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# Love and Politics in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*

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This brief essay is intended to shed light on the significance of one of the many colorful episodes in Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*. I have chosen to examine the passages relating to Panthea, reputed the most beautiful woman in Asia, for various reasons. Aside from the charm of her story and the nobility of her deeds (Higgins, p. 53), Panthea sparks one of only two dialogues of a philosophic nature in the work—a discussion between Cyrus and his friend Araspas concerning the effects of erotic longing on the human soul. Next, this discussion of love turns out to be related in a significant fashion to the other philosophic interlude, in which Cyrus and his friend Tigranes discuss fear and its capacity to make intransigent men malleable and arrogant men discreet. Third, while I cannot define precisely the role of these discussions in his overall teaching without producing a thorough interpretation of Xenophon's epic, I will present some speculations on the place of Cyrus' reflections on love in his political scheme. The discussion and events that follow from Cyrus' capture of Panthea provide a metaphor for Cyrus' hold over his massive army and empire. In the end, however, Panthea's story is just as much an actual experiment in capturing and holding the loyalty of Cyrus' political subjects. By exploring both the metaphor and the experiment, I will suggest a way in which the dialogue on love illuminates Xenophon's political purposes, both to explain and to criticize Cyrus' success at ruling (cf. Newell, 1981; Glenn).

The issue I wish to examine is one for which Xenophon prepares us at the beginning of his book: most forms of political rule simply do not last. Cyrus is the only ruler known to Xenophon and his companions who was able to command the obedience of a "vast number of people and cities and nations" despite the fact that "some were distant from him a journey of many days, and others of many months; others . . . had never seen him, and still others . . . knew well that they never should see him" (I.i.3. The translations of the *Cyropaedia* are those of Miller; I have altered them only on those occasions when his inconsistency in the use of terms renders the meaning unclear). The *Cyropaedia* is generally agreed to be pseudo-history—the Cyrus and the Persia here de-

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scribed did not exist. Yet, in the form of a historical-biographical account of Cyrus the Great, Xenophon works out a vivid speculation on the renowned conqueror's moral and practical training in Persia and Media and his career subduing and ruling this large empire. What made a vast variety of peoples willing to be ruled by a stranger? What made Cyrus' rule desirable and thus virtually irresistible? The apparent digression on erotic love, sparked by Panthea's presence in Cyrus' camp, turns out to be an excellent place to begin to find the answer to these questions.

In the episodes to be examined most thoroughly, Xenophon seems to digress from his primary focus, Cyrus' empire building and leadership qualities, to present a discussion of love and its power. When we join the narrative with the Panthea story, Cyrus has been educated in both an austere gentlemanliness, associated with the Persia ruled by his father, and the possibility of the indulgence of all desires through tyrannical monarchy, associated with the Media ruled by his grandfather. He has begun the conquest of a vast empire by subduing a revolt in a tributary kingdom, Armenia, and advancing on Assyrian-held territory. In such a context, the story of Cyrus' friend, Araspas, and his experiences of love has a decidedly humorous aspect, according well with the modern characterization of the *Cyropaedia* as an historical romance (Miller, p. viii). I will argue, however, that these episodes are not tangential, but crucial to the understanding of Cyrus' enterprise. The issue is this: Cyrus' abilities as a leader and ruler are obvious, yet Xenophon presents a decidedly unfavorable evaluation of Cyrus' rule at the end of his book. Some argue that his failure is a practical one—that he neglected to educate his sons properly for assuming the throne. I believe that, on the contrary, the Panthea episodes uncover a principled reason for rejecting Cyrus' method of rule.

Newell (1981, *passim*; 1983, pp. 900–905) looks at Panthea as significant to an understanding of Cyrus' rule by representing the highest aspirations for the beautiful and the noble among Cyrus' subordinates, aspirations that Cyrus cannot allow to be fulfilled. The erotic is crucial to Newell's analysis, but not in the same way or toward the same end as in the analysis to follow.

I have found no place in the first half of the *Cyropaedia* in which love or things erotic are mentioned. Though there are many references to Cyrus' desire to befriend almost everyone he meets and to his close familial ties, his preparations to undertake an ambitious military career are foremost in the narrative. With the exception of his mother, women hardly figure in Cyrus' life up to this point. He keeps innocently aloof from innuendoes of homosexual activities and, shortly after his dialogue with Araspas, he refuses the offer of a new ally's daughter in marriage (I.iv.27–28; V.ii.7–12. The use of the word *erōtikōs* at III.iii.12, has, therefore, a special significance. See *infra*, pp. 399, 401; Newell, 1983, p. 895). It is, thus, all the more interesting that Cyrus should produce a full-blown theory of the effects of love at this point in his life and

then be proven absolutely correct. He has clearly contemplated the subject, but perhaps not in a manner common to young men.

#### THE PANTHEA EPISODE

Panthea's story, which begins in Book V, should be placed in context. Toward the end of Book IV, as a result of the first major engagement with his primary enemy, the Assyrian army, Cyrus has acquired a bountiful booty. Most of it he appears to distribute to his army, most of that to the non-Persians, in hopes of retaining the loyalty of these men. He directs that the spoils be so divided as to reward and satisfy his allies, to show gratitude to the gods, and to appease Cyaxares, who is king of the Medes, Cyrus' peevish uncle, and, up to this point, his greatest source of supplies (IV.v.38–54). It is curious that Cyrus' general principle of rewarding the most valiant is not mentioned here, yet it cannot apply only to Persians (III.iii.6–8). Rather the principle at work here is to trust that the Hyrcanians and the Median cavalry will divide the spoils equitably and leave something for the Persians. The Medes choose Cyrus' prize before they select Cyaxares' prize, showing disobedience to Cyrus' orders. He does not, however, object to the selection (IV.vi.11). This most valuable and glorious prize he keeps, but refuses to touch or even to examine. Aside from adding luster to his growing fame, it proves to be quite useful to him in prosecuting his military campaign.

Thus Book IV ends with the King of Assyria dead and many of the Assyrians and their allies, as well as their camp and most of their supplies, captured. Cyrus gains a new ally, Gobryas, who desires vengeance on the new Assyrian king. Book V opens with a relatively peaceful scene: upon request, Cyrus presents a musician to one of Cyaxares' associates, not as a reward which the latter might consider his due for prowess in battle, but explicitly as a favor from Cyrus. In return, the Mede declares he would be more eager to follow Cyrus to war than to remain at home. Cyrus here cultivates gratitude, combined with the enchantment of the musician's art, to create a tie between himself and his followers. Cyrus has previously tried to incur the gratitude of his fellow Persians and their allies, even the allies gained by force, by various acts of generosity, in order to cement their loyalty to him (I.iv.2, 10–13, 26; vi. 24; II.i.21; iv.10; III.i.28–31; ii.12–26; iii.4–5; IV.iv. Cf. Farber, 508–509). There are two potential dangers in this ploy: either the Mede could become so enchanted with the music-girl, that is, with the pleasures of peacetime, that he could withdraw from warlike activities altogether or, tiring of this diversion, the Mede could continually raise his demands for prizes. Nonetheless, Cyrus seems anxious to satisfy all his associates that he is most generous and acts consistently to please them. As long as the gift of a musician suffices for this purpose, he will give it.

Cyrus next calls in Araspas and asks him to take charge of his most valuable prize, she “who was said to be the most beautiful woman in Asia,” Panthea, the wife of Abradatas of Susa (IV.vi.11; V.i.2–3). Araspas, a Mede, apparently became a friend of Cyrus during the time Cyrus spent with his grandfather, the King of Media, as a boy. When Cyrus returned to his homeland to complete the mandated education of a Persian gentleman, he gave a sumptuous robe—a gift from his grandfather to someone of whom he was very fond (*ēspazeto*) (I.iv.26). At that point in the narrative, Xenophon did not identify the recipient of the gift. We are told nothing more of him—we do not even learn his name—until the earlier story is recalled in the episode of Panthea. It is, therefore, impossible to gain evidence of Araspas’ character or of his relationship with Cyrus independent of the ensuing events. It is as if Araspas has no life independent of his relationship with Cyrus. Araspas is repeatedly referred to as “the young man” in his conversation with Cyrus, but he cannot be much younger in age than Cyrus. Perhaps the description refers to his naïvete? Cyrus’ request to care for the beautiful Panthea might seem to indicate complete trust in his friend. This interpretation becomes implausible, however, when we learn Cyrus’ view of the effects of attending to this prize on even the strongest, most dedicated soul. Though his true motives are never made fully explicit, the results of giving Araspas this assignment will indicate something of Cyrus’ thoughts on this occasion, for he will never react with surprise to any of Araspas’ actions.

It seems that Araspas cannot believe that Cyrus proposes this task for him. Cyrus has not seen Panthea, while Araspas was a member of the party that captured her. He tries to give Cyrus some sense of the beauty of this woman. He focuses his own attention on her physical beauty, but the description of the circumstances of her capture also reveals the beauty of her soul. Though she may merely be attempting to escape detection, she appears not to be haughty, for she is dressed like her slaves, veiled, and looking at the ground when her captors enter her tent. What distinguishes her from her slaves is her virtue (*aretē*) and her graceful bearing, which were apparent to the beholders without her speaking a word or performing a deed. Her virtue is feminine virtue—that of attitude more than of action. (On feminine virtue, cf. Aristotle, *Nic Eth*, VIII.xii; *Politics*, I.xiii.3–7; III.iv.16–17; Homer, *Odyssey*, II.206.) She is crying and one of Araspas’ company tries to comfort her by explaining that she will be the prize of a man no less handsome, intelligent, or powerful than her highly-honored husband, perhaps more so. Far from mitigating her distress, this news causes her to cry aloud and tear her clothes. (We learn later of her complete devotion to her husband and his glory, which indicates that this increased anguish could be as much on account of his disgrace as on account of her captivity.) Completely ignoring her distress, Araspas comments on her beauty as revealed by her torn garments and her gestures of grief, and confirms her reputation as the most beautiful mortal woman in Asia (V.i.4–6). Perhaps

it is because Araspas is insensitive to the pains of slavery, indeed because his service to Cyrus has so far been relatively painless and has cost him no great sacrifice, that he does not understand that this woman's beauty or nobility (*kalē*) is greatly enhanced by her nonslavish reaction to her fate. (It is quite striking the frequency with which *kalos* is so used in the *Cyropaedia* as to allow the ambiguity of its meaning to remain. I will translate it "beautiful or noble" in this account, because it is often not clear which Xenophon (or Cyrus) sees as the object of the lover's passion.)

*Cyrus and Araspas Debate Concerning Love*

Cyrus, in contrast to Araspas, is a man who assumes the guise of the servant of his people while he commands them, and eschews servitude to any other master. He must appreciate Panthea's anguish at being enslaved, though he discusses her beauty and her usefulness to him in a rather detached manner. First, he declares to Araspas (with an oath to Zeus) that he has not seen the woman and then that he will not "by Zeus" go to see her now—"all the less if she is such as you say." His first explanation for his self-imposed ignorance of her appearance reveals much about Cyrus' understanding of his own soul and human desires in general: He declares that he has no time to spare from his active life for gazing at her, and particularly for repeatedly returning to gaze at her (V.i.8). That is, Cyrus judges that the attraction of extraordinary beauty will cause a person, even such a strong person as himself, to neglect all other matters, without regard to their importance. Cyrus thus reinforces the image evident in his military deeds of his determination to conquer both his enemies and all the soul's weaknesses. Though his intentions to conquer the Assyrians and to gain a great empire seem quite genuine, his intention to conquer erotic desire may be merely a means to these other ends—a means that would be abandoned when the ends are achieved. Cyrus makes no argument on principle that erotic activity or the capture of another man's wife is ignoble or unjust. Indeed, Cyrus promises his loyal followers that his empire will provide them with the satisfaction of many desires (e.g., I.v.8–13; II.i.23–24).

We must notice, however, that Cyrus does have an inclination to spend time gazing on Panthea merely on the strength of Araspas' account of her beauty or nobility. He already exercises a strength of character uncommon to most men, for he has not even seen her and he feels an attraction to her—an attraction detrimental to his military venture. Actually to see her, to know her, would, he seems to believe, require a virtually impossible restraint and would, thus, be fatal to his independence.

His friend argues that beauty cannot entrap the soul against a man's interests or wishes. Araspas' argument appeals to a radical distinction (probably a false dilemma) between those things that compel a response in us by nature and those over the reaction to which a human being exercises control. Introducing a

comparison that will become significant, Araspas observes that fire always burns human beings who touch it, while the decision to love someone is a matter of individual choice. (V.i. 9–10). This distinction is very difficult to maintain in the face of actual human action. That some men love certain beautiful things and others love other beautiful things does not prove that one simply chooses the objects of his love, as he chooses clothes or shoes (V.i.11), nor does it disprove a largely uncontrollable attraction cast by the beautiful on the erotic part of the soul. It is a characteristic of human life to love beautiful things. It is also a function of human nature that men have some capacity to control that love: religious and civil laws against incest are Araspas' examples (V.i.10). The existence of such laws, however, indicates the difficulty in destroying the erotic attraction completely, either by self-restraint or even by law, human or divine.

Taking Araspas' argument from the opposite end, one could also object to his examples of the things naturally *uncontrollable* by man—hunger, thirst, and feeling cold in winter and hot in summer (V.i.11). Cyrus, building on a long-standing civic education in the case of his Persian officers (I.ii.10–11, 16), has achieved such discipline in the army that they remain efficient on minimal rations and even resist what we, in a highly technological age, still refer to as the call of nature. The abstemious and disciplined Persians, with Cyrus at their head, have achieved what Araspas, a Mede, deems impossible: to forbid a man who does not eat to feel hungry (II.i.29; III.iii.9; IV.ii.38–41, 46–47; V.ii.17–19). On the other hand, Cyrus' rewards for self-control, discipline, and valor in his subordinates often take the form of food or other bodily pleasures. What else does he have to give them? Honors and promotions are much more limited than material prizes. Cyrus' twofold purpose again seems to influence his actions.

Cyrus counters Araspas' points with the observation that people who suffer an erotic attraction cannot escape it, cannot deny its power, to the alarming extent that, while they once believed slavery to be “a great evil,” they become enslaved to the object of their love. These sorrowful sufferers may pray to be released from their self-destructive condition, but they find that they are “fettered by a stronger necessity than if they had been fettered with shackles of iron” (V.i.12). They surrender to the beloved; they serve the beloved blindly. Indeed, they act to keep their “masters” in power at all costs. It is as if the victims of love know slavery to be evil only in an abstract sense, but do not recognize their condition as slavery—perhaps because their suffering is of a different sort and perhaps because the master in this master-slave relationship is portrayed as reluctant to play the despot, while the slave eagerly surrenders his freedom.

Araspas claims that it is only the weak who become enslaved and neither exert themselves to be released nor muster the strength to kill themselves, though they wish for death (V.i.13). In a sense, he is arguing that only the naturally

slavish become slaves, while the natural gentlemen (*kaloi kagathoi*) restrain their desires “for money and good horses and beautiful women” and thereby limit their entrapment by their understanding of the right (*to dikaion*), or they commit suicide (V.i.14). He equates enslavement to *erōs* with enslavement to any passion, using the desire for gain as his prime example. If people can and should be punished for theft, the law presumes that the thief has the capacity to act otherwise. If one may master the desire to steal a beautiful object, one may master the desire to possess a certain beautiful human being. Somewhat immodestly, Araspas mentions himself as exemplifying his argument: He has seen Panthea and he has not become hopelessly enslaved to her or to a desire for her. Rather, he is carrying on his normal military duties (V.i.15).

Cyrus replies by asserting that, with time, Araspas or any man would be trapped by Panthea’s beauty. While Araspas contrasted love with fire, Cyrus observes that just as a flame may not immediately burn the one who touches it, it is possible that some time will be required for the love of a beautiful or noble object to develop. To take the metaphor a step further, just as it is foolish to put one’s hand in a fire to test its effects on the human body, so it is foolish to tempt oneself with beauty while expecting not to suffer its consequences. Through cool observation of human experience, one can determine that pain will result from both actions. The only difference Cyrus admits between fire and love is that beautiful or noble things *also* “insidiously kindle a fire even in those who gaze upon them from afar, so that they burn with *erōs*” (V.i.16). This power to burn, so to speak, at a distance, combined with the capacities to enslave even those who know slavery to be “a great evil” and to singe those who do not see but only imagine the beautiful object, shows beauty or nobility as a force to be reckoned with.

After this impassioned speech on the dangerous power of passion, Cyrus accepts Araspas’ professions of his capacity to resist Panthea’s beauty and delegates him to take great care of her. His explanation: “. . . this lady may perhaps be of very great service to us when the time comes” (V.i.17). What is Cyrus up to? It is entirely possible that he is planning to use Araspas to test his theory of the power of love. Newell suggests that Cyrus is testing Araspas’ power to restrain “physical hedonism” (1981, p. 160). He cites an earlier passage in which Cyrus urges his men to delay their feasting and plundering after capturing the Assyrian camp for the sake of greater pleasure through greater plunder in the future. Is Araspas even implicitly promised a greater reward than Panthea for guarding Panthea and restraining his desires? For what further purpose would Cyrus use Araspas’ power of self-restraint?

As Xenophon’s readers surely predict, Araspas becomes completely ensnared by Panthea’s beauty. He acts just as Cyrus has prepared us to expect: he is conquered by love (*hēlisketo erōti*) because of her physical charm as well as her *kalokagathia*, that is, her gratitude and her generosity (V.i.18). Knowing now that Xenophon endorses Cyrus’ theory, we should look more deeply into

the properties Cyrus has discovered in erotic attachment. Despite his endorsement of Cyrus' view of love, has Xenophon completely rejected Araspas' attitude?

The pains and degradations of slavery are a recurrent theme of the friends' exchange: Panthea has been enslaved and suffers great anguish; Panthea is easily distinguished from her slaves as a free woman by her noble bearing; Cyrus compares the bonds of *erōs* to the shackles of slavery and finds them stronger and capable of overcoming even the strongest man. Further, the service of *erōs* is said to become such an all-encompassing enterprise that it resembles ordinary slavery—it leaves no leisure time, even for what the enslaved considers more important activities. Despite this clear similarity to slavery, even this extreme degree of erotic attachment is deceptive, in that the enslaved does not recognize the true character of his condition. These themes are played out in the ensuing action: Araspas is conquered against his will, while Panthea displays a contrasting *kalokagathia* even under the circumstances of captivity. Although Araspas views servitude as a sign of weakness—no noble and good man would enter it unwillingly or fail to escape it when it becomes ignoble—he is drawn into a degrading servitude, apparently quite against his intention and in ignorance of his situation.

As a counterpoint to the slavery theme, Cyrus and Araspas also discuss the conditions of freedom or independence. If, as Araspas argues, love can enslave only the weak and ignoble, then there is another part of the soul that can be successful in combating the effects of *erōs*. His first formulation suggests that wish, choice, or consent (*boulomenon, ethelousion*), intellectual activities in one sense or another, can combat love's influence (V.i.9–11; cf. IV.2.11; Xenophon, *Symposium*, VIII.13). If thoughtful intention fails, fear (probably of the gods) and the law, that is, external forces, must enforce resistance. Araspas' implication is that the noble know the right course and follow it, while the ignorant must be forced by threats to act rightly. Cyrus denies such great strength in the reasoning or calculating part of any soul—all men act thoroughly irrationally under the influence of love. Cyrus has also proven that law or custom can do many unexpected things, but he doubts that it can counteract the power of love.

Araspas' second attempt to persuade Cyrus that love can be conquered adds the element of spiritedness to the theme of restraint by punishment. It is not the law, as dispassionate arbiter, but Cyrus or the wronged party ("you") who punishes the thief (. . . *kai ou sungignōskeis, alla kolazeis*) (V.i.13). To put the struggle on the most individual level, then, Araspas speaks of the gentleman who has the power (*dunatai*) within himself to resist excessive desires for money, horses, and women. It is as if one part of the man, a potent spiritedness, fights another to keep his desires within the bounds of "the right." Cyrus rejects this argument as well. The spirited part of a man will also succumb eventually to the lure of the beautiful, just as a fire will eventually cause even

green wood to burn. Events prove Cyrus right in his skepticism regarding Araspas, and he seems to doubt the ability of even his own immense *thumos* to withstand the assault of beauty. Newell states that Cyrus is “able to overcome his desire completely” (1981, p. 163; cf. p. 210), but he never puts his powers of resistance to the true test, for he refuses to look at Panthea until her usefulness has been exhausted.

Bruell (pp. 128–131) suggests that Cyrus has repressed the erotic such that his life is maimed. Afraid that his military activity and its fruits will not prove to be as attractive as Panthea’s beauty, Cyrus simply cuts himself off from her. Bruell argues that Cyrus’ failure to confront the erotic is a significant indication that he has not given serious consideration to the goodness of his imperial enterprise. Xenophon, who admires Socrates for his ability to confront physical beauty and not be overcome by it (*Memorabilia*, III.11), therefore, would fault Cyrus for his weakness which is based on his incomplete understanding of the human good. As it turns out, however, it is not simply out of fear that he would succumb to her beauty that Cyrus avoids Panthea—it is part of a calculated effort to advance his military advantage. He uses her and those who love her.

In their zeal to belittle the dignity of *erōs* and to cast aspersions on those who are preoccupied with it, Cyrus and Araspas do not mention the inducements that ensnare the lover. It should be observed, however, that the slavery of love gains much strength from its rewards or from the hope of greater rewards in the future. The enslaved may suffer a variety of pains, but all for the sake of what he considers a greater pleasure. Despite the appearance of free choice in this trade relationship, the two men concur that the situation is indistinguishable from slavery. Araspas and Cyrus also agree that self-destructive erotic relationships occur commonly. The former, because of his training as a nobleman, attributes them to the weakness of the lover, while the latter, less attached to noble action for its own sake, to the overwhelming power of *erōs*, but both must concede that the erotic can be relied upon to create strong bonds in most people. A contractual relationship or a citizenship bond, on the other hand, rarely approaches the loyalty and desire to benefit the other that either love or friendship can produce. And, whereas a friendship as binding as erotic love usually takes much careful cultivation and attention, Cyrus claims that *erōs* burns almost immediately and that the mere description of a beautiful woman tempts him away from his duties, while the sight of her would probably spell the end of his independence.

In a similar fashion, the descriptions of the nobility of Cyrus’ exploits and intended conquests, and the possibility of future rewards clearly seduce many men to love Cyrus and his enterprise, sight unseen, not merely to agree with the advantages he offers or to desire to help an admired friend. (At III.iii.12 the word *erōtikōs* describes the desire of Cyrus’ officers to begin his campaign of conquest. They are instructed to instill a desire [*epithumia*] for battle in their

divisions. Cf. VI.ii.21–22.) Has Cyrus discovered a new way of understanding the relationship of ruler to ruled? He intends to conquer and maintain a great empire. To achieve this aim, he attempts by various methods to win the personal loyalty, not only of his close advisors and lieutenants, but of his entire army and, indeed, of the conquered peoples (e.g., the Armenians and Chaldeans, III.ii.12–27; the farmers on his conquered territory, IV.iv.5–13, and Croesus of Lydia, VII.ii.11–14). He has tested the capacity of laws to control men's attachments, through his enforcement of the Persian standards of moderation. He has been zealous in associating the gods with his enterprise. He has engendered loyalty by acts of generosity—making splendid gifts as well as refusing to accept much that is offered him (e.g., III.i.33–37, 42; V.ii.7–12, iii.30–33, iv.30–33). By his wit and friendliness, he has reinforced the appeal of his courage, moderation, distributive justice, and military wisdom. Nonetheless, Cyrus knows that the fear of punishment by men *or* by gods, gratitude, and admiration can all be nullified by the awakening of erotic desire. Cyrus accurately predicts that his long-time, admiring friend will disobey him and disgrace himself because of love. His characteristic circumspection, coupled with his arguments to Araspas, lead me to speculate that Cyrus believes he can unleash this most potent of forces, *erōs*, and successfully channel its dangerous effects, indeed, turn them to his own advantage. If he can enlist the erotic desires of his people in his own service, he will be virtually unbeatable.

The earlier books show that since childhood Cyrus has wanted people to like him and has acted so as to elicit their friendship. In the earlier cases, primarily those of his grandfather and his young play-fellows, Cyrus' relationships have been described with more familial or friendly terms of affection—*aspazomai*, *phileō*—cultivated by acts of kindness which incur gratitude. In this episode, the stakes are raised. A beautiful woman has been taken from her noble husband, and Cyrus puts an old friend's capacity for self-restraint to an extreme test. As we shall see, the means by which Cyrus manages to elicit gratitude become increasingly devious. Cyrus experiments with love's powers and succeeds in predicting the enslavement of a previously quite unwilling victim.

Xenophon may be outlining for us, in the character of Cyrus, an understanding of the place of *erōs* in political life—an alternative to the antagonistic relationship described in Plato's *Republic*. Newell discusses the “intriguing but historically unverifiable tradition” that the *Cyropaedia* is Xenophon's response to the *Republic* (1981, pp. 17–18). The texts provide some support for this view, whether taken literally or more figuratively. For example, Cyrus' meritocracy directly attacks the egalitarianism within the noble class of pre-Cyrian Persia and the support for that meritocracy comes directly from unleashing previously well-moderated desires for material satisfactions. Regarding the subject of love and politics, Socrates attempts to describe the political institutions necessary to subdue the disintegrative effects of *erōs* and direct erotic desires toward the good of the city in order to create the most unified city. Cyrus, while appearing

to reject erotic attachments himself, will not insist on such self-denial in his subjects. Rather, he seems to have a method in mind of using the strong powers of *erōs* to achieve a similar end—a unified political order—but extended over a vast empire, not merely over a small *polis*. By contriving to direct his subjects' affections toward himself, rather than toward each other, he can defuse love's dangerous effects and enhance his own political position.

*The Results of Cyrus' Experiment with Erōs*

Having recorded Araspas' entrapment, Xenophon resumes his narrative of Cyrus' political and military plans just as if it had never been interrupted by this lengthy dialogue on love (Compare V.i.1 with V.i.19). Both before and after, Cyrus' prime concern is to satisfy Cyaxares with the spoils of battle and to maintain the loyalty of the Median officers to himself rather than to their king (V.i.20). Cyrus also continues to be anxious to secure the loyalty of his various new allies. Though describing a few minor battles, much of the remainder of Book V takes up Cyrus' overt efforts to prepare by the use of persuasive techniques to fight a major battle against the Assyrians and their allies. In addition to using force and the threat of force against the enemy and occasionally against his allies, much of Cyrus' strategy is psychological. For example, he intentionally flatters his men with his ability to remember everyone's name, then he assumes the role of craftsman, using his adoring followers as his "tools" for battle or to inspire courage or fear (V.iii.46–50). As regards the enemy, Xenophon summarizes at one point: Cyrus took three unnamed forts—one by storm (*bia*), one by intimidation (*phobos*), one by persuasion (*peithō*) (V.iv.51). A long passage describes Cyrus' successful seduction of Cyaxares. Though his uncle has good reason to be jealous of Cyrus' hold over his own people, the Medes, and his success in the field, Cyrus persuades him that he should love Cyrus none the less (V.v). Without going into more detail, it is clear that much of Cyrus' power derives from his capacity to charm others into acting in favor of his interests and often against their own.

Book VI opens with Cyrus' staging a discussion among the allied leaders to be overheard by Cyaxares for the purpose of convincing him to continue the war. With his approval secured by these devious means, Cyrus is free to plan his next moves. He invents a stronger, more stable, scythe-bearing chariot to shred enemy men and horses, and he instructs his army to forage more aggressively and to secure as much from enemy territory as will be useful in the coming trials. In keeping with these preparations, the fruit of Cyrus' debate with Araspas concerning love ripens to maturity.

Xenophon now elaborates on Araspas' plight. He becomes so thoroughly enamored of Panthea, while she remains so thoroughly faithful to her husband, that Araspas threatens to rape her. Though he once professed to believe enslavement a great evil, he places himself thoroughly under Panthea's power.

Her last resort is to beg Cyrus for protection. While another Mede is horrified by Araspas' behavior, Cyrus laughs. Of course, he sees the irony of Araspas' predicament, but there is evidently much more to this laughter, as Xenophon's introduction to this scene indicates: "Now, [Cyrus] wished to send someone as a spy into Lydia to find out what the Assyrian was doing, and it seemed to him that Araspas, the guardian of the beautiful woman, was the proper person to go on this mission" (VI.i.31).

By his own actions and by Cyrus' arrangement, Araspas has been placed in a very delicate position. He is so ashamed of his deeds, particularly in light of his own speeches on weakness of character, and so afraid of Cyrus' righteous displeasure that he becomes completely subservient to Cyrus. The appearance of a falling out with his commander thus makes Araspas a perfect candidate for a dangerous spy mission. Cyrus' first act, after someone else makes Araspas fully aware of his wrong-doing (VI.i.34–35), is to *forgive* Araspas for falling victim to the love of the beautiful. He admits that he is himself responsible for Araspas' actions—an admission that, of course, detracts nothing from Araspas' feelings of shame (Farber, pp. 509–510). The next of Cyrus' ruthless tactics for the coming battle can now be set in motion.

In Book III, Tigranes, another childhood friend of Cyrus, engaged him in an inquiry into the effects of fear on the human soul. He educated Cyrus in the use of a combination of fear and gratitude. First, Cyrus learned that "fear is a heavier punishment for human beings than to be injured indeed" (III.i.23). Fear of harm, better than harm itself, can instill moderation in those who have been brought to see their genuine inferiority to another, though that moderation should be reinforced by the superior's vigilance (III.i.27). One means of utilizing abject fear to the best advantage, Cyrus also learned, is to incur the deepest gratitude by pardoning the one who has good reason to fear punishment. For his forgiveness of Tigranes' father's treachery, Cyrus was rewarded with riches and armed forces, and he was lauded for his wisdom, strength, gentleness, beauty or nobility, and greatness (III.i.41). As we see in Book VI, when Cyrus has learned a practical lesson, he never forgets it. He uses the same strategy on Araspas, but Araspas' shame is even greater than that of Tigranes' father due to its association with erotic excess.

In the cases of Tigranes' father and Araspas, it is clear that Cyrus' virtues, rather than serving some notion of the good and noble, serve his interests, by creating a perfectly manipulable tool (Farber, pp. 500–501, 511–12). Like his magnanimity, Cyrus' philosophic inquiries serve a wholly practical purpose. He is not a lover of wisdom for its own sake, for that would be just as distracting from his political enterprise as the love of human beauty. When Araspas lays out his new theory of the soul to explain both his desire for Panthea and his willingness to leave her to take on his mission for Cyrus, Cyrus does not take up the conversation. His interest is in the practical outcome of their earlier debate—Cyrus was right and Araspas wrong. His only response: "Well then, if you also have decided to go, this is what you must do . . ." (VI.i.42).

In return for Cyrus' apparently magnanimous decision to forgive him, Araspas promises to lie to his friends and the enemy alike, to act as if he were fleeing Cyrus' wrath and going over to the Assyrians. Under this cover, he is able to prosecute a carefully planned disinformation campaign against the enemy while gathering valuable intelligence (VI.i.42–43). His espionage proves quite useful to Cyrus in perfecting his plan of attack for the great confrontation.

Judging from the episodes of Tigranes' father and Araspas, Cyrus' *modus operandi* in incurring gratitude and devotion appears to have several parts. First, he allows an erotic attachment for a forbidden object (which may merely be any object other than himself) to strengthen to such a degree of entrapment that the lover commits an ignoble or illegal act. Next, he produces shame in his victim before he forgives the act. The greater the shame, the greater the fear of his wrath and the greater the gratitude incurred by forgiveness. Then, when he has forgiven the act, he can ask his victim to do most anything to show his appreciation. Cyrus may be seeking sure proof that Araspas loves him above all others—that even the attraction of the beautiful Panthea cannot distract him from the service of the noble Cyrus. Predictably, Araspas fails in the first phase of the test, but when his shame is aroused, his devotion can be rekindled and put to use. The desire to please the beautiful and noble Cyrus and to win his favor prevails over the desire to possess the beautiful and noble Panthea. It is possible that the utility of this strategy is limited in that it would only work once. Having paid the price for his misdeeds, would Araspas ever let himself be trapped again? Or, having been deprived of what he wants most, will Araspas' devotion to Cyrus last?

#### *Love's Effect on the Noble Abradatas*

The Araspas/Panthea episode bears fruit on a different branch as well. As we were shown in the description of her capture, Panthea had reason to fear the great conqueror who was her new master. Cyrus, she was told, is a man more powerful than her powerful husband and the most amazing in the world (V.i.6). Cyrus makes her a part of the growing entourage following his growing army from fortress to castle in pursuit of new allies, and yet he never looks at her. What can she imagine her fate to be? In the meantime, Cyrus' friend and her designated protector makes repeated and increasingly heated advances to her. Not understanding Cyrus' plan, of course, Panthea postpones complaining of her treatment as long as she can bear it. When her fear of her position rivals her fear of Cyrus, she does complain. Very soon thereafter Araspas disappears from the camp and is said to have deserted to the Assyrians. Because she believes Cyrus to have saved her from Araspas, Panthea's fear of Cyrus turns to gratitude.

Out of gratitude, she pledges to bring her husband, the great Abradatas of Susa, and his forces into Cyrus' army, that is, to ally her beloved husband with her captor. She is certain that her husband will come over to Cyrus because the

new king of Assyria once tried to take her from her husband (VI.i.45). Of course, what has Cyrus done, if not succeed in the same enterprise in which the Assyrian failed? (Cf. VI.i.47) The act of banishing Araspas seems to have blocked out her terror and fury over her original capture. Panthea believes Cyrus has displayed “piety, moderation, and compassion toward her,” and that he has, in the process, lost a friend (VI.i.47, 45). Again, however, Cyrus’ apparent virtues serve his short-term interests in prosecuting the war and adding to his own glory. They do not aim at the noble for its own sake (Farber, pp. 501–502). Indeed, he has sacrificed nothing but erotic entanglement, and risked nothing by his actions. Rather, he has gained a valuable spy and a powerful new ally, while depriving his enemy of Abradatas’ services.

Abradatas does indeed offer to be Cyrus’ “friend, servant, and ally” (VI.i.48). The bond of love between Panthea and her husband is vividly portrayed by the scene of their meeting after a long absence during which each had come to believe they would be separated forever. Indeed, it is this erotic bond which is responsible for Abradatas’ willingness to ally with Cyrus. First, he is ill-disposed to the new king of Assyria for a past attempt to steal his wife. Then, he is full of gratitude to Cyrus for protecting his wife from outrage and for arranging their reunion (VI.i.47). His political decisions are dictated by his love for Panthea, a predicament Cyrus has studiously avoided. Cyrus has seen the dangers of such erotic entanglements and is, therefore, eminently prepared to exploit Abradatas when he falls prey to them. Abradatas and Panthea, on the other hand, become another example in Cyrus’ eyes of love’s self-destructive consequences. As we saw in Araspas’ case, Abradatas’ experience demonstrates the difficulty of achieving independence from a desired object. His love for Panthea will consume him entirely.

As the time of the great battle approaches, Araspas’ service to Cyrus is completed. While the reports of Indian spies regarding the enemy’s preparations put Cyrus’ men into a panic, he uses his powers of persuasion and charm to calm them with promises of greater rewards than they have yet seen and with an assessment of the improvements he has made in their own readiness. The armies begin to march toward each other. Araspas returns from his spy mission shortly before the two armies are to meet. Cyrus makes a point of praising Araspas highly before his bodyguard and close advisors. Araspas then provides vital information on enemy troop strength, order of battle, and battle plans. Cyrus places him at the head of a wing in the post of *muriarch* or general. We never hear of Araspas again. If he is rewarded for his work, as Cyrus promised (at VI.ii.16), Xenophon gives no particular account of it. Perhaps his reward is promotion to *muriarch*, the highest official post under Cyrus. He is, at any rate, separated from his beloved by the summoning of Abradatas, so it is doubtful that his reward consists of what he desires most of all. Perhaps he is killed in this battle, but Cyrus makes no more public acknowledgement of his contribution to its success.

Abradatas' fate is sealed when Cyrus plans his order of battle. Last to be assigned places in the battlelines are the three chariot forces. Cyrus suggests that the three commanders draw lots to determine whose one hundred charioteers will take the position against the center of the enemy phalanx. This method is striking, for Cyrus rarely leaves such questions to chance. In response to what might be a test of Cyrus' officers' courage, Abradatas volunteers to take the most dangerous position in the battle and Cyrus is said to have "admired him." The Persian chariot commanders refuse to yield the most honorable position (and Cyrus' admiration) voluntarily, and insist on drawing lots, but Abradatas wins the place in any case.

As evidence that love affects both men and women in the way Cyrus described to Araspas, we are shown Panthea's gifts to her husband on the eve of battle. She has spent all she owns to have a golden suit of armor made for Abradatas. In spite of knowing that her actions conflict with her interest in keeping her husband alive, that is, he will very likely be killed in the coming battle, she wants him to appear to others as glorious as he appears to her (VI.iv.3). She considers his nobility and his beauty to be inseparable, and she wishes to add to them, though surely this armor makes him an even more prominent target for the enemy. His disgrace would be her own, so she must spur him to the most valiant acts, particularly in gratitude to Cyrus (VI.iv.6–9).

Moments before the battle begins, Cyrus gives his final instructions to Abradatas, encouraging him to bravery, and perhaps to recklessness. Cyrus reminds his new ally that he wanted this forward position and that the Persians will be watching his bearing in battle, suggesting that he must prove himself worthy of the post he has won by chance. Cyrus also promises that the Persians will support his maneuvers against the enemy. They engage in boastful banter, Abradatas claiming that his forces will be fine but he fears for the flanks, Cyrus claiming he will set the enemy's flanks in flight so quickly that Abradatas' task will be lightened. In the process, Cyrus suggests that he will himself be present to reinforce Abradatas' charge (VII.i.16–17). In the event, Abradatas charges into the fray with abandon, rushing forward and whipping his horses mercilessly. He times his attack in accordance with Cyrus' orders, but he is initially so successful in his scythe-bearing chariot that he finds himself in the midst of the Egyptian forces thrown from his chariot. No amount of valor can save him from this hopeless situation. Only at this point are the Persians said to reinforce Abradatas' attack. Was Cyrus merely delayed by the exigencies of battle or did Cyrus give Abradatas false indications of his intent to back him up? It is impossible to determine Cyrus' intent, but it is obvious at least that Cyrus' boast-ings spurs on Abradatas' clear tendency to be excessively fearless in battle.

In interpreting the drawing of lots, Newell (1981) suggests that Cyrus sets Abradatas up from the beginning to be killed, in order to eliminate the only serious rival for honor and its rewards remaining in Asia. This speculation is

plausible in light of what we have seen of Cyrus' character, though there is little positive evidence to support it. At the very least, Cyrus has discovered a means by which to nullify the danger Abradatas' military prowess presents by bringing him over to his own camp. Cyrus succeeds once again in manipulating a spirited man by his erotic desires. As in the case of Araspas, the usefulness of Abradatas as a tool is limited to one episode of manipulation, after which his devotion need not be cultivated. As a variation on Newell's interpretation, I would suggest that Cyrus had expended his leverage against Abradatas by returning his wife, and was therefore willing to dispense with the man himself, using his fearlessness to advantage and allowing him to be killed.

In contrast to his treatment of Abradatas and his forces, Cyrus is able to make a long-term contract with the Egyptians and bring a large and well-trained force into his camp. The Persians surround the Egyptians, but, unlike all the other allies of the Assyrians, the Egyptians fight valiantly. By a combination of flattery and his practiced gratitude-from-fear ploy, Cyrus persuades them to desert the Assyrians and join his army. Perhaps the longevity of their alliance is enhanced by the fact that there is no outstanding leader mentioned among the Egyptians who could rival Cyrus' renown, no one like the Abradatas they killed (cf. Newell, 1981, pp. 205–210).

Cyrus' leadership is juxtaposed to that of Abradatas in this battle and shown to be more successful. When Abradatas enters the thick of the battle against the well-armed Egyptians, only his close friends and messmates follow, while many of his men ride off to chase retreating chariots. Cyrus, in contrast, leads a much less reckless attack against the rear of the Egyptian forces and, when he is thrown from his horse, all of his men join together to protect him and restore him to a mount. The attachment for him that Cyrus engenders in his subordinates is shown here as elsewhere to be crucial to his success as a military commander.

The Panthea episode culminates in a final scene of mourning and suicide. Though Cyrus had promised to provide support for Abradatas' chariot forces, he claims two days after the battle not to know that Abradatas was killed. When he learns of Panthea's funeral plans, he gathers an ostentatious collection of cavalry, adornments, and sacrificial animals in honor of Abradatas. Panthea blames both herself and Cyrus for her husband's death (VII.iii.8–10). She is indeed responsible for Abradatas' alliance with Cyrus, which placed him in this battle, and for impressing him with the necessity to prove valiant and a friend of Cyrus. Does she, however, know something we are not told about Cyrus' responsibility for her husband's death? Cyrus responds only by praising Abradatas and calling his death the most beautiful or noble end. Because Cyrus succeeds in winning a wealthy empire from which every beautiful thing is available to him, it is unnecessary for him to take solace in this consolation, the beautiful/noble death in battle. Cyrus will die of old age.

Having invested everything she has in Abradatas and his performance in the

battle, Panthea sees no other recourse but suicide. As she said earlier, she loves him more than her own life (VI.iv.5). Though she virtually warns Cyrus that she will kill herself, in order to join Abradatas, he goes away and does not try to send help until she has already succeeded (VII.iii.13–15). Because of their devotion to their beautiful and noble mistress, Panthea's three eunuchs also commit suicide. Cyrus builds a great monument to all four.

Cyrus is shown in these scenes to be a leader of deceptive nobility. He appears quite glorious, a man of grand aspirations and the capacity to fulfill them—even a critical reader can hardly resist admiring the man. Indeed, a leader like Cyrus depends on his dazzling image and his astonishing success. There is more to be said, however, about the man behind this facade and the aims and methods of his rulership of both his armies and his empire.

### THE PLACE OF LOVE IN POLITICS

By way of conclusion, I would like to make two related points. First, according to Xenophon's discussion of regimes at the beginning of the *Cyropaedia*, successful rulership is indistinguishable from the successful mastery of slaves. When Cyrus uses enslavement as a metaphor for the lover's relationship to the beloved, the reader should pay attention. Xenophon juxtaposes Cyrus' successful method of exercising leadership to the ways of a beloved and thus makes his despotism evident. Though in some ways this despotism is pleasant for his (loving) subjects, it is despotism nonetheless. Second, in his attempt to capture the loyalty of his subjects—both the nobly educated and the common people—Cyrus engages in an extended deception which makes them fall in love with him. He makes himself appear beautiful, both physically and by displays of great deeds, so that his people find him irresistible. This superficial beauty successfully hides the hollowness of his virtue for the duration of his lifetime. The emptiness of the virtue Cyrus practices and advocates, however, causes the downfall of this vast empire in the very next generation.

From the first paragraph of the *Cyropaedia*, it is clear that the praise of Cyrus rests on the premise that there is no significant distinction between political rule and the mastery of slaves. Democratic government, monarchy, oligarchy, and the rule of household servants are all examples of the exertion of similar authority. Reminiscent of Thrasymachus' contribution to the *Republic*, the analogy Xenophon offers between herdsmen and successful rulers illuminates this view of politics: like a shepherd, the one who wants to rule over men seeks to determine where they may go to graze and where they may not go and to keep all the profits that the subjects produce, while the subjects remain loyal to their ruler or keeper and hostile to all others (I.i.2. Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 342e–345e versus Aristotle, *Politics*, I.1). Cyrus' empire is said to provide historical evidence that this aim is attainable, “if one acts knowledgeably [*epistamenōs*]”

(I.i.3). While Xenophon's account of Cyrus' career stretches historical events, his account of Cyrus' method of gaining and keeping power reveals much about imperial monarchy and the mastery of men.

One manifestation of Cyrus' knowledge as applied to politics is his capacity to turn observations about human nature to his political and military advantage. All he learns he uses and only the useful does he seek to learn. (Cf. Bruell, Ch. VIII, esp. pp. 125–127.) Having studied the effects of love, Cyrus sees the potential political use of *erōs*, the irresistible love of the beautiful and ultimately of his own beauty or nobility, and succeeds in manipulating men of otherwise strong characters. The consequences of Panthea's capture make up only two, but I believe representative, examples of Cyrus' methods of making noblemen his instruments, to be used according to his will. Commoners may be impressed by his ability to remember their names; the well-bred must be manipulated by their desires as filtered through their noble educations. Many of Cyrus' men are tricked by their love not to recognize their servitude to him as slavish, just as Araspas, representing all lovers, is forced by his love of Panthea into betraying Cyrus' trust and acting ignobly. In a sense, Abradatas is punished for his love of Panthea by his love of Panthea combined with his noble aspirations.

Cyrus' highly effective leadership is not founded on the persuasion of the ruled to be ruled, nor even on such overt force as would alert the ruled to their situation, but on a seduction of the ruled by the inducements of desire. In both cited works, Newell stresses fear as the most fundamental ground of Cyrus' power, the fear of his military prowess among the conquered peoples and the fear of his displeasure among his closer associates. Fear is essential, but I wish to suggest that it does not wholly account for the phenomenon Xenophon describes in Cyrus. Though he has terrorized his subjects in subtle ways, Cyrus is not Stalin. As I have argued, fear begins the process of creating gratitude, and apparently a deeply felt gratitude, among his followers (I.i.5). The fact that Cyrus' followers love him is not diminished by the possibility that they fear to love anyone else.

Cyrus' hold over his people is more insidious than ordinary tyranny. Though the story begins with an almost compulsively honest Cyrus, apparently genuinely hoping to befriend one and all by his generosity, as the "education of Cyrus" continues, he becomes more deceptive—first toward the enemy, of course, but then toward his commander, Cyaxares, and finally toward some of his closest advisors. As Cyrus' youthful attraction to nobility fades and the nobility of his actions becomes more apparent and less real, so does the aging Cyrus find it necessary to enhance his beauty with elegant robes and extravagant make-up (VIII.i.40, where these devices are said explicitly to be part of Cyrus' campaign to "cast a sort of spell" on his subjects; VIII.iii.1, 4, 13–14). Xenophon maintains the parallel of beauty and nobility through his observation on its decay into mere appearance. He also supplies a bridge between Cyrus' tactics of leadership as a military commander and his method of securing the obedience of his subjects as an established ruler.

Cyrus makes himself appear beautiful or noble to all who gaze on or merely learn about him. It is to his advantage to make himself as beautiful as Panthea in some sense, and then to eliminate her as a rival for his men's admiration. He knows that beauty/nobility can make him irresistible, even to those who have merely heard about him. Cyrus acts like a beloved in another respect as well—he appears not to want to be a despot, the master of a slavish lover. Indeed, he claims to desire to be friendly to those he can help. He cannot, of course, have any friends in the most genuine sense, for no one can be his equal (Newell, 1983, p. 902). Though friendship requires equality, the erotic relationship of lover and beloved is radically unequal.

The most generous category for Cyrus' type of rule is benevolent despotism. Glenn suggests that the "type" of rule Cyrus represents is that of a *hegemon*—neither wholly a king nor wholly a tyrant. Perhaps, as a model for Machiavelli's prince, *hegemon* is an appropriate title for this rulership. My intention in calling Cyrus at best a benevolent despot is to emphasize, as Machiavelli would not openly do, that he *is* a despot, that his subjects are enslaved to him. Newell (1983, p. 900) also argues that Cyrus

floats somewhere between being a king and a tyrant according to Xenophon's conventional definitions of those terms, for although he rules over willing subjects in accordance with knowledge, he could never have founded his rational empire without abrogating the laws of Persia and terrorizing the vanquished.

Farber (pp. 503–504) discusses how Cyrus, like a tyrant, substitutes his will for law. He argues that the term tyrant, however, is more appropriate to the lawless ruler of a *polis*, while Cyrus has moved beyond the *polis* to an empire. While Farber sees in Xenophon's *Hiero* an argument that tyranny cannot succeed in a *polis*, the circumstances of empire building and maintenance, requiring something like martial law, are more conducive to tyranny. If the original question of the *Cyropaedia* concerns the rule of cities and households, that Cyrus' example works only for a vast empire may be the first clue that something is wrong. Is the only method of solving civil strife in a republic or monarchy to transcend the city?

Unlike Panthea, the despot Cyrus acts generously not because of a *kalokagathia* that supports good behavior for its own sake. Quite deceptively, therefore, he is able to become a potent master—capable of the complete manipulation of his followers because they can see no reason to resent his mastery (cf. VIII.ii.14). They act for the sake of their love of him. They may say that they expect rewards, but, like slaves, they have no leisure to consider their own interests or to do anything but what Cyrus wishes them to do. Even if they were first persuaded to join the imperial campaign for the sake of their self-interest, Cyrus' beauty/nobility so ensnares his followers that such considerations assume secondary importance. Often even those who have been beaten by Cyrus' superior military skill tie their fortunes to his and willingly submit to his empire.

If the conventionally noble Abradatas and Araspas can be manipulated to sacrifice all they desire for Cyrus, how much more vulnerable are the commoners under his command, those who are not extensively trained to view slavery as “a great evil”! There are other examples of devoted followers who are burned by a love of Cyrus kindled in person, but Cyrus knows that love can burn also from afar and his reputation brings many to submit to his rule willingly without any personal contact with him. (See Artabazus’ description of Cyrus’ capacity to draw followers as a leader bee leads the drones at V.i.24–25. Other followers burned by love of Cyrus include Croesus and Gadatas.) He reduces “to obedience a vast number of men and cities and nations,” first by instilling a mortal fear of resistance, and then by awakening “in all so lively a desire to please him, that they always wished to be guided by his will” (I.i.3, 5).

To address the second problem with Cyrus’ enterprise: Xenophon speaks at length and bitterly of the collapse of Cyrus’ empire shortly after his death, showing that his sons are incapable of sustaining the hold Cyrus gained over the multitudes. That some editors wish to expunge this last part of the book, believing that any unfavorable reflection on Cyrus must have been the work of a later, perhaps excessively fastidious, editor shows that it remains possible to be seduced by Cyrus’ success. Machiavelli presumably would also deemphasize the decline of Cyrus’ acquisitions after his death. Many, including Xenophon, judging by his examples of other kings, would agree with Aristotle, that monarchy is generally more prone to corruption than the rule of many and that even the best kingships are prone to decay after the original extraordinary man has died (*Politics*, III.15). Leaving aside the practical difficulties of maintaining a large empire or producing princes as capable as their father, I would like to address an inherent flaw in Cyrus’ project from what I believe to be Xenophon’s viewpoint.

Xenophon makes at least one judgment of Cyrus quite evident in the Panthea episodes. Without being a Greek, Cyrus is clearly described as acting so as to emulate the magnanimous man (in the sense Aristotle delineates in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the man who seeks to do the noble for its own sake). He displays, literally for all the world to see, the virtues of courage, moderation, practical wisdom, distributive justice, ambition in accord with his capacities, truthfulness (not in the philosophic sense, but in the sense of practicing neither boastfulness nor ironic modesty), wit, friendliness, liberality, even good temper and magnificence. He is admired for his acts of generosity, forgiveness, and justice by both Araspas and Abradatas, indeed, by most everyone he meets. As Aristotle tells us, a man of such strong character deserves to feel pride, a greatness of soul, and to act magnanimously toward his inferiors. The reader of the *Cyropaedia* is inevitably drawn into this circle of admiration, for Cyrus represents what is rarely seen in the world. Upon more careful consideration, however, one is brought by Xenophon to see that this magnanimity is hollow, this beauty/nobility superficial.

The end of Cyrus' virtue is his own self-interest. He attempts to make a principle of self-interest in an early speech to his Persian officers. The ancient traditions of moderation made the Persians virtuous, but they had nothing to show for their efforts. Cyrus' new political principle is that virtue will be rewarded with material gain, so long as his military campaign is successful (I.v.8–11). He restrains his own desires for wealth and bodily pleasures much more stringently than he expects his followers to do in order to conquer an empire in which all the world's wealth and pleasures are at his command. As a means of gaining a loyal following, this may be a politic practice. Cyrus' virtue, however, simply masks acts of self-aggrandizement or vice. His moderation with respect to the most beautiful woman in Asia was a ploy calculated to render her more useful to his military venture. His generosity in returning her unscathed to her husband won him a new ally, one whom it is possible to argue he betrays at the next opportunity. He forgives his friend Araspas for misdeeds that he practically forced him to commit, and by that forgiveness he puts Araspas even more surely under his power as a tool in the military campaign. Indeed, he has learned that the apparently magnanimous forgiveness of the wrongs of others, fortified with the intimation that punishment can still be meted out, is perhaps the best method of gaining their complete loyalty.

In the end Xenophon does not endorse Cyrus' approach to rule. While the Machiavellian assessment of Cyrus would applaud his political acumen in understanding that the appearance of lofty virtue, covering the reality of calculated self-interest, is the only true virtue of a political ruler, Xenophon shows us the actions and attitudes of the more conventionally noble man and, in comparison, Cyrus' virtues appear flawed. First, the naïve Araspas, who knows the difference between the right and the disgraceful, but has some difficulty living up to the standard he sets for himself, is ultimately willing to sacrifice both his life and what he most desires to rectify his misdeed. His reward *may* be promotion in the army, his fate is obscurity. He has given up Panthea for the sake of his loyalty to Cyrus and in order to prove that he can tame his erotic desires, while Cyrus practices his self-restraint only for the sake of the complete satisfaction of his desires at a future time. The more mature Abradatas displays a certain recklessness in battle and is not completely admirable for subordinating his military decisions to his erotic devotion, but at least he demonstrates two significant truths: that erotic attachments on the level of the family are beautiful and personal sacrifice for the sake of such attachments is noble, and that complete sacrifice for something one considers greater than oneself is more noble than short-term sacrifice for the sake of future indulgence. Unlike the sheep who follow Cyrus in return for his protection and to the detriment of their own independence, Abradatas has not "fallen in love" with Cyrus. He maintains his standard of virtue, prowess in battle, and does not expect material reward for it. His willingness to ally with Cyrus derives from his perfectly understandable view that he must repay the man who returned his wife unscathed. Abradatas

comes to Cyrus in gratitude as “friend, servant, and ally.” The friendship is not reciprocated, his continuing devotion to his beloved wife, rather than to Cyrus, is punished.

Not only does Cyrus display a spurious virtue, he renders his political subjects incapable of practicing or even of recognizing true virtue. They are no longer trained in the restraint of the passions of which most men are capable, for they act constantly out of a passion to please him and to gain unspecified future material rewards. They care neither for the improvement of their own souls nor for their political freedom. Again Machiavelli would find much to admire in Cyrus’ capacity to turn the altruism of others to the service of his own desires: love on a mass scale makes a herd animal out of a man. Bruell’s argument throws light on this point from a different angle: Cyrus seems to aim at the noble understood as the splendid, rather than—and in conflict with—the noble understood as the virtuous (pp. 132–33). His followers, taught not to admire the noble for its own sake, also fail to imitate Cyrus’ splendor. Without it, their efforts at aggrandizement are reduced to thievery and their enjoyment of riches to decadence.

Rather than their own sufficiency and capacity to act well, Cyrus’ adoring subjects depend on the favor of the herdsman and are conscious only that they would not want to live without the object of their love. Just as Araspas’ attraction to Panthea is enhanced by her acts of solicitude, the conquered peoples “fall for” Cyrus’ generosity in allowing them to keep their own land. Their love causes them to forget their own interests (the grounds on which he originally brought them into his military enterprise and/or his empire) in the face of his will. Cyrus has enslaved these people.

The nobility of private erotic attachment, of the selfless devotion to another memorialized by the Panthea story, is not an issue for Cyrus. He is concerned with the effects of *erōs* at a distance and on a grand scale. The subjects’ devotion to Cyrus becomes completely unconscious—he wins their loyalty without their understanding their predicament. Remember that Xenophon shows Araspas and Cyrus agreeing—though perhaps for different reasons—that the typical actions of a lover are ridiculous and ignoble.

In reference to the contrast with the *Republic* mentioned earlier, both Cyrus and the *Republic*’s Socrates err in rendering *erōs* so completely a public issue. It is because Cyrus considers the world to be his household, over which he may exercise a combination of a master’s prerogative and a father’s benevolence, that it could seem appropriate that all his subjects develop a love for him. As Glenn shows, Cyrus’ self-understanding as the father of his peoples is highly ambiguous (VIII.i.44; ii.9. Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, I.i; II.ii–iii).

As confirmation that Xenophon is vitally concerned with the issue of the maintenance of virtue, I will merely point to the last chapter of his book. The decline of the Persians is cast exclusively in terms of their unethical and undisciplined behavior. They no longer even practice virtue for the sake of rewards, as Cyrus initially taught. Rather, they have given up all pretense to virtue in or-

der to increase their wealth without limit. Cyrus' method of military leadership and imperial rule ultimately undermined all support for genuine self-restraint and virtue. Without at least self-restraint, political order disintegrates.

In short, love is no substitute for politics. If erotic attachments dominate one's political actions, self-sufficiency and dignity decline; if political aims control the erotic completely, the genuine altruism of a loving relationship is denied. Seduction and disguised tyrannical force should not substitute for persuasion and law-governed force. Seduction is effective in attracting a following, but then one's power depends solely on a seductive appearance. When the seducer disappears, so does the unity and peace of Cyrus' reign. The Persians and the many nations Cyrus conquers are in a worse condition as a result of his "benevolent" rulership and their "happy" submission to it. The discipline Cyrus imposes upon them and the rewards in material satisfactions that he metes out both disappear when there is no radiant personality to hold their desires in check and make them feel satisfied with what he chooses to give them.

If, as Newell argues, the *Cyropaedia* is an ancient anticipation of modern liberalism, or if, as Glenn argues, Machiavelli's prince, based in part on what can be learned from Cyrus' success, is a modern model of executive leadership, the Panthea story should cause us to reconsider the grounding of contemporary views of the proper relationship of leader to led and ruler to ruled.

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