

Oikonomia as a Theory of Empire in the Political Thought of Xenophon and Aristotle

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FROM AT LEAST HERODOTUS (5.29) onwards, the household (*oikos*) and its management (*oikonomia*) served as important conceptual touchstones for Greek thought about the *polis* and the challenges it faces.¹ Consider the exchange between Socrates and a certain Nicomachides in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 3.4. In response to Nicomachides' complaint that the Athenians selected as general a man with no experience in warfare but who is a good "household manager" (*oikonomos*, 3.4.7, cf. 3.4.11), Socrates maintains that *oikonomia* and management of public affairs differ only in "scale" and are "quite close in all other respects": skill in the one task readily transfers to the other because each requires "knowing how to make use of" (*epistamenoī chrēsthai*) people.² A more sophisticated version of this argument appears in Plato's *Politicus* (258E4–259D5) when the Elean stranger elicits Socrates' agreement

¹ See R. Brock, *Greek Political Imagery* (London 2013) 25–42, for an overview of household imagery applied to the *polis*. For concise definitions of the Greek *oikos* see L. Foxhall, "Household, Gender and Property in Classical Athens," *CQ* 39 (1989) 29–31; D. B. Nagle, *The Household as the Foundation of Aristotle's Polis* (Cambridge 2006) 15–18; and S. Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus. A Social and Historical Commentary* (Oxford 1994) 213–214. C. A. Cox, *Household Interests. Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens* (Princeton 1998) 130–167, judiciously evaluates the *Oeconomicus*' conception of the *oikos* against other literary and material evidence.

² Cf. *Mem.* 2.1.9, 4.2.11. At *Hier.* 11.14 Simonides enjoins Hiero to "increase the *polis* ... [and] consider the fatherland (*patris*) your household *oikos*."

that the statesman (*politikos*) and *oikonomos* differ only in terms of the quantity of people under their purview and that their shared theoretical knowledge renders them the same in kind on epistemological grounds.³ Even Aristotle, whose unequivocal rejection of the categorical similarity between rule in the *oikos* and rule in the *polis* (e.g. 1252a7–16) underwrites his analysis of the city as a natural and unique entity,⁴ nonetheless views the *oikos* as both a foundational element of the *polis* (e.g. 1280b33–34) and, like the *polis*, even its own “association” (*koinōnia*) of speech, reason, and morality (e.g. 1253a7–18).⁵ Whether the comparison is made in terms of the agent (i.e. *oikonomos*, *politikos*) or institution (*oikos*, *polis*), all three examples attest to the power of analogical reasoning between the household (as the “source domain”) and the city-state (as the “target domain”) in Greek political thought.⁶

The present article develops the intellectual trajectory of this analogy by examining its innovative redeployment in Xeno-

³ For the argument that Plato ultimately disagrees with Xenophon on the conceptual similarity between the *oikos* and the *polis* see E. Helmer, “Le lieu controversé de l’économie antique: entre ‘oikos’ et ‘polis’,” *PhilosAnt* 15 (2015) 179–204.

⁴ Cf. T. J. Saunders, *Aristotle Politics: Books I and II* (Oxford 1995) 56–59.

⁵ See Nagle, *Household as the Foundation* 152–156, for discussion. Cf. W. J. Booth, “Politics and the Household. A Commentary on Aristotle’s *Politics*, Book One” *History of Political Thought* 2 (1981) 203–226.

⁶ For the language of “source” and “target domain” see P. C. Hogan, *Cognitive Science, Literature, and the Arts* (New York 2003) 89. The scholarly bibliography on analogy and related forms of cognition is immense, but most useful for my purposes has been the work of G. E. R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy. Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Cambridge 1966), and *Analogical Investigations: Historical and Cross-cultural Perspectives on Human Reasoning* (Cambridge 2015); G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago 1980); G. Lakoff and M. Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago 1989); J. H. Holland, K. J. Holyoak, R. E. Nisbett, and P. R. Thagard, *Induction: Processes of Inference, Learning, and Discovery* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1989); and G. Fauconnier and M. Turner, *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind’s Hidden Complexities* (New York 2002). Cf. 99 ff. below for further discussion.

phon's *Oeconomicus* and *Cyropaedia*. Largely abstaining from the vigorous scholarly debate over the tenor of these two texts,⁷ I

⁷ Turning on whether Xenophon's works should be read sincerely or ironically, the split frequently falls along disciplinary lines, with classicists and historians often preferring the former mode of interpretation and a number of philosophers and political scientists, especially Leo Strauss and adherents to his hermeneutics, adopting the latter. For sincere readings of *Oeconomicus* see Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus*, and V. J. Gray, *Xenophon's Mirror of Princes: Reading Reflections* (Oxford 2011) 353–360; and of *Cyropaedia*, see J. Luccioni, *Les idées politiques et sociales de Xénophon* (Paris 1947) 201–254; W. E. Higgins, *Xenophon the Athenian: The Problem of the Individual and the Society of the Polis* (Albany 1987) 44–59; B. Due, *The Cyropaedia: Xenophon's Aims and Methods* (Aarhus 1989); P. A. Stadter, "Fictional Narrative in the *Cyropaedia*," *AJP* 112 (1991) 461–491; D. L. Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: Style, Genre, and Literary Technique* (Oxford 1993); Gray, *Xenophon's Mirror* 246–290; G. Danzig, "The Best of the Achaemenids: Benevolence, Self-Interest and the 'Ironic' Reading of *Cyropaedia*," in F. Hobden and C. Tuplin (eds.), *Xenophon: Ethical Principles and Historical Enquiry* (Leiden 2012) 499–539; N. B. Sandridge, *Loving Humanity, Learning, and Being Honored: the Foundations of Leadership in Xenophon's Education of Cyrus* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2012); and D. Placido, "La monarchie comme modèle de la polis: la *Cyropédie* de Xénophon," in A. Gonzalès and M. T. Schettino (eds.), *L'idéalisation de l'autre* (Besançon 2014) 41–52. For ironic readings of *Oeconomicus* see L. Strauss, *Xenophon's Socratic Discourse. An Interpretation of the Oeconomicus* (Ithaca 1970); L. Kronenberg, *Allegories of Farming from Greece and Rome: Philosophical Satire in Xenophon, Varro, and Virgil* (Cambridge 2009) 37–72; and L. D. Nec, "The City on Trial: Socrates' Indictment of the Gentleman in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*," *Polis* 26 (2009) 246–270; and of *Cyropaedia*, see P. Carlier, "L'idée de monarchie impériale dans la *Cyropédie* de Xénophon," *Ktéma* 3 (1978) 133–163; W. R. Newell, "Tyranny and the Science of Ruling in Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*," *Journal of Politics* 45 (1983) 889–906; J. Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction: On the Education of Cyrus* (Princeton 1989); C. Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince: Republic and Empire in the Cyropaedia* (Berkeley 2001); V. Azoulay, *Xénophon et les grâces du pouvoir* (Paris 2004); C. Whidden, "Hares, Hounds, Herds, and Hives in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*," *Interpretation* 35 (2008) 225–239, "Cyrus's Imperial Household: An Aristotelian Reading of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*," *Polis* 25 (2008) 31–62, and "Deception in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*," *Interpretation* 34 (2007) 129–156; and J. Reisert, "Ambition and Corruption in Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*," *Polis* 26 (2009) 296–315. For critiques of the specifically 'Straussian' mode of reading Xenophon see L.-A. Dorion, "L'exégèse straussienne de Xénophon: le cas paradigmatique de *Mémorables* IV 4," *PhilosAnt* 1 (2001) 87–118, and D. M. Johnson, "Strauss on Xeno-

hope instead to show that each shifts the domains of analogical transference from between *oikos* and *polis* to between *oikos* and “empire” (*archē*): a type of polity that, transcending the spatial bounds of the *polis*, takes the form of “rule over very large territory and many peoples without consent”; assiduously cultivates the terms of imposed hierarchy between the dominant “metropole” and its subaltern peoples through a rationalized system of difference; and generally entails exploitation of that subject “periphery” by that metropolitan “core.”⁸ As we shall see, however, each text expands the terms of analogizing in

phon,” in *Xenophon: Ethical Principles* 123–159.

⁸ D. J. Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity* (Princeton 2011) 75; see also M. W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca 1986) 19–47; P. Pomper, “The History and Theory of Empires,” *History and Theory* 44.4 (2005) 1–27; J. Pitt, “Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2011) 211–235; and C. Ando, “Imperial Identities,” in T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World* (New York 2010) 217–245. These works have proved integral for this working definition of “empire.” Throughout I retain the Greek for the key concepts of *polis*, *oikos*, and *oikonomia* or gloss them with the respective translations of “city-state,” “household,” and “household management,” while I use the English “empire” to refer henceforth to that phenomenon for which Xenophon usually employs *archē* and its cognates. As various scholars have observed (e.g. Carlier, *Ktema* 3 [1978] 135–136; C. J. Tuplin, “Imperial Tyranny. Some Reflections on a Classical Greek Political Metaphor,” *HPTTh* 6 [1986] 148 n.22), the semantic range of *archē* is much wider than “empire,” encompassing all sorts of “rule” and “positions of authority” outside its scope. When classical Greek writers speak of imperial relations, they tend to apply metaphors—particularly those surrounding the “tyrant” (*turanos*, e.g. Pl. *Leg.* 693A2–3) and “tyranny” (*turannis*, Thuc. 2.63.2, 3.37.2), but also “mastery” (*despoteia*, Arist. *Pol.* 1324a5–1325a15) and “slavery” (*douleia*, Thuc. 1.122.2–3)—to *archē* and its cognates; see Tuplin 348–375, who observes that such discussions are motivated mostly by concern for the “internal nature of the ruling power” (349). Cf. “leadership” (*hēgemonia*, e.g. Isoc. 4.122) and “kingship” (*basileuein*, Ar. *Eq.* 1087). What I hope to show is that Xenophon’s use of the *oikos* and *oikonomia* to conceptualize the Persians’ *archē* develops an understanding that approximates modern approaches to “empire” as a territorial state structured by rationalized and decidedly hierarchical relations of exploitation.

roughly inverse ways: whereas *Oeconomicus* employs the Persian Empire as an analogy for the agriculturally-focused *oikos* and *oikonomia*, *Cyropaedia* presents Cyrus' imperial project on the model of the *oikos* and articulates a strikingly original theory of empire management by way of *oikonomia*.

Scholars have noted some of the 'imperial' features of *Oeconomicus*' account of household management and the 'oikonomic' qualities of the Persian Empire in *Cyropaedia*,⁹ but those observations have usually been made only in passing and are almost always submerged within a more general interest in Xenophon's valuation of leaders and their moral qualities. At other times, aspects of these analogies have been misunderstood or outright missed and the great extent to which they are developed in each work—both individually and in dialogue with one another—remains underappreciated. In the first two sections, I seek to clarify, refine, and deepen our understanding of the analogies in, respectively, *Oeconomicus* and *Cyropaedia*. In keeping with my intellectual historical approach, I am less interested in whatever value these two texts may have for the historian of Cyrus the Great or the fourth-century empire of the Achaemenids and more interested in what they tell us about the substance and method of Xenophon's political thought and the possibilities of his political imagination.¹⁰ My

⁹ For the 'imperial' qualities of *oikonomia* in *Oeconomicus* see esp. S. B. Pomeroy, "The Persian King and the Queen Bee," *AJAH* 9 (1984) 98–108; cf. Luccioni, *Les idées politiques* 101–108; Gray, *Xenophon's Mirror* 288–289; Brock, *Greek Political Imagery* 25–26; and Helmer, *PhilosAnt* 15 (2015) 193–194. Pomeroy is correct to observe that "Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.1.14), and other fourth-century authors ... extend the meaning of *oikonomia* and related words, to refer to the administration of states" (98), but her strictly lexical approach overlooks the metaphorical quality of this extension in meaning and, thus, its value as a heuristic for conceptual formulation. See 99 ff. below. For the 'oikonomic' qualities of empire in *Cyropaedia* see Carlier, *Ktema* 3 (1978) 157; Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction* 189–192; and Whidden, *Polis* 25 (2008) 31–62.

¹⁰ For the interpretive and source questions surrounding the value of Xenophon's works for reconstructing Iranian history see Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus* 237–247. The discussions I have found most useful are P.

approach is also in keeping with a recent scholarly trend that stresses the creative elements and intertextual dimensions of Xenophon's works and I will thus occasionally have recourse to a comparative reading between the two texts.¹¹ The final section considers the purpose and import of making inductive arguments through bilateral analogies. In particular, I argue that the expansion of the conceptual affinity of the *oikos* from *polis* to empire augments the heuristic value of analogizing and the process of conceptualization in Xenophon's political thought. Finally, I suggest that one of the emerging propositions from a joint reading of these two works—that empire management is like *oikonomia*—constitutes a significant development in ancient political philosophy, likely inspiring Aristotle's concept of *pambasileia* in the *Politics*.

1. From empire to *oikos*: *Oeconomicus*

Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* takes the form of a dialogue between Socrates and Critoboulos, a well-to-do Athenian gentleman

Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander* (Winona Lake 2002) 1–49; S. W. Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Hanover 1985); H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "The Death of Cyrus: Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as a Source for Iranian History," *Acta Iranica* 25 (1985) 459–471; C. J. Tuplin, "The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire," in I. Carradice (ed.), *Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires* (Oxford 1987) 109–166, "Xenophon and the Garrisons of the Achaemenid Empire," *AMIran* 20 (1987) 167–245, and "Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*: Fictive History, Political Analysis and Thinking with Iranian Kings," in L. Mitchell (ed.), *Every Inch a King: Comparative Studies on Kings and Kingship in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds* (Leiden 2012) 67–90. That Cyrus was also a focus of Antisthenes' philosophical dialogues (see tt. 41a, 43a, 50, 85, 86a, 87a, and 141a in S. Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens* [Ann Arbor 2015]) adds another layer to the source question.

¹¹ See esp. Gray, *Xenophon's Mirror* 119–178. According to E. Delebecque, "Sur la date et l'objet de l' 'Economie'," *REG* 64 (1951) 21–58, *Oeconomicus* was published in 362, while *Cyropaedia* post-dates 362/1 (*Essai sur la vie de Xénophon* [Paris 1957] 384–410). The following discussion does not hinge on the temporal priority of one text or the other, though I do presume that Xenophon composed each with awareness of the other's actual or eventual existence.

beleaguered by a concern for successful management of his *oikos*.¹² In the course of the conversation, Socrates presents several models for emulation, including the founder of the Persian empire, Cyrus the Great (ca. 600–530 BCE); that king’s homonymous descendant and failed aspirant to the throne, Cyrus the Younger (d. 401); and a Greek *oikonomos* named Ischomachus, whose account of his own managerial practices supplies Socrates with the precepts now being offered to Critoboulos. The paradigms offered by the two Cyruses offer the most transparent points of similarity between *oikonomia* and empire, though, as we shall see, the nested dialogue between Socrates and Ischomachus both reinforces the relevance of the Persian regime’s model for household management and develops it further in a number of crucial ways.

Socrates’ first model is Cyrus the Great, whose appraisal of farming and warfare as “among the noblest and most necessary” concerns attests to the value of agriculture and security for successful *oikonomia* (4.4).¹³ As Socrates explains, the king managed his imperial holdings through a number of strategies. First, he divides each area of his dominion into two complementary and interdependent spheres of function—military and agricultural—and delegates authority over each sphere to a corresponding official. In the case of the former sphere (4.5–7), the relevant official (garrison commander, chiliarch, or satrap) procures men and outfits them with the equipment necessary for defense, while a civil governor takes care of the latter by ensuring that the land is sufficiently populated, cultivated, and able to send its requisite tribute (4.8–9). Not simply producing

¹² On the form and genre of Socratic dialogues see A. Ford, “The Beginnings of Dialogue: Socratic Discourses and Fourth-Century Prose,” in S. Goldhill (ed.), *The End of Dialogue in Antiquity* (Cambridge 2008) 29–44. For the presentation of Socrates and his knowledge of *oikonomia* in *Memorabilia* and *Oeconomicus* see L.-A. Dorion, “Socrate *oikonomikos*,” in M. Narcy and A. Tordesillas (eds.), *Xénophon et Socrate* (Paris 2008) 253–281. For Critoboulos see J. K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families* (Oxford 1971) 336–337.

¹³ For Xenophon’s works I have used Marchant’s *OCT* editions. All translations are mine.

an elegant and perhaps more efficacious mode of administration, this division of oversight allows each official to focus on his assigned task, thereby enhancing that individual's accountability to the king and producing a sort of checks and balances on their collective authority through the mutual threat of denunciation for failure to perform the appointed duties (4.9–10).¹⁴ Second, Cyrus complements his functional analysis of empire with one that takes its vast spatial dimensions into consideration. In the case of those lands “around his own residence (*oikēsis*),” Cyrus eschews delegated and vicarious management in favor of personal oversight, while he sends “trusted men” as surrogate inspectors of the lands of “those dwelling far off” (*tous prosō apoikountas*, 4.6, cf. 4.8). Perhaps more importantly, this construal of the space of Persian empire effectively creates what modern theorists refer to as a “core” and a “periphery,” wherein the core of Cyrus' *oikēsis* holds dominion over a periphery of subject regions from which resources are extracted in the form of military manpower (4.5–7) and tribute (4.9–11). Third, it is on the basis of these reviews that Cyrus then removes bad administrators from their positions and remunerates good ones (4.7–8); thus, his managerial approach also entails the judicious use of both punishments and rewards. Finally, by promoting the image of the Persian king as ultimate guarantor of agricultural fertility and civic peace (cf. 4.16.1–5), there is an ideological component to these measures as well.¹⁵ Indeed, the symbolic importance of the agricultural sphere is marked even further by the King's frequenting of pleasure-gardens (*paradeisoi*) “in whatever lands he dwells in or visits” (4.13.1–5). Thus, the case of Cyrus the Great's management of his vast holdings illustrates the manifold ways in which his construal of empire in functional terms—as an agricultural estate that must be simultaneously cultivated and defended—shapes the structure of its

¹⁴ Satraps are potential exceptions to this division of authority, as some appear to have actually combined both functions in their persons (4.11). Cf. Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus* 245–247.

¹⁵ For a fuller discussion see Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus* 238–241.

spaces, informs the managerial practices he employs, and fosters the ideology he seeks to project.

Socrates' treatment of the agri-martial dimensions of Persian empire also extends—somewhat abruptly¹⁶—to those of the other Cyrus. As he supposedly related to Lysander on the Spartan general's sojourn to his *paradeisos* in Sardis (4.18–25), Cyrus the Younger takes a keen and daily interest in the arts of war and the cultivation of the earth: particularly the planting of trees, but any “agricultural work” as well (4.24). In these respects, the younger Cyrus aspires to emulate his eponymous ancestor, though his death at the Battle of Cunaxa in 401 precluded him from putting into practice the latent imperial skills evinced in his meticulously planted orchard.

Contextually, the two Cyruses' shared interest in the military and agricultural dimensions of empire prefaces Socrates' ensuing encomium of agriculture (5.1–17), which extols the manifold benefits farming provides to its practitioners (including the ability for self-defense, 5.13–16) and ultimately helps to convince Critoboulos that it constitutes for the *oikonomos*, as he puts it, “the noblest, best, and sweetest mode of life” (6.11).¹⁷ The centrality of agriculture to successful *oikonomia* may now be clear to Critoboulos, but he still remains unsure about *how* he is to go about successfully implementing this lifestyle. It is at this point that Socrates recounts his prior conversation with Ischomachus (7.1–21.12), in the course of which the *technē* of agriculture will receive due attention (15.1–20.29). Thus does Xenophon make good on correlating the Greek *oikos* with the Persian Empire in their shared interest in agricultural pro-

¹⁶ Scholarly attempts to treat the abrupt transition between the two Cyruses are manifold and disparate; see Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus* 248–250; Y. L. Too, “Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*: Disfiguring the Pedagogical State,” in Y. L. Too and N. Livingstone (eds.), *Pedagogy and Power: Rhetorics of Classical Learning* (Cambridge 1998) 287; and Kronenberg, *Allegories of Farming* 44–46.

¹⁷ For Xenophon's “stylization” of virtuous “toil” see S. Johnstone, “Virtuous Toil, Vicious Work: Xenophon on Aristocratic Style,” *CP* 89 (1994) 219–240.

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Yet, to limit the Persian Empire's relevance for *oikonomia* solely to the practice of agriculture ignores the other elements of Cyrus' imperial vision as well as the fact that the cultivation of fields comprises only one part of the subject of *oikonomia*. As we saw, Cyrus' analysis of his empire entailed two types of distinctions: the first between the military and agricultural spheres within a given area, the second between areas differentiated by the spatial distance from his own place of residence. The question thus arises: do these two types of division apply to the management of the *oikos*? Sarah Pomeroy has astutely observed that "the division of labor between the civil and military commands in Persia and their interdependence are paralleled by the reciprocal relationship of the domestic sphere which is supervised by the wife and of the husband's realm which lies beyond the house,"¹⁸ but her formulation neither distinguishes adequately between the two types of analysis nor captures the precise and full force of the analogies. As Ischomachus repeatedly makes clear in the recounting of his instructions to his wife, this singular *oikos*, which is "common" (*koinos*, 7.13) to them both and serves as the site for their marriage *qua* "partnership" (*koinōnia*, 7.18),¹⁹ admits differentiation on the basis of both space and function. Like Cyrus' distinction between the core of his *oikēsis* and its outlying periphery, Ischomachus' *oikos* has an internal dimension (*ta endon*) over which his wife presides and an external one (*ta exō*) that is the concern of Ischomachus (7.22, cf. 7.3, 7.20–25, 7.30–31). This spatial distinction, which

¹⁸ Pomeroy, *AJAH* 9 (1984) 103.

¹⁹ Cf. 3.15, where Socrates affirms that a good wife is a partner (*koinōnos*) of the household and contributes equally to it. The tenor of the wife's representation remains subject to dispute: compare Pomeroy, *AJAH* 9 (1984) 103, with S. Murnaghan, "How a Woman Can be More Like a Man," *Helios* 15 (1988) 9–22. Suffice it to say that I find Pomeroy's arguments for an enlightened Xenophon more compelling on literary and historical grounds. Cf. V. J. Gray, "Xenophon and Isocrates," in C. Rowe and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge 2000) 147–148.

is fundamental to the sort of *oikonomia* that Ischomachus is about to espouse, is actually anticipated in the opening exchange between Socrates and Critoboulos (1.5–6), where it is established that the *oikos* constitutes not only the “house” (*oikia*)²⁰ itself but also everything the *oikonomos* owns outside of it ([*ta*] *exō tēs oikias*), including the land, draft animals, sheep, and cattle (1.8–9, 1.14, cf. 2.11, 7.20). In fact, Critoboulos goes so far as to include possessions outside the city in which the owner resides as part of his *oikos* as well (1.6); in this respect, the potential spatial disjunction of property from physical domicile mirrors the structure of empire.²¹ And like the imperial periphery’s provision of tribute and manpower for the ultimate benefit of the metropole, it is the extramural possessions that provide the resources stored in, and consumed at, the house itself.

In addition to the likeness between their spatial dimensions, the Persian Empire and Ischomachus’ household admit similar analyses in terms of function. Ischomachus’ extramural activities, which include the training of field overseers (12.3–15.1) and his occasional direct oversight of the estate’s farming operations (11.16; cf. 21.9–10), readily map onto the agricultural dimensions of the Persian Empire and even mirror the twofold management strategy of inspection by proxy and personal autopsy which Cyrus employs. The corollary analogy between the military sphere of empire and the domestic concerns of Ischomachus’ wife may initially appear tenuous and, in fact, paradoxical, but the shared function of protection underlying both actually renders it more than fitting: whereas the commander secures the peaceful conditions necessary for successful cultivation of land (4.10), the wife guards the produce reaped from the fields and keeps the house and its storerooms in good working order (7.21–9.10, cf. 3.15). Indeed, Ischoma-

²⁰ On the occasional semantic overlap between *oikia* and *oikos* see Cox, *Household Interests* 132, 135.

²¹ For the potentially great distance between the house and fields see R. Osborne, *Demos: The Discovery of Classical Attika* (Cambridge 1985) 16–19.

thus even explicitly likens her in these capacities to a “garrison commander” (*phrouarchos*, 9.15), employing one of the same terms Socrates used earlier for Cyrus’ appointed officials (4.10–11).²²

In the case of Ischomachus’ household, however, the relationship between the two spheres goes deeper than one of interdependent, though mutually exclusive, complementarity, for each actually allows for the exercise of the function associated with its counterpart: concern for agriculture offers Ischomachus the opportunity for military training (11.12–20) and puts him in a position to defend the *oikos* from enemies (7.25), while his wife actively contributes to production through, among other things, the spinning of wool (10.10–11, cf. 7.36, 7.21) and the creation of additional value in slaves through training and supervision (9.11–15, 10.10, cf. 7.41). Unlike the Persian Empire, then, production and security are common concerns of *both* spheres of function for the *oikos*. Finally, similar to the mutual checks and balances created by the apportionment of authority between two separate imperial administrators, Ischomachus allows for the possibility that his wife may find fault with his *oikonomia* (11.24–25, cf. 7.42), while he himself likewise models his own censure of shortcomings when redressing her failure to store things in their proper place (8.1–9.10). But *unlike* the Persian officials, whose mandate remains contingent on the personal pleasure of Cyrus as their absolute monarch, *both* husband and wife answer only to each other and enjoy a sort of dyarchic rule over their joint estate. Perhaps a reflex of Ischomachus’ explicit conceptualization of their marriage as a partnership (*koinōnia*), the collective unity of this Greek *oikos* in terms of function and rule ultimately transcends that of the Persian Empire with its strict bifurcation of delegated duties and rigid hierarchy of officials subordinated to Cyrus.

²² As Pomeroy, *Xenophon Oeconomicus* 302, observes, the term is also used of Athenian officials in the context of their empire.

The third way in which Ischomachus' household resembles the Persian Empire is in the management of its slaves.²³ As we saw earlier, Cyrus uses both the threat of punishment and the prospect of reward to procure his desired ends from those to whom he delegates oversight; though Socrates does not frame it as such, Cyrus' actions thus also constitute a sort of ongoing training for the administrators of his empire. In Ischomachus' household, husband and wife likewise appoint and train certain slaves to supervise the other workers: field overseers (*epitropoi*) in the case of the master (12.2–15.1), the chief household slave (*tamia*) by the mistress (9.11–13, cf. 7.41). Moreover, like Cyrus, the husband and wife duo use an admixture of reward and punishment to procure obedient service and efficacious performance from subordinates (*epitropoi*, 12.6, 12.15–19, 13.6–12, 14.4–7; *tamia*, 9.11–15, cf. 7.41). The professed inspiration for some of these methods is especially telling. In the case of training overseers to be honest and to refrain from stealing crops (14.2–3), Ischomachus initially claims to have drawn inspiration from the (Greek) laws of Draco and Solon (14.4–5), but he ultimately traces the pedigree of his policies to the “kingly laws” (14.6, cf. 4.7) of the Persians: “For [the former] offer only punishments to offenders, but the kingly laws not only offer punishments to the wrongdoers, but also reward the just” (14.7).²⁴ Finally, Ischomachus and his wife even go so far as to “give a share” (*metadidontes*, 9.12, cf. 12.6) in the successes and failures of the household to their servile deputies. Although that share remains entirely subject to the owners' discretion due to their surrogates' status as slaves (9.16), this policy nonetheless allows Ischomachus and his wife to create the perception of a *common good*, which remains intrinsically tied to the masters' benefit and well-being (cf. 15.1). In their *oikos*, then, the Greek

²³ For the use of slaves in *Oeconomicus* and its relationship to historical reality see S. B. Pomeroy, “Slavery in the Greek Domestic Economy in the Light of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*,” *Index* 17 (1989) 11–18.

²⁴ Cf. Ischomachus' figuration of his wife as the *nomophylax* of the *oikia* (9.15).

laws of the *polis* ultimately give way to the Persian laws of imperial monarchy and the common good is the masters' good.

Finally, just as Cyrus' imperial strategies contribute to his public image as the guardian of agricultural productivity and military security, so does the sort of *oikonomia* practiced by Ischomachus underpin his reputation as a "gentleman" (7.2, cf. 11.1) in the eyes of his fellow citizens and lead Socrates to conclude that both he and his wife are "worthy of praise" (11.1). On the level of ideology, then, the Ischomachean household yet again yields a rough correspondence with Cyrus' empire.

In the course of presenting the multi-layered dialogue on household management in *Oeconomicus*, Xenophon uses the Persian Empire as a comparandum for the *oikos* of Ischomachus and his wife and postulates a considerable number of similarities between the two phenomena. Though a few key differences do emerge during this comparison,²⁵ the sheer number of affinities suggests that Xenophon is using the Persian Empire as an analogical model for the Ischomachean *oikos* and Cyrus the Great's management of that empire as a conceptual heuristic for *oikonomia*—one that facilitates the articulation of its spaces and practices, the quality of its rule, its managerial strategies, and its ideological dimensions in a fairly methodical way. The result is not only a reasonably robust account of the theory of *oikonomia* as a whole, but also a careful consideration of the nature of a 'political' community that is, as it happens to turn out, decidedly not a *polis*.

2. From *oikos* to empire: *Cyropaedia*

Understood variously as a "biography" or a "fictive history" or a "historical romance" or a "novel" or even as an example of "*politeia* literature," Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* takes the form of a third-person narrative marked by the occasional authorial

²⁵ Cf. Lloyd, *Analogical Investigations* 44, who observes that "analogies ... implicitly, and often explicitly, recognize differences."

comment.²⁶ Taking its cues from the previous section, the following discussion will focus on Cyrus' management of his empire (7.5.35–8.6.23) through various 'oikonomic' strategies. Central to this endeavor is, as we shall see, a rationalized analysis of Babylon and the other regions, in which Cyrus employs a number of methods not only mentioned explicitly by *Oeconomicus*' Socrates, but also implicitly evinced in Ischomachean *oikonomia*. The result is that, whereas *Oeconomicus* uses the Persian Empire as a heuristic for conceptualizing the *oikos* and its management, *Cyropaedia* reverses those terms so as to provide an incipient theory of empire management on the model of the *oikos*.

With Babylon taken (7.5.1–34), Cyrus begins to secure the organization and management of the city itself. After distributing places of residence (*oikia*) in the city to the Persians and their allies (7.5.35)²⁷ and enjoining them to address the land-working and tribute-paying Babylonians as "slaves" *en masse* (7.5.36, cf. 7.5.72), Cyrus then turns to the question of his own domicile through the stratagem of holding court out in the open (7.5.37–47). The burden and impracticality of this policy—as well as the frustration it incites in his devoted followers (7.5.48–54)—prompt Chrysantas, a Persian Peer and steadfast companion, to propose the establishment of a house (*oikia*) for Cyrus (7.5.55–56). Thus does the incipient king procure the royal palace as the hearth and home of his empire (7.5.56–57, cf. 7.5.37). Notably, the way in which Xenophon narrates Cyrus' ensuing "arrangement" (*dioikein*) of this household exhibits a roughly concentric structure that blurs the confines of his personal abode with the boundaries of the city as a whole:

²⁶ For discussions of the genre of *Cyropaedia* see Carlier, *Ktema* 3 (1978) 133–140; Due, *Xenophon's Aims and Methods* 29–51; Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction* 33–63; Stadter, *AJP* 112 (1991) 461–491; Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia* 1–13; and M. Reichel, "Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and the Hellenistic Novel," in *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel* 6 (Groningen 1995) 1–20.

²⁷ For the distribution of booty as a source of obtaining loyalty see 7.2.11. For the lack of clarity on the ethnicity of these allies see Tuplin, in *Every Inch a King* 81.

eunuchs serve as his personal bodyguards (7.5.58–65), ten thousand Persian spearmen as his palace guard (7.5.66–68), and mercenaries as the city’s garrison (7.5.69). The rationale for the first two assignments comes down to the degree to which each group identifies its interests with those of Cyrus; because of their lack of family and contemptible status in the eyes of all others, eunuchs remain wholly dependent on Cyrus for their standing and livelihood and are “most trustworthy” (7.5.59), while the Persians’ austere upbringing render them grateful for the comfortable way of life he now provides them and thus supportive of his rule (7.5.67). As for the city’s garrison, the money securing their allegiance to Cyrus may not involve affection, but the practice of forcing the field-working Babylonians to pay the garrison’s wages both transfers resources deemed superfluous in one sphere of Cyrus’ dominion to another where they are needed and renders the exploited “most submissive” and “most docile” (7.5.70).

Implicit in these measures is the sense that Cyrus is consolidating his rule over the city of Babylon along the lines of the agricultural *oikos* delineated in *Oeconomicus*. In a manner evocative of Ischomachus’ basic division between the house (*oikia*) and fields, Cyrus’ imperial vision for Babylon is broadly divided between, on the one hand, the places of residence for the conquerors and, on the other, the farmlands tilled by Babylonian subjects. In this respect, Cyrus’ division of Babylon’s spaces entails the delegation of functions in the form of military defense to his various appointees and farming to the now weapon-less Babylonians (7.5.34, cf. 7.5.79); mutually dependent on one another, the tasks of each group nonetheless remain strictly differentiated. Finally, just as the basic economic strategy of Ischomachus’ *oikonomia* involves the exploitation of slave labor for the purpose of crop production and the benefit of the master, so Cyrus renders the Babylonians akin to field slaves and appropriates the fruits of their labor.

There is, however, one significant difference between the *oikos* proper of Ischomachus and the *oikos*-like structure of Babylon: whereas the former is a singular unit, the latter comprises

multiple *oikiai* with, as it would seem, the Persians and their allies as the individual householders thereof. What, then, is the relationship between Cyrus, who has begun to manage the city of Babylon *qua oikos*, and this latter group? That Cyrus is explicitly said to have granted these *oikiai* “to those very ones whom he deemed partners (*koinōnai*)” (7.5.35)²⁸ in his pursuit of empire may suggest that he is construing the Persians and their allies as collectively playing the part of the Ischomachean spouse to his own *oikonomos*. Cyrus himself almost seems cognizant of this intertextual analogy when he convenes these *koinōnai* together and addresses them (7.5.71–86) in a manner evocative of Ischomachus’ conversations with his wife (*Oec.* 7.8–10.13). After invoking the gods and surveying the Persians’ imperial possessions through the now-familiar partition between agricultural land (*gē*) with its labor force and housing (*oikiai*) with its furnishings (*Cyr.* 7.5.72; cf. *Oec.* 7.8, 7.20–25), Cyrus turns to the practice of virtue (*aretē*) and restraint (*sōphrosynē*) as the necessary moral foundations of successful management and preservation of empire (*Cyr.* 7.5.74–86; cf. *Oec.* 7.26, 7.43, 8.14). Indeed, Cyrus’ instructions that the subjugated utilize material resources only by the subjugator’s grace (*Cyr.* 7.5.73) but ought to be given a share (cf. *metadidontas*) in them (7.5.78), and that the Persian Peers and he must keep watch over each other (7.5.85), have clear analogues in the principles of Ischomachean *oikonomia* (respectively: *Oec.* 9.16–17, 9.12, 12.6; and 7.42, 11.24–25). And the twice-stated injunction to keep up their skills in warfare for defense and security (*Cyr.* 7.5.79, 7.5.84) neatly aligns them with the guardianship of Ischomachus’ wife (*Oec.* 7.21–9.15). Cyrus’ prospective treatment of his fellow Persians and allies on the model of the wifely partner would thus seem to offer one conceptual avenue via *oikonomia* for redressing the difficulties in managing an imperial *oikos* potentially fragmented by its multiplicity of *oikiai*.

²⁸ In *Cyropaedia*, *koinōnos* generally appears in discussions of Cyrus’ method of assigning rewards on the basis of merit (e.g. 2.2.25, 2.3.3, 4.2.21). See Gray, in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* 144–145.

But another model—one still related to *oikonomia*, but nonetheless crucially different in subtle ways—is offered immediately in response by Chrysantas, the Persian Peer who had proposed the palace for Cyrus earlier (*Cyr.* 8.1.1):

But oftentimes, men, and on other occasions have I apprehended that a good ruler (*archōn*) differs in no way from a good father (*patēr*). For fathers (*pateres*) take thought for their children (*paides*) that good things never lack for them, and Cyrus seems to me at present to provide counsel for us on how we might continue to live happily (*eudaimonountes*).

Just short of similes, Chrysantas' dual parallels figure Cyrus as both a good "ruler" and a good "father" (cf. Hdt. 3.89.3). At first glance, Chrysantas seems merely to be speaking in support of Cyrus' speech, but his figuration of the incipient king as the Persians' "father" and *not* as their spouse constitutes a significant change in trope. Though the rearing of children receives only limited attention in *Oeconomicus* (e.g. 7.11–12), it is an integral part of the duties of the household manager and receives more attention in other *oikonomia* literature.²⁹ Perhaps most relevant here is Aristotle's careful distinction in the *Politics* between the three types of rule in an *oikos*: over the wife, children, and slaves.³⁰ The first involves a relationship between two free and (relatively) equal individuals and is 'political' in the sense that it hypothetically involves the alternation of ruling and being ruled, though the husband ends up exercising that rule by nature and *in perpetuo* (1259a37–b9, cf. 1260a9–14).³¹ The

²⁹ E.g. [Arist.] *Oec.* 1343b21–23; Bryson *Management of the Estate* 104–160, in S. Swain, *Economy, Family, and Society from Rome to Islam* (Cambridge 2013) 475–497. For Hellenistic *oikonomia* literature see C. Natali, "Oikonomia in Hellenistic Political Thought," in A. Laks and M. Schofield (eds.), *Justice and Generosity* (Cambridge 1995) 95–128.

³⁰ Reading *Cyropaedia* ironically against Aristotle's *Politics*, Whidden, *Polis* 25 (2008) 31–62, argues that Cyrus ultimately reduces all his subjects to the level of women, children, and slaves.

³¹ The tensions between Aristotle's conception of 'political' rule and his view of wives fall outside the present scope; see M. Deslauriers, "Political Rule over Women in *Politics* 1," in T. Lockwood and T. Samaras (eds.),

third kind of rule, over slaves, involves domination by a free master over the naturally unfree and unequal slave and entails the use of the slave for the benefit of the master (1253b23–55a2).³² As we have seen, Cyrus explicitly advocates the latter kind of relationship *vis-à-vis* the Babylonians, while he appears to extend the offer of the former kind to his fellow Persians and allies. Rule over children, however, serves as an intermediary of sorts, constituting the ‘monarchic’ rule of the father over his free, but unequal, children by virtue of his affection and fully-developed rationality (1259a37–b17, cf. 1260a9–14). By pointedly figuring Cyrus in the position of father, whose paternalistic concern for their happiness (*eudaimonia*) motivates him to ensure that “good things never lack for them,” Chrysantas implicitly does away with the conception of Cyrus as husband to the spouse of the Persians and allies. In so doing, he would also seem to put to rest the idea that they will be joint and roughly equal partners (*koinōnai*) in the empire—at least on the analogy of Ischomachus’ wife.

At the same time, Chrysantas’ demotion of the Persians is not wholesale, for, in the course of his ensuing argument about the need for his fellow Persians’ obedience to Cyrus (8.1.1–5), he ends up claiming that “willing” devotion to Cyrus will ultimately distinguish them as “free men” from “slaves” who serve “unwillingly” (8.1.4).³³ In these respects, the implicit figuration of the Persians and allies as Cyrus’ children may also be read as Chrysantas’ attempt to insulate them from the utterly abject condition of slaves. Moreover, Cyrus’ success in securing the

Aristotle’s Politics: A Critical Guide (Cambridge 2015) 46–63.

³² Note, however, that Aristotle’s theory of natural slavery maintains that good mastery benefits the slave as well: 1255b4–15.

³³ For willing obedience as an essential goal of Xenophonic leadership see esp. Gray, *Xenophon’s Mirror* 15–18, whereas Carlier, *Ktēma* 3 (1978) 151–152, argues that the claim fails to differentiate precisely between free men and slaves and renders all inhabitants of the Persian Empire as slaves to Cyrus. But see Xen. *Mem.* 4.6.12 for the voluntary obedience of subjects as a criterion that distinguishes the king from the tyrant who rules over unwilling subjects. Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1285a24–29.

willing obedience of his fellow Persians, so Chrysantas continues to argue, will ultimately stem from a recognition that he “will not be able to find something that will be of use for his own good, but not ours, seeing that these same things benefit us” (8.1.5). That the Persians and their allies respond with acclamation and pass a resolution to supply themselves “to be used (*chrēsthai*) for whatever [Cyrus] may wish” (8.1.6) suggests that Chrysantas’ vision of Cyrus as a benevolent *patēr* is shared by or, at least, palatable enough to them. More importantly, by imparting to Chrysantas and the Persians the sense that his good and theirs are consonant, Cyrus creates the perception of a common good.³⁴ In so doing, he puts into practice the precepts of Ischomachus, who likewise motivates the members of his household—not just the housekeeper (*Oec.* 9.11–12) and field overseers (12.6–7), but even his wife and children (7.3–10.13)—by convincing them that their own good is linked to his good. Thus does the exchange between Cyrus and Chrysantas seemingly resolve the question of Cyrus’ position *vis-à-vis* the Persians and allies by appeal to the *oikonomos* in his fatherly capacity.

Four further observations are worth being made. First, the original intention of Cyrus for convening the Persians and the allies was that he wished “not to appear to be giving commands to them, but that they of their own accord know that [his injunctions] are the best and might thus adhere to them and concern themselves with virtue” (*Cyr.* 7.5.71). Prudently avoiding the appearance of dominating his erstwhile *koinōnai* by appealing to them in a husbandly fashion, Cyrus enjoins them to the pursuit of virtue, while Chrysantas’ subsequent emphasis on

³⁴ Note also that Chrysantas was earlier described as “excelling in judgment (*phronēsis*)” (2.3.5). Interestingly enough, Plato’s *Laws* (694B2–5) describes a situation where a “man of judgment” (*phronimos*) can “supply his power of judgment for the common good.” For the argument that Cyrus’ notion of a common good is disingenuous, see esp. C. Nadon, “From Republic to Empire: Political Revolution and the Common Good in Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus*,” *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996) 361–374.

the need for willing obedience to their kindly father expressly articulates the other half of Cyrus' intentions; the convocation might thus be understood to be another of the many successful stratagems Cyrus employs *en route* to the establishment of his imperial monarchy.

Second, the figuration of the Persians and allies as Cyrus' children marks a distinct break from the *Oeconomicus*' terms of analogizing. On the model offered there, if the Persians and allies were to function as the wife who most closely resembles the military commander by virtue of her guardianship of the house but still contributes to production and enjoys a (roughly) equal share of rule over the household, it would seem to follow that Cyrus ought to play the Ischomachean part of cultivator who also contributes to the security of the *oikos* and remains accountable to his spouse. Demoting the Persians and allies to the position of children thus provides the incipient monarch an elegant solution, for it not only allows him to subordinate his former *koinōnai* in a way that retains their freedom (or, at least, a degree of it) but also removes the possibility of him having to share rule over both the military and agricultural spheres with an equal partner. Free, but unequal, the Persians and allies may still play a role in defense, but they do so now only under the aegis of Cyrus and no longer provide a potential check on his absolute authority.

Third, by establishing himself as the production-, security-, and virtue-minded father of the Persians and their allies, Cyrus also seems to be following the advice of his own father, Cambyses, who taught the adolescent architect of the future Persian Empire that the attainment of a good personal reputation and successful management of the "members of one's own household" (*oiketai*) may be "great deeds" (cf. *Mem.* 1.2.48), but that knowing how to rule other humans with a view to fulfilling *their* material needs and moral potential is a positively "amazing" feat (1.6.7, cf. 1.6.12, 1.6.17–18). Essentially taking his father's advice as both a structural template and an ideology for imperial rule, Cyrus fuses the "great" and the "amazing" achievements into his 'oikonomic' management of Babylon and, as we shall see, the empire as a whole.

Finally, Cyrus' emergence as a ruler who "makes use of" (*chrēsthai*, 8.1.6) his subjects for the mutual benefit of both parties is consonant with another tradition Xenophon records, wherein Cyrus saw himself as a herdsman-king, whose obligation was "to make use of" (*chrēsthai*) his subjects while securing "happiness" (*eudaimonia*) for them in the same way that a shepherd's is to care for his flocks while using them for his own benefit (8.2.14; cf. Pl. *Leg.* 694E6–695A5).³⁵ To what extent the, so to speak, 'pastoral imperialism' of Cyrus entailed shameless exploitation *à la* Thrasymachus (Pl. *Resp.* 343A7–C1) or benevolent caretaking *à la* Socrates (Xen. *Mem.* 3.2.1–4) is a question inextricably bound up with larger issues of interpretation regarding the moral and ethical status of Cyrus himself, his leadership, and polity.³⁶ Still, the ethos of the herdsman-king is consistent with that of the *oikonomos*, whose agricultural endeavors, it may be worth observing, certainly involved the use of draught animals and, if *Oeconomicus* is anything to go by, were at least supplemented by animal husbandry.

Having emerged from the convocation with a clear mandate as the fatherly *oikonomos* of empire, Cyrus now looks to solidify his rule further in two ways. First, he establishes *at* Babylon a courtly culture that elicits compliance from the Persians and allies through a series of measures like the practice of group hunting and the holding of public processions (8.1.21–44, 8.3.1–50). Though not strictly 'oikonomic', these measures nonetheless encourage the Persians and allies to participate in the system of court he has established *in* and *around* his royal residence, and their efficacy, as was the case in Ischomachus'

³⁵ For herdsman imagery in Greek thought see Brock, *Greek Political Imagery* 43–52, esp. 46–48. Note that M. Foucault, "'*Omnes et singulatim*': Towards a Critique of Political Reason," in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault III* (London 2002) 298–325, famously discusses this passage.

³⁶ Whidden, *Interpretation* 35 (2008) 232–233, interprets Cyrus as inhabiting "a kind of midpoint on the continuum between" Thrasymachus and Socrates, whereas Danzig, in *Xenophon: Ethical Principles* 499–539, argues that the two ends are actually mutually reinforcing for Xenophon.

household, depends on the judicious meting out of punishments and rewards. Indeed, Xenophon even devotes a considerable amount of attention to Cyrus' management of his dining room, which involves the distribution of the same foods he eats to the members of his court and his servants (8.2.1–6) and the careful honoring of deserving guests (8.4.1–5). Thus does Cyrus bolster his 'oikonomic' rule over Babylon and even make it approach a literal reality.

Second, Cyrus also looks *beyond* Babylon in order to confront another central problem for the sort of imperial rule he is now implementing: its size and scale. To frame the matter analogically, if the Ischomachean *oikos* featured two co-regents over a much smaller domain yet still required a housekeeper and field overseers, how is Cyrus to manage a vastly larger estate on his own? He initially appoints officials to specific financial and administrative tasks (8.1.9), but quickly recognizes the need for delegating portions of his authority to those—generals, satraps, and the like—who would oversee the other “*poleis* and entire nations (*ethnē*)” (8.1.11). Inspired by the army with its hierarchical structure of command (8.1.14), Cyrus delegates oversight to a handful of officers, each of whom reports directly to the king and in turn distributes portions of his own mandate to a coterie of subordinates, and so on; the result is that Cyrus “centralize[s] the household functions” (*tas oikonomikas praxeis*, 8.1.15) of empire in his own person and ensures that “no part of his estate (*mēden tōn oikeiōn*) goes uncared for,” all the while limiting the number of officers with whom he must interact and retaining more “leisure” than the caretaker of “a single *oikia* or ship.”³⁷ In this last respect, Cyrus' use of the army as a model to structure the chain of command in his imperial household both reinforces the martial dimension of his 'oikonomic' management and makes the fulfillment of his father's injunctions look easy.

³⁷ Mention of the ship makes perfect sense if the reader has *Oeconomicus* in mind, where the importance of order in the *oikia* is analogized by the Phoenician merchant ship (*Oec.* 8.11–17).

Still, the appointment of resident satraps presents a unique problem to Cyrus owing to the threat these officials might pose to his own power should they be granted control over both civil and military affairs (8.6.1). In order to guard against this potential threat, the Persian king devises the aforementioned system of bifurcated authority, delegating oversight over agricultural matters to the satrap while retaining the garrison-commander for military affairs and, more importantly, ensuring that official's direct allegiance to himself.³⁸ Shrewdly explaining the motivation for this policy in terms of just rewards for the commanders and prudent administration by satraps (8.6.3), Cyrus has taken the division he made between the agricultural and military spheres at Babylon and replicated it for the other cities and peoples of the empire *in toto*. Moreover, just as Cyrus has the Babylonians provide the resources necessary for the security of himself and his rule, so he tasks the satraps with ensuring that the subject peoples send tribute—"whatever is beautiful or good in each land" (8.6.6)—back to Babylon. Much as Ischomachus must rely on field overseers for the produce that is to be consumed at the house, Cyrus depends on resident satraps to exploit the empire's periphery for the benefit of its metropole.

At the same time, Cyrus' commitment to the *oikos* as a model for imperial rule runs even deeper than his imposition of it on the city of Babylon and throughout the empire as a whole. After appointing qualified companions to satrapies (8.6.7), he enjoins them to imitate him in everything that he does (8.6.10), including the distribution of lands and residences to followers and the creation of a court system. Furthermore, satraps ought to mimic Cyrus' careful dining arrangement in their own homes (8.6.11). Thus does Cyrus envision a form of imperial administration in which each satrap constitutes a paternalistic *oikonomos*, each of whom replicates the structure and administration of the king's *oikos* in his own provincial household, yet

³⁸ But cf. n.14 above.

still remains integrated within the household of, and ultimately subordinate to, Cyrus *qua* father.³⁹ In this way, Cyrus establishes a pervasive imperial culture that is fundamentally predicated on *oikonomia* at different scales and on multiple levels—by both “father” and “sons,” in both the core and the periphery.

Finally, this view of Cyrus’ theory and praxis of empire gives new meaning to the introduction and conclusion of *Cyropaedia*. On the one hand, Xenophon’s epitaph of Cyrus as one who “honored and served his subjects as if they were his children (*paides*), and they revered him as a father (*patēr*)” (8.8.1, cf. 8.2.9) would seem both to corroborate the notion of Cyrus as patriarchal *oikonomos* of empire and to confirm the success of his rule on the model of the household. Indeed, the lack of any modifier to “subjects” may even suggest that the benevolence of the “father” was perceived to be so great as to elevate those who would otherwise strictly qualify as slaves on the model explicated here to the position of children.⁴⁰ Perhaps it is this quality that the Roman statesman Cicero had in mind when he described Xenophon’s presentation of Cyrus as an “image of just *imperium*” (*Q.Fr.* 1.1.23). On the other hand, the theoretical and practical terms of Cyrus’ ‘oikonomic’ rule recall the analogy found in the work’s opening lines, wherein the failure of “masters” (*despotai*) of both large and small *oikoi* to secure obedience from and “make use of” (*chrēsthai*) the “members of their household” (*oiketai*) is emblematic of humankind’s refusal to submit to the rule of another and, hence, of the recurrent and seemingly interminable cycle of political revolution (1.1.1–2). By taking the *oikos* as the model for his rule, apparently using his subjects in a mutually beneficial way, and ultimately figuring them as the children and himself as the father of an im-

³⁹ As represented by Xenophon, the structure of this imperial administration closely resembles what J. D. Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake 2001) 50–53, has theorized as the “patrimonial household model.”

⁴⁰ Cf. 8.1.44, where Cyrus’ treatment of his slaves while hunting elicits their appellation of *patēr* for him.

perial household, Cyrus would seem to have managed to find a way to hold that universal law of human nature in abeyance.⁴¹ Whether the Persian Empire's subsequent moral and political decline under the rule of those children (8.8.2 ff.) attests to the inimitable ingenuity and exemplarity of Cyrus' 'oikonomic' rule or ultimately reveals its inadequacies and failings largely depends on the reader's estimation of Xenophon as an author, his sense of irony, and the possibility of what his texts can mean without overtly saying.⁴² But regardless of the precise moral and ethical lessons that readers are to draw from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, the text also functions as a thought experiment of sorts on the analogical applicability of household rule to empire and, in so doing, provides a rudimentary theory of empire in Greek political thought.

3. Some concluding thoughts on analogy and Aristotle

As I hope to have shown, Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* uses the Persian Empire as an analogy to conceptualize the Ischomachean *oikos* and to structure its account of *oikonomia*, while *Cyro-*

⁴¹ Cf. Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction* 81: "paternalism conceived in a broad sense is the solution to the problem Xenophon raised in the prologue."

⁴² Compare Tatum, *Xenophon's Imperial Fiction* 215–234, for whom the implicit critique of *Cyropaedia* by Plato (*Leg.* 694A3–696A3) substantiates Xenophon's ironic deployment of the metaphors of the *patēr* and *oikonomia* for Cyrus and his rule, with Gray, *Xenophon's Mirror* 246–263, who argues that the decline sincerely underscores the virtues of Cyrus. For other pessimistic readings of the final chapter see Carlier, *Klema* 3 (1978) 159–163; T. L. Pangle, "Socrates in the Context of Xenophon's Political Writings," in P. A. Vander Waert (ed.), *The Socratic Movement* (Ithaca 1994) 149; Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia* 286; and Nadon, *Xenophon's Prince* 139–146; and for counter-arguments see Danzig, in *Xenophon: Ethical Principles* 502. On the relationship between Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and Plato's works see Ath. 504F–505A, Gell. *NA* 14.3.2–4, and Diog. Laert. 3.34; and for discussion, Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians* 97–100; Tatum 38–41; G. Danzig, "La prétendue rivalité entre Platon et Xenophon," *RFHIP* 16 (2002) 351–368; and L.-A. Dorion, "La Responsabilité de Cyrus dans le déclin de l'empire perse selon Platon et Xénophon," *RFHIP* 16 (2002) 369–386.

paedia reverses those terms so as to analogize Cyrus' creation of empire on the model of the *oikos* and to offer an implicit theory of empire management by way of *oikonomia*. In this concluding section I consider briefly the value of reading these two texts in tandem for understanding Xenophon's purposes and the place of his political thought in the history of ancient political philosophy.

An intertextual reading of *Oeconomicus* and *Cyropaedia* along the lines above leads to a basic question: what are we to make of the fact that each work, in applying the source domain of its counterpart to the target domain of its own subject, ends up transposing the terms of analogical transference found in the other? Depending on one's critical bent, various answers emerge. From an argumentative perspective, an extensive and fairly methodical application of an analogy both, so to speak, forwards (e.g. household management is like empire management) and backwards (empire management is like household management) might be thought to probe more deeply the terms of analogical transference—i.e. the particular qualities that are selected for comparison, the degree of their saliency and likeness, and so on—thereby bolstering the inductive terms of argumentation in each text.⁴³ Or put rather loosely, the analogical claims advanced in *Oeconomicus* reinforce those of *Cyropaedia*, and vice-versa. To be sure, analogical reasoning can never offer proof in the way that Aristotle's creation of axiomatic-deductive argumentation was soon to establish,⁴⁴ but

⁴³ For analogy as a form of inductive argument see especially Holland et al., *Induction* 287–319. The application of any analogy requires selection of which features are to transfer from domain to target; otherwise, the comparison becomes equivalence. Note also that analogies depend on shared cultural knowledge and localized context for their intelligibility and efficacy; see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors* 56–67; Hogan, *Cognitive Science* 90–92; and Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think* 72–73.

⁴⁴ See esp. Lloyd, *Analogical Investigations* 48–57, who nonetheless observes that Aristotle (*Eth.Nic.* 1094b12–27) allows for ethics to “deal with truths that hold not just always, but also for the most part, and it has to do with terms that are applied ... in virtue of a similarity” (50).

the seemingly deliberate and careful correspondences between the two texts and the bilateral terms of their comparisons do, I contend, suggest that Xenophon is attempting to establish some sort of truth value for his analogical propositions.

To make a similar point from a literary perspective, we might view Xenophon as creating a complementary and mutually reinforcing world of political imagination, which has Socrates, Ischomachus, and Cyrus the Great—sometimes explicitly, at other times implicitly—looking to one another by turns for inspiration and affirmation. Yet another approach to the question is to take an explicitly cognitive perspective, wherein the use of analogy is understood to be a fundamental, pervasive, and essential feature of human cognition.⁴⁵ On this view, if even very basic phenomena require the unconscious activation of schemas of metaphor or the integration of sophisticated conceptual blends, then it may be no surprise that more complex and multidimensional ones like *oikonomia* and empire management consciously draw upon sustained analogical reasoning for understanding; working both directions of the analogy may thus be a strategy to aid that process of conceptualization. Moreover, we could even bring the basic constraints of human perception into consideration here⁴⁶—particularly in the case of empire management. For an empire is partly defined by its large quantity of space and is therefore not directly perceivable by any one person at any one time, let alone one unequipped with the sort of cartographic resources and

⁴⁵ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, is largely responsible for this view of the centrality of metaphor for everyday thought and speech, which Lakoff and Turner, *Cool Reason*, formally extends to the literary realm. More recently, Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, have reworked this understanding of metaphor into “conceptual blending,” in which features of two “inputs” are integrated into a “conceptual blend” that has its own “emergent structure” with new uses and meanings. This last approach seems to hold the most promise for further probing the bilateral analogies I have traced here, but would require a separate article.

⁴⁶ For the way that analogies redress problems of perception see Lloyd, *Analogical Investigations* 72–75; cf. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy* 173–303.

mentality that modernity tends to take for granted.⁴⁷ For this reason, recourse to the conceptual likeness of a more readily perceptible phenomenon like the household may hold intuitive appeal for understanding something as large and multifaceted as empire.

But far from being *ex nihilo*, Xenophon's case for the conceptual affinity between household and empire management develops out of, as was noted at the outset of this article, the analogy between rule in the *oikos* and rule in the *polis*. From the vantage of this 'political' tradition, then, the analogizing of Cyrus' leadership in terms of *oikonomia* might be viewed as somewhat conventional and Xenophon's primary contribution to political thought as simply the personification of household management's potential for transference to 'politics' in the figure of Cyrus. Yet, framing the analogy's target domain in terms of politics or the political misses the essential point that Xenophon's Cyrus transcends the structural and conceptual limitations of the *polis* to become the farmer, herdsman, and *oikonomos* of *empire*. Xenophon may not be alone in this respect, for Mary Dietz⁴⁸ has recently argued that reading Aristotle's *Politics* in a manner she terms as "between *polis* and empire" allows us to perceive ways in which Aristotle's text—as beholden to the *polis* as it is⁴⁹—actually acknowledges the incipient emergence of imperial monarchy as a potential challenge to the *polis* with its democratizing tendencies. In particular, Dietz suggests that the form of monarchy burgeoning around the Macedonian kings, Philip and Alexander, inspires Aristotle's discussion of "absolute kingship" (*pambasileia*, 1285b36), a term that he

⁴⁷ For the emergence of cartography in the Greek world and its limitations see A. C. Purves, *Space and Time in Ancient Greek Narrative* (Cambridge 2009) 97–117, and 196–232 for the representation of domestic space in *Oeconomicus*.

⁴⁸ M. G. Dietz, "Between Polis and Empire: Aristotle's *Politics*," *American Political Science Review* 106 (2012) 275–293.

⁴⁹ See especially M. Schofield, "Aristotle: An Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* 310–320.

himself may have coined⁵⁰ and defines as follows (1285b29–33):

[*Pambasileia* is] a fifth kind of kingship, when there is a single master (*kurios*) over all matters, just as each nation (*ethnos*) and each *polis* is master over common matters, and it is arranged according to household management (*oikonomikē*). For just as household management is a sort of kingship over the household (*oikia*), so this kingship is household management (*oikonomia*) over one or more *poleis* and nations.

Acknowledging that *pambasileia* can manifest itself over an area far larger than any one *polis* or nation, Aristotle will later specify that this monarch rules over “all things (*panta*) ... according to his personal whim” (1287a9–10).⁵¹ But what matters most for my purposes is, first, Aristotle’s nearly unqualified equivalence of *pambasileia* with household management and, second, his use of bilateral analogies to corroborate this point. As Dietz would have it, Aristotle not only recognizes that *pambasileia* constitutes a new and distinct form of *politeia* from the previous kinds he considers, but also apprehends—almost presciently—the sort of rule that would come to define the Hellenistic world before the century’s end. Yet, in addition to the Macedonian paradigms, Aristotle would also have had at hand the Xenophontic figure of Cyrus, the swath of whose kingship similarly admitted characterization as an “entirety” (*pas*) by virtue of its encompassing a “great-many people” (*pam-*

⁵⁰ So M. Nichols, *Citizens and Statesmen: A Study of Aristotle’s Politics* (Savage 1991) 74.

⁵¹ For discussions of the place of *pambasileia* in Aristotle’s theoretical apparatus see C. A. Bates, Jr., “The Rule of Law or *Pambasileia*: Competing Claims for Rule in Aristotle’s *Politics*,” in L. G. Rubin (ed.), *Justice v. Law in Greek Political Thought* (Lanham 1997) 195–212, and C. Attack, “Aristotle’s *Pambasileia* and the Metaphysics of Monarchy,” *Polis* 32 (2015) 297–320. Carlier, *Ktema* 3 (1978) 157, briefly observes that “La monarchie impériale du Cyrus de Xénophon est très proche [my emphasis] du ‘type idéal’ de la *pambasileia* défini par Aristote dans la *Politique*.” Acknowledging the bilateral terms of Xenophon’s analogizing between *oikonomia* and management of empire allows us, I contend, to posit the influence of Xenophon on Aristotle with more certainty.

pollous anthrōpous), a “great-many cities” (*pampollas poleis*), and a “great-many nations” (*pampolla ethnē*) spread out over distances to be traversed over a “great-many days ... and months” (Xen. *Cyr.* 1.1.3).⁵² That Aristotle also deploys the same analogies and in the same bilateral terms found in Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* and *Cyropaedia* further attests to the likelihood that his conception of *pambasileia* owes as much—if not even more—to Xenophon’s thought as it does to his experience of Philip and Alexander.⁵³ In these respects, Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* and *Cyropaedia* effectively serve as the intellectual precursors to Aristotle’s concept of *pambasileia* by creating thought experiments about the conceptual affinity between *oikos* and empire: a form of polity that, as perhaps Xenophon also presaged,⁵⁴ would come to envelop Greece not even twenty years after his death.⁵⁵

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⁵² The post-Aristotelian division of *oikonomia* into four species ([Arist.] *Oec.* 1345b7–13; cf. C. Rowe, “The Peripatos after Aristotle,” in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* 392–393)—“kingly,” “satrapic,” “political,” and “individual”—further attests to the influence that the Persian Empire had on the conceptualization of polities larger than the *polis*.

⁵³ Note also that Aristotle’s present recourse to the *oikos*, a form of rule whose categorical similarity to ‘political’ rule he had so emphatically earlier denied (1252a7–16; see 75 above), is perhaps one of the most striking aspects of his brief account of *pambasileia*, illustrates the strain that imperial monarchy places on the theoretical apparatus of the *Politics*, and merits further consideration, which I hope to pursue in future work.

⁵⁴ Cf. J. Farber, “The *Cyropaedia* and Hellenistic Kingship,” *AJP* 100 (1979) 497–514.

⁵⁵ I would like to thank the anonymous readers and the editor for their astute comments and help.