
"It seems at times that too little attention is paid to [the Cyropaedia] as a literary composition in its own right." So G. in the first paragraph of her preface (p. vii). This was almost certainly true when G. began the Oxford doctoral thesis that eventually became the present work, but is rather less so now, for a great number of publications on the *Cyropaedia* have appeared in recent years; not only have there been articles,¹ but two important books appeared in 1989.² It would seem that one of those strange coincidences that sometimes enliven

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scholarship has occurred—searching for a subject that had been largely neglected, all these scholars thought as if with one mind: "Ah, the *Cyropaedia*!"

In such a situation the publication that came out last and had time to take account of the preceding works ought to come out best; thus G.'s book ought to be the definitive work to date on the *Cyropaedia*. That it is not has two causes. First, it was clearly not G.'s intention to write such a book; this is a study "not of the long, multifarious composition in its entirety, but of three particular literary strands which feature prominently in the work" (p. vii; despite this disclaimer, however, there are few aspects of the *Cyropaedia* that are not touched upon).

The second reason exposes a rather more serious flaw. It would appear that, though four years have elapsed between the publication of Due and Tatum and the present work, G.'s manuscript was sufficiently far advanced that she has been unable (or unwilling) to take much account of their work. So, for instance, in her discussion on the possible influence on Xenophon of Antisthenes' *Cyrus* (pp. 8-10) there is no mention of Due's extensive discussion of this very topic,¹ and there is little reference to Tatum's discussion² of the first dialogue between Cyrus and Cambyses (Cyr. 1.6) in G.'s treatment (pp. 50-72); at other points, references to Tatum and Due are squeezed in at the end of footnotes (e.g., p. 298, n. 74). On some topics there are several references to Tatum and Due (notably the discussion of the death of Cyrus [pp. 115-130], which does deal with Tatum's work rather more). Overall, however, G. has not really addressed the opinions of her two immediate predecessors, and this is a weakness of the book. It is understandable that after so long working on the text G. should not want to go back and start more or less from scratch, but the book would be better if she had.

To be fair, however, it must be conceded that G.'s objectives are rather different from those of Due and Tatum. Where these two pursue the intentions that lie behind Xenophon's work and the manner in which he attempted to get his message across, G. is more interested in tracing the literary evolution of the *Cyropaedia* and setting it in its literary context, both within Xenophon's work as a whole and within the entire corpus of Greek literature. Hence Chapter II, "Socrates in Persia" (pp. 26-131), outlining the Socratic influence on the *Cyropaedia*, includes an introductory section (pp. 26-49) that is a thorough examination of the portrayal of Socrates (and of other "Socratic" characters) elsewhere in the works of Xenophon, whilst Chapter III, "The Symposia of the *Cyropaedia*" (pp. 132-191), includes a section outlining the history of sympotic literature before Xenophon (pp. 132-154). In the book G. displays a working knowledge of even the most obscure Greek writers; she is obviously familiar with such minor writers as Aeschines Socraticus and Sophron (and of course has a full *index locorum* [pp. 315-339]). Thus from Tatum and Due one will get a good idea of why Xenophon has his characters do what they do; from G. one will certainly get a treatment of this, but the most vivid impression given is of the

¹Due, pp. 139-141.
²Tatum, pp. 85-89.
literary genres practised in the late fifth and early fourth centuries BC, and how and why Xenophon chose to write this particular work.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to compare the three works. Take, for instance, the conversation between Cyrus and his mother Mandane (Cyr. 1.3.15-18). In Tatum's treatment, this is interpreted as a clash of wills between the two; Mandane wants Cyrus to return to Persia, whilst the ever-manipulative Cyrus is intent on remaining at the court of his grandfather Astyages. G. (pp. 73-78), perhaps more plausibly, sees the passage as rather less sinister; Mandane's questions are intended not to catch out her nephew or put him in a near-impossible position (as Tatum sees it) but rather to remind her son of Persian values (which Cyrus, of course, will keep in mind for the rest of the work).

Like any work, this book has its strengths and weaknesses. One particular strength is the attempt to identify Persian sources behind Xenophon (pp. 13-22). After a careful examination of the evidence (such as it is) in which G. is quite prepared to speculate (but makes it quite clear that she is doing so), she makes a good case for some sort of Persian epic underlying some of the incidents adapted by Xenophon; this is certainly more satisfactory than Due's treatment of the same topic. The weakest part, on the other hand, is the fourth chapter, "Romance, Revenge, and Pathos: the Novellas of the Cyropaedia" (pp. 192-279). Though sometimes an interesting study of how Xenophon has interwoven four essentially separable romantic tales (of Panthea, Gobryas, Gadatas and Croesus) into his overall narrative framework, at other times it becomes no more than an annotated retelling of the episodes.

Perhaps the most thought-provoking section of the work is G.'s treatment of the end of the Cyropaedia. Like Due and Tatum, G. accepts the problematic final passage of the work attacking contemporary Persian decadence (8.8) as a genuine part of Xenophon's original work (pp. 299-300). Where she differs from many scholars, however, is in suggesting that through the final stages of the work, the description of Cyrus' court at Babylon, Xenophon is subtly hinting that the seeds of the Persian empire's fall from grace lie in the later years of the reign of Cyrus (pp. 285-299). How plausible one finds this is open to question; Xenophon has, after all, written a didactic work on the ideal ruler (noted by G. at pp. 1-2, 13, though this is an aspect of the Cyropaedia she plays down), and it seems questionable that he would demonstrate at the end, however obliquely, that his hero has feet of clay.

As one might expect given its origins and the series it has been published in, this is a less accessible work than Tatum or Due. So for instance Tatum includes hardly any Greek text at all, Due includes a sizeable amount, but always translates, whilst G. has a great deal of untransliterated and untranslated Greek.

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1 Tatum, pp. 98-100.
2 Due, pp. 141-144.
3 See Tatum, pp. 146-159, for a more effective treatment of the Croesus episode than that offered by G. (pp. 265-279), though G. is good on the use Xenophon has made of Herodotus on this topic.
4 Due, pp. 16-22; Tatum, pp. 220-225.
text throughout the work, and even some untransliterated and untranslated Hebrew (p. 14, nn. 56, 57), which is a bit of a shock. And in common with many ex-doctoral theses, this book assumes a knowledge of the literature almost as thorough as the author's and tends to swamp the reader in detail. Clearly scholars who might want to use this work will be able to cope with these aspects, but the book will be beyond the use of most students (which in these days of restricted library budgets will discourage many institutions from purchasing it).

This is by no means a bad book; a great deal of effort has gone into it, and it contains much that is worth reading. I myself, as a historian whose primary interest in the Cyropaedia is not literary, found a number of points at which useful and enlightening information was presented. It is, however, unfortunate that G.'s work has appeared in such close proximity to two books on essentially the same subject which are in many respects rather better and easier to use. In conclusion then, if one is going to purchase only one book on the Cyropaedia, it should be either Due or Tatum, which are a better introduction for someone unfamiliar with the work. If, however, one's thoughts should, provoked by recent interest, turn to teaching the Cyropaedia as an undergraduate text (and why not; it's more interesting than the Anabasis and no more difficult Greek), G.'s work will be an indispensable complement to the other two.1

Antony G. Keen
University of Manchester

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Those who have noted a lowering of standards in OUP's proofreading will be glad to know that typos are rare in this work, though there are at least two sentences (on pp. 152 and 191) that end without full stops.

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