

WORK IN PROGRESS ON XENOPHON'S LANGUAGE

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The standard work on Xenophon's language, written by Gautier in 1911, built on a strong tradition of interest in Xenophon's language from earlier centuries.¹ The interest never completely died, but Xenophon is beginning to figure again in the revival of interest in grammar as interpretation.² Perhaps the time has come for a new overall look at his language as the basis of interpretation of his work. Various received modern opinions about his language also need dispelling, for instance that *Anabasis* is the beginner's text because of the ease of its Greek, when in fact that text is not easy for beginners; or that Xenophon's prose is in the plain style: 'artless', when it is as artful as any other ancient writer's.

The earlier knowledge is also in danger of being lost. Gautier had shown that Xenophon frequently uses rare words – at a very high rate throughout his works, but a recent article published in a premier journal did not take that into account. It was investigating Xenophon's account of Prodicus' lecture, the so-called 'Choice of Heracles' in *Memorabilia* 2.1.³ It asked how much we could glean of the original of Prodicus from Xenophon's account – since we have nothing of Prodicus' original left, and a central argument was that where Xenophon was using vocabulary he did not use elsewhere, he was retaining the words of the original Prodicus. Gautier had not got through.

My remarks on Xenophon's rare vocabulary in this conference paper arise from my response to that article and are part of a larger project on his language.⁴ My purpose is to categorize some of his uses of rare words and explain their significance in the interpretation of their contexts.⁵

Category 1

One category that is emerging from preliminary studies is that Xenophon often uses rare words to extend his range of synonyms and antonyms in balances that enhance

¹ Gautier (1911). Gautier was intent on challenging the designation of Xenophon's unusual vocabulary as 'poetic', defining it instead as dialectal, and seeing these dialectical forms as the natural result of his life spent abroad. However, he did not always explain why Xenophon chose to use such words when, often, he had Attic equivalents to hand and used them also elsewhere. I pursue the contextual approach and propose reasons for usage rather than merely observing that rare words are just 'in his vocabulary', dialectical or otherwise. Gautier was right to say that Xenophon's usages often seem inexplicable, but further examination is profitable, and some of Gautier's brief remarks about contexts are not among his strongest. I record my thanks here to Doug Kelly at the conference for detecting an over-translated 'blooper' in my presentation, and to John Melville-Jones for comments on the style of the extracts in the hand-out.

² See Bakker (1997), e.g., Sicking and Stork. But Xenophon can still be passed over without comment, for instance in Bakker (2010), in Bers' chapter on prose writing.

³ Sansone (2004).

⁴ See my response: Gray (2006).

⁵ Some categories are not discussed here, such as his scientific vocabulary. Suffice to say that the rare scientific words he uses arise because he is among the first extant writers of technical treatises, such as the training and care of horses and hounds in *Hipparchicus*, *de re equestri* and *Cynegeticus*, and the art of farming in *Oeconomicus*. The authors that share his technical vocabularies include the Hippocratics, Aristotle, Galen.

his meaning.⁶ For instance, at *Memorabilia* 4.3.3 he uses the rare ἀναπαυτήριον as a synonym for ἀνάπαυσις, both of them referring to ‘rest’: Ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ἀναπαύσεώς γε δεομένοις ἡμῖν νύκτα παρέχουσι κάλλιστον ἀναπαυτήριον. There is no occurrence of this word before Xenophon and no subsequent occurrence until the fourth century AD.⁷ The question arises whether this word was in the oral tradition and just happens not to have made it into the literary record before Xenophon, or whether Xenophon has coined it. At the moment I do not have any answers to this. Nor can I yet say how different the rare word sounded to the ancient audience – except in terms of the reactions of characters in the contexts, which are often valuable indicators (see below).

The context for this rare word for ‘rest’ is a conversation in which Socrates is explaining to Euthydemus how the gods serve the needs of mankind in their design of the world, and how men should show their gratitude for that in respect and sacrifice. He explains first in a long list of benefits how they gave the light of day for men to see, and the night-time for rest. The early placement of the commoner word for rest introduces the new topic and the repetition through the rare word reinforces it. We could go further. We find below that the rare word often enhances literary ‘charm’ in passages with charming subject matter. And here we notice that Euthydemus’ reply to Socrates’ description of how the gods give the night-time to men for rest, which he makes immediately after the rare word, is Πάνυ γ’, ἔφη, καὶ τοῦτο χάριτος ἄξιον: ‘this is worthy of gratitude too’. Since the word for gratitude is also the word for that stylistic ‘charm’, we could take the character’s remark as a comment on the charm of the rare word, which we might translate as ‘chamber of rest’, indicating a physical space like other words of this ending (*bouleuterion*, *ergasterion*), and also as a comment on the charm of what it expresses. Socrates signals this charm when he calls this rest ‘most beautiful’. Pindar *Nem.* 7.52 had also said that rest from any work is ‘sweet’: ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἀνάπαυσις ἐν παντὶ γλυκεῖα ἔργω.

Rare words are also found in Xenophon’s definitions of leadership. In one instance, Socrates is describing the contrary qualities that the good manager must possess, and while searching for the opposite quality of the brigand who ‘grasps’ his victim’s goods at *Memorabilia* 3.1.6, Xenophon invents or finds προετικός for the quality of ‘letting go’: the leader must be καὶ φιλόφρονά τε καὶ ὤμόν, καὶ ἀπλοῦν τε καὶ ἐπίβουλον, καὶ φυλακτικόν τε καὶ κλέπτην, καὶ προετικόν καὶ ἄρπαγα καὶ φιλόδωρον καὶ πλεονέκτην καὶ ἀσφαλῆ καὶ ἐπιθετικόν, ‘kindly and savage, open and secretive, a guardian and thief, a letter-go and a grabber, a lover of giving and a grasper, a safe pair of hands and ready on the attack’. [Plato] and Aristotle use this word after Xenophon, and none before him. We have to think quite hard about the implications of ‘letting go’, which is one effect of the rare word; the spurious *Definitiones* attributed to Plato provides the appropriate answer.⁸

⁶ I start with this category because Gautier (1911) 118-26 recognizes such pairs as part of Xenophon’s style, and notes that they sometimes involve rare words, which he says come from dialect. See also pp. 145-49 in his ‘Appendice’.

⁷ At this preliminary stage I am using the *TLG* and Perseus and the Packard Humanities Institute epigraphic data bases. Xenophon’s rare words might occur in papyrus and other documents not in these data bases, but given the large numbers of rare words in the categories I am developing, it would be surprising if a substantial number turned up in other unchecked forms of documentation. Herodotus 1.181 once uses the syncopated adjectival form ἀπαυστήριοι of beds, but the rareness of ἀναπαυτήριον seems confirmed by the commoner usage of *anapausis* in most other authors.

⁸ He defines love of honour as ‘the condition of letting go of all expense without calculation’: Φιλοτιμία ἕξις ψυχῆς προετικῆ πάσης δαπάνης ἄνευ λογισμοῦ.

Memorabilia 3.4.11 in another elaborately balanced comment on the ideal leader, pairs λυσιτελής with the quite rare ἀλυσιτελής, and κερδαλέον with the very rare ζημιώδες in order to contrast the profit in victory and loss in defeat:

ὁ γὰρ ἀγαθὸς οἰκονόμος, εἰδὼς ὅτι οὐδὲν οὕτω λυσιτελὲς τε καὶ κερδαλέον ἐστίν, ὡς τὸ μαχόμενον τοὺς πολεμίους νικᾶν, οὐδὲ οὕτως ἀλυσιτελὲς τε καὶ ζημιώδες, ὡς τὸ ἡττᾶσθαι, προθύμως μὲν τὰ πρὸς τὸ νικᾶν συμφέροντα ζητήσῃ καὶ παρασκευάσεται, ἐπιμελῶς δὲ τὰ πρὸς τὸ ἡττᾶσθαι φέροντα σκέπεται καὶ φυλάσσεται, ἐνεργῶς δ' ἂν τὴν παρασκευὴν ὄρᾳ νικητικὴν οὔσαν, μαχεῖται, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ τούτων, ἔαν ἀπαρασκευοῦς ᾖ, φυλάσσεται συνάπτειν μάχην.

We see again, as in the earlier example, the rare words working within the antithesis and anaphora of the sentence structure to enhance the thought, this time about victory and defeat. The equally rare νικητικὴν also serves to focus on the idea of the victory.⁹

Another example involving word play in the pairing of opposites is the description of a well-fitting corselet as ‘not a burden, but a natural attachment’ (to get the play on words: not something you ‘carry’, but something that is ‘married’ to your person), from *Memorabilia* 3.10.13: οὐ φορήματι, ἀλλὰ προσθήματι εἰκόασιν. Φόρημα occurs previously in the poets, but not in prose writers. Πρόσθημα occurs once in Euripides, once in Plato, once in Hippocrates.¹⁰ There is a possibility of technical language here when the topic is industrial production, but the main effect is the economical way the pairing captures the quality of the armour that is well made for its purpose, and the startling ‘drag’ it can be if it does not fit.

Xenophon has the son of Pericles use another rare word: ἀτηρία for ‘pain and suffering’ at *Memorabilia* 3.5.17: ἐξ ὧν πολλὴ μὲν ἀτηρία καὶ κακία τῇ πόλει ἐμφύεται, πολλὴ δὲ ἔχθρα καὶ μῖσος ἀλλήλων τοῖς πολίταις ἐγγίγνεται. This word has a wholly poetic heritage, and since civil suffering is an emotional idea, it may elevate or heighten the effect.¹¹ The sentence again shows the usual balancing of synonymous verbs for the double ruin that comes to the whole city and its citizens, and the pairs of synonymous nouns then double the ruin to the group and the set of individuals.

In cases like these, Xenophon invents or imports words that assist his antithetical thought with their precision, or reinforce his thought by saying the same thing in two ways, one of them likely to strike the reader as different and deserving attention. His use of rare alpha privatives makes a category on its own here, for instance in the Choice of Heracles, *Memorabilia* 2.1.31: τοῦ δὲ πάντων ἡδίστου ἀκούσματος, ἐπαίνου σεαυτῆς, ἀνήκοος εἶ, καὶ τοῦ πάντων ἡδίστου θεάματος ἀθέατος: ‘Unseeing of the sweetest spectacle’ refers to the failure by the woman who represents the life of indulgence to produce ‘any fine achievement’ on which she or others may gaze.

Related to this category, consider the pairing of the poetic words φραστήρ and ὀπτήρ. Xenophon uses the former for the first time in prose (among the poets, Aeschylus, *Supp.* 492 in a similar context uses a not so very different form: ὀπάοντας δὲ φράστορας τ' ἐγχωρίων Ξύπεμψον) and it is not used again until Philo. The latter is found in Homer and the poets and in the oddly poetic Antiphon.¹² Xenophon has

⁹ This word is found only in Alexis the comic poet and then later in Polybius. The PHI data base finds one use of the word, in square brackets, from an inscription from Mysia.

¹⁰ The PHI data base reveals one use of *prosthema* in an inscription from Attica.

¹¹ Plato in *Cratylus* 395b4 says that the name of Atreus advertises his nature as one who is full of ‘suffering and ruin in respect of virtue’: πάντα ταῦτα ζημιώδη καὶ ἀτηρὰ πρὸς ἀρετήν. He discusses the word again at 417-18.

¹² Gautier (1911) 43-47 tries to establish that words with this ending are rare in Attic, but are Dorisms rather than Ionic dialect. He simply lists these two. Again my interest is not in what they are but in the rare forms and why they are used where they are used.

Cyrus the Great use the words together at *Cyropaedia* 4.5.17 in another artfully balanced phrase: πεμψάντων δὲ καὶ ὀπτήρας ὧν πράττομεν καὶ φραστήρας ὧν ἐρωτῶμεν, ‘let them send witnesses of what we do and revealers of what we ask’. The context is that Cyrus is fighting away from home and is sending home for reinforcements. He asks those back home to send people to see what he has been doing (he has had great success) so that they will know that the reinforcements are deserved. The memorable combination of two unusual words is made more memorable by its balanced phrasing and some alliteration. This language is directing us to a matter of importance, and that seems to be the characterization of Cyrus as one who is confident in his success and wishes to open his request to full inspection: that once they see what he has achieved, they will take his request back to Persia and endorse it.¹³

Category 2

The use of the rare word for ‘playmates’ in *Cyropaedia* 1.3.14, συμπαίστορες, introduces us to another interesting category.¹⁴ Here Astyages, the Median grandfather of the young Cyrus the Great, is trying to seduce his beloved grandson into living with him in Media rather than returning to his native Persia, and he offers him whatever he wants as an enticement to staying. To paraphrase and summarise his speech, he says: ‘You can have access to me whenever you want, you can have my horse and as many other horses as you like, the kinds of meals you want, the kinds of animals you want to hunt. You can hunt and shoot them like the grown-ups, and I’ll give you boys as playmates, and whatever else you list for me, you will not fail to get’: καὶ παῖδας δέ σοι ἐγὼ συμπαίστορας παρέξω, καὶ ἄλλα ὅποσα ἂν βούλη λέγων πρὸς ἐμὲ οὐκ ἀτυχήσεις.

Xenophon could have used the regular combination of the article and participle for playmates (those who play: the verbal form is not rare), but he has chosen the rare noun, which does not occur before and not again until Gregory the Nazarene.¹⁵ One likely reason is that the rare word captures his famous literary ‘charm’. Demetrius *de elocutione* 139ff. defines this charm as a special literary effect of writing. He defines the subject matter that is a source of charm as male love affairs, weddings, playfulness, humour, anything in short that gives delight. He also defines the linguistic ways in which to express this charm and he frequently illustrates it from Xenophon (131, 134, 137, 139, 155). One of the sources of linguistic charm was the rare word. Demetrius 144 uses an example from Aristotle:

Καὶ ἐξ ἰδιωτικοῦ δὲ ὀνόματος γίνεται, ὡς ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, ὅσω γὰρ, φησί, μονώτης εἰμί, φιλομυθότερος γέγονα. καὶ ἐκ πεποιημένου, ὡς ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ: ὅσω γὰρ αὐτίτης καὶ μονώτης εἰμί, φιλομυθότερος γέγονα. τὸ μὲν γὰρ μονώτης ἰδιωτικωτέρου ἔθους ἤδη ἐστί, τὸ δὲ αὐτίτης πεποιημένον ἐκ τοῦ αὐτός.

And [charm] comes from the unusual word, as Aristotle when he says: ‘The more solitary I am, the more I become a lover of stories’; and it also comes from a word new-coined, as in the same example ...

¹³ Xenophon uses φραστήρ again at 5.4.40, where he appoints Gadatas as φραστέρα of the roads and waters and fodder that Cyrus needs for his army because he is a native of the region, and then when he says that ‘as scouts and revealers/answerers of the way, they showed everything’: σκοποὶ γὰρ καὶ φραστήρες τῆς ὁδοῦ πάντ’ ἐδήλουν.

¹⁴ Gautier (1911) 77 says that συμπαίκτηρ is Dorian dialect, and that our word is a variant of it, but he does not explain the reasons for its use in this context.

¹⁵ Aristophanes *Frogs* 411, with equal invention, refers to a lovely girl as συμπαιστρία, a hapax feminine form, and another hapax συμπαιστήν occurs in [Plato]’s *Minos*.

(where Demetrius includes another unusual word for 'solitary' that is coined from 'self').

In explaining the rare word 'playmate' as a source of charm, we note that the topic of play is itself one of the sources of charm, and that Xenophon also found special charm in young boys, which he conveys for instance in the stories that focus on the delightful kiss of a young boy.¹⁶ The idea of playmates is charming then because it involves play and young boys.¹⁷ We have a preliminary sign of the charm, I think, in the grandfather's reference to his ability to hunt 'like the grown-ups', ὡςπερ οἱ μεγάλοι ἄνδρες.

We go to another rare word in one of those 'kiss stories' for a comparison that confirms how Xenophon uses the rare word to convey charm. Here the rare word occurs within a cluster of other features of charm in a story that is charming from beginning to end. The context of *Cyropaedia* 1.4.27-8 is when his relatives are taking their leave of this same young Cyrus who was enticed to stay by his grandfather, after a few years of playmates. He is no longer a boy, but a beautiful youth. The central focus is his kiss, a charming thing, and his beauty, also charming. His Persian relatives kiss him farewell because it is their custom, but his Median relatives do not know the custom. One Median relative, who has a secret passion for Cyrus, introduces himself as a relative, receives the kiss as recognition of his kinship, and seeks to have the kiss explained. Cyrus explains that relatives kiss each other on parting and on meeting up again. The Median then asks for another kiss, since after meeting him for the first kiss, he is now about to leave him. Kiss number two takes place, and off he goes. But very soon he is back, on a sweating horse, Xenophon's clichéd sign of great speed. To paraphrase: 'Have you forgotten something?' says Cyrus. 'No, but I'm returning after a time of separation and how about a kiss?' 'Not a very long separation, I think', says young Cyrus. 'Oh yes,' says the relative, 'because even the time it takes to blink my eye, that is a separation from the sight of you that is all too long': ὅτι καὶ ὅσον σκαρδαμύττω χρόνον, πάνυ πολὺς μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι. The verb is unknown before Xenophon (Aristophanes, *Knights*, 292 uses the adjectival form) and combines the charming topic of humour with love.

Cyrus in response laughs through his tears; he has been crying because he is leaving his relatives, but the humour breaks the sorrow of leaving his family. Demetrius recognises laughing through tears as a charming idea in Homer, and it continues in Xenophon.¹⁸ Cyrus then ends the conversation with a punch-line, telling his relative that they will not be apart for long, so that in a very short time he can see him if he wishes 'even without blinking an eye': ὥστε ὄρᾶν ἐξέσται κἄνβούληται ἄσκαρδαμυκτί. The word is the climax of the story and the joke, and it is the adverbial form, which is even rarer than the verb. Xenophon uses it one other time in *Symposium*, again in the context of the lover's obsessive gaze: 4.25. It is rare in authors before him, occurring once in Aristophanes and then later in the medical writers of medical conditions. Love is a pathological condition and suits a medical vocabulary, if the word is coming from that scientific tradition.

¹⁶ See the story of Megabates in *Agesilaus* 5.4-7 and of Cyrus in *Cyropaedia* below.

¹⁷ This is the charm of Anacreon's poem about the old man with the white hair being challenged to 'play ball with a girl' by the god with the golden hair: *PMG* f.13 σφαίρηι δηῦτέ με πορφυρήι βάλλων χρυσοκόμης Ἔρωσ νήνι ποικιλοσαμβάλωι συμπαίζειν προκαλεῖται.

¹⁸ *Iliad* 6.484. Gautier (1911) p. 154 comments on the equally rare κλαυσίγελωσ at *Hell.* 7.2.9, where men and their wives weep in relief when they have driven the enemy back from their walls. Demetrius also notes the charm of the relief that follows fear.

Here then the rare word describing the gaze of love is chosen to achieve literary ‘charm’, and so it is with the ‘playmates’ in the earlier example. The charm in that case conveys the charm of the speaker, Cyrus’ grandfather, and may assist the inter-textual allusions that have been recognised between Xenophon’s portrait of Astyages in *Cyropaedia*, and Herodotus’ portrait in the *Histories*. Xenophon’s Astyages has a charming way about him with his grandson, but Herodotus’ Astyages was no friend of young boys; he cooked Harpagus’ son and served him up to his father, head and hands last (1.119); and that was in punishment for Harpagus’ failure to carry out his instructions to kill young Cyrus, whom he indulges so charmingly in Xenophon. We also note that when Cyrus does have playmates in Herodotus, he is playing a game in which he whips them, as a premonition of the ruler he will become as an adult (1.114); Xenophon’s Cyrus has more friendly relations with his playmates.

Xenophon found charm in heterosexual love as well. The rare word, with a largely poetic heritage, enhances this in *Memorabilia* 3.11.10, when the ‘body’ σῶμα of the courtesan Theodote is said to ‘cling close and wrap around’ her clients: περιπλέκειν.¹⁹ The charm is there already in the subject matter of love and beauty: the courtesan’s beauty is described at the beginning of the anecdote as beggaring description, and the rare word reflects the very heart of her occupation. Demetrius speaks also of the charm of the unexpected and of imagery, and this is relevant because the word turns out also to be part of a metaphor of hunting, which Theodote herself in character finds unexpected. In describing her occupation, Socrates tells her that she finds ways of driving her clients into her ‘nets’, and she says ‘What do you mean by nets?’ He replies that her body is the net in question, because she ‘closes around’ the victim in an embrace; her question makes it clear that the image is strange.²⁰ This image also captures the charm of Socrates’ paradoxical combination of seriousness through play. Throughout this conversation with the courtesan Socrates is analyzing the serious notion of the knowledge she has of ‘friendship’, and this culminates at the end of the conversation when Theodote is in pursuit of Socrates for the serious wisdom she now knows he has about friendship, and he jokes about being happy to see her any time as long as he is not engaged with his own clients – who are of course the philosophers.²¹

Category 3

Xenophon’s philosophical works turn up a few interesting examples of rare words. *Memorabilia* 4.6.12 has Socrates define the range of constitutions by the identity of the ruling group: καὶ ὅπου μὲν ἐκ τῶν τὰ νόμιμα ἐπιτελούντων αἱ ἀρχαὶ καθίστανται, ταύτην μὲν τὴν πολιτείαν ἀριστοκρατίαν ἐνόμιζεν εἶναι, ὅπου δ’ ἐκ τιμημάτων, πλουτοκρατίαν, ὅπου δ’ ἐκ πάντων, δημοκρατίαν. Socrates seems to have invented a

¹⁹ The word is found in Homer, and the PHI data base reveals one Homeric ‘embracing’ in the grave. Alcman F. 13b uses ἐμπεριπλέκει. Leucippus, Fragment 1 line 5 and other earlier philosophers frequently use it to describe the creation of the world from the intertwining of atoms; πᾶν εἶναι κενὸν καὶ πλήρες σωμάτων. τοὺς τε κόσμους γίνεσθαι σωμάτων εἰς τὸ κενὸν ἐμπίπτοντων καὶ ἀλλήλοις περιπλεκόμενων: ‘Everything is void and full of bodies, Worlds are created when the bodies fall into the void and wind themselves around each other.’

²⁰ Familiarity with Ibycus’ poem about how the god of love drives him unwillingly into the nets of the Cyprian goddess (*PMG* f. 6: Ἔρος αὐτὲ με κυανέοισιν ὑπὸ βλεφάροις τακέρ’ ὄμμασι δερκόμενος κηλίμασι παντοδαποῖς ἐς ἄπειρα δίκτυα Κύπριδος ἐσβάλλει) would make this image much less unusual than it seems to be to Theodote, but then she might not have read such poems, or had forgotten it for the moment.

²¹ Gautier (1911) 95 of the rare ἄγρευμα in the same passage says that this poetic word ‘generally indicates Socrates’ ironic intention’; which is rather vague.

new type of constitution because *πλουτοκρατία* is attested elsewhere only in Menander the rhetor of the fourth century AD (Spengel p. 359-60), and he is directly discussing the various terms used for constitutions. Not even Aristotle uses this term, though he also identifies constitutions through ruling groups.

At *Memorabilia* 2.6.21 Xenophon has Socrates use *διχογνωμόνῃ* in a discussion of *homonoia* or civic unity: *τά τε γὰρ αὐτὰ καλὰ καὶ ἡδέα νομίζοντες ὑπὲρ τούτων μάχονται καὶ διχογνωμονοῦντες ἐναντιοῦνται*: 'thinking the same things fine and lovely, they fight over them and oppose one another with split opinions'. The wider context is a discussion about the conflicting political tendencies in good and virtuous men toward competition on the one hand and co-operation on the other. The rare word deftly captures their state of mind when in competition and reinforces the more normal words for 'fighting' and 'opposing'.²²

Category 4

There is finally the category of the rare word from epic poetry that imposes a heroic dimension. Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* has been read as an epic in prose, with Cyrus as a kind of Achilles, and his uncle Cyaxares as an Agamemnon. They certainly have a quarrel, and there is great wrath from Cyaxares in the story of their relations. In this case, words rare in prose seem to put the characters on a par with the heroes.

Cyropaedia 4.5.9 uses a poetic word of Cyaxares' anger when his followers desert him because of his lack of personal appeal as a leader and lack of achievement: *ἐνταῦθα δὴ ἐβριμοῦτό τε τῷ Κύρῳ καὶ τοῖς Μήδοις τῷ καταλιπόντας αὐτὸν ἔρημον*. This verb occurs in Aristophanes once, Corinna once and many later authors. Homer *Iliad* 15.327, in a grand description of how Hector attacked the ships, uses *ἐμβρέμεται* of the gales at seas, which frighten the sailors, in a simile of the savagery of Hector's onslaught. Xenophon's word is of a different formation, but the savagery of Cambyses' anger is like the onslaught of Hector's terrifying gales. Yet Cambyses is not a hero like Hector. His anger does not drive him to attack the ships or perform any of the usual heroics – he merely sends an abusive letter to his followers, telling them to return at once or else. He is epic only in his anger and his threat, not in any action, and this undercuts the heroic impression.²³ The same can be said of the characterization of Cyaxares in another epic phrase at *Cyropaedia* 5.5.6, where Xenophon says that when, having failed to get his followers back with his abusive letter, he saw Cyrus coming to meet him with a much larger following than his own, 'anguish seized him': *ἄχος αὐτὸν ἔλαβεν*. Homer uses *ἄχος ἔλλαβεν* as a formula. There is another undercutting effect here, because the anguish arises from his own inability to attract the following that would make him worthy of the epic sentiment of anguish.²⁴

Xenophon's rare words fall into categories. He reaches out to them for balanced pairs to reinforce his meaning, working within elaborate sentence structures to achieve that. He makes them a feature of his literary charm, in deliberate combination with other sources of charm. Sometimes he pioneers concepts in philosophical

²² Iamblichus uses the word in his discussion of *homonoia*: IAMBL. Ep. Περὶ ὁμονοίας [Stob. II 33, 15] ὑφ' ἑνὸς μὲν γὰρ τις νοήματος καὶ μιᾶς γνώμης κυβερνώμενος ὁμονοεῖ πρὸς ἑαυτόν, διχογνωμονῶν δὲ πρὸς ἑαυτόν καὶ ἀνόμοια λογιζόμενος διαστασιάζει.

²³ Gautier (1911) 86, in denying that rare words occur in elevated passages involving passion, simply lists this word as another case where there is no 'poetic' intent.

²⁴ Gautier (1911) 101 recognizes the poetry, but not the epic tone to it – Cyaxares is behaving like a child, he says, making an epic tone inappropriate; but the undercutting of the epic phrase in this non-heroic context is just the point.

thought. At other times the words are made use of for their epic qualities, to deconstruct heroic images. He may have had such words as part of his natural vocabulary, but he seems to use them for deliberate artistic effect and meaning rather than simply because he had them at hand.

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