

## BOOK REVIEW

*Loving Humanity, Learning, and Being Honored. The Foundations of Leadership in Xenophon's Education of Cyrus.* By NORMAN B. SANDRIDGE. Hellenic Studies 55. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2012. Distributed by Harvard University Press. Pp. v + 139. Paper, \$24.95. ISBN 978-0-674-06702-8.

This book is a welcome addition to Xenophonic studies. Published one year after Vivienne Gray's *Xenophon's Mirror of Princes: Reading the Reflections* (Oxford 2011), it testifies to the increasing scholarly interest in Xenophon's leadership theory. Although Sandridge's focus is more limited than Gray's (since he deals mainly with the *Cyropaedia*), his conclusions complement or qualify those of Gray's in many aspects.

Sandridge takes passage 1.2.1 of the *Cyropaedia* as his starting point. In this passage Xenophon states that Cyrus possessed three qualities in the superlative: love of humanity, love of learning and love of being honored (Cyrus is characterized as φιλανθρωπότατος, φιλομαθέστατος and φιλοτιμύτατος). Sandridge argues that these three qualities are the foundations of Xenophon's leadership theory in the *Cyropaedia*. This approach may seem at first hand somewhat reductionist, yet it emerges from the subsequent analysis that these qualities are fundamental, in the sense that they dictate many of Cyrus' actions and that other qualities derive from them.

The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, a short bibliography and two indices (index locorum and index of subjects). In the introduction Sandridge offers some qualifications to the ideas of "ideal leader" and "utopian state" and alerts readers to the fact that these terms do not appear as such in Xenophon. He then raises the issues of "comprehensiveness" and "fundamentality" for Xenophon's leadership theory and explains his focus on *Cyr.* 1.2.1 on the basis of these issues. Finally, he presents the contexts which he takes into account in his analysis of Xenophon: Xenophon's own writings; the literary tradition Xenophon inherits (historians, Homer, tragedy); Xenophon's contemporaries who were also preoccupied with leadership (such as Plato and Isocrates); and Persian material.

The first two chapters analyze scenes of the *Cyropaedia* which allow for a better definition and circumscription of the three basic concepts which are the focus of the study. Chapter 1 is a joint examination of the love of the humanity (φιλανθρωπία) and love of being honored (φιλοτιμία). The first concept covers a wide range of meanings: it refers to Cyrus' fondness for others, his feelings of pity and sympathy, his inclination to offer gifts and his attention to illness. On the other hand, φιλοτιμία is related to Cyrus' interest in being praised and approved and, consequently, to his undertaking of risks in order to achieve this goal. Chapter 2 is devoted to the love of learning (φιλομάθεια): this involves an aptitude or propensity for learning, as well as an emphasis on exercise and attentiveness (ἐπιμέλεια). In the third chapter Sandridge shows how these three qualities are connected with each other and also examines other important qualities that derive from them: love of toil (φιλοπονία), gentleness, justice, self-mastery (ἐγκράτεια), piety, love of beauty (φιλοκαλία).

The next three chapters deal with some problems with which a leader is confronted when he possesses these qualities. Through a careful analysis of several episodes of the *Cyropaedia*, Sandridge outlines certain limitations of these qualities: for instance, a leader should not love everybody indiscriminately and should not be too permissive; he should not be interested in learning everything, but rather what matters; and he should not undertake any risk, but rather those that would assign great honor to him; moreover, he should pursue these risks with the right caution. In a concluding section Sandridge summarizes his findings and also presents the challenges Xenophon poses for modern theories of leadership, as well as for studies of neuroscience, which have recently connected the qualities Xenophon attributes to Cyrus' soul with specific parts of the human brain.

Overall, this is a stimulating study which contains many interesting insights into Xenophon's leadership theory. Sandridge offers a comprehensive examination of three basic concepts of the *Cyropaedia*. He shows that their meaning is broader than is usually assumed and he highlights their political connotations. One may reasonably wonder whether the focus on the *Cyropaedia* implies that this work is viewed as a more valuable source for Xenophon's leadership theory than, for example, the *Memorabilia* or the *Anabasis*, but Sandridge does not directly address this issue. The investigation of contexts from which Xenophon might have drawn, especially tragedy, Homer, Ctesias and Herodotus, is illuminating and from this perspective this book complements another study about the *Cyropaedia*, that of D. L. Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: Style, Genre and Literary Tech-*

*nique* (Oxford, 1993). However, the relatively greater insistence on surrounding contexts (Xenophon's own writings appear mainly in the footnotes) at times runs the risk of making readers miss something of Xenophon's original contribution to political theory. Finally, Sandridge does not deal with (rather old) controversial topics concerning the *Cyropaedia* (such as the authenticity of the epilogue or the textual problem of *Cyr.* 8.1.44), but he participates in the recent debate about "dark" and more straightforward readings of this work, by suggesting ways of reconciling the edges: he argues throughout the book that Cyrus can exhibit attitudes of political expediency and self-interest, while at the same time showing a sincere interest in the prosperity of others. The extent to which these traits can be reconciled in both ancient and modern political theory and practice is (and perhaps will always be) debatable and, for this reason, Sandridge's book certainly prompts further reflection on the challenges leaders of all times have to face and on the feasibility of a truly successful leadership.

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