that the encomium treats at significant length is the Battle of Coronea in 394, which took place on the way home from Asia.

Despite its highlighting of the Asian expedition, the encomium nonetheless omits material discreditable to Agesilaus that the much fuller description in the *Hellenica* includes, while adding insignificant details clearly designed to enhance the Spartan's panhellenic credentials. As a good illustration of this we have the differing versions of how the expedition came about. In the encomium, it is a concern for the safety of the Greeks, the hope of punishing Persia for the invasion of 480, and a desire to fight the Persian King on his own, not Greek, territory that motivates Agesilaus to volunteer to lead a force into Asia (1.7-8). The implication is that not just Sparta but all Greece was eager to follow him. But in the *Hellenica*, the expedition is presented as the brainchild of the ambitious Lysander. According to Xenophon, Lysander planned to use this force to reestablish the governments he had set up in Ionian cities in 405, which a rival faction at Sparta had overthrown (*Hell.* 3.4.2). He had to persuade Agesilaus to promote the project—though once in Asia, Agesilaus surprised him by asserting his own control over it.

The *Hellenica* reveals that Lysander's brand of personal imperialism had not been unopposed at home and that perhaps, as a consequence, he was hoping to revive his dreams of empire in Ionia through Agesilaus. Support, therefore, for the expedition of 396 may not have been unanimous at Sparta, but that is nowhere stated explicitly. However, the *Hellenica* does make clear that the rest of the Greek world was far from united in its support for Agesilaus' campaign. In its settlement of the Peloponnesian war Sparta had reserved most of the bounties of victory for itself, thus angering key allies such as Corinth and Thebes who had supplied troops, fleets and money.¹⁶ Sparta also had used its position as victor to settle old scores; for example, it invaded Elis in 400 and seized territory (*Hell.* 3.2.21-31). As a result of this kind of behavior, many of its old allies refused to contribute troops to Agesilaus' campaign. According to the *Hellenica* therefore, Agesilaus was undertaking a panhellenic crusade at precisely the time when Sparta was alienating much of the Greek world. Indeed, the Corinthian War, with Athens, Thebes, Corinth and Argos aligned against Sparta, would

¹⁵Cf., for example, Clearchus (*An.* 1.3.1-21); Cyrus the Younger (*An.* 1.7.3-5); Callicratidas (*Hell.* 1.6.6-11); Xenophon and Hecatonymus (*An.* 5.5.8-23).

¹⁶Thebes and Corinth had argued for the destruction of Athens (*Hell.* 2.2.19; cf. 3.5.8); Thebes had offered refuge to Athenian democrats fleeing the Thirty (*Hell.* 2.4.2; 3.5.5); Neither Corinth or Thebes contributed troops to King Pausanias' expedition to Attica in 403 (*Hell.* 2.4.30; 3.5.5), nor did they take part in Sparta's invasion of Elis (*Hell.* 3.2.25). On the falling out between Thebes and Sparta, see Hamilton 1979, 137-61.

break out little more than a year after Agesilaus departed for Asia. Xenophon, therefore, could include little of this broader historical context in his encomium. Instead he focuses on Agesilaus' panhellenic motivation for undertaking the expedition. While Agesilaus may well have harbored such panhellenic sentiments, the *Hellenica* shows that Xenophon believed they were hardly the Spartan's primary impetus.

Lysander is particularly notable for his absence throughout the *Agesilaus*. His relationship with Agesilaus was close; indeed, the two were reportedly lovers when Agesilaus was young.¹⁷ One might have expected Xenophon somehow to have turned Agesilaus' tie to the victor of Aegospotami into an accomplishment worthy of praise. There are however several possible reasons behind the omission of Lysander. First, Agesilaus owed a great deal to him. According to the *Hellenica*, it was through Lysander's influence, especially his clever interpretation of an oracle—beware a lame kingship—that the Spartans chose Agesilaus to succeed his brother Agis, rather than Agis' son Leotychidas (*Hell.* 3.3.3-4). By contrast in the *Agesilaus* it was Agesilaus' birth and outstanding character that prompted the choice (1.5). As mentioned above, Lysander was also instrumental in obtaining for Agesilaus the command of the expedition to Asia. For the encomium Xenophon apparently preferred not to dilute Agesilaus' accomplishments, and so left Lysander out.

For similar reasons Xenophon omits from the *Agesilaus* the *Hellenica*'s account of the rivalry that arose between the two Spartans, the first signs of which appeared once they arrived in Asia in 396 (*Hell.* 3.4.7-9). Lysander seems to have taken it for granted that he would wield actual power, and that Agesilaus would rubberstamp his actions. But Agesilaus exerted his own will, undercut all of Lysander's moves, and forced him to yield to his own ultimate, royal authority.¹⁸ Although the incident illustrates Agesilaus asserting his authority Xenophon could not praise him for that without alluding to Lysander's prominent role in promoting Agesilaus' early career. In the *Hellenica* Xenophon describes the two men as parting on cordial terms; Agesilaus, at Lysander's request, appointed him to a command in another region (the Hellespont) where he won over an important Persian ally (*Hell.* 3.4.10).

Another reason for omitting Lysander from the encomium is that he was intimately connected with Persia. He had been Sparta's most effective liaison in the recent history of its checkered relations with Persia. Indeed, it was Lysander who, through his close relationship with Cyrus, effectively wielded the Spartan-Persian alliance to defeat Athens.

¹⁷Plut. *Ages.* 2.2. See also *Lac.* 2.13-14.

¹⁸This incident may have helped induce Lysander to seek other means of acquiring lasting power. Other sources allege that Lysander plotted to supplant the two hereditary royal houses at Sparta and open the kingship to others, i.e., himself: Diod. Sic. 14.13; Plut. *Lys.* 24-6, 30; Nep. *Lys.* 3.5. Cf. Cartledge 1987, 94-6; Hamilton 1979, 69-98. Xenophon says nothing directly about such a plot in either work though, as Tuplin points out, a passage in the *Hellenica* (3.4.7) may refer obliquely to it (Tuplin 1993, 57). Xenophon may have regarded Lysander's machinations, if they took place, as another reason to leave him out of the encomium. Note that Plutarch has a senior Spartan advise Agesilaus to keep the plot quiet when papers incriminating Lysander are discovered after his death.

Xenophon rarely associates him with panhellenic sentiment or rhetoric in the *Hellenica*.¹⁹ Such a figure would have been jarringly out of place amid the panhellenic rhetoric of the encomium.²⁰ Lysander's reasons for undertaking the expedition to Asia with Agesilaus, as Xenophon presents them, were strictly personal and based on a highly practical assessment of the situation. While the other Spartans were wringing their hands in consternation at the news that Persia was building a new fleet in Phoenicia, Lysander weighed the odds carefully: the Greeks were far superior at sea, and the Cyreans' safe return spoke eloquently of the King's weakness on land; it looked like a good opportunity to reestablish his decarchies, which the ephors had overthrown (*Hell.* 3.4.1-2). Not only did he have no panhellenic motive, but he made no pretence of having one. He apparently did not, for example, go along on Agesilaus' excursion to Aulis. Lysander was, in essence, exploiting the new Persian threat to advance his own cause in the factional wrangling at Sparta.²¹

The *Hellenica* does portray Agesilaus as sensitive to the propagandistic powers of panhellenism. He tried to establish the expedition of 396 as part of the long struggle between east and west stretching back to the heroic age of the Trojan war. Before setting out for Asia he went to Aulis on the east coast of Boeotia, intending to sacrifice there as Agamemnon had done before leading the Greeks to Troy. The Boeotians, who opposed the expedition, forcefully disrupted the rites as unauthorized, and Agesilaus sailed off in anger, having failed in his purpose (*Hell.* 3.4.3-4; cf. also 7.1.34). This incident plays an important role in the *Hellenica*. It foreshadows the later attack on Sparta by a Boeotian-led coalition of mainland Greek cities that forced Agesilaus to abandon his Asiatic ambitions and return to Greece.²²

Not surprisingly, this ill-omened beginning to the great panhellenic venture does not appear in the *Agesilaus*. The omission implies that Xenophon believed that the episode, to some degree, reflected poorly on Agesilaus. While the Boeotians' actions might be viewed as high-handed, Agesilaus does not come off well either; he was unable to prevent the Boeotians from intervening, or to do anything in retaliation, but was forced to depart having failed in

¹⁹ One instance occurs at *Hell.* 2.1.32. Before executing Philocles, one of the Athenian generals captured at Aegospotami, Lysander asked him what he thought he should suffer for having begun outrageous practices against Greeks (Philocles had allegedly drowned the crews of two captured triremes, one Corinthian, the other Andrian). The irony is obvious.

²⁰ Note the anecdote in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (4.20-25 with Pomeroy 1994, 251) in which Lysander while visiting Cyrus admires his handiwork as a gardener. The two were clearly closely associated in contemporary Greek minds. See also *Hell.* 1.5.1-7 and 2.1.13-15 where Cyrus entrusts his satrapy to Lysander when he returns inland to attend his sick father. Cf. also Plut. *Lys.* 4.1, 9.1. Lysander picked Ephesus as his base because it was convenient to the satrapal seat at Sardis and it was, as Plutarch notes (*Lys.* 3.3), markedly under Persian influence (Krentz 1989, 135. Cf. *Hell.* 2.1.6-7).

²¹ On Lysander's ambitions see, e.g., the remarks of Hodkinson 1993, 162-3.

²² On the incident at Aulis, see Hamilton 1991, 30-32, who comments on Agesilaus' ego and also discusses Plutarch's version: *Ages.* 6.4-6. Tuplin 1993, 57, notes that Xenophon's account is "surprisingly objective". Cartledge 1987, 290-91, argues that Agesilaus' "unreasoning hatred of Thebes" was a result of what happened at Aulis. Dillery 1995, 23, 116, notes how the failed sacrifice presages Agesilaus' failure. Krentz 1995, 184, observes that not much later Agesilaus will make a similarly arrogant claim to be speaking for all the Greeks to the barbarian Otys (4.1.8).

his purpose. It is hard, too, not to see his attempt to liken himself to Agamemnon as egotistical, even arrogant, especially when one considers the modest quality and relatively small size of his initial force: only thirty Spartiates, with 2,000 *neodamodeis*, and 6,000 allied troops (*Hell.* 3.4.2-3). Moreover, Agamemnon at Aulis seems, at best, a dangerously ambiguous image to invoke. Certainly the episode left in tatters the panhellenic veneer Agesilaus was trying to put on his expedition; although intending to contend with the King of Persia for Asia, he failed to obtain the cooperation of other Greeks, even those who at the time, at least nominally, were Spartan allies. The scene highlighted very effectively the rising hostility to Sparta on the part of other Greek states, which undercut the alleged panhellenic nature of the enterprise.

After the *Hellenica* shows Agesilaus' attempt at Aulis to invoke comparisons with the heroes of the Trojan War, it is something of a letdown to find that his first action in Asia as the new Agamemnon was to make a truce with Tissaphernes. True, when the Persian satrap asked his reason for coming, Agesilaus had replied, "That the cities of Asia be independent, as are those in our part of Greece" (*Hell.* 3.4.5). But this did not seem to mean immediate military action; his first so-called success over Tissaphernes was to keep his oath regarding the truce while the Persian did not, thereby winning for the Greeks the support of the gods (*Hell.* 3.4.6; 11).

In the *Agesilaus*, the story is very different. Lysander, of course, does not play any role. Agesilaus' offer to go to Asia, made of his own accord, meets with great enthusiasm. Xenophon elaborates the reasons for this, none of which appears in the *Hellenica*: the fact that the expedition would keep Persia busy in Asia and prevent an invasion of Greece; the personal appeal of Agesilaus' great eagerness to avenge Xerxes' invasion, and his determination to fight an offensive war, at the enemy's cost; the attractiveness of turning the conflict from a struggle to protect Greece into a contest for Asia (1.8). These amount to three (slightly) different ways of expressing the same panhellenic sentiment.²³ The narrative then jumps to Asia, where it picks up with Tissaphernes' breaking the treaty by assembling a huge army. The unpleasantness at Aulis is left out, and thus does not linger in the memory to cast a shadow of foreboding. Nor, as in the *Hellenica*, is the story of Tissaphernes' perfidy interrupted by an account of the confrontation between Lysander and Agesilaus (*Hell.* 3.4.7-10). Although it is still slightly odd to find Agesilaus making a treaty, after all the talk of carrying the war into Persian territory, there is substantially less in the narrative of the *Agesilaus* to distract from the contrast between Agesilaus' faith and Tissaphernes' duplicity, a typical feature of the common Greek view of the Greek-*barbaroi* dichotomy.

In the encomium, Xenophon gives the impression that Agesilaus undertook the expedition motivated only by panhellenic patriotism. In the *Hellenica* this is not so clear. There, Lysander came up with the plan as a way to further his own imperial ambitions. Agesilaus, at first, was happy to go along; it was an excellent chance for a recently installed king to make his reputation. Indeed, it did not take long for his own aspirations to emerge, and after the confrontation with Lysander he took control of the enterprise. The trip to Aulis,

²³The second does imply a personal faith in Agesilaus, in addition to supporting the substance of his proposal.

however, does suggest that Agesilaus at least recognized the potential for posing as a panhellenic hero that the expedition represented. The *Hellenica* gives a fuller, if still indirect, picture of Agesilaus' motivations. It was not just panhellenic allegiance, but personal ambition as well.²⁴

Both works give virtually the same version of much of the first year's campaigning in Asia, including Agesilaus' deceiving Tissaphernes about his intended line of march, and his successful pillaging of Phrygia (*Ages.* 1.15-16; *Hell.* 3.4.11-12). Xenophon adds some praise in editorial asides in the *Agesilaus*, noting that the ruse was seen as evidence of sound generalship, and contrasted favorably with Tissaphernes' deceit while under oath (1.17). This remains implicit in the *Hellenica*.

However, the two accounts differ greatly on how the first year concluded. In the *Hellenica*, Agesilaus' meager cavalry is roughed up badly by Pharnabazus' better-armed and numerically superior Persians near Dascylium. An unfavorable sacrifice and the realization that his cavalry was inadequate persuade Agesilaus to leave off pillaging and retreat to the coast, where he sets about raising a suitable cavalry force (*Hell.* 3.4.13-15). In the *Agesilaus*, he recognizes, *without experiencing a defeat*, that if he is to avoid running away from the enemy, he will need a good cavalry force when campaigning in the plains of Asia against Pharnabazus (1.23). The *Hellenica*, by contrast, does not conceal Agesilaus' initial weakness in cavalry, or the defeat that ended the year's fighting, and even describes Agesilaus' campaigning as "fighting while running away" or "skulking warfare" (*drapeteuonta polemein*, *Hell.* 3.4.15). Instead of the unsuccessful cavalry skirmish, in the encomium Xenophon describes how effectively Agesilaus carried out the more mundane duties of a general. For example, he made sure that his friends were able to profit from the sale of plunder (1.18-19); at the same time he took care not to despoil territory excessively, so that it could still support an army. In addition to force, he also tried to use gentleness to win over enemies, ordering his men to treat captives like human beings, and providing for orphans and elderly captives. Similarly, he demanded from captured cities only the sort of obedience that free men owe rulers (1.20-22).

Thus the year ends on a panhellenic note in the encomium. The brief portrait of Agesilaus' treatment of his friends, and especially of his enemies, offers an implied contrast with the usual characterization of Persian or barbarian kings. Agesilaus regards the men of cities he has captured as free. A key element of the Greek stereotype of Persia was that everyone, even the highest nobility, was a slave of the King.²⁵ Agesilaus' clemency to individuals and captives therefore comes across as the opposite of what one might have expected from the Great

²⁴ Agesilaus may also have seen sacrificing at Aulis as a way to assert his status both as leader of the expedition and as king independent of the older and much more established Lysander. He may have anticipated that it would not be easy to wrest control of the expedition.

²⁵ Xenophon even calls Cyrus the Younger a slave (*An.* 1.9.29). Note, too, that in his speech to the Greeks before Cunaxa, Cyrus tells them he would rather have their freedom than his own vast wealth (*An.* 1.7.3). See Missiou 1993 on the Greek perception that all Persian subjects were slaves. Cp. *Anabasis* 1.9.28-29; Euripides, *Helen* 276; the dialogue between Xerxes and the exiled Spartan king Demaratus, 7.101-4.

King.²⁶ This section is a foretaste of the explicit comparison of the lifestyles of Agesilaus and Artaxerxes formulated in the second part of the encomium (9.1-5).

Both works give essentially the same account of Agesilaus' preparations in the spring of 395 for the fighting in the coming year. The passage (*Ages.* 1.25-8; *Hell.* 3.4.16-9) is a set piece, both highly polished and didactic: Agesilaus demonstrates how to inspire, train and motivate troops (by holding competitions with prizes, setting an example personally, showing proper respect for the gods). Although the two versions are virtually the same, Xenophon makes close to twenty small changes in wording, omitting a brief phrase, or substituting one word for another. The aim appears to have been to make the encomium more dignified.²⁷ The passage ends with a paragraph describing how Agesilaus instilled fighting spirit in his troops. He had barbarian captives sold naked, to expose them as white and soft from never exercising and always riding in carriages. As a result, the men believed that fighting the Persians would be just like fighting women (*Ages.* 1.28; *Hell.* 3.4.19). The characterization of Persians as effete, enervated by luxurious living, is a stock panhellenic theme.²⁸

Again, in the main both works give the same account of the Battle of Sardis in 395.²⁹ There are some small differences in vocabulary and phrasing, due to the requirements of genre. For example, in the *Hellenica* "the Persians" (*hoi Persai*) receive the charge of the Greek cavalry (*Hell.* 3.4.24); in the *Agesilaus*, it is "the brave among the Persians" (*hoi agathoi ton Person* 1.32), burnishing Agesilaus' victory by elevating the quality of the defeated foe. The works treat the aftermath of the battle quite differently. The *Hellenica* provides the information that Tissaphernes was present in Sardis at the time of the battle, with the result that the Persians blamed him for the defeat and charged him with betrayal (*Hell.* 3.4.24).³⁰ Both versions note that the King sent Tithraustes to execute Tissaphernes and take over his satrapy. But in the *Hellenica* we learn that Tithraustes sent envoys to Agesilaus proposing a treaty on behalf of the King. The terms were that the King would allow the cities in Asia to retain their autonomy, so long as they paid the ancient tribute—and if Agesilaus returned to Greece. Agesilaus replied that such an agreement had to be ratified by the authorities at

²⁶Note Xenophon's clemency in the *Anabasis*, e.g., when Seuthes offers him vengeance on some Thracians who had deceived him (*An.* 7.4.23-24). Consider, by contrast, Cyrus the Younger's harsh brand of justice -- though it is not clear if Xenophon disapproves of it -- (*An.* 1.9.13), and Herodotus' portrait of Xerxes' tyrannical cruelty.

²⁷Henry 1967, 114-15, gives a representative example of the kind of polishing Xenophon did to the *Agesilaus*. The addition of a word turns a mundane sentence in the *Hellenica* (4.3.8) into an isocolon in the *Agesilaus* (2.4).

²⁸See, e.g., Cawkwell 1982, 325; cf. *Anabasis* 3.2.25-26. It is curious, though, that this somewhat undercuts the characterization of Agesilaus as gentle and merciful to captives which Xenophon had presented just a few paragraphs earlier in the encomium (1.21-22). Two dominant themes in the encomium seem slightly at cross-purposes here: Agesilaus the victorious general and panhellenic hero does not always quite jibe with Agesilaus the man of Socratic moderation, the true *kaloskagathos*.

²⁹On the Battle of Sardis, *Hell.* 3.4.1-4.2.9; *Ages.* 1.6-38. An alternative account is in the Oxyrhynchus Historian, 11.3-22.4; with additional details in Diod. Sic. 14.79-80, 83 and Plut. *Ages.* 10.1-5. On the reliability of the two traditions see Shipley 1997, 165-169. See also Wylie 1992, 118-130; DeVoto 1988; Gray 1979; Anderson 1974; Bruce 1967, 150-56; and Dugas 1910.

³⁰The *Hellenica* adds that the booty Agesilaus collected amounted to over 70 talents, and included a number of camels that he brought back to Greece (*Hell.* 3.4.24).

Sparta. In the meantime Tithraustes suggested that Agesilaus take his army to the territory of Pharnabazus, which Agesilaus agreed to do in return for thirty talents (*Hell.* 3.4.25-26). This amounted to a bribe, and Xenophon did little to disguise the fact.

Indeed, in the *Agesilaus*' catalogue of virtues Xenophon terms Tithraustes' offer a bribe (*dora*), and supplies Agesilaus' reply: "Among us, Tithraustes, it is more honorable for a ruler to enrich his army rather than himself, and to take plunder rather than gifts from the enemy" (4.6). But Xenophon did not note here, as he did in the *Hellenica*, that Agesilaus accepted the gifts. Moreover, the encomium's version of Agesilaus' deeds does not even mention the interchange between the Spartan and Tithraustes. Instead it provides further details about the aftermath of the victory that are of little historical significance but serve solely to enhance Agesilaus' panhellenic laurels: Agesilaus burns and pillages the suburbs of Sardis, and issues both a proclamation inviting anyone who wants freedom to join him, as well as a challenge to anyone who claims a right to Asia to seek a decision by arms; when the challenge goes unanswered he continues to campaign with complete confidence. Further, he now sees the Asiatic Greeks, who had before been forced to cringe, honored by their former oppressors; he forces those who had previously arrogantly claimed for themselves the honors paid to gods to shrink even from looking the Greeks in the face. After this victory, the encomium claims, all nations send envoys to Agesilaus seeking friendship, and the desire for freedom causes many to revolt to him, so that he becomes *hegemon* not only of Greeks but of many barbarians as well (1.33-35).

These paragraphs introduce several standard Greek stereotypes of Persian behavior, most prominently the dichotomy of Greek freedom and Persian tyranny.³¹ In addition, the King's beheading of Tissaphernes supplies a telling contrast to the image of Agesilaus the Liberator. The picture of Persians bowing slavishly before their King, as if to a god, is also a standard image of panhellenic rhetoric.³²

The close of the Sardis campaign in the *Agesilaus*, with Greeks and barbarians flocking to Agesilaus' standard, is a far cry from the *Hellenica*, where Agesilaus takes Tithraustes' bribe to leave the area. Neither work calls attention to the fact that Agesilaus had been unable to take Sardis, that the campaign had been nothing more than an extended plundering

³¹See, e.g., Green 1996, 14-17.

³²Cf. Isocrates, *Panegyricus* (4.150-54) for an example of the full Greek stereotype of Persian character. But there is more here than just panhellenic trappings. Agesilaus' rule stands for freedom, but not just *Greek* freedom. Xenophon claims that many barbarian nations revolted to him because they desired to be free. This narrows the target of the anti-Persian rhetoric to the Great King, while 'humanizing' other barbarians to the extent that they can be seen as appreciating the value of freedom, so much so that they revolt from their oppressive King—though the emphasis remains on Agesilaus as the one who brought them their freedom. As with the praise for his gentleness to captives, by equating Agesilaus' rule with freedom Xenophon adds to his credentials as a *kaloskagathos*. Neither trait is entirely consonant with the image of a panhellenic hero; indeed, the latter actually goes against the stereotypical view of the barbarian's natural slavishness.

expedition—except, in the *Agesilaus*, for the information that Agesilaus was able to dedicate one hundred talents as a tithe at Delphi from the spoils of two years in Asia (1.34).³³

After recounting the Sardis campaign, the narrative of Agesilaus' deeds in the *Agesilaus* suddenly shifts from trumpeting Agesilaus' panhellenic zeal to praising his loyalty to Sparta. The reason for this is simple. In 395 the Corinthian War had broken out in Greece, so that Sparta was no longer opposed only by Persia, but by a coalition of mainland Greek states as well. The *Agesilaus* says nothing about how Sparta found itself thus beset. The *Hellenica* does discuss the outbreak of hostilities and its causes. The rise of Thebes and Persian bribes in mainland Greek cities were key factors (*Hell.* 3.5.1-2). But Xenophon also depicts the Spartans as just as eager for the war as anyone else (*Hell.* 3.5.5; 4.2.1-3). The pertinent point here is that, even if Xenophon did blame the Thebans and other Greeks for forcing an end to Agesilaus' panhellenic crusade, he does not say so *explicitly* in the encomium. The focus of praise simply shifts to Agesilaus' love for his fatherland, and the selflessness he shows by abandoning his personal dreams of Persian conquest and returning home to defend his city (1.36). Indeed, the encomium gives this act considerable play, exaggerating the extent of Agesilaus' expectations in Asia—he hoped to dissolve the empire that had attacked Greece—and emphasizing the alacrity of his response to the order to come home—he obeyed as if he were in the presence of the Ephors. Agesilaus, according to the encomium, would not take the whole earth in exchange for his fatherland (1.36). Xenophon's shift of focus, from praising Agesilaus' panhellenic patriotism to extolling his loyalty to Sparta, reveals the all too common obstacle to true cooperation among Greek states. Loyalty to one's *polis* almost always took precedence over any obligation to working for the good of the Greeks as a whole. Yet being a *philopolis* did not necessarily disqualify one from being a panhellenist as well: the encomium praises Agesilaus with equal lavishness for both kinds of patriotism.

There were, however, clear limits to Xenophon's praise for Agesilaus' *polis* patriotism. Besides the Battle of Coronea (394), he includes very little of Agesilaus' extensive activities during the Corinthian War in the encomium, though these occur frequently in the *Hellenica*. Indeed, the *Agesilaus* ignores most of the next thirty years of Agesilaus' reign. During this period Sparta was either at war with other Greek states or, with Persian support, enforcing a rule on the rest of Greece that was almost universally despised; it was the humiliating King's Peace of 387 that brought an end to the Corinthian War. As with the Peloponnesian War, Sparta had emerged victorious thanks to the support of Persia. In exchange, Sparta had renounced any claim to the Greek cities in Asia. There was no way to put this in a panhellenic light, nor would fierce loyalty to Sparta during this time have appeared admirable to many Greeks outside Sparta.

³³The *Hellenica* adds that the booty Agesilaus collected amounted to over 70 talents, and included a number of camels that he brought back to Greece (*Hell.* 3.4.24). The alternative account of the campaign of 395, including the Battle at Sardis, in the Oxyrhynchus Historian varies considerably from that in Xenophon. The outcome and its lasting effects are the same, however (11.3-22.4). In the Oxyrhynchus Historian's version the battle was on a much larger scale, which Agesilaus won by successfully executing a complicated stratagem. Nonetheless he was unable to take Sardis, and had similar failures at other cities (Gordium and Miletou Teichos 21.6 in Phrygia; Cius in Mysia 21.6; and in Lydia). Xenophon does not mention any of this further campaigning in either of his works. See Tuplin 1993, 57-8.

The *Agésilas* contains only a handful of events from the years 394-371, and none of these demonstrates Agesilaus' panhellenism. Some illustrate his cleverness as a commander (2.18-20), or his piety and modesty (2.17), and touch on political conditions only tangentially. Others are examples of Agesilaus rescuing Spartan supporters, in Phlius (2.21), and Thebes (2.22).

After Sparta's defeat at Leuctra in 371, Persia withdrew its support. This reopened the opportunity for Xenophon to praise Agesilaus both as a panhellenist and as a good Spartan. Agesilaus' conduct in defense of Sparta during the Theban invasions of Laconia comes under the latter heading in the encomium (2.23-24), though Xenophon does not name Agesilaus specifically as directing the defense of the city in the *Hellenica* (*Hell.* 6.5.22-32; 49-52). On the other hand, the *Hellenica* describes an expedition Agesilaus led into Arcadia that gets only a brief mention in the encomium (*Hell.* 6.5.12-21; *Ages.* 2.23).

Further events from the last years of Agesilaus' life appear only in the encomium, probably because they took place after the Battle of Mantinea (362), which closes the *Hellenica*. Some of these Xenophon praises as benefiting Sparta. Agesilaus' work as an envoy, Xenophon claims, resulted in deeds worthy of a great general for which he could have justly set up trophies. These exploits all took place along the coast of Asia Minor and probably should be associated with the Satraps' Revolt of the 360s.³⁴ However, it is Agesilaus' personal prestige that Xenophon emphasizes, not the fact that he supported the revolt. Agesilaus' last campaign, as a mercenary in Egypt, receives praise for being good both for the Greeks and for Sparta. Xenophon's description of Agesilaus' reaction at the invitation from the Egyptian king exemplifies this mix:

For he thought that at one stroke he would repay the Egyptian king for his good works for Sparta, would free again the Greeks in Asia, and would punish the Persian king both for his former wrongs and because now while claiming to be an ally of Sparta he orders it to give up Messene (2.29; my translation).

The passage is full of contradictions. Agesilaus saw service with the Egyptian king as benefiting Sparta, but at the same time enabling him to free the Greeks in Asia. This was a blend of *polis* patriotism and panhellenism that was as far-fetched as it was ironic. By the mid-fourth century, presumably with Agesilaus' acquiescence if not his full approval, Sparta had a long history of swapping the Asiatic Greek cities to the King in exchange for Persian support against its mainland Greek adversaries.³⁵ The 'former hostility' doubtless refers to Xerxes' invasion, though possibly it may include the twelve years or so from 399-387, the only time since the last decade of the fifth century when Sparta had *not* been a Persian ally. Finally, Xenophon implies that even as Agesilaus uttered these words Sparta was still

³⁴Hornblower 1982, 174, 201-2; Cartledge 1987, 324-28; Weiskopf 1989; Hornblower 1994, 64-96; Cook 1983, 220-23; Olmstead, 1948, 411-22.

³⁵E.g., the treaty Tissaphernes negotiates in 411 (Thuc. 8.17.4; 8.37); the close collaboration of Cyrus (*Hell.* 1.4.3-7); the King's Peace of 387 (*Hell.* 5.1.25-36).

technically an ally of Persia, if not a very satisfactory one. This may not have been true, since in 367 Persia had shifted its support to Thebes.³⁶

But it is a mistake to take this picture of the elderly Agesilaus' state of mind as he embarked for Egypt as an analysis based on a dispassionate assessment of the facts. Sparta and Agesilaus had fallen on very hard times. After the Battle of Mantinea most of the major Greek states agreed to a Common Peace based on autonomy for all cities. Sparta refused to relinquish its claim to Messenia, and was thus excluded from this agreement.³⁷ The panhellenic and patriotic words whitewashed the fact that the king of once mighty Sparta, now isolated and without its league of subordinate Greek allies, had been reduced to serving as a mercenary to raise money for the state. The tone Xenophon assigns to Agesilaus here is the same as that found in many instances when this sort of dramatic panhellenic language appears in Xenophon's works. The gulf between rhetoric and reality often is wide, indeed, unbridgeable. The words sound defiant, desperate, certainly as though they are intended to stir the listener or reader. Nobody would have taken seriously the notion that, unable even to retake its longtime fiefdom Messenia, Sparta would have been able to free the Greeks of Asia through the money Agesilaus raised in Egypt, or even that such funds were intended for anything other than furthering *Spartan* interests.

In the second part of the encomium Xenophon outlines the characteristics of Agesilaus' spirit (*psuche*) that had enabled him to achieve his great deeds. There are around a dozen virtues, each with illustrative examples. They include piety towards the gods (*eusebeia*, 3.2-5); justice in financial dealings (*peri ge tes eis chremata dikaiousunes*, 4.1-6); self-control (*engkrateia*) in bodily appetites (5.1-7); courage (*andreia*, 6.1-3); wisdom (*sophia*, 6.4-8); *polis* patriotism (7.1-3); being a *philhellen* (7.4-6); being a *misoperses* (7.7); urbanity (*euchari*, 8.1-2); dignity (*megalognomosune*, 8.3-4); foresight (*pronoia*, 8.5); simple lifestyle and lack of concern for personal comfort (8.6-9.7). The last two are combined and contain a comparison with the luxurious lifestyle of the Great King. In fact, *barbaroi* appear in the illustrations for seven of the virtues, although not always as a negative contrast, to highlight Agesilaus' goodness. For example, Agesilaus' *eusebeia* is regarded as proven by the faith his enemies put in his oath. All the examples Xenophon used to illustrate this trust are *barbaroi*: Spithridates, Cotys and Pharnabazus. This conferred some dignity on the *barbaroi* by recognizing the value that they put on trustworthiness. It also, of course, does less damage to Agesilaus the panhellenist than if Xenophon had listed Greek enemies.

Near the end of the catalogue of virtues Xenophon draws an explicit comparison between Agesilaus and the Great King. The context is a description of Agesilaus' moderate, simple way of life, and his lack of concern with personal comfort. The Persian King, whom Xenophon depicts as obsessed with wealth and luxury, furnishes a negative foil. Agesilaus' house, we are told, was simple, with doors reminiscent of the time of Sparta's first kings, nor did his

³⁶On this see Cartledge 1987, 311-12, 387-8. Cf. *Hell.* 7.1.33-40, where Thebes wins Persian backing in 367 but fails nonetheless to enforce a 'common peace' on the rest of the Greeks.

³⁷On the Peace see Diod. Sic. 15.89.1; Plut. *Ages.* 35.3-4; and Polybius 4.33.8-9; Ryder 1965, 140-44; Tod 145 = R&O 42. On Sparta's status at this time, and Agesilaus in Egypt, see Hamilton 1991, 252-57, Cartledge 1987, 327-29.

expenses ever force him to commit an act of injustice for the sake of money (8.8). The Great King, on the other hand, believed that power came from possessing wealth; he sought to accumulate vast quantities of gold, silver and other valuables (8.6). The two also differed in their accessibility; Agesilaus was available to all and was prompt in carrying out business, while the Persian thought that his dignity required almost complete seclusion (9.1-2). The Persian required the best wine, maintained an army of cooks, and took great pains over his sleeping arrangements. Agesilaus enjoyed any food or drink that came his way, and slept soundly anywhere (9.3-4). Agesilaus easily accommodated himself to heat or cold, and lived in harmony with the natural order. The Persian's weakness of character made him avoid extremes of weather (9.5). Agesilaus adorned his life with signs of his merit, not his wealth (9.6).

In an earlier section of the catalogue (5.1-5) Xenophon had already praised Agesilaus for the control he exerted over his bodily appetites. In addition to moderation in sleeping, eating and drinking, indifference to heat and cold, and the capacity for hard work, this moderation included setting an example for subordinates in all of these, and he won praise in addition for his sexual self-control as well. By contrasting Agesilaus' self-mastery with the laxness of the Persian King, Xenophon's encomium plays on the Greek stereotype of Persian luxury and excess. Herodotus' portrait of Xerxes was an influential model for the oriental tyrant driven by his excessive appetites for power, wealth and physical pleasure.³⁸ The encomium's Great King is much the same kind of ruler.

The virtues of Agesilaus that Xenophon praises in his encomium are essentially the same as those which he portrays in other exceptional men, including himself in the *Anabasis*, and nearly the same as those his Socrates champions in the Socratic works. They make up the basic elements of Xenophon's *kalokagathia*.³⁹ Xenophon exploits the Greek stereotype of the luxury-loving and tyrannical Persian King in order to highlight key traits of Agesilaus' *kalokagathia*, such as self-control and moderation. This was not necessarily a condemnation of all Persians; Xenophon takes care to specify that the Great King was personally responsible for the evils done to Greece. Indeed, in his other works Xenophon has favorable things to say even about the Great King.⁴⁰ In the *Agesilaus*, however, he was not interested in anything more than presenting as glowing a picture of his friend as possible. It was not part of his plan to give an even-handed assessment of the respective kings. As in other areas of his encomium, he drew on panhellenic themes and stereotypes to give the strongest appraisal.

In the encomium's catalogue of virtues three are directly related to panhellenism: *polis* patriotism, being a friend to the Greeks, and being a *misoperses*. Xenophon had to tread carefully here, as these virtues often worked at cross-purposes. Striving to attain hegemony for one's *polis*, or to maintain it, often required actions that the rest of Greece would hardly

³⁸Cf. esp. Xerxes' treatment of Pythius the Lydian (7.38-39); his affair with his brother's wife and her daughter (9.108-13); Pausanias' reaction to the lavish furniture, provisions, cooks and tent—which had been Xerxes'—captured after Plataea (9.82).

³⁹ For a full and an excellent discussion of Xenophon's view of the ideal leader see Gray 2011.

⁴⁰E.g., *Oec.* 4.1-25.

consider panhellenic; for example, making an alliance directed against one's chief Greek rival with the Great King. Xenophon was especially careful to distinguish between loyalty to one's state (*philopolis*) and being a friend to Greeks generally (*philhellen*).⁴¹ Nor did the latter automatically include hating 'the Persian,' a trait that Xenophon assigned to its own section. Of the three, loyalty to one's state almost invariably comes first. In the encomium, the praise for Agesilaus' loyalty to Sparta is detailed and lavish. It was evident, Xenophon says, in his total devotion to serving Sparta: he shirked no toil, shrank from no danger, spared no money, never excused himself on account of bodily weakness or old age,⁴² and above all was a devoted servant of the laws (7.1-3). There was nothing unusual in this praise, including the embellishment. It is significant, however, that in this context Xenophon did not explicitly praise Agesilaus' *military* service on behalf of Sparta. Much of this was against other Greeks, but the reader only learns this in the next section—albeit indirectly—which praises Agesilaus for being a *philhellen*.

Xenophon included in his praise of Agesilaus' *polis* patriotism the observation that he was not a bitter factionalist in domestic politics. Instead he treated his political opponents as a father does children, chiding their errors while honoring their good deeds (7.3). This kind of moderation in political disputes, whether within a city or among cities, is extremely rare in the *Hellenica*. However, a particularly notable example of Agesilaus' moderation in the *Hellenica* did not, in fact, benefit Sparta. This was when he argued for the acquittal of Sphodrias after the botched raid on Peiraeus.⁴³ Sphodrias was a supporter of Cleombrotus, the other Spartan king, and his friends were worried that this would cause Agesilaus and his partisans to work for his condemnation (*Hell.* 5.4.25). However, Agesilaus backed the acquittal of Sphodrias at the request of his son (who was the lover of Sphodrias' son). He justified his decision by noting that Sparta had need of the kind of man who as child, boy and man had continually performed all the duties of a Spartan (5.4.32). Xenophon included this lengthy anecdote explicitly to explain how Agesilaus came to back a judgment so damaging to Sparta, and which, Xenophon said, seemed to many the most unjust ever known in Sparta (*Hell.* 5.4.24).⁴⁴ The encomium makes no mention of this episode.

Following the section on loyalty to Sparta, Xenophon praises Agesilaus' friendship for non-Spartan Greeks while glossing over the fact that this philhellenism did not induce

⁴¹Xenophon also maintained the distinction between serving one's state and serving Greece in his praise for Agesilaus' courage. Agesilaus, he said, always fought in the front ranks against the enemies of both his city and Greece (*Ages.* 6.1). Similarly, Agesilaus' dignity prompted him to reject a letter from the Great King offering personal friendship. The King, he said, had no need for private letters to him so long as he gave proof of his friendship for Sparta and goodwill to Greece (8.3). *Polis* loyalty took precedence over the general good of the Greeks—one reason for the fragility of any *koine eirene*.

⁴²On at least two occasions Agesilaus did beg off leading an expedition, in 385 to Mantinea and in 379 to Thebes, apparently for political reasons. His pretext for the latter was that, having served more than forty years since reaching military age, he was not required to take part in foreign military campaigns (*Hell.* 5.2.3 and 5.4.13). See Cartledge 1987, 229, 371; Hamilton 1989, 126, 164-5; Tuplin 1993, 89, 125.

⁴³In 378; cf. *Hell.* 5.4.20-24.

⁴⁴There is some irony here in that instead of the father chiding the son, it is the son who persuades the father to do what both know is wrong for Sparta (*Hell.* 5.4.30).

Agesilaus to take *positive* action to bring unity to Greece (7.4). Indeed, it did not even prevent him from going to war with his fellow Greeks. The best Xenophon can do is to commend Agesilaus' restraint in fighting such wars, and note that he considered a victory over Greeks a disaster (7.4). He also supplies a series of platitudinous quotes in which Agesilaus expressed regret for the Greeks slain on the opposing side after a Spartan victory. For example, on one unidentified occasion Agesilaus passed up an opportunity to sack a Greek city, saying, "...Greek cities ought not to be enslaved, but chastened..." and, "...if we are going to annihilate the erring members of our own race, let us beware lest we lack men to help in the conquest of the barbarians" (7.6). Upon hearing of Sparta's victory at the Battle of Nemea in 394 over an army made up of contingents from Athens, Argos, Corinth, Thebes and other Greek states, Agesilaus mourned the death of 10,000 Greeks (the Spartans lost 8): "Alas for thee, Hellas! Those who lie dead were enough to defeat all the barbarians in battle had they lived!" (7.5).

None of these details is in the *Hellenica*. In fact, Xenophon records there a quite different version of Agesilaus' reaction to the news of the Spartan victory at Nemea.⁴⁵ In this account, Agesilaus was on his way back from Asia when Dercylidas met him with the news at Amphipolis. With an eye to the morale of his own troops, he sent Dercylidas on to announce the victory in the Asiatic cities which had contributed contingents to his army, and bade him add that if the next battle was also successful he would be back in Asia soon (*Hell.* 4.3.1-3). This was a much more pragmatic response. Agesilaus' main concern was to subdue the mainland Greek coalition as quickly as possible and get back to Asia to resume *his* campaign. Not only was the war against Persia a Spartan, not panhellenic, effort, but now much of the rest of Greece was fighting on the side of Persia.

In the encomium's praise for Agesilaus as a *misoperses* (7.7), Xenophon begins by setting out reasons why it was honorable to hate "the Persian." Interestingly, these are all directed solely at the Great King, *not* at Persians or barbarians generally. First, because in the old days (referring to the Persian Wars) the Great King had tried to enslave Greece; second, because he now allied himself with the side which offered him the greatest opportunity of working evils on the Greeks; third, because he would negotiate a peace among the Greeks which he thought most certain to produce war among them. The last two refer to a series of Persian-brokered peace settlements in Greece, the first of which being the so-called King's Peace of 387 that ended the Corinthian War.⁴⁶ This treaty greatly favored Sparta, which became its enforcer, a position Agesilaus utilized to expand Sparta's power while weakening its Greek rivals. Significantly, the encomium makes no mention of Agesilaus' activities during the period following the initial King's Peace, that is, for the twenty or so years when Sparta enjoyed Persian backing. The only evidence Xenophon provides to show that Agesilaus hated "the Persian" are three brief and vague references which allude, presumably, to the expedition of 396-4: nobody but Agesilaus had caused a tribe to revolt from the King, or had

⁴⁵For Nemea, cf. *Hell.* 4.2. 9-23.

⁴⁶The King's Peace, *Hell.* 5.1.25-36; other such treaties were negotiated in 375, *Hell.* 6.2.1; twice in 371, at Sparta, *Hell.* 6.3.3 and Athens, *Hell.* 6.5.1; possibly in 365, *Hell.* 7.4.2-11; and in 362, Diod. Sic. 15.89.1, Plut. *Ages.* 35.3-4, and Polybius 4.33.8-9. On the phenomenon of the 'Common Peace' see Ryder 1965.

saved such a tribe from destruction, or had otherwise occupied the King so that he could not annoy the Greeks.

But Xenophon also claimed that Agesilaus, in his hatred for the King, did not neglect the common good of Greece. Even when Sparta was at war with Greeks, he sailed out to do whatever harm he could to the barbarian (7.7). This might also, conceivably, be a reference to the expedition of 396; or, possibly to Agesilaus' mercenary service in Egypt.⁴⁷ The vagueness, surely, is deliberate; neither expedition had any lasting effect. But the implication of the remark is that doing harm to the Great King was *per se* good for Greece. Agesilaus won praise for doing this even when at war with Greeks. The logic underpinning the passage is strained at best. The appeal is grounded in emotion not reason. By hurting the Great King Agesilaus worked for the common good of Greece, even though Sparta was at war with other Greeks. This would *seem* to give priority to hatred for the Great King, and to put hostility among Greeks at a subordinate level. If so, it would constitute a rare instance in the encomium where 'the good of Greece' outranked *polis* patriotism. But the statement gains much of its impact from the fact that Agesilaus hurt the King *even* while at war with other Greeks, i.e., while defending Sparta's interests, as the good *philopolis* that he was.

To summarize, throughout his encomium Xenophon makes use of panhellenic themes and Greek stereotypes of *barbaroi* in praising Agesilaus. One can observe no iron-clad rules about how he deploys these themes, except that, not surprisingly, they always reflect favorably on Agesilaus. Generally, they are designed to appeal on an emotional rather than a rational level. Xenophon could not realistically have expected any contemporary reader to believe, for example, that Agesilaus' mercenary service in Egypt would result in freedom for the Asiatic Greeks—or even that the Spartan thought that it would. The praise for Agesilaus attacking the Great King, even when at war with Greeks, works similarly. Too often the demands of *polis* loyalty conflicted with working for the common good of Greece. Xenophon is careful to avoid, where possible, calling attention to these clashes. He divides his praise for Agesilaus' patriotism into three sections, each seemingly distinct. This separateness, however, is illusory. He does not, in his praise of Agesilaus' *polis* patriotism, allude to instances when the Spartan fought against other Greeks; but these crop up later when he praises Agesilaus the *philhellen*.

Two additional important generalizations can be extrapolated from this analysis. First, *polis* loyalty tended to be strongest. For most of Agesilaus' reign Sparta enjoyed Persian backing, a fact that kept Sparta atop the Greek world for nearly a quarter of a century. Throughout that period *polis* loyalty meant collaborating with Persia—the prime reason why so little of Agesilaus' career appears in the encomium. Secondly, anti-Persian sentiment in the *Agesilaus* is usually reserved for the Great King. Occasionally, Xenophon does exploit Greek stereotypes of Persian slavishness, addiction to luxury, and effeminacy. But this does not mean that *barbaroi* could not appreciate the benefits of freedom: hatred for *barbaroi* was not in itself a necessary ingredient of being a *philhellen*.

⁴⁷Taylor 1880, 84.

Panhellenic rhetoric offered the safest and most effective way to praise Agesilaus. It operates in the *Agesilaus* as it often does throughout the rest of Xenophon's corpus, rooted in an emotional rather than a rational basis. Sparta's hegemony, ultimately, had been disappointing to Xenophon. It is clear, too, from the *Hellenica* that Agesilaus shared in the responsibility for Sparta's failure. Still, Xenophon admired his character, however flawed it may have been, and sought to memorialize Agesilaus' good qualities and deeds, despite Sparta's—and his—ultimate failure. Thus, the main theme of praise in the work, Agesilaus' panhellenism, has little to do with Sparta. Instead the encomium focuses narrowly on episodes from Agesilaus' life, such as the expeditions to Asia and Egypt, which could be portrayed plausibly in a panhellenic light. Likewise, the description of the Battle of Coronea, which Agesilaus fought against a Greek coalition, concentrates on his bravery, fighting skill and mercy, while ignoring the *political* context in which the battle took place. The catalogue of virtues similarly disregards the political background against which Agesilaus displayed his excellent character, except, significantly, when Xenophon compares him to the Persian Great King. In the final analysis, Sparta and Agesilaus must be regarded as failures. The fuller and more rational account in the *Hellenica* does little to disguise this fact; the *Agesilaus*, with its omissions and emotionally charged panhellenic rhetoric, ignores it.

BRUCE LAFORSE
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, J. K., 1974, "The Battle of Sardis in 395 B.C.", *CSCA* 7: 27-53.
- Breitenbach, H. R., 1967, "Xenophon (6): Xenophon von Athen", *RE* IXA: 1567-1928, 1981/2-2051, 2502.
- Bruce, I. A. F., 1967, *An Historical Commentary on the "Hellenica Oxyrhynchia"* (Cambridge).
- Bruns, I., 1896, *Das literarische Porträt der Griechen in fünften und vierten Jahrhundert v. Christi Geburt* (Berlin).
- Burgess, T. C., 1902, "Epideictic Literature", *Studies in Classical Philology, Univ. of Chicago* 3: 89-254.
- Cartledge, P., 1987, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta* (Baltimore).
- Cawkwell, G. L., 1982, "Isocrates", in T. Luce (ed.), *Ancient Writers: Greece and Rome I* (New York): 313-329.
- Cook, J. M., 1983, *The Persian Empire* (London).
- Delebecque, E., 1957, *Essai sur la vie de Xénophon* (Paris).
- DeVoto, J., 1988, "Agesilaos and Tissaphernes near Sardis in 395 B.C.", *Hermes* 116: 41-53.
- Dihle, A., 1956, *Studien zur griechischen Biographie* (Göttingen).
- Dillery, J., 1995, *Xenophon and the History of His Times* (London and New York).
- Ch. Dugas, Ch., 1910, "La campagne d'Agésilas en Asie Mineure (395): Xenophon et l'anonyme d'Oxyrhynchos", *BCH* 34: 58-95.
-

- Flower, M. 2012, *Xenophon's Anabasis or The Expedition of Cyrus* (Oxford).
- Flower, M., 2000, "From Simonides to Isocrates: The fifth Century Origins of Fourth Century Panhellenism", *ClAnt* 19: 65-101.
- Georges, P., 1994, *Barbarian Asia and the Greek Experience* (Baltimore).
- Gray, V., 2011, *Xenophon's Mirror of Princes* (Oxford).
- , 1989, *The Character of Xenophon's "Hellenica"* (Baltimore).
- , 1979, "Two Different Approaches to the Battle of Sardis in 395 B.C.: Xenophon *Hellenica* 3.4.20-24 and *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* 11 (6).4-6", *CSCA* 12: 183-200.
- Green, P., 1996, "The Metamorphosis of the Barbarian: Athenian Panhellenism in a Changing World", in R. Wallace and E. Harris (edd.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 360-146 BC in Honor of E. Badian* (Norman and London): 5-36.
- Hall, E., 1989, *Inventing the Barbarian* (Oxford).
- Hall, J., 2002, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago and London).
- 1997, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge).
- Hamilton, C., 1991, *Agesilaus and the Failure of Spartan Hegemony* (Ithaca).
- , 1982, "Agesilaus and the Failure of Spartan Hegemony", *AncW* 5: 67-78.
- , 1979, *Sparta's Bitter Victories: Politics and Diplomacy in the Corinthian War* (Ithaca).
- Henry, W., 1967, *Greek Historical Writing* (Chicago).
- Higgins, W. E., 1977 *Xenophon the Athenian: The Problem of the Individual and the Society of the Polis* (Albany).
- Hirsch, S., 1985, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Hanover and London).
- Hodkinson, S., 1993, "Warfare, Wealth, and the Crisis of Spartiate Society", in J. Rich and G. Shipley (edd.), *War and Society in the Greek World* (London and New York) 146-176.
- Hornblower, S., 1994, "Persian political history: the involvement with the Greeks, 400-336 B.C.", *CAH* (Cambridge) 64-96.
- , 1982, *Mausolus* (Oxford 1982).
- Humble, N., forthcoming, "True History: Xenophon's Agesilaos and the Encomiastic Genre", in A. Powell and N. Richer (edd.), *Xenophon and Sparta* (Swansea and London).
- Krentz, P., 1995, *Xenophon: Hellenika II.3.11-IV.2.8*. (Warminster).
- , 1989, *Xenophon: Hellenika I-II.3.10* (Warminster).
- LaForse, B., 1998, "Xenophon, Callicratidas and Panhellenism", *AHB* 12: 55-67.
- Leo, F., 1901, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form*. (Leipzig).
- Luccioni, J., 1947, *Les Idées politiques et sociales de Xénophon* (Paris).
- Malkin, I., 2001, (ed.) *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Washington, D.C.).
- A. Missiou, A., 1993, "Doulos tou Basileos", *CQ* 43: 377-391.
- Mitchell, L., 2007, *Panhellenism and The Barbarian in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Swansea).

- Momigliano, A., 1993, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge, Mass., expanded edition).
- Olmstead, A. T., 1948, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago and London).
- Pomeroy, S., 1994, *Xenophon. Oeconomicus: A Social and Historical Commentary* (Oxford).
- Pownall, F., 2004, *Lessons from the Past: The Moral Use of History in Fourth-Century Prose* (Ann Arbor).
- Rood, T., 2004, "Panhellenism and Self-Presentation: Xenophon's Speeches" in R. Lane Fox (ed.), *The Long March: Xenophon and The Ten Thousand* (New Haven and London): 305-329.
- Ryder, T. T. B., 1965, *Koine Eirene: General Peace and Local Independence in Ancient Greece* (Oxford).
- Shipley, D. R., 1997, *Plutarch's Life of Agesilaos* (Oxford).
- Stuart, D. R., 1928, *Epochs of Greek and Roman Biography* (Berkeley).
- Taylor, R. W., 1880, *Xenophon's Agesilaus* (London).
- Tuplin, C. J., 1993, *The Failings of Empire: A reading of Xenophon, Hellenica 2.3.11-7.5.27* (*Historia Einzelschriften* 76, Stuttgart).
- Weiskopf, M., 1989, *The So-called "Great Satraps' Revolt", 366-360 B.C.: Concerning Local Stability in the Achaemenid Far West* (*Historia Einzelschrift* 63, Stuttgart).
- Wylie, G., 1992, "Agesilaus and the Battle of Sardis", *Klio* 74: 118-130.