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Speeches and military Leadership in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*

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The importance of speech deliveries in Xenophon's military leadership has generally been overlooked by scholarship.² The greater part of the research, which focuses on the author's attributes necessary for an ideal commander, has not made a reference to rhetorical ability not even to the degree of successful speech delivery or has at least taken it for granted without further exploration.³ Moreover, the scholarship which examines Xenophon's speeches focuses more on the speeches as a literary device without emphasizing their practical aspect for effective military leadership.⁴

In contrast, this article will assess the role of the speeches in important aspects of Xenophon's ideal military leadership. Predominantly, this role concerns the encouragement of the troops and the conduction of military planning. It will be argued that speeches were more than a literary device in the case of Xenophon and that the author actually sets effective speech delivery as one more criterion for successful military leadership.

The decision of focusing on the *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia* in this research was not arbitrary. These two works set in a relatively systematic manner Xenophon's view on the role of a military commander while presenting a striking amount of similarities with one another, within which the inclusion of speeches is of the outmost importance for the present article.⁵

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2 I would like to extend my thanks to Andrew Erskine, David Lewis, and Matteo Zaccarini for all of their valuable recommendations.

3 The subject of speeches is absent in Buxton's (2017) edition 'Aspects of leadership in Xenophon'. The same is true for Gray (2010). It is not emphasised in Wood (1964) and Hutchinson (2000).

4 That is the case in Baragwanath (2017) esp. 281–3, 285–7; Scardino (2012) esp. 70–79, 91; Grethlein (2012); Grethlein (2013) the 3rd section dealing with narratology in the *Anabasis*. An exception is Rood (2004) esp. 322–326, however his focus is more on Xenophon's self-justification speeches, which are not examined by this article, as they aim at establishing Xenophon's status and not at presenting an ideal style of command.

5 Huitink and Rood (2019) 15. The presence of Cyrus the younger in the *Anabasis*, namely Cyrus' the Great grandson is another element that connects the two works.

As far as the chronology of the works is concerned, even if the exact dating is uncertain, it is generally accepted that the *Cyropaedia* is the latter.⁶ Whatever the case might be, one can trace echoes of Xenophon's experience as a commander during the mercenary expedition in the *Cyropaedia*.⁷

In order to address the subject in a clear way, the article will have the following form: first, the significance of the speeches for Xenophon will be demonstrated based on various references to his works, which acknowledge the practical aspects of speech deliveries in a military context. Some of the particular circumstances of the mercenary expedition, during which speech deliveries were instrumental for Xenophon as a commander, will be also underscored. Secondly, the role of the speeches for the encouragement of the soldiers before or during critical times will be examined. The emphasis of the final section will be on how speeches facilitated military planning and it will be demonstrated that speech deliveries were necessary for a significant number of military decisions.

The importance of speeches for Xenophon is made evident by a plethora of references within his works, which clearly indicate that he acknowledged and valued speech delivery in a military context, especially as a tool to achieve the encouragement of troops and their willing obedience.

Xenophon argues at *Anab.* 7.7.24, that the speech of a profoundly honest man is as powerful as force (οἱ δ' ἂν φανεροὶ ὦσιν ἀλήθειαν ἀσκοῦντες, τοῦτων οἱ λόγοι, οὐδὲν μείον δύνανται ἀνύσασθαι ἢ ἄλλων ἢ βία).⁸ This acknowledgement makes clear that Xenophon fully comprehended the significance of speeches, especially if the content of a speech was true. Similarly, in his treatise about the ideal cavalry commander, Xenophon suggests speeches from appropriate spokesmen in order to alert the cavalry of possible dangers (ἔχειν ῥήτορας ἐπιτηδείους, ὅπως λέγοντες φοβῶσιν τε τοὺς ἰππέας, *Hipparchicus* 1.8).

It is also noteworthy that Xenophon comments ironically on the confidence that one of his adversaries had on his rhetorical abilities (προηγόρει δὲ Ἐκατόνυμος δεινὸς νομιζόμενος εἶναι λέγειν, *Anab.* 5.5.7). This gives Xenophon the opportunity to display his superiority at debating with the delivery of a very successful speech (*Anab.* 5.5.13–23).⁹

6 For more information on the dating of these works see Humble (1997) 29–31; Cristensen (2017) 380–1.

7 Buxton (2017) 335, notes the risk of circular reasoning, which constitutes any effort to trace the first source of influence futile.

8 All translations are my own but I have taken into consideration Miller (1914), and Brownson, (1998). All Greek citations are from the same editions of the Harvard University Press.

9 Baragwanath (2017) 288, notes Xenophon's success at this speech, after having to employ similar devices with his adversary.

Finally, attention should be drawn to *Cyrop.* 3.3.55, where Cyrus elaborates on the extent to which speeches can encourage soldiers. He concludes that those who are wholly untrained in virtue cannot be benefitted from a speech (τοὺς δ' ἀπαιδεύτους παντάπασιν ἀρετῆς θαυμάζοιμ' ἄν, εἴ τι πλέον ἂν ὠφελήσειε λόγος καλῶς ῥηθεις εἰς ἀνδραγαθίαν). Since Cyrus and his vigorously trained Persian troops are virtuous, however, they can be encouraged by speeches, and unsurprisingly speech deliveries preceded almost every major battle in the *Cyropaedia*.¹⁰

We should also take into consideration the circumstances of the mercenary expedition supporting Cyrus the Younger, during which Xenophon gained a great amount of experience as a commander.¹¹ It is clear, as Anderson points out, that Xenophon was not the commander in chief of the army.¹² As a matter of fact there was not a sole command after the execution of the Greek generals (*Anab.* 3.1.2). The only exception was the election of Chirisophus as commander in chief of the army in an effort to facilitate prompt decision making, which however lasted less than a week (*Anab.* 6.1.17–32). For the most part seven generals, including Xenophon, were managing the army by majority decision.¹³ Thus, if this is true, then Xenophon would definitely have had to communicate his strategies to the other generals since every major decision would have to be approved.

Another argument in the same direction is that Xenophon displayed sensitivity on the matter of the psychology of the troops. As Keim eloquently points out, Xenophon was 'the first military psychologist'.¹⁴ For example Xenophon has no difficulty in discerning the negative psychological state of the Greek troops (ὡς ἀθύμωος μὲν ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὰ ὄπλα, *Anab.* 3.1.40) and tries to find ways to improve their morale (πολὺ εὐθυμότεροι ἔσονται, *Anab.* 3.1.41). It is clear from the *Anabasis* that speeches were one of the most effective ways to improve morale without the usage of any other resource.¹⁵

Moreover, Xenophon was an advocate of willing obedience. There is a scholarly consensus on the fact that Xenophon supported and promoted willing

10 This subject will be further explored in the next section.

11 Buxton (2017) 335, argues that Xenophon's thinking on the subject of leadership was most likely molded during the expedition he describes at the *Anab.*

12 Anderson (1974) 119.

13 Roy (1967) 289, points out based on his reading of *Anab.* 2.5.37, that seven generals including Xenophon were responsible for the decision making; Anderson (1974) 120, argues that the generals were approved by popular vote.

14 Keim (2016) 127.

15 The role of the speeches at the encouragement of the troops will be further explored in the next section.

obedience in his military-focused works.¹⁶ As Buxton points out, a ‘rhetorical strategy’ was required for winning willing obedience.¹⁷ This strategy included mainly persuasion through speeches as the troops would carry out orders more efficiently if they understood the benefit of doing so. For example, Cyrus admits that willing obedience is the best form of order and that for this to be achieved the subordinates must be convinced that obeying orders is in their best interest (κρείττον τούτου πολύ, τὸ ἐκόντας πειθεσθαι... ἂν ἡγήσωνται περὶ τοῦ συμφέροντος ἑαυτοῖς..., *Cyrus*. 1.6.21). Xenophon’s opinion on willing obedience is clearly articulated at *Hipparchicus* 1.24:

εἷς γε μὴν τὸ εὐπειθεῖς εἶναι τοὺς ἀρχομένους μέγα μὲν τὸ καὶ λόγῳ
διδάσκειν ὅσα ἀγαθὰ ἔνι ἐν τῷ πειθαρχεῖν...

Xenophon claims in this passage that subordinates should learn about the benefits of obedience through speeches (λόγῳ διδάσκειν), to be better disciplined. Thus, it is clear that for Xenophon speeches have a more practical dimension in a military context than that of a mere literary device.

The characteristics of speeches which aimed at boosting the morale of the soldiers at the most critical times will now be examined. Most of the speeches of this category were delivered before major battles or other important military operations, for the completion of which the maximum possible courage was required from the soldiers. This kind of speech delivery can be also observed in moments of despair, namely after some major setback, such as the execution of the generals of the Greek army by Tissaphernes (*Anab.* 3.1.2). In the *Cyropaedia* one can observe speeches with a similar structure which often addressed the same aspects. First, Xenophon’s most organised attempt to boost the army’s morale in the aforementioned difficult situation will be examined. After that, the characteristic example of Xenophon’s speech delivery before the battle with the Colchians will be presented. Finally, the same practice in the *Cyropaedia* will be analyzed with respect to what will have already been pointed out about the *Anabasis*.

Shortly after the execution of the generals, Xenophon realized how difficult the situation for the Greeks actually was, as they were not only in the middle of the Persian Empire surrounded by enemies lacking both provisions and allies,

16 Buxton (2016) 191–2; Buxton (2017) 323–4; Gray (2012) 180–6; Nadon (2001) 147–8. Wood (1964) 51–2.

17 Buxton (2016) 179; Anderson (1974) 120, argues that persuasion was crucial for the command of the Greek mercenary force.

but they had just lost almost their entire leadership.¹⁸ Thus, he decided to take action and do everything in his power to restore the low morale of the Greeks.¹⁹ This endeavour materialised with the delivery of three speeches.²⁰ The first was an address to Proxenus' captains, which established Xenophon as a replacement general in his position (*Anab.* 3.1.15–25). The second addressed the remaining officers of the whole army (*Anab.* 3.1.35–45) and the third the whole army itself (*Anab.* 3.2.7–32).

Xenophon decided to address Proxenus' captains first (ὧ ἄνδρες λοχαγοί, *Anab.* 3.1.15) most likely because he did not have any official position in the army since he was invited as Proxenus' friend (*Anab.* 3.1.4). Thus, he would have been known by Proxenus' men but not necessarily by the other soldiers. Xenophon started his speech by noting the difficult position they found themselves in (ὄρων ἐν οἴοις ἐσμέν, *Anab.* 3.1.15) and the need for action as the enemies would take advantage of their passivity to complete military preparations before engaging in battle with the Greeks (πρὶν... καλῶς τὰ ἑαυτῶν παρασκευάσασθαι, *Anab.* 3.1.16).²¹ Then, in order to boost their confidence he noted that the enemies clearly did not have divine support as perjurers (οὔτοι αὐτοὺς ἐπιωρκήκασιν), in contrast with the Greeks who respected their oaths (τῶν θεῶν ὄρκους, *Anab.* 3.1.22).²² In the same vein the military supremacy of the Greeks was contrasted with the weakness of the enemies at *Anab.* 3.1.23:

ἔτι δ' ἔχομεν σώματα ἰκανώτερα τούτων καὶ ψύχη καὶ θάλπη καὶ πόνους φέρειν: ἔχομεν δὲ καὶ ψυχὰς σὺν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀμείνονας: οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες καὶ τρωτοὶ καὶ θνητοὶ μᾶλλον ἡμῶν...

It is clear from the passage that Xenophon tries to present the Greeks as more accustomed to hardships (πόνους) and extreme weather conditions (ψύχη καὶ θάλπη). In addition, they are also presented as braver than their opponents

18 The treacherous execution included five generals, twenty captains, and two hundred soldiers (*Anab.* 2.5.30).

19 Hutchinson (2000) 44, points out that Xenophon decided to address the problem of the morale of the army first.

20 The focus on Xenophon as a character is inextricably linked with these speeches as they were the reason he was recognized by both Proxenus' men and the whole army.

21 The difficult state of the Greek mercenary army has been noted already at *Anab.* 1.1.2 (ἐν πολλῇ δὴ ἀπορίᾳ ἦσαν οἱ Ἕλληνες). See also *Anab.* 1.1.7, where the word ἀπορία is repeated to describe the position of the Greeks.

22 For the description of the oath between Tissaphernes and the Greeks see *Anab.* 2.3.28, 2.5.3. Huitink and Rood (2019) on 3.1.21 note that the breaking of the treaty by the Persians was a 'rhetorically apt' subject.

(ψυχᾶς ...ἀμείνονας). In this way the officers would feel more confident and could start mobilising easier.

Xenophon was then encouraged by Proxenus' officers to deliver a second speech to the remaining captains and generals of the whole army (ὧ ἄνδρες στρατηγοὶ καὶ λοχαγοί, *Anab.* 3.1.34).²³ According to Huitink and Rood, this was a general address to the whole officer class in order to evoke their sense of responsibility.²⁴ One can also assume that Xenophon was trying to establish a rapport with them as he was an upcoming figure in the leadership of the Greek force. In this speech, Xenophon first informed them about the adverse circumstances (*Anab.* 3.1.35–6). He also emphasised the importance of discipline, as it saves more lives than the lack of order (εὐταξία σώζειν δοκεῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀταξία πολλοὺς ἤδη ἀπολώλεκεν, *Anab.* 3.1.38).²⁵

Interestingly, both the idea that the commander should set an example as the soldiers look up to him and the importance of discipline are stressed in the *Cyropaedia*.²⁶ Specifically, in the discussion of Cyrus with his father, Cambyses, it is concluded that a commander must be superior to his subordinates in endurance (καρτερώτερον δεῖ πρὸς πάντα τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχομένων εἶναι, *Cyrop.* 1.6.25) as nothing escapes their notice (οὐ λανθάνει ὃ τι ἂν ποιῆ, *Cyrop.* 1.6.25). As far as discipline is concerned, it is the object of the same discussion as the aforementioned interlocutors are trying to establish how obedience can be best achieved (*Cyrop.* 1.6.19–21). In the last part of the speech Xenophon notes two of the main 'assets' of the Greeks, namely their divine support (σὺν τοῖς θεοῖς, *Anab.* 3.142) and their bravery (ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἐρρωμενέστεροι, *Anab.* 3.142).

We can now turn our attention to the last speech of the group, which addressed the whole army including the newly elected officers (*Anab.* 3.2.7–32). As Rood points out, Xenophon dressed up accordingly for the occasion wearing his most beautiful armour (ὡς ἐδύνατο κάλλιστα, *Anab.* 3.2.7).²⁷ Xenophon needed a positive visual image that would impress the soldiers along with his rhetorical

23 The majority of the addressees would have been captains as only three generals were not at the ambush (*Anab.* 2.5.37).

24 Huitink and Rood (2016) 214–5.

25 The necessity for discipline was even greater for the Greeks as their main unit was a phalanx of heavily armed infantry. Quick responses to changes in formation and order were crucial for this style of fighting. For more information on the importance of order for the phalanx see Cartledge (1977) 16–7; Anderson (1970) 94–5; Anderson (1974) 75–6.

26 For the theme of a commander setting a personal example for his subordinates see Buxton (2016) 176, 187; *Anab.* 3.4.48, 4.4.11–12.

27 Rood (2017) 436.

ability.²⁸ At the start of the speech he notes that there is still hope for them if they choose to fight (πολλοὶ ἡμῖν καὶ καλοὶ ἐλπίδες εἰσὶ σωτηρίας, *Anab.* 3.2.8). He based this claim first on the fact that they had secured divine favour for their piety, in contrast with the enemies who have aggravated the gods by violating their oaths (ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐμπεδοῦμεν τοὺς τῶν θεῶν ὄρκους, οἱ δὲ πολέμιοι ἐπιωρκήκασιν τε καὶ τὰς σπονδὰς παρὰ τοὺς ὄρκους λελύκασιν, *Anab.* 3.2.10).²⁹ As Flower points out, this is one of the occasions where Xenophon exploited religion in his rhetoric.³⁰ Then, he reminded the troops of the two victories of the Greeks against the two campaigns of the Persians in Greece, in 492 and 480 respectively (*Anab.* 3.2.11–13).³¹ Xenophon was also able to capitalise on more recent and relevant events such as the success of the mercenary army in the battle of Cunaxa against the same army that was posing a threat then. There is a high probability that Xenophon stressed the outcome of the battle in favour of the Greeks not only for reasons of morale but also to claim a heroic status for the Cyreans, portraying them as achieving a similar exploit to that of their ancestors.³²

In the next part of the speech Xenophon made an effort to undermine the virtues of the enemies by addressing two facts that most likely concerned the soldiers (*Anab.* 3.2.16–20). The first one is the fact that the other soldiers of Cyrus had deserted the Greek army and joined the ranks of the enemies (*Anab.* 3.2.17). Xenophon goes so far as to claim that this was actually a positive outcome with the rationale being that these men were cowards since they were deserters (οὗτοι κακιοῦντες εἰσὶ, *Anab.* 3.2.17). Furthermore, it is noted that they would do more harm than good in their ranks at 3.2.17:

28 The effects of someone's appearance are something that has concerned Xenophon at the *Cyrop.* 1.3.2–3, where young Cyrus was amazed by his grandfather's purple tunics and jewelry.

29 Parker (2004) 140, also stresses the fact that Xenophon is portraying the enemies as oath-breakers in his speech.

30 Flower (2006) 100–1.

31 Cyrus the Younger also recalls the victories of the Greeks against the Persians in his speech before the battle of Cunaxa (*Anab.* 1.7.3–4) by following a similar rhetoric of noting the superiority of both the troops he is addressing and the inferiority of the enemies. For this overlap between Xenophon's and Cyrus's speech see Rood (2004) 310–11; Hutchinson (2000) 44–5, notes that the basis of Xenophon's speech are the successful encounters against the Persians.

32 It is difficult to determine if the Greeks could claim victory for the battle of Cunaxa as, even if Xenophon's account is completely accurate, there are some controversies. On the one hand the Greek mercenaries managed to pursue their opposing units (οἱ μὲν διώκοντες τοὺς καθ' αὐτοὺς ὡς πάντας νικῶντες, *Anab.* 1.10.4). On the other hand, their opponents did get to the Greek camp and looted it (εἰς δὲ τὸ στρατόπεδον ἀφικόμενος τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων, *Anab.* 1.10.8). Moreover, none of the two sides had the chance to set a monument of the enemy's defeat, but nevertheless thought they were victorious. For more information on how this was possible see Hutchinson (2000) 153; Whitby (2004) 228, argues that the achievement at Cunaxa was probably exaggerated.

τοὺς δ' ἐθέλοντας φυγῆς ἄρχειν πολὺ κρεῖττον σὺν τοῖς πολεμίοις
ταττομένους ἢ ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ τάξει ὄρᾶν.

Xenophon insinuates in this passage that men with questionable morals standing, who are clearly cowards and untrustworthy (τοὺς δ' ἐθέλοντας φυγῆς) are a liability for every army and they would probably cause the same problems to their enemies. It should be noted that with this passage Xenophon displays his rhetorical abilities since he convincingly managed to argue about the advantage of former allies joining the ranks of the enemies.³³

The second issue that discouraged the Greeks and Xenophon felt he had to address is the Greek's lack of cavalry (*Anab.* 3.2.18–20). At this point the Greeks do not have a single unit of cavalry in their ranks, in contrast with the Persians for whom cavalry, as Xenophon himself confirms, is one of the most important units (*Anab.* 3.2.18).³⁴ Xenophon tried to undermine the significance of cavalry, in general, in an effort to encourage the Greeks. His argument is based on the fact that the horses themselves do not actually engage in battle (*Anab.* 3.2.18) and that infantry has a far surer foundation than cavalry (ἐπ' ἀσφαλεστέρου ὀχήματός, *Anab.* 3.2.19).³⁵ He concludes his argument by noting that the only advantage of cavalry is that it makes flight safer (ἀσφαλέστερόν ἐστιν ἢ ἡμῖν, *Anab.* 3.2.19). If the audience takes into consideration both that the enemies are evidently cowards and that cavalry facilitates flight, it would be clear that cavalry was a liability for the Persians too. It is noteworthy that the circumstances and the fact that the Persian cavalry posed one of the most eminent threats, for the Greeks, forced Xenophon to devalue the significance of cavalry in this speech, even though he is one of the greatest supporters of this unit.³⁶ It can be deduced that Xenophon decided to set aside his personal view on the subject of cavalry to encourage the men as effectively as possible.

It is interesting to note that Xenophon did his best to maximise the rhetorical effect of his speeches. Specifically, it is clear that his words to the Greek army

33 The difficulty of arguing about it stems from the fact that every deserter would not only make the Cyreans weaker but also their enemies stronger. For the argument of deserters being better in their opponents' ranks see Huitink and Rood (2019) on 3.2.17.

34 For the major differences between Persians and Greeks with respect to war, see Hutchinson (2000) 20–1; See also p. 64 of the same book where the importance of the cavalry for the Persians is pointed out.

35 Huitink and Rood (2019) on 3.2.18 question the persuasiveness of Xenophon's argument as the lack of cavalry would cause major problems to the Greeks.

36 Xenophon's interest on cavalry is evident by his treatises, *On Horsemanship* and *Hipparchicus*. In addition, one of the first measures he proposes against Tissaphernes' offensives was the creation of a small cavalry force (*Anab.* 3.3.16–7). Cyrus is also presented by Xenophon sharing the author's 'obsession' for cavalry as will be further explored in the last section.

before the battle with the Colchians were an exaggeration. He suggested that Greeks should eat their enemies raw as they were the only obstacle left in their way (οὗτοί εἰσιν οὓς ὄρατε μόνοι ἔτι ἡμῖν ἐμποδῶν... τούτους, ἦν πῶς δυνώμεθα, καὶ ὤμοιους δεῖ καταφαγεῖν, *Anab.* 4.8.14). Of course, the phrase is not to be taken literally by the audience as it is a hyperbole used more for its rhetoric effect reminding to the Greek mercenaries not only of all the difficulties they had already gone through, but also their ferocity in battle. According to Scardino, another motivation for the men in this case is the suggestion that the Colchians constitute the final challenge for the Greeks.³⁷ Thus, it can be observed that Xenophon tried to exploit everything within his reach, for the best possible effect on the soldier's morale.

We can now turn to the speech delivery before battles in the *Cyropaedia*, examining similar elements that aim at the encouragement of Cyrus' soldiers. Xenophon presents the founder of the Persian Empire as seriously concerned with his soldier's morale displaying a genuine interest in the psychological state of the troops especially before battles. It is indicative that he was interested in the matter even before becoming the commander in chief of the Persian army, through the aforementioned discussion with his father. Specifically, Cyrus states that the best way to encourage soldiers is to inspire them with hope (εἷς γε τὸ προθυμίαν ἐμβαλεῖν στρατιώταις οὐδὲν μοι δοκεῖ ικανώτερον εἶναι ἢ τὸ δύνασθαι ἐλπίδας ἐμποιεῖν ἀνθρώποις, *Cyrop.* 1.6.19). Furthermore, as will be demonstrated, Cyrus delivers a speech before almost every crucial battle.

We will begin with Cyrus' first address to the Persian army, the majority of which consisted of Persians of a low social status (*Cyrop.* 2.1.14–18). Cyrus tried in this case to encourage his troops in two ways. He reminded the men their superiority in physical strength and bravery (καὶ τὰ σώματά τε οὐδὲν ἡμῶν χειρόνα ἔχετε, ψυχὰς τε οὐδὲν κακίονας, *Cyrop.* 2.1.15). This is of course highly reminiscent of *Anab.* 3.1.23, where the bravery and physical supremacy of the Greeks is noted in Xenophon's speech (ἔχομεν σώματα ικανώτερα... καὶ ψυχὰς σὺν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀμείνονας).

The second way of encouragement was to underscore the incentives for the men. He first noted that they will have a fair share of the benefits (ἄν τι ἐκ τούτων καλὸν κάγαθὸν γίγνηται, τῶν ὁμοίων ἡμῖν ἀξιοῦσθαι., *Cyrop.* 2.1.15).

In the last part of the speech Cyrus reminded the men that only victory assures any material good (νίκης τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖν, ἢ τὰ καλὰ πάντα καὶ τάγαθὰ κτᾶταί τε καὶ σώζει, *Cyrop.* 2.1.17). It is essential to emphasise that there is an absence

37 Scardino (2012) 79.

of material incentives from Xenophon's speeches in the *Anabasis*.³⁸ It would be relatively safe to assume that this stems from the fact that the main incentive of the Greek mercenaries, especially since the execution of their leadership and until they managed to reach the sea, was their survival (*Anab.* 4.7.15–25). Thus, any additional motive would have been superfluous.

Another indicative example is Cyrus' speeches before the battle with the Assyrians. The first speech addressed the elite troops of the Persian nobility called ὁμότιμοι (*Cyrop.* 3.3.34–40) and the second the whole army (*Cyrop.* 3.3.41–4).³⁹ The two main elements of the first speech echo significantly Xenophon's speeches in the *Anabasis*. Cyrus highlights the fact that his army has secured divine support, since the omens from the sacrifice were positive according to the seers (οἱ μὲν θεοί, ὡς οἳ τε μάντιες φασὶ καὶ ἔμοι συνδοκεῖ, *Cyrop.* 3.3.34).⁴⁰ As it has been already noted, Xenophon's emphasis on divine support in his speeches is evident in more than one occasion.⁴¹ The other encouragement is Cyrus' confirmation to his elite troops that they have mastered the art of war to such a degree as to not need any practical advice (οἶδα ὑμᾶς ταῦτα ἐπισταμένους καὶ μεμελητήκοτας, *Cyrop.* 3.3.35).⁴² As far as the whole army is concerned, Cyrus once again notes their bravery (τοῖς κρατίστοις ὅμοιοι, *Cyrop.* 3.3.41). He also makes a reference to the importance of discipline (ὑπακούετε αὐτοῖς, *Cyrop.* 3.3.42).⁴³

Some attention should be drawn to Cyrus' speeches before the battle of Thymbra, against the allied forces of the remaining Assyrians and Croesus. The first speech was delivered by Cyrus when he perceived that some of the soldiers and officers had lost their courage (ὡς δὲ ἦσθετο ὁ Κῦρος φόβον διαθέοντα ἐν τῇ στρατιᾷ, *Cyrop.* 6.2.13–19).⁴⁴ The other was an exhortative speech just before the battle itself (*Cyrop.* 6.4.12–20). The first aspect emphasised by Cyrus to boost his army's morale was the fact that their enemies had already been defeated

38 The speech of Cyrus the Younger before the battle of Cunaxa, however, made some rather explicit references to material goods to incentivize the soldiers at *Anab.* 1.7.7: ὑμῶν δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ στέφανον ἐκάστω χρυσοῦν δῶσω. He makes the overstatement promising a golden crown for each Greek, which symbolizes the desired victory

39 Xenophon explains that the ὁμότιμοι were significantly less numerous than the other Persians and held positions in the leadership of the army at *Cyrop.* 2.1.2–3.

40 For another claim of divine favour in one of Cyrus' speeches see *Cyrop.* 7.5.22, where a reference to a god as a protector is made before the battle of Babylon; Flower (2016) 93, describes Xenophon's view on the reciprocal relationship between gods and mortals.

41 See *Anab.* 3.1.15–6, 3.1.43, 3.2.8–9, 6.5.21; Hutchinson (2000) 187–9, stresses the importance of piety and omens in the *Cyrop.*; Parker (2004) 143, highlights the role that omens and religion play in the soldier's morale.

42 The supremacy of the Greek troops is noted by Xenophon at *Anab.* 3.1.23.

43 See a similar reference about discipline in Xenophon's speech at *Anab.* 3.1.38.

44 For more information on the account of this battle see Anderson (1970) 171–2.

once with less military preparations on the Persian side than now (ὅτε ἐνικῶμεν ἐκείνους, πολὺ δὲ ἄμεινον σὺν θεοῖς παρεσκευάσαμεθα νῦν ἢ πρόσθεν, *Cyrop.* 6.2.14).⁴⁵ He further strengthens his argument about the inferiority of the enemies by claiming that they have cowards among their ranks at *Cyrop.* 6.2.19:

Κροῖσος μὲν ἤρηται τῶν πολεμίων στρατηγός, ὃς τοσοῦτω Σύρων κακίων ἐγένετο ὅσω Σύροι μὲν μάχη ἡττηθέντες ἔφυγον, Κροῖσος δὲ ἰδὼν ἡττημένους ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀρήγειν τοῖς συμμαχοῖς φεύγων ὤχετο

It is clear from the passage that Croesus is being accused of cowardice (κακίων ἐγένετο) as he decided not to help his allies, the Assyrians, in a time of need by retreating (ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀρήγειν τοῖς συμμαχοῖς... ὤχετο).⁴⁶ This significantly echoes Xenophon's effort to downgrade the strength of their enemies in his address to the whole Greek army after the execution of the generals (*Anab.* 3.2.7–32). Specifically, he also recalled the recent success of the Greeks at Cunaxa (*Anab.* 3.2.14) and the fact that there were cowards among the ranks of the enemies, who had evidently abandoned allies during a critical moment (*Anab.* 3.2.17).

It is going to be argued that speeches also played an important role in military planning. Speech deliveries generally facilitated decision-making with respect to important military matters in both the *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*. As it has been already noted, Xenophon had to communicate his strategies to the other generals and officers during the mercenary expedition, as there was not a sole commander for the Greeks after the execution of their leaders.⁴⁷ Interestingly, Cyrus the Great is presented doing the same, especially in his first steps as the commander-in-chief of the Persian army. The main reason according to Xenophon for Cyrus' tendency to communicate his strategies, even if he was the sole commander of his army, was that he sought validation and support from his uncle Cyaxares, who was king of the Medes and the most important ally of the Persians. In addition, as an advocate of willing obedience he tried to obtain support from the Persian nobility and other allies mainly through persuasion. It is particularly striking that a significant number of strategies in the *Cyropaedia* echo the *Anabasis*. More importantly most of the strategies in both of these works are presented in speeches, which are trying to convince the audience of their utility and their overall benefit for the army.

It will be also apparent through the examination of these speeches that Cyrus the Great echoes a significant number of Xenophon's characteristics as

45 The argument of the prior defeat is also used in the encouragement speech before the battle of Babylon at *Cyrop.* 7.5.20–1.

46 The defeat and Croesus involvement and eventual flight in the battle with the Assyrians is described in detail at *Cyrop.* 4.1.8–9.

47 See the discussion in the first section.

a commander.⁴⁸ The most important of which is their tendency for military innovations, their enthusiasm for cavalry, and their skilful deployment of tactics.⁴⁹ It is also indicative that both Xenophon and Cyrus the Great were accessible and interested in the opinions of others on military matters.⁵⁰ In the *Anabasis* anyone could approach Xenophon to discuss matters that concerned war (εἴ τις τι ἔχει τῶν πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον, *Anab.* 4.3.10. Similarly, Cyrus encouraged his officers to speak their minds with respect to proposed strategies, in case they knew something better (ἢ ῥᾶον ἡμῖν, διδασκέτω, *Cyrop.* 6.2.24).⁵¹ It is thus clear that Xenophon presents Cyrus as sharing with him the same attitude regarding military decision-making.

Speech deliveries had a crucial role in the materialisation of key military reforms by both Xenophon and Cyrus. We will first examine Xenophon's radical changes in tactics after the execution of the Greek leadership, namely during his first steps as one of the generals of the Greek army.

Xenophon's first tactical suggestion for the army was the formation of a hollow square by the hoplites during the march (πορεύεσθαι πλαίσιον ποιησαμένους τῶν ὀπλων, 3.236).⁵² He also presented the rationale behind this proposal, which was that the non-combatants and the baggage-train would benefit the most from the safety that the centre of this formation would provide (ἵνα τὰ σκευοφόρα καὶ ὁ πολὺς ὄχλος ἐν ἀσφαλεστέρῳ εἴη, 3.236).⁵³ He then carried on suggesting who was most suitable to be in charge of each side, providing explanations for each of his suggestions. For example, Chirisophus was the best option for the front-rank as a Spartan (Χειρίσοφος μὲν ἡγοῖτο, ἐπειδὴ καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἐστὶ, *Anab.* 3.2.37).⁵⁴ For Xenophon himself the rear-rank was the wiser choice as he was younger and more inexperienced (ὀπισθοφυλακοῦμεν δ' ἡμεῖς οἱ νεώτατοι ἐγὼ καὶ Τιμασίων, *Anab.* 3.2.37).⁵⁵ As it was later confirmed, no one

48 Hutchinson (2000) 183.

49 Another convergence between the two figures is their knowledge of the art of divination noted by Flower (2016) 110, based mainly on his reading of *Anab.* 5.6.29 and *Cyrop.* 1.6.2.

50 Hutchinson (2000) 68, notes the openness in their style of command.

51 For a similar stance from Xenophon see *Anab.* 3.2.38: εἰ δέ τις ἄλλο ὄρᾳ βέλτιον, λεξάτω.

52 For more information on the hollow square formation see Whitby (2004) 132–3.

53 It should also be taken into consideration that in this way the valuable provisions of the mercenary army would be safer in the center.

54 Xenophon's admiration for the Spartan supremacy in battle is evident primarily in his work dedicated to Sparta, the *Lakedemonion Politeia*. See especially *Lak. Pol.* 11.7–10; Anderson (1970) 96, notes that certain tactics in the *Cyrop.* reflect Spartan practice.

55 Xenophon was in charge of the rear-guard during the retreat and he had displayed their value in multiple occasions such as *Anab.* 3.30–34, 4.5.16; Anderson (1970) 175, notes that Cyrus the Great addressed the rear-rank before the battle of Thymbra noting that they are equally honorable with the front-rank.

disagreed with Xenophon's suggestions and his plan was approved (ἐπεὶ δ' οὐδεὶς ἀντέλεγεν, εἶπεν: ὅτω δοκεῖ ταῦτα, ἀνατεινᾶτω τὴν χεῖρα. ἔδοξε ταῦτα, *Anab.* 3.2.38). Thus, it is clear that Xenophon's speech, which provided details of the plan and emphasised the benefit of the proposed formation, aimed primarily at the approval of his suggestions by the other commanders. It should be noted that the execution of the plan would depend heavily on this approval as Xenophon was not the commander in chief of the army.

The deficiencies of the square formation quickly surfaced under the pressure of Tissaphernes' offensives with units of cavalry, archers, and slingers (*Anab.* 3.3.7). Xenophon presented the difficulties the rear-guard was facing along with a proposed solution at his speech to the army in *Anab.* 3.3.13–19. According to Xenophon the only way to keep the Persians at a distance from the Greek army during the march was the creation of a cavalry unit and slingers (εἰ μέλλομεν τούτους εἶργειν ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι βλάπτειν ἡμᾶς πορευομένους σφενδονητῶν τὴν ταχίστην δεῖ καὶ ἱπέων, *Anab.* 3.3.16).⁵⁶ He also elaborated on the logistical aspect to present the feasibility of the proposed solution to the army. Specifically, the Rhodians, who were familiar with the use of the sling, could enlist as slingers (*Anab.* 3.3.16). As far as the cavalry is concerned, the necessary horses could be gathered from those left by Clearchus and those captured and currently used as baggage animals (τούς δὲ τῶν Κλεάρχου καταλελειμμένους, πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ ἄλλους αἰχμαλώτους σκευοφοροῦντας, *Anab.* 3.3.19). It is thus clear that Xenophon quickly responded to the new circumstances with a well presented plan, which made the best use of the available resources to transform the phalanx into a highly effective military instrument through a speech.⁵⁷ As Hutchinson notes, the appearance of a cavalry force by the Greeks must have been a total surprise to the Persians.⁵⁸

We can now turn our attention to Cyrus the Great, who displayed a similar innovative character as the commander in chief of the Persian army. The two major reforms which were also presented in speeches were the creation of heavily-armed infantry and cavalry.

Cyrus' effort to create heavy infantry is described in his discussion with Cyaxares (*Cyrop.* 2.1.7–10). Cyrus was first informed about the number of the enemy forces and the type of units usually deployed by Cyaxares (*Cyrop.* 2.1.6–7).⁵⁹ Specifically, according to the Median king, the enemies would deploy mostly archers and

56 Anderson (1970)116, notes that the Greek mercenaries used auxiliary troops, such as cavalry and slingers, against the enemies efficiently. As Xenophon claims, this happened with his own initiative.

57 Wood (1964) 36, also underscores Xenophon's contribution to this effective military reform.

58 Hutchinson (2000) 73.

59 The approximate numbers of the Assyrians were mentioned at *Cyrop.* 2.1.6.

peltasts outnumbering the Persians and their allies, who were also about to use the same type of troops (τοξόται γάρ εἰσι καὶ ἀκοντισταὶ οἷ τ' ἐκείνων καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροι, *Cyrop.* 2.1.7).⁶⁰ Cyrus evaluated the circumstances acknowledging that if that were the case, defeat was most likely certain for their side, as their forces would get destroyed faster than their opponents (πολὺ γὰρ ἂν θᾶπτον οἱ ὀλίγοι ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν τιτρωσκόμενοι ἀναλωθείησαν, *Cyrop.* 2.1.8). He then presented to Cyaxares the only feasible solution, which was to equip the majority of the Persian army with heavy infantry equipment. That would be breastplates (θώραξ), a shield (γέρρον), and a close range weapon such as a curved blade (κοπίς) or an axe (σάγαρις, *Cyrop.* 2.1.9).⁶¹ The equipment would enable the Persians to fight at close quarters with the enemy and force them to retreat (τοῖς πολεμίοις δὲ τὸ φεύγειν ἢ τὸ μένειν αἰρετώτερον, *Cyrop.* 2.1.9). According to Hutchinson, Cyrus usually planned as a tactician adapting to circumstances, while trying to secure a strategic advantage for his army.⁶²

It should be noted that it was necessary for Cyrus to persuade Cyaxares for the future success of the plan as only the king of the Medes had the available resources to materialise the plan, and this speech with the details certainly seems to have facilitated this endeavour. As is confirmed by Xenophon in the next paragraph, Cyaxares approved the plan and ordered the construction of the aforementioned equipment (τῷ δὲ Κυαξάρῃ ἔδοξέ τε εὖ λέγειν, *Cyrop.* 2.1.10). It should also be taken into consideration that the efficiency of the heavy infantry in battles against lightly-armed troops, which was the main premise behind Cyrus' plan in this case, most likely reflects Xenophon's own experience, who witnessed the success of the phalanx against the lightly-armed troops of the Persians at Cunaxa.⁶³

The second innovation was the creation of Persian cavalry. According to Nadon, this was a rather radical military reform for the Persians.⁶⁴ Cyrus perceived the lack

60 Peltasts and archers were both units that threw missiles from a distance. For more information on this particular type of javelin throwers see Anderson (1970) 113–4.

61 This was the equipment of the Persian nobility according to Xenophon at *Cyrop.* 2.1.9: οἷ ἄπτερ ἔχοντες ἔρχονται παρ' ἡμῶν οἱ τῶν ὁμοτίμων. However, this type of military equipment significantly echoes the type of weapons and protective equipment used by the Greek hoplite. For more information on Greek hoplite equipment see Cartledge (1977) 13–15.

62 Hutchinson (2000) 200; See also *Cyrop.* 1.6.35: διδάσκειν ὅπως πλεονεκτήσω ἐγὼ τῶν πολεμίων. It was mainly supported that a good general would engage a battle only if has secured a strategic advantage for his army.

63 For the success of the Greek mercenaries at the battle of Cunaxa see *Anab.* 1.8.19–20: οἱ βάρβαροι καὶ φεύγουσι. καὶ ἐνταῦθα δὴ ἐδίωκον μὲν κατὰ κράτος οἱ Ἕλληνες. However, the deficiencies of the phalanx during the retreat and especially in mountainous terrains such as that of the Carduchians were also emphasised. See for example *Anab.* 4.1.14–18; Hutchinson (2000) 21, argues that much of the *Cyrop.* is based on Xenophon's first-hand knowledge.

64 Nadon (2001) 101, also notes a resemblance with Xenophon's innovations.

of cavalry as the most important deficiency of his army and decided to address the subject in a speech to his high-rank officers (*Cyrop.* 4.3.4–15).⁶⁵ The main problem, according to Cyrus' speech, was that the Persians could not capitalise on their victories without cavalry. He also elaborated on the reason behind this claim at *Cyrop.* 4.3.5:

ποίους ἢ ἱππέας ἢ τοξότας ἢ πελταστὰς ἄνευ ἵππων ὄντες δυναίμεθ' ἂν
φεύγοντας ἢ λαβεῖν ἢ κατακανεῖν;

It is clear from the passage that the Persians could not capture or kill (λαβεῖν ἢ κατακανεῖν) a significant amount of enemies without cavalry (ἄνευ ἵππων). It should be noted that the Persians depended heavily on their allies, the Medes and Hyrcanians in particular, for cavalry support.⁶⁶ Cyrus' plan was aspiring to make the Persian army self-sufficient (ἄρκοῖμεν ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς, *Cyrop.* 4.3.7) something that, as argued in the speech, was undeniably beneficial to the Persians (*Cyrop.* 4.3.8).⁶⁷

Cyrus then presented the details of the plan and reassured the audience about the feasibility of the proposed change. Specifically, according to Cyrus, the creation of a Persian cavalry was something logistically possible since there was an abundance of captured horses with reins in their camp (πολλοὶ ἐν τῷ στρατοπέδῳ κατελιημμένοι καὶ χαλινοὶ, *Cyrop.* 4.3.9). In addition, most of the Persian foot soldiers were already equipped with the breastplates necessary for cavalry (θώρακας μὲν ...ἔχοντες χρώμεθ' ἂν, *Cyrop.* 4.3.9). Most importantly, there were men willing to enlist and learn the art of horsemanship (δῆλον ὅτι ἀνδρῶν δεῖ. οὐκοῦν τοῦτο μάλιστα ἔχομεν, *Cyrop.* 4.3.10). It should be noted that the fruition of such a plan demanded a certain degree of devotion by his officers and soldiers, who would have to train vigorously to master the new art. Thus, this well-presented speech by Xenophon's Cyrus, seems more than necessary for the occasion to evoke the necessary degree of eagerness in the officers. This part is, of course, highly reminiscent of Xenophon's own plan to create a cavalry unit in order to facilitate the retreat of the Greek force.⁶⁸ One can observe that there is a similar effort to persuade the audience about the benefit of the plan for the army

65 Specifically the addressees were the commanders (ταξίαρχους) at *Cyrop.* 4.3.3.

66 See *Cyrop.* 4.1.19–21, where Cyrus argues to Cyaxares why he should support the Persian forces with his cavalry.

67 The lack of self-sufficiency with respect to cavalry was mentioned at *Cyrop.* 4.3.4: μη αὐτάρκεις ὄντες.

68 Nadon (2001) 62, notes that Cyrus the Great often proposed similar changes in tactics with Xenophon.

and its feasibility. It is indicative that both plans involved the utilisation of already available resources, such as captured horses.⁶⁹

We can now turn our attention to the other military decisions, which were introduced through speeches in both the *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia* and echo one another significantly. These were the disposal of unnecessary baggage and the deployment of the slowest unit at the front during night marches.

Xenophon argued in his address to the whole army after the execution of the Greek leadership (*Anab.* 3.2.7–32), that they should dispose of all the unnecessary baggage at *Anab.* 3.2.27–8:

πρῶτον μὲν τοίνυν, ἔφη, δοκεῖ μοι κατακαῦσαι τὰς ἀμάξας ἃς ἔχομεν, ἵνα μὴ τὰ ζεύγη ἡμῶν στρατηγῆ, ἀλλὰ πορευώμεθα ὅπη ἂν τῆ στρατιᾷ συμφέρη: ἔπειτα καὶ τὰς σκηναὶς συγκατακαῦσαι. αὗται γὰρ αὖ ὄχλον μὲν παρέχουσιν ἄγειν, συνωφελοῦσι δ' οὐδὲν οὔτε εἰς τὸ μάχεσθαι οὔτ' εἰς τὸ τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἔχειν. ἔτι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων σκευῶν τὰ περιττὰ ἀπαλλάξωμεν πλὴν ὅσα πολέμου ἕνεκεν ἢ σίτων ἢ ποτῶν ἔχομεν, ἵνα ὡς πλεῖστοι μὲν ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις ᾤσιν, ὡς ἐλάχιστοι δὲ σκευοφορῶσι.

It is clear from the passage that according to Xenophon the disposal of the wagons (τὰς ἀμάξας) would enable the Greeks to advance through different terrains following the best possible route (πορευώμεθα ὅπη ἂν τῆ στρατιᾷ συμφέρη).⁷⁰ It was also suggested to abandon all other superfluous baggage (τὰ περιττὰ ἀπαλλάξωμεν). These would most likely have included spoils of war. Consequently, a degree of persuasion was required for the men to dispose some of their hard-earned gains. Xenophon's main focus in this part of the speech was to display the benefit of maximising the Greek army's mobility and fighting capacity (πλεῖστοι μὲν ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις).⁷¹

Interestingly, this military decision is echoed in the *Cyropaedia* where Cyrus argues about the disposal of unnecessary weight. Specifically, at *Cyrop.* 6.2.30 we read:

καὶ τὸ τῶν στρωμάτων δὲ βάρος εἰς τὰπιτήδεια καταδαπανᾶτε: τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιτήδεια περιττεύοντα οὐκ ἄχρηστα ἔσται...

69 See the discussion above and *Anab.* 3.3.19.

70 Huitink and Rood (2019) on 3.2.28 note that this would increase both the maneuverability and the fighting force of the Greek army.

71 It should also be taken into consideration that less baggage-carriers would mean more armed soldiers in formation and consequently more chances of survival.

According to Cyrus, the weight of the army's mattresses should be replaced with provisions, as they were significantly more necessary (οὐκ ἄχρηστα ἔσται). It is thus clear that Xenophon's ideal commander often highlights why something is important for the army and what was required by the subordinates, since in this way they would carry out the orders more efficiently.

This article has sought to display the practical aspects of the speeches in Xenophon's effective military leadership. While Xenophon surely benefits of the advantages of the speeches as a literary device, his decision to include a significant amount of speeches in his war-related works such as the *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia* superseded their convenience as a literary device and is also a statement for their practical function in a military context.⁷² It has been argued that Xenophon sets speech deliveries as one more criterion for successful military leadership, since they did not only facilitate but were also necessary for the aspects of the ideal military command under examination. The role of the speeches was critical for the encouragement of the troops in both the *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*. As it has been demonstrated this was mainly possible by highlighting the superiority of the addressed troops and the inferiority of the opposing army in various aspects, the most important of which were their training, physical supremacy, courage, and divine support.

Speech deliveries also facilitated military decision-making by presenting the logistical requirements and the expected benefits to the officers and the army. It has been demonstrated that both Xenophon and Cyrus had to communicate their strategies to achieve the materialisation of their plans. Xenophon had to cooperate with the other officers and generals as there was, for the most part, a lack of a sole commander during the Greek expedition and this experience most likely contributed to Xenophon's perception of speeches as an invaluable tool for every commander. Similarly, Cyrus is presented depending heavily, especially during his first steps as the commander in chief of the Persian army, on his allies, whose aid was necessary for the fruition of the majority of his plans.

Overall, it is evident in the light of the present article that it is wrong to assume that the employment of speeches in the case of Xenophon was a mere literary decision. It can be safely argued that for Xenophon effective speeches deliveries were a prerequisite for successful military leadership.

72 Baragwanath (2017) 284–7, presents some major advantages of Xenophon's speeches as a literary device.

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