

Colonisation, *nostos* and the foreign environment in Xenophon's *Anabasis*

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The representation of the foreign landscape and environment plays a big part in the experience of Asia offered to the reader of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. We are given sensual and evocative descriptions of fertile plains lush with unusual and delicious game and enormous, exotic fruit; but we also accompany the Greeks as they struggle over harsh and forbidding mountain ranges, through ice and snow, beset by enemies. The text's admiring descriptions of fecundity and abundance have been read as indicative of an ethnographic gaze which figures the Greeks as discoverers and exploiters of rich foreign resources, and so ideologically constitutes Greek identity through opposition to the exotic and consumable world they survey.¹ In contrast, the frequent depictions of the hopelessness of the Greeks lost in a hostile and unfamiliar land from which they are desperate to escape have been read as indicating a concern with a loss of self and the dislocation of Greek identity in the fourth century B.C.E.² Both sets of experiences co-exist in the text: the Greeks are a marauding army who loot and destroy, but they also suffer great deprivation, hardship and uncertainty on their journey. As I will suggest, the contradictions involved in the Greek relation to the foreign environment mark, and produce, contradictions in Greek self-consciousness.

I will explore two concepts of the environment at work in the *Anabasis*: the experience of the Asian landscape as a series of obstacles which must be overcome in order to accomplish a successful return to Greece, and the experience of Asia as a land of plenty which provides rich resources to plunder and territory to colonise.³ These models of the

foreign environment can be related in complex and often contradictory ways, I suggest, to two possible story arcs which seem to be at play simultaneously in the text. As has often been noted, this text takes an unusual form, and is difficult to pin down in terms of pre-existing prose genres. No explanatory introduction is provided, and since the text opens with the Persian royal house and the story of Cyrus' attempt on the throne, our initial expectation is that this will be a story about Cyrus; yet he is dead, his attempt on the throne a failure, by the end of book 1. We are then left struggling, like the Greeks themselves, to understand where the text is taking us -- what sort of story this is going to be.⁴ Comparisons to the journey of Odysseus (3.2.25, 5.1.2) as well as the Greeks' own statements about the need to return home to Greece seem to situate this as a *nostos* narrative,⁵ yet the possibility that the Greeks might found a city -- that this is a foundation narrative⁶ -- is also repeatedly raised.

Both narrative models, the return to Greece and colonisation, could potentially imagine the Greek experience figured in the story of the 10,000 as self-affirmatory -- a story of Greek empowerment and triumph over the foreign. Yet, neither possibility is realised. Although the claim that the Greeks' ultimate goal is a return "home" is frequently made, no such return to Greece is described in the text, and the text ends with the Greeks splitting up, some drifting away, some once again taking up as mercenaries in Ionia, as at the text's opening.⁷ And similarly, although the possibility that the 10,000 might settle in Asia is repeatedly raised, this also is never achieved. This lack of resolution of expectations leaves the reader unsure what to make of the narrative: what sort of story are we left with? And what does that mean politically, as a narrative about the Greek experience in a foreign land?

The two sets of narrative expectations stand in clear contradiction to one another: return home and settlement abroad are mutually exclusive options. There is a tension between these two possibilities,⁸ and between the contradictory ways of responding to the environment which, I will suggest, herald or tell against these possibilities, throughout the text.⁹ As we shall see, as well as suggesting self-affirmation, discussions of each possibility -- return and colonisation -- are also inflected with concern regarding whether and how they might be achieved and what their implications might be for the Greek sense of self. Similarly, each model of response to the environment is shown to be problematic and a cause for anxiety, which the 10,000 Greeks attempt to overcome but from which they can never entirely escape.

GREEKS ABROAD

Before I move on to look at how the environment is presented, it is useful to examine the speech given by Xenophon's character at the point where he takes over leadership of the army following the murder of the generals, and the return march (*katabasis*) begins.¹⁰ He encourages the army not to be despondent about the difficulties of their situation -- the numbers of their Persian enemy, the defection of Ariaeus, or their lack of cavalry or guide. Regarding their lack of provisions, he claims they can "appropriate them, if we are victorious" (3.2.21), and regarding the obstacle posed by the rivers in their way, he suggests they can simply cross them where they become fordable nearer their sources (3.2.22). However, he advises that "even if the rivers will not afford us a crossing and we

shall find no-one to guide us, even in that case we ought not to be despondent (*athumêteon*)” (3.2.23):

“For we know that the Mysians, whom we should not admit to be better men than ourselves, inhabit many large and prosperous cities in the King's territory, we know that the same is true of the Pisidians, and as for the Lycaonians we even saw with our own eyes that they had seized the strongholds in the plains and were reaping for themselves the lands of these Persians; so, in our case, my own view would be that we ought not yet to let it be seen that we have set out for home; we ought, rather, to be making our arrangements as if we intended to settle here (*hôs autou oikêsonτας*). For I know that to the Mysians the King would not only give plenty of guides, but plenty of hostages, to guarantee a safe conduct for them out of his country; in fact, he would build a road for them, even if they wanted to take their departure in four-horse chariots. And I know that he would be thrice glad to do the same for us, if he saw that we were preparing to stay here.” (3.2.23-4)¹¹

This is a very strange passage. The fear of being trapped by impassable rivers is resolved by the statement that others have inhabited the land, are reaping the plains and have established prosperous cities. The land is transformed from a place of entrapment and danger, to a potentially fertile and prosperous home. However, Xenophon raises this possibility only in order to suggest that they *pretend* to want to settle there as a strategy for being able to leave the sooner. However, in the next stage of his speech he seems to revert to considering settlement, but now he expresses concern that this too carries dangers:

“I really fear, however, that if we once learn to live in idleness and luxury (*argoi zên kai en aphthonois bioteuein*), and to consort with the tall and beautiful women and maidens of these Medes and Persians, we may, like the Lotus Eaters, forget our homeward way (*epilathômetha tês oikade hodou*).” (3.2.25)

Now the Greeks seem to be threatened not by a landscape of obstacles and entrapment, but by an environment of luxury and erotic pleasure, where, like the Lotus Eaters, they are figured as consumers of exotic delights: the allure and attraction of the place is now the danger that the Greeks face, not the impassability of obstacles. As John Dillery has noted, “There is a suggestion here that the Greeks will in some way lose their identity, that in losing their desire to return home they will lose their ‘Greekness’”.¹² In a final step, Xenophon again urges a return to Greece, but with a curious twist:

“Therefore, I think it is right and proper that our first endeavour should be to return to our kindred (*oikeious*) in Greece, and to point out (*epideixai*) to the Greeks that it is by their own choice that they are poor; for they could bring here the people who are now living a hard life at home (*oikoi*), and could see them in the enjoyment of riches.” (3.2.26)

The army’s ideological point of reference should be Greece (figured as ‘home’), and the comforting, self-fulfilling notion of return. Yet the purpose of return is to point out / display (*epideixai*) to the Greeks that they could see the poor become rich by bringing them here. It is not clear how the putative returnees of the 10,000 would be “pointing this out”. The visual vocabulary of display might suggest that they will return to Greece rich, although in the following paragraph Xenophon urges that they should dump all non-

essential baggage and burn tents and wagons, carrying only what is needed for fighting and for eating and drinking. Yet this austere message, suggesting the dire straits in which they find themselves, is immediately softened by Xenophon's added comment that "when men are conquered, you are aware that all their possessions become the property of others; but if we are victorious, we may regard the enemy as our packbearers" (3.2.28), suggesting that they may be able to acquire wealth after all.¹³ Elsewhere, we are told that taking profit back home to their families was the aim of many of them in setting out ("some had abandoned mothers and fathers, or had left children behind with the idea of getting money to bring back to them", 6.4.8). Indeed, a connection is made between plunder and return home: "By this time, since it seemed that they were getting near Greece, the question came into their minds more than before how they might reach home with a little something in hand (*exontes ti oikade aphikôntai*)" (6.1.17).

The journey of the 10,000 seems to wobble conceptually between a narrative of escape under desperate circumstances, and an expedition aimed at acquisition.¹⁴ The image of Asia as a land of sensual enjoyment seems to be offered as a way of mitigating the disempowerment of the 10,000, by figuring them as potential exploiters rather than as desperate escapees.¹⁵ Yet this image poses its own threat -- a loss of essential Greekness. The speech wants to have its cake and eat it too: to combine images of Greeks as empowered appropriators and consumers of the foreign, *and* as rejecting the moral inferiority implied by the use and consumption of the foreign (note the value-laden language of idleness and luxury: *argoi zên kai en aphthonois bioteuein*, 3.2.25). When an attempt is made to diffuse the problems posed by the enjoyment of foreign plenty by hinting that they could take wealth home, thus incorporating it into a narrative of return,

this line of reasoning too twists back on itself: we are told that they will show Greeks at home that they are better off here. The idea of Asia as a land of plenty seems simultaneously to evoke the possibility of successful (because wealthy) return home, *and* the possibility of settlement abroad. An argument for the one bleeds into a suggestion of the other, despite settlement's problematic connotations; the self-affirming desire that foreign bounty arouses seems difficult to contain within ideologically acceptable limits.¹⁶ The speech's logical contortions attempt to smooth over the essential contradictions between these different positions; but they also expose the tensions and anxieties in Greek self-conception in relation to foreign lands.¹⁷

The speech's contradictions can also perhaps be related to contradictions in contemporary Greek ideas about the environment: the idea of the desire for or enjoyment of material comfort becoming a threat to identity is a key theme in Herodotus and early ethnographic and geographical writing. The evocation of Asia as a land of luxury which might have an enervating effect on its inhabitants is reminiscent of *Airs Waters Places* 12, which imagines Asia as having a mild, temperate climate brought about by its position in the middle of the world between the extremes of north and south.¹⁸ This leads to great fertility and abundance, with vegetation, animals and human inhabitants all growing to greater beauty and size than elsewhere -- as with Xenophon's image of beautiful women, the people are beautiful in appearance and very tall. However, "Courage, endurance, industry and high spirit could not arise in such conditions either among the natives or among immigrants.... but pleasure must be supreme".¹⁹ Similarly, Herodotus imagines a link between fertile, productive land and military weakness: in his closing chapter, Cyrus the Great rejects the idea that the Persians should emigrate from their harsh, rugged land

to the rich, fertile plains recently won by the Persian Empire, objecting that “soft lands tend to breed soft men” (Hdt. 9.122).²⁰ Here, as so often in Herodotus’ depiction of the powerful (most obviously in Xerxes’ attempt to invade Greece), we are shown that the desire for more can lead to a people’s undoing.

Interestingly, however, alternative ideas about the effects of an ideal climate or flourishing land seem to have been around in Xenophon’s day. As Romm has shown, in Plato and Aristotle it is not Asia but Greece that occupies the ideal temperate zone at the centre of the earth, and, far from having negative consequences, this is used to explain her political and military excellence.²¹ We can compare Xenophon’s *Poroi*, which praises Athens’ good fortune in lying at the mild, temperate centre of the *oikoumenê*, away from extremes of heat and cold (*Poroi* 1.6), and in occupying fertile land with flourishing crops (*Poroi* 1.3).

Although the *Anabasis* does not generally discuss the climate, the idea that Asia contains the earth’s central temperate zone, midway between the extremes of heat and cold, is perhaps implied in Cyrus’ speech which rhetorically figures the Persian Empire as encompassing the entire *oikoumenê*: the empire extends “toward the south to a region where men cannot dwell by reason of the heat, and to the north to a region where they cannot dwell by reason of the cold” (1.7.6) -- which would presumably put the ideal, mild zone somewhere at its centre. In any case, as we shall see, the text frequently presents Asia as full of fertile crops and rich resources. Yet the potential effects of a flourishing land on those who might be tempted to reap its benefits are not clear. Cyrus’ description of the Persian Empire also presents an image of Asia as a place of great environmental

variation; we can compare *Airs Waters Places* 16, which stresses the variety of conditions in Asia. This might prepare the reader for a range of experiences.

The different images of the foreign environment mentioned in Xenophon's speech -- impassable rivers or rich plains and sensual enjoyment -- recur throughout the text, and feed into, I suggest, the ideological tensions discussed above. Yet, as I will show, each of these images also contains its own ambiguities and contradictions.

OBSTACLES AND ENTRAPMENT

The foreign landscape is frequently described as a place of entrapment. As Rood has shown, the text makes frequent use of the language of *aporia* (and other terms based on the root *poros*) to describe the state of uncertainty, pathlessness or lack of resource that the 10,000 often find themselves in.²² When the 10,000 find themselves trapped between the Tigris and the Carduchian mountains, we are told, "Here there was great uncertainty (*aporia*). For on one side of them were exceedingly high mountains and on the other a river so deep that not even their spears reached above water when they tried its depth" (3.5.7). Similarly, as they approach the borderlands of Armenia, "Then great despondency (*athumia*) fell upon the Greeks as they saw a river difficult to cross (*dusporian*), as they saw troops ahead who would obstruct their crossing, and as they saw the Carduchians behind them, ready to attack them if they tried to cross" (4.3.7).²³

Although other obstacles are mentioned, there seems to be a particular concern with the crossing of rivers: Dexippus as good as condemned his fellow soldiers to death by cheating them of the chance of transport by sea, we are told, since he heard "that it was

impossible (*aporon*), returning by land, to cross the rivers and reach Greece in safety” (6.6.23). Hesiod describes the need for reverence for rivers, saying that the gods will punish those who cross rivers without purifying themselves (*Op.* 737-41), a concern that might be linked to the worship of river gods.²⁴ Perhaps more pertinently, in early Greek geographical thought rivers are imagined as significant boundaries. Herodotus tells us that the rivers Nile, Phasis and Tanais were considered boundaries between the continents (Hdt. 4.45).²⁵ Boundary crossing is a matter of deep concern: Xerxes’ bridging of the Hellespont, the boundary between Asia and Europe, for example, is presented in Herodotus (7.34-5) and Aeschylus (*Pers.* 745-51) as an act of *hubris* which will receive punishment from the gods. The *Anabasis*’s repeated concern with whether the Greeks will or will not be able to cross rivers and other natural obstacles might indicate an anxiety about the potentially transgressive nature of their travels, as they press onwards through territory where they do not perhaps, as Greeks, belong.²⁶

Yet despite their frequent uncertainty and despondency when faced with such obstacles, the 10,000 do eventually manage to cross them.²⁷ This overcoming of difficulties can become an affirmation of Greek superiority through the ideological language of “victory”. When faced with an apparently impassable ravine, Xenophon claims: “It is to the enemy that I should myself wish to have all roads seem easy (*eupora*) -- for their retreat; as for ourselves, we ought to learn from the very ground (*apo tou chôriou*) before us that there is no safety for us except in victory (*mê nikôsi*)” (6.5.18). Similarly, in a manipulative speech in which he attempts to play on their shared Greekness, Hecatomus of Sinope claims both to applaud the 10,000 as Greeks who stand victors over barbarians (*nikate Hellênes ontes barbarous*, 5.5.8), and to congratulate them “that

you have made your way through many dreadful troubles, as we hear, in safety to this place” (5.5.8). Successful accomplishment of their difficult journey is claimed as a sign of successful Greekness through its construction via opposition to the non-Greek. Here any potentially disturbing connotations of boundary crossing seem to be pushed aside in favour of promoting the Greeks’ dynamism as adventurers who triumph over the lands they pass through.

Just as the successful overcoming of obstacles is imagined as a sign of Greek victory, the claim that they will fail to overcome obstacles is used by enemies in order to get the 10,000 to submit to their control or to manipulate their path.²⁸ After Cunaxa, Phalinus tells the 10,000 that the King “believes that you are his because he has you in the middle of his country, enclosed by impassable rivers (*potamôn...adiabatôn*)” (2.1.11).

Tissaphernes attempts to impress upon Clearchus the vulnerability of his position (and so his need to submit to Persian control) by inviting him to view the hostile landscape which surrounds him: “Do you not behold these vast plains, which even now, when they are friendly, you cross (*diaporeuesthe*) only with great toil; and also these great mountains you have to pass (*poreutea*), which we can occupy in advance and make impassable (*apora*)?” (2.5.18). Hecatonymus of Sinope stresses the difficult landscape which faces the 10,000 should they attempt to continue their journey by land -- the impassable mountain peaks (5.6.7), plains full of cavalry (5.6.8) and rivers difficult to cross (5.6.9) -- with the aim of getting the 10,000 to go by sea and so to leave Sinopean territory untouched. The manipulation of the 10,000’s responses to the environment can take place not just through speech, but through manipulating the physical environment itself. When “they kept coming upon trenches and canals, full of water, which could not be crossed

without bridges” (2.3.10), Clearchus “suspected that the King had let the water into the plain in order that several obstacles in the way of their journey should appear to exist for the Greeks (*polla ta apora phainoito tois Hellêsi einai eis tèn poreian*)” (2.3.13).²⁹

In the sequence of speeches following the murder of the generals, the problem of how to respond to the environment they face -- of whether or not the difficulties that face them can be overcome -- becomes involved in defining Greek identity. In the immediate aftermath of the murders, “the Greeks were in a state of great uncertainty (*aporia*)” (3.1.2), reflecting that “they were distant from Greece not less than ten thousand stadia, that they had no guide to show them the way, that they were cut off by impassable rivers (*potamoi... adiabatoi*) which flowed across the homeward route (*oikade hodou*)...” (3.1.2). In order to overcome their *aporia*, Xenophon makes a speech reimagining their situation -- stranded in a foreign land with open war declared against them -- as a positive, rather than disastrous, development, by reframing the environment about them as an environment of riches there for the taking. He declares that previously, “I saw plainly what a great amount of fine land they possessed, what an abundance (*aphthona*) of provisions, what quantities of servants, cattle, gold, and apparel; but whenever I took thought of the situation of our own soldiers, I saw that we had no share in these good things, except if we bought them,” (3.1.19-20). Now that the truce has broken down, he says, the Greeks are free to plunder. This opportunity is framed in ideological terms: “For now all these good things are offered as prizes for whichever of the two parties shall prove to be the better men,” (3.1.21). And, claims Xenophon, they themselves are better: “We have bodies more capable than theirs of bearing cold and heat and toil,” (3.1.23). The perception of the land as full of abundance and luxuries seems to go hand in hand

with the perception of the softness of the inhabitants: we can compare Herodotus on Cyrus the Great's claim that soft lands breed soft men (Hdt. 9.122) and *Airs Waters Places* 12 on the connection between a wealthy, fertile environment in Asia and a lack of fighting spirit in Asian men, discussed above. Just as the environment is reframed as not threatening but inviting, the enemy are reimagined as men not to be feared. Yet despite this encouraging message, the reader might also be unsettled by the suggestion of Greek desire for foreign wealth, through the hinted danger of its enervating power.

This highly ideological language continues in the confrontation between Xenophon and Apollonides. Apollonides rejects Xenophon's suggestions: "This man maintained that anyone who said he could gain safety in any other way than by winning the King's consent through persuasion, if possible, was talking nonsense; and at the same time he began to recite the difficulties (*aporias*) of their situation," (3.1.26). Xenophon responds by accusing him of perceiving things wrongly ("You amazing fellow, you have eyes but still do not perceive, and you have ears but still do not remember", 3.1.27). He links this failure of perception to a failure of Greekness: "For the fellow is a disgrace both to his native state and to the whole of Greece, since, being a Greek, he is still a man of this kind" (3.1.30). This claim of failure is taken to its logical extreme as it is noticed that Apollonides has pierced ears like a Lydian, and so is declared not to be Greek and driven away. Here the perception and declaration of difficulties -- or at least difficulties which would prevent the army from pursuing their return home -- is framed in terms of a loss of Greek identity.

The text's concern with the traversing of obstacles suggests tensions in Greek thought about the nature of Greek travel abroad. Through the suggestion of obstacles in the way,

Greek travel can be conceived as a dangerous and potentially transgressive act, and the failure to overcome difficulties can be imagined as equivalent to defeat by an enemy or even as leading to the unravelling of Greek identity. Yet Greek identity can also be bolstered through the reimagination of the foreign landscape as a place to be traversed and plundered at will, although this too might offer its own dangers.

ABUNDANCE

Co-existing with the experience of an environment of obstacles, the text contains descriptions of the fecundity of landscapes which focus on what can be consumed. In Cilicia, for example, the Greeks discover “a large and beautiful plain, well-watered and full of trees of all sorts and vines; it produces an abundance of sesame, millet, panic, wheat, and barley, and it is surrounded on every side, from sea to sea, by a lofty and formidable range of mountains” (1.2.22). The description of the plain in terms not only of foods produced but natural resources and defences might hint at an implicit consideration of the land’s colonial potential, even though this occurs early in the text when the army is still on the inland march led by Cyrus and settlement is not a consideration.³⁰ Such descriptions position the Greeks as potential exploiters of foreign lands, forming a backdrop to their violence as a marauding army who loot and burn as they go.³¹ Indeed, sometimes the representation of Greek consumption of foreign goods suggests a leisurely enjoyment of plundered riches. However, such scenes can be complex. Greek consumption of the foreign can also be presented as the desperate last resort of near-starving men: the 10,000 are sometimes left entirely without provisions, having to eat

their pack animals to survive, and their appropriation of local goods is often driven by pure need. Further, the consumption of looted goods can provide unexpected experiences, or elicit unusual, un-Greek behaviour from the soldiers: as mentioned above, there seems to be some equivocation in fifth and fourth century Greek thought regarding the effects of a flourishing, fertile land on those who experience it. While in many cases the language of strangeness can mark the Greeks' empowered distance from the peoples whose goods they steal, some experiences of the foreign can be disturbing. Such moments hint at anxieties about the effects of desire for and enjoyment of foreign wealth.

The Arabian plain is described in terms of its wild game. There are “wild animals of all sorts, vast numbers of wild asses and many ostriches, besides bustards and gazelles” (1.5.2). We are informed how these could best be hunted and what they tasted like: for the asses “the flesh of those that were captured was like venison, but more tender” (1.5.2), while for the bustards, “their flesh was delicious” (1.5.3). An attempt is made to fit these foods into a framework of familiar Greek experience -- asses taste like venison; trapping bustards is like trapping partridges (“they fly only a short distance, like partridges, and soon tire”, 1.5.3). Yet the oddity of these experiences is also stressed: “As for the asses, whenever one chased them, they would run on ahead and stop—for they ran much faster than the horses—and then, when the horses came near, they would do the same thing again, and it was impossible to catch them unless the horsemen posted themselves at intervals and hunted them in relays” (1.5.2). The ostrich was impossible for a hunter to catch, “for it would distance him at once in its flight, not merely plying its feet, but hoisting its wings and using them like a sail” (1.5.3). It is an exotic, and alien, environment: “In this region the ground was an unbroken plain, as level as the sea, and

full of wormwood; and whatever else there was on the plain by way of shrub or reed, was always fragrant, like spices; trees there were none” (1.5.1-2). The land is viewed in terms of consumption, yet the processes involved in that consumption are strange, and require an adjustment in expectations about how the world is to be experienced.

Similarly, in villages in Babylonia, “there was grain in abundance and palm wine and a sour drink made from the same by boiling” (2.3.14). The food is fantastic and strange, and is described via Greek expectations: “As for the dates themselves of the palm, the sort that one can see in Greece were set apart for the servants, while those laid away for the masters were selected ones, remarkable (*thaumasiai*) for their beauty and size and with a colour altogether resembling that of amber” (2.3.15). The impressive beauty and size of the dates is reminiscent of the description of Asian produce in *Airs Waters Places* 12. Yet these foods produce unexpected results. The dates “made a pleasant morsel alongside a drink, but were apt to cause headaches” (2.3.15). Similarly, “Here also the soldiers ate for the first time the crown of the palm, and most of them were surprised (*ethaumasan*) not alone at its appearance, but at the peculiar nature of its flavour. This, too, however, was exceedingly apt to cause headaches” (2.3.16). The description of consumption follows after a particularly tough stretch of journey, where the Greeks are trapped by flooded waterways and have to struggle through the mud to build makeshift bridges in order to escape (2.3.10-13). Their enjoyment of exotic foods through their exploitation of the villages comes as somewhat of a reprieve. The emphasis on the strangeness of the food can be read as participating in a self-affirmatory discourse of Otherness; yet it can also hint at experiences which are slightly discomfiting.

In Armenia, after a terrible journey through the snow, where many men die of exhaustion or cold, they attack and occupy villages, taking the local chief and his family hostage, billeting themselves on the local homes and appropriating their stores. The villages are described in terms of goods to be consumed: “In the houses were goats, sheep, cattle, fowls, and their young” (4.5.25); “Here were also wheat, barley, and beans, and barleywine in large bowls” (4.5.26). There are also erotic attractions, reminiscent of Xenophon’s description of Asia as full of erotic opportunities which might ensnare the Greeks and make them forget their way home, like the Lotus Eaters (3.2.25). Among the list of people and property captured, there is included “the village chief’s daughter, who had been married eight days before” (4.5.24). The detail of her recent marriage sexualizes her, hinting at her potential exploitation by the Greeks. The chief’s son is also presented in terms of availability for sexual use: a boy “just coming into the prime of youth” (4.6.1), he is carried off by the man who had been charged with keeping him as a hostage (“Pleisthenes, however, desired the boy, took him home with him, and found him absolutely faithful”, 4.6.3).

From victims of a harsh environment, the Greeks become violent exploiters of foreign plenty. But again, there is an emphasis on strangeness, and a sense that the Greeks are taking on unusual forms of experience. In contrast to the Greek manner of drinking, the barleywine is drunk straight from the vat with straws: “when one was thirsty, he had to take these [straws] into his mouth and suck. It was an extremely strong drink unless one diluted it with water, and extremely good when one was used to it” (4.5.27). The soldiers indulge in unusually expansive feasts, which mark both their abuse of others’ property and their transformation into a different mode of being, as they become animal-like in

their uncontrolled consumption: “there was no place where they did not serve on the same table lamb, kid, pork, veal, and poultry, together with many loaves of bread, some of wheat and some of barley. And whenever a man wanted out of good fellowship to drink another's health, he would draw him to the bowl, and then one had to stoop over and drink from it, sucking like an ox” (4.5.31-2).³² The Greeks take, consume and enjoy, but they also enter into an alien world, behaving and experiencing in alien ways.

This sense of entering an altered state of experience is most explicit, and disturbing, in the land of the Colchians, where the Greeks eat honey appropriated from local villages which sends them ‘mad’. Here, unlike in the above passages, the strangeness of the foreign poses a threat, which is described as akin to defeat by an enemy:

“The soldiers who ate of the honey all went off their heads (*aphrones*), and suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea, and not one of them could stand up, but those who had eaten a little were like people exceedingly drunk, while those who had eaten a great deal seemed like mad (*mainomenois*), or even, in some cases, dying men. So they lay there in great numbers as though the army had suffered a defeat, and great despondency (*athumia*) prevailed. On the next day, however, no one had died, and at approximately the same hour as they had eaten the honey they began to come to their senses (*anephronoun*); and on the third or fourth day they got up, as if from a drugging (*hōsper ek pharmakoposias*).” (4.8.20-1)

The comparison to being drugged might remind us of the experience of Odysseus’ men in the house of Circe, who gives them food mixed with drugs and transforms them into pigs

(Hom. *Od.* 10. 233-43): the 10,000 similarly suffer a terrible transformation as they consume foreign foods.

The text's descriptions of the consumption of foreign produce have been read as marking the essential difference of non-Greek cultures, in a way that confirms the superiority of Greek identity in contrast.³³ A contrary view has seen such scenes as marking the openness of the Greeks to foreign customs, as the soldiers happily adapt to local circumstances and ways of doing things.³⁴ In contrast to both these approaches, I would stress the rather more conflicted and contradictory picture of Greek experience that emerges from such encounters. The 10,000 are figured as empowered exploiters of foreign resources, but their consumption of foreign foods can mark their desperation -- a moment of relief from an unremitting landscape of dangers. As they consume, they are also simultaneously confronted with the alien. This confrontation can indeed bolster Greek identity by contrast; but it can also make the Greeks behave in un-Greek ways, as they take on local customs or slip into animalistic debauchery, and can occasionally be unsettling or even (at least momentarily) transfigure the Greeks' experience. We might recall Xenophon's image of the Lotus Eaters (3.2.25), who consume and enjoy sensual delights but are left changed, no longer themselves.³⁵

COLONISATION OR RETURN?

The different experiences of the foreign environment that we are offered in depictions of Asia as a land of obstacles or as a land of plenty prepare us for different ways of thinking about the political significance of the 10,000's journey, and so link to broader questions

regarding expectations of narrative closure and their ideological consequences. Indeed, the concerns which emerge in these varying depictions of encounters with the foreign also surface in the text's discussions of the possibilities and problems of settlement abroad -- discussions which often raise questions about the nature of Greek identity in quite conflicted and contradictory ways.³⁶ In what follows I will discuss three key moments where the possibility of settlement is suggested -- on the approach to the Tigris River near Babylon, at Cotyora and at Calpe Harbour³⁷ -- noting how the language of obstacles, entrapment and lands of plenty intersects with other claims about how the Greek experience abroad should be thought about.

The possibility that the 10,000 might settle in Asia is first raised in book 2 after the army have crossed canals issuing from the Tigris and are encamped on an area of land between a canal and the river. A messenger appears from Ariaeus and Artaozus saying that he has been sent to warn them that Tissaphernes intends to destroy the bridge over the Tigris during the night, "so that you may not cross, but may be cut off between the river and the canal" (2.4.17). The message causes extreme agitation and fear (2.4.18). However, the trustworthiness of the message is soon questioned, and Clearchus enquires how extensive the land between the river and canal is, to which he is told that it is a large tract with many villages and large towns in it (2.4.21). This information changes how the situation is perceived (2.4.22):

"Then it was perceived that the barbarians had sent the man with a false message out of fear that the Greeks might destroy the bridge and establish themselves permanently on the island, with the Tigris for a defence on one side and the canal on the other; in that case, they thought, the Greeks might get provisions from the

territory between the river and the canal, since it was extensive and fertile and there were men in it to cultivate it; and furthermore, the spot might also become a place of refuge for anyone who might desire to do harm to the King.”

The piece of land shifts from a dangerous site of entrapment to a rich land full of provisions with good natural defences -- a perfect colonial site. Although at this stage of their journey colonisation is not being considered and the Greeks immediately depart the next day, this way of viewing the environment seems to co-exist with the image of a landscape of dangers. We see the co-existence of different ways of thinking about the Greeks’ relationship with the foreign land in which they find themselves.

Settlement in Asia first emerges as an option to be considered in practice as Xenophon views the army near Cotyora (5.6.15):

“At this time, as Xenophon's eyes rested upon a great body of Greek hoplites, and likewise upon a great body of peltasts, bowmen, slingers, and horsemen also, all of them now exceedingly efficient through constant service and all there in Pontus, where so large a force could not have been gathered by any slight outlay of money, it seemed to him that it was a fine thing to gain additional territory and power for Greece by founding a city (*chôran kai dunamin têi Helladi prosktêsasthai polin katoikisantas*).”

Here the sight of the men prompts the idea, which is described in terms of gaining territory and power for *Greece*. The army are imagined as somehow representatives of Greece as a whole. Skating over the problems in how the 10,000 relate to other Greeks (we might think especially of their awkward relationship with the Black Sea coast cities

and with Spartan power in the region), the passage imagines a Panhellenic connection between this disparate band of mercenaries and a fantasy of a unified “Greece”. This fantasy of unity is immediately undermined, however, as problems of power relations among the 10,000 emerge: Silanus opposes Xenophon’s vision by circulating a report “that Xenophon wanted them to settle down, so that he could found a city (*polin oikisai*) and win for himself a name and power (*onoma kai dunamin*)” (5.6.17). Xenophon is accused of pursuing power for himself. Indeed, Xenophon’s colonial vision emerges through a commander’s gaze over his men, and becomes the source of serious discord in the army, as the soldiers oppose a plan that they regard as being imposed upon them. The arguments that follow about the options that face the army are often quite contradictory and indicate ambivalence about how the Greeks should best think about their position in a foreign land. The image of a politically coherent “Greek identity” bolstered by the act of city foundation is shattered as the issue of settlement provokes suspicion, dissent and class-based conflict between leaders and men.³⁸

Contrary to the imagined Panhellenic ideal of collective aspiration and action, the threat of settlement provokes individual self-interest. Silanus opposes the plan because he has been given 3,000 darics by Cyrus and he wants to take them to Greece, and Timasion is bribed by the Sinopeans and Heracleots to get the army to leave. Timasion’s ideological-sounding statement to the soldiers -- “You ought not, soldiers, to set your thoughts on remaining here, nor to esteem anything more highly than Greece” (5.6.22) -- is ironic in view of his own concern with being paid. Interestingly, his arguments to the soldiers also involve the wealth that could be theirs if they leave: “I myself will lead you to places from which you will get an abundance of wealth. I am acquainted with Aeolis, Phrygia,

Troas, and the entire province of Pharnabazus” (5.6.24). Suddenly, the argument for going back to Greece merges into an argument for going to other places in Asia where there are rich pickings. Similarly, Thorax (who is similarly to profit from bribes if he encourages the 10,000 to leave) insists that “It was ridiculous, when there was plenty of rich (*apthonou*) land in Greece, to be hunting for it in the domain of the barbarians” (5.6.25), yet he also says that “once they got out of the Euxine they would have the Chersonese, a fair and prosperous country, where anyone who so desired might dwell, while any who did not desire to do this, might return home (*oikade*)” (5.6.25). These arguments combine the inducements of return with the inducements of rich foreign lands or even settlement -- but settlement somewhere other than in the current location -- in order to get the soldiers to agree to move on.

Just as those arguing against settlement seem to employ the allurements of rich foreign lands as part of their rhetorical arsenal, in Xenophon’s justification for why settlement might have been a reasonable consideration, he counter-intuitively describes it simply as a means by which to return to Greece: “Now if I saw that you were without resources (*aporountas*), I should be looking about for a plan by which you might get possession of a city, with the provision that afterwards he who chose might sail back home at once, while he who did not wish to go at once might return after he had accumulated enough to bestow a little something upon his people at home (*tous heautou oikeious*)” (5.6.30). Had they been so far without resources as to be unable to complete their return, then settlement, he claims, would have been a means to accomplish that return more effectively. The co-existing, but mutually exclusive, desires of return to Greece and settlement abroad seem to become rhetorically entwined. In the convolutions of these

arguments, we see a sense of ambivalence about what these different options might mean politically: how they might frame Greek self-conception. What it means to be Greek -- what a properly 'Greek' response to the situation might be -- becomes a matter of concern.

Xenophon's next speech at Cotyora defending himself against the suspicion that he plans colonisation -- this time in the region of the Phasis -- restages the adventures of the 10,000 using implicit mythological paradigms that suggest a desire for return, but also perhaps carry an undercurrent of ambiguity about what return might entail. He describes a symmetrically ordered natural world which structurally opposes Greece and "barbarians": "You doubtless know," he said, "where the sun rises and where it sets; likewise, that if a man is to go to Greece, he must journey toward the west, while if he wishes to go to the lands of the barbarians, he must travel in the opposite direction, that is, toward the east" (5.7.6). Similarly: "Again, you surely know this also, that the north wind carries one out of the Euxine to Greece, while the south wind carries you within, to the Phasis" (5.7.7). In this clearly ordered world, Greeks know where they belong and where they should be headed: just as the natural order of things makes the sun rise in the east and the north wind blow, so too, it is implied, is it natural for Greeks to return to Greece. A mythological frame of reference is implied as Xenophon asks: "But suppose you have been deceived and bewitched (*goêteuthentas*) by me and we have come to the Phasis; we accordingly disembark upon the shore; you will perceive, likely enough, that you are not in Greece" (5.7.9). The language of bewitchment is reminiscent both of the adventures of Odysseus, who faced bewitchment by Circe, and also of Jason and the Argonauts in their experiences with Medea. The land of the Phasis, we have been told, is

currently ruled by the grandson of Aeetes (5.6.37), and as the 10,000 continue their journey we are told that they travel along the same route as the Argonauts (“And coursing along, they saw Jason's Cape, where the Argo is said to have come to anchor”, 6.2.1). Just as both Odysseus’s and Jason’s travels aimed at return to Greece, it seems to be implied, so too these are the 10,000’s aims. Yet interestingly, the claim that, if they disembark on the shore at the Phasis, the 10,000 will easily recognise that they are not in Greece runs counter to the experience of Odysseus, who at first does not recognise Ithaca when he finds himself on its shores, and fears that he might be in another foreign land (Hom. *Od.* 13.187-202). Whereas Odysseus’ experiences, in which home and the foreign are not always so easy to distinguish, suggest the complexity of identities, Xenophon’s speech attempts to smooth over such possible concerns. Yet the intertextual echo may still allow such ambiguities to be retained in the mind of the reader -- as may the incongruity of the claims about the ease of understanding where one is and where one is going in the light of the difficult and perplexing journey that the 10,000 have so far experienced, where their lack of guides has so often been a source of worry, alongside other obstacles (see above). The speech posits, and potentially also questions, a secure and comforting conceptual model for understanding the place of the 10,000 in foreign lands.

The third key moment where settlement is raised as a possibility is when the 10,000 reach Calpe Harbour. Here, the suggestion of an opportunity for colonisation emerges via narratorial description of landscape:

“Calpe Harbour lies midway on the voyage between Heracleia and Byzantium and is a bit of land jutting out into the sea, the part of it which extends seaward

being a precipitous mass of rock, not less than twenty fathoms high at its lowest point, and the isthmus which connects this head with the mainland being about four plethra in width; and the space to the seaward of the isthmus is large enough for ten thousand people to dwell in (*oikêsai*). At the very foot of the rock there is a harbour whose beach faces toward the west, and an abundantly (*aphthonos*) flowing spring of fresh water close to the shore of the sea and commanded by the headland. There is also a great deal of timber of various sorts, but an especially large amount of fine ship-timber, on the very shore of the sea. The ridge extends back into the interior for about twenty stadia, and this stretch is deep-soiled and free from stones, while the land bordering the coast is thickly covered for a distance of more than twenty stadia with an abundance of heavy timber of all sorts. The rest of the region is fair and extensive, and contains many inhabited (*oikoumenai*) villages; for the land produces barley, wheat, beans of all kinds, millet and sesame, a sufficient quantity of figs, an abundance of grapes which yield a good sweet wine, and in fact everything except olives.” (6.4.3-6)

The description of the natural advantages of the place in terms of how they might be shaped to human use is reminiscent of the description of the island adjacent to the land of the Cyclopes in the *Odyssey* (Hom. *Od.* 9.116-41).³⁹ As Tripodi has noted, the abundance of everything except olives -- a staple of Greek diet, religion and culture -- marks the foreignness of the place and suggests that despite the site’s attractions, the way of life established there would not be a fully Greek way of life.⁴⁰

A curious dynamic emerges in response to the Calpe Harbour site. We are told that “The men took up quarters on the beach by the sea, refusing to encamp on the spot which

might become a city” (6.4.7). They continue to refuse to make use of the advantages of the site even under threat (6.4.21-2), although eventually they are so far beset by enemies that they are forced to do so (6.5.1). Their concern that they should not settle in Calpe Harbour is ironically countered by the repeated failure of the sacrificial omens to sanction their departure. The army end up stuck in Calpe Harbour, in great desperation, without provisions, a situation some connect to Xenophon’s desire to found a city: “Now some people had the effrontery to say that Xenophon, in his desire to found a city (*oikisai*) at this spot, had induced the soothsayer to declare that the sacrifices were not favourable for departure” (6.4.14).

This idea of the Calpe Harbour site as a site of entrapment also emerges after Xenophon leads out a raiding party in search of provisions, and they are faced with crossing a dangerous ravine in order to make their way back to the camp. As mentioned above, in response to Sophraenetus’ claim that the ravine is impassable (6.5.13), Xenophon makes an ideological link between the traversal of difficult paths and victory, and between easy paths and defeat, in order to reframe the difficult journey before them as something to accept or even to desire as an emblem of the victory to come: “It is to the enemy that I should myself wish to have all roads seem easy (*eupora*) -- for their retreat; as for ourselves, we ought to learn from the very ground (*apo tou chôriou*) before us that there is no safety for us except in victory (*mê nikôsi*)” (6.5.18). In order to stress the need for courage in facing obstacles, he reframes their intended destination -- their camp at Calpe Harbour -- as a site of dangerous obstacles to be overcome: “Again, if we do reach the sea in safety, what a great ravine, one may say, is the Euxine, where we have neither ships to take us away nor food to subsist upon if we remain” (6.5.20). Being in Calpe

Harbour is like their position now, under threat at the edge of a ravine. Yet shortly after they make it back to the Calpe Harbour camp, the site is presented as a site of abundance. The Greeks make successful raids on the local land (“they fearlessly carried off wheat and barley, wine, beans, millet, and figs; for the country had all manner of good things, except olive oil”, 6.6.1) -- although, again, the strangeness and dislocation of life there is subtly hinted at by the mention of the lack of olive oil. Further, the site seems to slip into becoming the beginnings of a colonial site: “And by this time there was an abundance (*aphthonia*) of everything, for market products came in from the Greek cities on all sides, and people coasting past were glad to put in, since they heard that a city was being founded (*hōs oikizoito polis*) and that there was a harbour” (6.6.3). The Calpe Harbour site is figured simultaneously as an abundant land ripe for colonisation, and a site of entrapment from which the 10,000 are desperate to escape.

CONCLUSION

The *Anabasis* offers the reader a glimpse into the experience of being Greek in foreign lands. I have suggested that the text’s contradictory depiction of foreign lands as an environment both of obstacles to be overcome and of rich resources to be enjoyed reflects, and constructs, a sense of ambivalence about how Greek identity functions and should be thought about.

The overcoming of obstacles is indicative of Greek success. Yet there are different modes of thought about obstacles in the text. The crossing of natural boundaries can hint at the disturbing, potentially transgressive nature of the Greeks’ displacement into lands to

which they do not belong. The claim that there are difficult paths ahead can suggest a surrender of Greek autonomy to Persian enemies and mark a loss of Greek identity, or can become a welcome sign of impending Greek victory, prefacing and evoking the self-affirmatory notion of return. The desperation and hopelessness produced by obstacles can be countered by the re-imagination of the landscape in terms of a landscape of plenty. However, the plentiful landscape has its own ambiguities. The consumption of foreign resources can be a surprising and perturbing experience as well as an enjoyable one, and can carry the risk of self-estrangement and loss of identity as well as empowerment. Further, the plentiful landscape can suggest the possibility of settlement, or conversely, a successful, wealthy, return home, and so can provoke uncertainty about the Greeks' position.

The incorporation of this discourse of the environment within the text's highly conflicted discussions of the possibilities of colonization or return home, which are so charged with concern about the nature of Greek identity, marks the wider significance of the *Anabasis's* interest in the environment for a reading of the text. As we read, we wonder how this is all going to end -- what sort of story this is going to turn out to be regarding what it means to be Greek in a foreign land. Each encounter with the foreign frames our expectations for that story in a different light: the experiences on offer, and the arguments made about the meaning of those experiences, are varied and sometimes even paradoxical. The contradictions apparent throughout the text between different responses to the foreign environment mark and inscribe ideological contradictions in Greek thought, revealing Greek identity as a fundamentally problematic concept.⁴¹

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¹ Tripodi 1995; Brulé 1995.

² Ma 2004; Purves 2010.

³ For the purposes of this chapter I focus on the physical environment, especially landscape and its various features and conditions, both natural (e.g., rivers, mountains, ravines) and man-made (e.g., canals and cultivated plains full of crops). Yet as we shall see, the physical environment can be difficult to separate from the social environment: see especially my discussion of environments of abundance, which focuses both on descriptions of fertile and productive landscapes and on descriptions of villages full of provisions, and explores the social effects of consumption of foreign produce; similarly, as my discussion of obstacles shows, the fear caused by impassable rivers and mountains can merge with the fear caused by enemy troops or the lack of a guide. I consider the environment as a cultural and political construction. See Mitchell 2002, who describes landscape as “an emblem of the social relations it conceals” (15), stressing the need to avoid ‘naturalising’ readings of landscape: “landscape is already artifice at the moment of its beholding” (14).

⁴ Bradley 2001, 65-9; Grethlein 2013, 76.

⁵ Gauthier 1985; Grethlein 2013, 75-83; Purves 2010. Cf. Malkin 1998 who argues that the ‘returns’ of Odysseus became a model for narratives of colonization.

⁶ Grethlein 2013, 69-75. For foundation narratives in Greek literature, see Dougherty 1993, 1994 and 2001, 122-42.

⁷ Ma 2004 describes the *Anabasis* as “structured around the difficulty or impossibility of return” (333), noting that “resolution and return are constantly deferred” (334). Cf. Grethlein 2013, 81 on the multiple attempts of Xenophon to leave the army (6.2.15, 7.1.4, 7.1.8, 7.1.38, 7.7.57).

⁸ See Dillery 1995, 63, who notes “two competing panhellenisms, represented in the first instance by the need to return to Greece and second by the desire to found a new city in Asia.”

⁹ See Purves 2010 on the relationship between narrative form and responses to a disorienting landscape: “the story of the *Anabasis*... increasingly meanders and wavers as it progresses through alien territory” (161).

¹⁰ See Grethlein 2013, 71 on the complexities of this speech.

¹¹ Translations are taken from the Loeb edition of C.L. Brownson 1998 (rev. ed.), with some minor modifications where necessary to bring out linguistic points.

¹² Dillery 1995, 62. Contrast Rzchiladze 1980, 314, who claims that Xenophon’s description of Persian and Median women as tall and beautiful is evidence of sympathy for non-Greek cultures.

¹³ The text registers a certain level of uncertainty regarding the ideological appropriateness of acquisition as an aim. The army is an army of mercenaries, but the mercenary has ambiguous connotations in class terms. At some moments, the *Anabasis* seems to distance Xenophon’s character from the soldiers’ interest in profit (see Azoulay 2004), or more generally to play down the image of the army as focused on gain (“Most of the soldiers had sailed away from Greece to undertake this service for pay, not because their means were scanty, but because they knew by report of the noble character of Cyrus”, 6.4.8). Yet it never fully achieves this. We are told that as Xenophon was setting out to join Cyrus, an omen foretold that he would not win gain from the venture (6.1.23). This indicates that gain is not a concern for him, but also simultaneously raises an expectation that gain might be a consideration. In the text’s closing paragraphs, after complaining about not having made any money on the journey (7.8.2), Xenophon attacks the household of the Persian Asidates (8.8.9), capturing Asidates, his wife and children, and gaining horses, oxen and other property (7.8.22-3). This closing passage has been seen as peculiarly anticlimactic and ideologically contrary, sitting strangely with earlier representations of Xenophon as uninterested in personal gain, such as in his dealings with Seuthes. See Dillery 1995, 91; also see Flower 2012, 214-5 on Xenophon’s poor leadership in the raid.

¹⁴ Of course, in the earlier stages of the narrative the 10,000's pillaging is a matter of pure survival, and it is only in the final parts of their journey, along the Black Sea coast, that pillaging for profit becomes more of a possibility.

¹⁵ Ma 2004, 339.

¹⁶ See discussions of the unsettling effects of desire for the Other in post-colonial discourse: Bhabha 1986. Gandhi 1998, 78 argues of the negative Orientalist stereotype: "in so far as it embodies the contradictory expulsions of colonial fantasy and phobia, it actualizes a potentially disruptive site of pleasure and anxiety".

¹⁷ See Purves 2010, 165 on the fluctuating meanings of the inland spaces of Asia in the text.

¹⁸ Romm 2010, 221.

¹⁹ Translation taken from W.H.S Jones' 1868 Loeb edition. A lacuna at the end of chapter 12 immediately following the quoted text makes it uncertain whether the phrase "pleasure must be supreme" belongs to the preceding section on Asia, or to the lost section on Libya that follows. See Romm 2010, 222.

²⁰ See Thomas 2000, 102-14.

²¹ See Romm 2010, 223-6.

²² Rood 2014, 66-78. I am most grateful to Tim Rood for kindly allowing me to see this article prior to publication. See also Purves 2010, esp. 177-9, and Ma 2004, 333-6.

²³ Many references to the environment in this text are framed in visual terms. See Harman 2013 on the politics of the visual experiences offered to the reader of the *Anabasis*.

²⁴ Mikalson 2003, 45.

²⁵ Romm 2010, 213.

²⁶ I am most grateful to the editors Rebecca Kennedy and Molly Jones-Lewis for suggesting the connection between rivers and conceptual boundaries.

²⁷ See Rood 2014, 80-4 on the role of Xenophon's character in overcoming such impasses.

²⁸ The question of whether or not they are trapped can also become the subject of political argument among the 10,000: often different perceptions of the environment, and so different ideas about how they need to respond, co-exist within the army. Clearchus' (as it turns out, mistaken) belief that they need to come to terms with Ariaeus and Tissaphernes after Cyrus' death, and cannot act independently, is framed in terms of his perception of the impassability of obstacles. They cannot attack the King, says Clearchus, "for as I now ascertain, between us and the King is the Tigris, a navigable river, which we could not cross without boats -- and boats we have none" (2.2.3). Some of the Greeks appeal to Clearchus, saying that they ought not to wait for Ariaeus but make their escape now, while they are still able, since "perhaps [the King] is digging a trench or building a wall somewhere to cut us off and make our road impassable (*aporos*)" (2.4.4): they think that the way is currently still passable, but fear that this will soon change. Clearchus' response is to point to the rivers that cannot be crossed: "Remember the rivers—there may be others, for aught I know, that we must cross (*diabateos*), but we know about the Euphrates at any rate, that it cannot possibly be crossed (*diabênai*) in the face of an enemy," (2.4.6). Similarly, insisting on their reliance upon the Persians, Clearchus tells Tissaphernes "For, with you, every road is easy for us to traverse (*euporos*), every river is passable (*diabatos*), supplies are not lacking (*aporia*); without you, all our road is through darkness -- for none of it do we know -- every river is hard to pass (*dusporos*), every crowd excites our fears, and most fearful of all is solitude -- for it is full of uncertainty (*aporias*)," (2.5.9).

²⁹ The text here is disputed. An alternative manuscript reading (preferred by Marchant's 1904 OCT edition) avoids the language of *aporia* (*all' hina êdê polla prophainoito tois Hellési deina eis tèn poreian...*).

³⁰ We can compare the description of Xenophon's future estate at Scillous (5.3.7-13), which similarly stresses the productiveness of the land. Dillery 1995, 90 has read the account of Scillous as suggesting a model for the colony that Xenophon never is able to found: "perhaps the quiet and ordered life we see in this bucolic description is a capsule or miniature of the life he had hoped to lead as a prominent settler in Asia".

³¹ See Pratt 1992 on the relationship between views of landscape and power in 18th-20th C colonial and post-colonial travel writing.

³² See Tripodi 1995, 51-2 on the animal-like qualities that the soldiers take on in their adjustment to foreign alimentary customs. Cf. 4.5.33, where Cheirisophus' men are feasting "crowned with wreaths of hay and served by Armenian boys in their strange, foreign dress; and they were showing the boys what to do by signs, as if they were deaf and dumb". Tripodi suggests that the transformation of a symbol of Hellenic

culture, the symposium garland, into a form made of animal fodder marks the distance from Greek practice, while the use of signs suggests that the Greeks “devono rinunciare all’uso della parola, e dunque al *logos*, loro prerogativa” (52). In contrast, Roy 2007, 75 notes that the Greeks “have made themselves very much at home” in their attempt to “find substitutes for the normal Greek life-style”. I would note the complexity of this scene. The Greeks exert their power over the Armenians whose food they steal and whom they force to serve them. They attempt to participate in Greek cultural practices -- to act as Greeks -- but simultaneously fail to do so, also behaving in ways that are strange.

³³ Tripodi 1995; Brulé 1995.

³⁴ Roy 2007.

³⁵ The postcolonial discourse of ‘hybridity’ could be applied here to describe the experience of cross-cultural interaction as producing simultaneously enriched and self-alienating identities. On the fashioning, and unsettling, of Western identities through the colonial experience, see Pratt 1992 and Clifford 1992; see Gandhi 1998, 133-4 on anxieties about colonialists abroad ‘going native’ in British and French imperial discourse.

³⁶ See Ma 2004, 339: “For this ad hoc community, the temptation or the desire is to find place; to look at a landscape otherwise than as a sequence of battle scenes; to convert strategic and tactical space... into a place of one’s own, where identity and communality could exist fully.”

³⁷ Other moments where the possibility of settlement is mentioned are at Byzantium, where, unlike in earlier passages, the soldiers want to settle but Xenophon does not (7.1.21); and in Thrace, where it is suggested that Seuthes might provide territory (7.2.38, 7.3.19, 7.5.8).

³⁸ Dillery 1995, 77-90. Cf. Ma 2004, 340, who describes the refusal of colonization in terms of a failure of the 10,000 to establish a secure sense of identity: “the soldiers want to go home and hence condemn themselves to the move and to this identity without place.”

³⁹ See Dougherty 2001, 129 on the *Odyssey*’s description of the island near the Cyclopes in terms of colonial possibilities.

⁴⁰ Tripodi 1995, 44.

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