



The politics of royal education: Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus* in early eighteenth-century Europe[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*, a historical fiction based on Cyrus the Great's imperial venture, has not received as much attention as Machiavelli's *Prince*. The purpose of this paper is to examine how three major political thinkers and royal tutors of early eighteenth-century Europe used this book in their search for a new anti-Machiavellian model of political leadership. The paper discusses the work of Archbishop Fénelon, tutor to Louis XIV's grandson, the Duke of Burgundy; Andrew Michael Ramsay royal advisor to Charles Edward, the young Pretender; and Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, who originally wrote his controversial advice-book for princes, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, for Frederick, Prince of Wales.

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1. Introduction

Despite the almost universal espousal of democracy, still one of the most widely read and discussed historical works on political leadership is Niccolò Machiavelli's *Prince* (cf. Leeden, 1999). Many consider his symbol of lion and fox, sheer brutality and cunning guile, as a fair description of reality, and as such his amoral approach to politics is seen as a source of wisdom and inspiration for practical politicians. His teachings may not tally with innate morality if such a thing exists, but they nevertheless show how to achieve and maintain political power against all odds. For Leo Strauss, by contrast, it was this distinction between facts and values that underlay the tragic nature of modernity (1953: 35–80). What he observed in Machiavelli's new political philosophy was the origin of the principle of value neutrality in social science, the epistemological impediment to a more just and humane society (1958: 174–299). In this respect, Strauss's exhaustive anatomy of the duality in Machiavelli's thought was just the beginning of his lifelong search for what may be termed Socratic leadership in a multicultural world, a leadership based on democratic dialogue and deliberation (cf. Murlay, 2005; Smith, S.B., 2000: 787–809, 2006; Zuckert & Zuckert, 2006). And it was Xenophon's Socratic writings and in particular his *Oeconomicus* that guided him throughout his intellectual journey towards ethical and democratic leadership (1963, 1970, 1972). In fact, Strauss's main criticism of Machiavelli was that he deliberately left out Socratic elements in Xenophon's political thought and concentrated instead on extracting practical lessons from Cyrus the Great's imperialism that the Greek philosopher writer described in great detail in his historical fiction called *Cyropaedia* or the *Education of Cyrus* (1958: 290–295; cf. Newell, 1981; Skinner, 1978a, 2000). In his own words, “Xenophon's thought and work has two foci, Cyrus and Socrates,” but “while Machiavelli is greatly concerned with Cyrus, he forgets Socrates” (1958: 291). Strauss had no hesitation at all in attributing Machiavelli's obsession with power to Xenophon's portrayal of the first Persian emperor.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate historically that Strauss's understanding of Xenophon's Persian hero as the personification of the kind of political ambition and instinct Machiavelli recommended for princes has serious flaws by looking at

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the intellectual legacy of the *Education of Cyrus* in early eighteenth-century Europe. To be more specific, Strauss, in my opinion, was correct in stressing the importance of Cyrus in Machiavelli's monarchist thinking in his *Prince*, but wrong in suggesting that the *Education of Cyrus* was a potential source of "Oriental despotism" (1988: 99–101). It is true that Xenophon devoted much of his book to Cyrus's genius for military strategy and managerial skills, and that the extraordinary stability of the Persian Empire under Cyrus resulted from his destruction of the traditional Persian nobility. It is equally unquestionable that Xenophon's Cyrus was different from both Plato's "philosopher-king" and Strauss's Socrates. The pursuit of truth or knowledge, whether by means of heuristic conversation or collective education, was doubtlessly not Cyrus's main concern (cf. Nichols, 1984: 252–274; Dobbs, 2003: 1062–1082). This, however, does not mean that he was essentially a military dictator Machiavelli longed for in his analysis of the success of Scipio in his *Prince* (1988: 53–54). Xenophon's Cyrus may not have been interested in metaphysics, but he certainly was not indifferent to the practice of virtue. What is more important, he understood the inherent corruptibility of human nature by luxury and power and urged on self-discipline above all else (1914: 423–453; cf. Annas, 1981; Howland, 2000: 875–889).

A closer reading of Book VIII of the *Education of Cyrus* where Xenophon discusses the nature of Cyrus's imperial rule makes clear how much he was interested in his Persian hero's princely virtue (cf. Newell, 1988: 108–130; Sage, 1994/1995: 161–174). Therein Xenophon explicated that it was Cyrus's exceptional moral rectitude and self-discipline that brought about his remarkable success. The first thing that Cyrus did after his final conquest of the city of Babylon was therefore to remind his officers and subjects, both new and old, the paramount significance of maintaining and cultivating virtue (1914: 291–295, 309–313). Moreover, Cyrus, according to Xenophon, "thought that it was not possible for him to incite others to good and noble deeds, if he were not himself such as he ought to be" (311). "He thought that he should be more likely to inspire in all respect for others, if he himself were seen to show such respect for all as not to say or do anything improper" (319). What Xenophon learned from Cyrus was that "no one had any right to rule who was not better than his subjects," and that the most important quality in a good leader was "to inspire in his people a spirit of emulation in what was beautiful and good" (323, 347). Although Xenophon praised Cyrus for holding the view that "the duties of a good shepherd and of a good king were very much alike," his stress was placed less on the paternalistic rule of the emperor than on his exceptional commitment to the common good (339). "A good ruler is not at all different from a good father" not because he takes all the important decisions for his people but because his utmost concern is their wellbeing (305). In this regard, Xenophon's monarchist thought can safely be identified as "republican monarchism" as it aims to instill civic virtue and patriotism in his prince (cf. Blom, Laursen, & Simonutti, 2007). It was, as we shall see, this image of Cyrus as the classical ideal of the leader that had fascinated generations of royalist thinkers in search of a new model of kingship, not least those involved in royal education (cf. Tatum, 1989).

Before embarking on our historical exploration of the Xenophontine tradition of monarchism, some explanation about the political context of the persistence of interest in kingship in the first half of the eighteenth century may be needed as the period is commonly hailed as a watershed in the development of modern parliamentary democracy, particularly in England. To begin with, although religiously far more stable than in the previous century, early eighteenth-century Europe was still in turmoil. This time at stake was the nature of kingship. The Divine Right of Kings enunciated by Sir Robert Filmer in England and Archbishop Bossuet in France was fighting a losing battle against the republican idea of a free state as well as the Lockean theory of natural rights (Figgis, 1922: 137–176; Laski, 1936). However, in contrast to the traditional Whig interpretation of history, recent historical scholarship has demonstrated that it was not the revolutionary fear of tyranny, but a persistent royalism, especially in foreign and military matters, that dominated early Hanoverian Britain (Clark, 1985, 1986; Smith, H., 2006; Thompson, 2006; Simms and Riotte, 2007). The traditional Aristotelian denigration of democracy as a mob rule conducive to tyranny was as yet unabated. Hereditary right was widely accepted as valid even in post-1688 England. For instance, the conclusion that the Convention Parliament finally reached after several days of heated debates was that James II had abdicated the government, leaving the throne vacant (Western, 1972: 307). Even John Locke, who was much more radical than mainstream Whigs, and notwithstanding his democratized conception of representation on the basis of property rights, never raised his voice against the monarchical form of government *per se*, let alone the mixed form of government, in his magnum opus, *Two Treatises of Government* (1998: 398–405). It was specifically the confessional policy of James II in support of the Catholic Church that Locke categorically viewed as the greatest threat to the security and prosperity of the English people (1983, 1998: 406–428). In a similar vein, Daniel Defoe, who is renowned for his embracement of modern bourgeois individualism in his celebrated novel, *Robinson Crusoe*, as well as for his support of the Glorious Revolution, depicted William III as the "soldier-redeemer" for saving the Protestant nation from falling into the hands of the Stuart popish despot (Schonhorn, 1991; cf. Claydon, 2004). It has also been suggested that even George I and George II were able to exploit the image of warrior-kingship (Smith, 2006a,b).

The situation on the other side of the English Channel was more unambiguously favourable to the monarchy (Ellis, 1988). Even though the grandiosity of the French court was faltering as Louis XIV failed to deliver any major military or diplomatic success against the League of Augsburg led by William of Orange, later William III of England (Burke, 1992: 108–203), Louis was continuously revered by the majority of people as the Sun King. Furthermore, the dazzling grandeur and delicacy of his royal court at Versailles designed to embellish him as a new Augustus was arguably the secret envy of many European monarchs and ruling Aristocratic elites (Hatton, 1969: 116–178; Monod, 1999: 205–271). Much more importantly, the groundbreaking historicophilosophical controversy between the ancients and the moderns which marked the beginning of the early Enlightenment was proudly held at the *Académie Française* under the auspices of Louis (Hatton, 1969: 179–209). It is therefore no accident that the leading libertine philosopher of the Enlightenment Voltaire was fulsome in his praise of the royal patronage in the development of the arts and sciences (Pocock, 1999: 72–96). He, too, was highly critical of Louis's ambition to become a universal monarch, but was careful not to take it as evidence of the natural superiority of the republican form of government over the monarchical. The first and foremost political question of contemporary French intellectuals, in short, was how to reform the monarchy exhausted by continuous wars of their exceedingly ostentatious master and not how to destroy it, although they did express it far less audaciously than did their English counterparts (Blom et al., 2007; Rothkrug, 1965; Smith, 2005; Showlin, 2006; Sonenscher, 2007).

At the centre of early eighteenth-century reformism, in brief, was the court society revolving around the sovereign ruler and the royal family (Elias, 1983, 2000: 187–447). And the education of the person next in line from an early age was naturally deemed as the handiest and most effective way to reform the monarchy (cf. Hont, 2005: 1–37, 325–353). The theme of royal education, however, has long been neglected in early modern European historiography. Not only was it overshadowed by the historic emergence of capitalism and liberal democracy, but it was largely considered as pedantic and even politically incorrect to study such an anachronistic topic (cf. Pocock, 1975: 333–505). The demonstration effects of the transition from royal authority to popular mandate in both England and France in the propagation of democratic movements across the globe made it ethically hard to resist the Whiggish dichotomy between absolute kingship, on the one hand, and representative democracy and civil society, on the other (Bendix, 1980: 582–603; Keane, 1988: 35–71; Butterfield, 1931). As a consequence, the early eighteenth century has been largely described and characterized as an epochal moment in the rise of modernity rather than as the last gasping phase of the Humanist ideal of princely rule (Pocock, 1985: 37–71, 215–310). The most popular, and generally regarded as the only way to incorporate monarchism into such an ideologically censured picture of the eighteenth century, admitting its paramount importance in comprehending the nature of contemporary politics and beyond, has been to relate it to “enlightened despotism” (Beales, 2006: 497–524, 2005: 28–59; Krieger, 1970: 241–256). Laying a conceptual bridge between Plato’s “philosopher-king” and his Prussian disciple Immanuel Kant’s Frederick the Great, however, solidifies, instead of redressing it, the Popperian hatred of any utopian platform of political and economic reforms with a predetermined agent by insinuating the incorrigible militaristic and tyrannical nature of such a Nietzschean charismatic saviour (Popper, 1995; Meinecke, 1957). Besides, such an interpretation makes a major factual error of not seeing the centrality of Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus* in the development of early modern ideas of kingship.

It is my intention to investigate this hitherto misconstrued, if not ignored, subject of the politics of royal education in early eighteenth-century Europe by looking at the enduring influence of Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus*. It certainly is true that Plato’s *Republic* was treated as a classic in the mirror-of-princes genre and continuously translated into major European languages throughout history, but compared to the attention Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus* had accrued its popularity was very limited (cf. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, 1990: 31–52). Xenophon may not be able to match Plato as a philosopher and Thucydides as a historian, but ironically it was, as Strauss has correctly noticed, the simplicity of his thought and style that had captivated eighteenth-century Europeans (1963: 25, 1958: 290–291). The significance of Xenophon’s text can be demonstrated through an analysis of its influence on three major political thinkers and royal advisors of the period under discussion. The first commentator, Archbishop Fénelon, was tutor to Louis XIV’s grandson, the Duke of Burgundy. His *Adventures of Telemachus* was modelled after the *Education of Cyrus*, although it took its cue from Homer’s *Odyssey*. Therein Fénelon combined the Christian pastoral model of spiritual leadership with the Humanist ideal of princely virtue. Second, this study looks to the works of Andrew Michael Ramsay, tutor to the young Pretender to the British throne, Charles Edward. Ramsay’s equally popular political epic was revealingly entitled *A New Cyropaedia or the Travels of Cyrus*, and argued for similar ideals for a monarch. Last but not least, discussion will turn to Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, the Tory leader and political philosopher. His controversial pamphlet, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, written for Frederick, Prince of Wales, was similarly indebted to Xenophon and his French inheritor Fénelon. Taken together, these royal preceptors demonstrate the continuing commitment to the ideal of a leader of classical virtue well into the eighteenth century.

2. Fénelon’s *Adventures of Telemachus, Son of Ulysses*

François de Salignac de La Mothe-Fénelon, archbishop of Cambrai, though as yet treated in most cases as a minor figure in the history of political thought, was a key Catholic philosopher, educator, theologian, and political reformer in France at the turn of the eighteenth century (Cherel, 1970; Riley, 2007: 78–100, 1994; Rothkrug, 1965; May, 1938). His lasting intellectual influence can be easily, but most unexpectedly, detected in the writings of the staunch Genevan republican Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Shklar, 1969: 1–32; Keohane, 1980; Riley, 1986). In the final book of his *Emile or On Education*, Rousseau wrote that its heroine Sophie formed her sense of justice by following through the eye-catching escapades of Telemachus (1979: 404–405). Rousseau went further to proclaim that his ideas of civic virtue reflected and incorporated much of what Fénelon had elaborated in his politico-philosophical fiction (467). Apart from the fact that Telemachus was a king and his mentor a god, there was nothing in the book that Jean-Jacques, Emile’s sagacious governor, found inimical to his republican principles and dreams. “One of the astonishing things from which I cannot recover,” Rousseau even wrote in his autobiography, *Confessions*, “is to see the good Fénelon speak about it in his *Adventures of Telemachus*” (1995: 192).

Furthermore, Rousseau knew about Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus* which had greatly inspired his Catholic predecessor several decades ago, and acknowledged its significance in the field of political and moral education. His criticism of Xenophon, to be more specific, was centred not on what he had taught, but on his setting of different stages and modes of education for the youth according to their ages and roles (1979: 51–52; cf. Xenophon, 1925: 9–27). Besides, contrary to his philosophical rival Voltaire, Rousseau firmly believed that the rustic charm of Xenophon’s style could be employed as a powerful antidote to the “bombastic lapidary style” of the moderns he so despised for ruining the minds and manners of his fellow citizens of Geneva, (1979: 343; 2004: 253–377). Rousseau, in other words, not only embraced Fénelonian education, but saw them as closely linked by the identity of their literary tastes for the “noble simplicity of the ancients” (Riley, 1994: xvi).

Fénelon first earned high admiration and international fame by his pioneering gesture of reconciliation towards ex-Huguenots who were drifting around the Dutch border in search of religious sanctuary after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 (Sanders, 1901: 3–153). His religious thought is also important as it constitutes the epistemological basis of his educational and political thought (cf. Sonenscher, 2007, 22–108; Smith, 2005: 1–103). At the heart of his compassionate guidance on the rehabilitation of the so-called new Catholics was his timely philosophical amalgamation of the quietist notion of salvation through

self-abandonment, the classical emphasis on civic education, and the natural right theories (cf. Pufendorf, 1991). Theoretically, to begin with, the foremost objective of Fénelon's theological enterprise was to rescue the original sacrificial spirit of the Catholic faith from the ever more lenient attitude of the Roman Church especially with regard to the question of God's grace. He believed that neither "the fear of punishment" nor "the hope of reward" can bring divine grace (Riley, 1994: xiv–xv). Fénelon was certain that there was no hope of eternal redemption, unless one completely abandons oneself in front of God. Nor did he endorse the "hidden God" of Jansenism (Hillenaar, 1967; Little, 1951: 98–103). The Jansenist conception of predestination which had a close affinity with the Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement, in his Catholic view, was discouraging rather than encouraging many religious seekers from embarking on their spiritual journeys (1720). Mutuality was the essence of our relationship with God because, as he wrote in his letter to one of his patrician friends, "God is love as well as truth" (1965: 134). It was all in all this somewhat mystic belief in the possibility of salvation by means of pure charity, combined with the concept of sociability of the natural law tradition, and refined by the social philosophy of Socrates and Xenophon, that formed the basis of Fénelon's "republican monarchism" (1735: xxix–xli; cf. Riley, 1994: xiii–xxxii, 2007: 78–100).

His involvement in the spiritual rehabilitation of the Protestant proselytes also marked the beginning of his eventful political career as a royal preceptor. In fact, one of the first fruits of his mentorship experience was the publication of his first instructional tract under the title *On the Education of Girls* in 1687. Written originally with a view to assisting the Duchess of Beauvillier in the education of her eight daughters, it provides a systematic outline of his heuristic method of teaching that was soon to be blossomed first into his lesser known, but not insignificant collection of Aesopian didactic stories, *The Dialogues of the Dead*, and then into his magnum opus, *The Adventures of Telemachus* (cf. Kelly, 1986: 75–102). This short educational treatise also reveals his characteristic exploitation of edifying fables of classical antiquity as well as his deep understanding of human nature. Fénelon accepted the conventional differentiation between the sexes, confining the role of women to the private sphere on the grounds of their physical inferiority. But his insistence on establishing a rapport with children, strong disapproval of taking a dictatorial or authoritative attitude as in the military, and emphasis on instilling a sense of responsibility as well as developing and fortifying reason rather than inflaming emotional imagination, can all be taken as unmistakable evidence of his liberal pedagogical thinking (1707: 339–352; cf. Janet, 1914: 19–40). In addition, and as hinted above, Fénelon placed considerable weight on the education of frugality and modesty from an early age. This is of paramount importance for two reasons. First, it shows his lifelong dislike of the luxury and hypocrisy of contemporary French aristocratic society. Second, because it is the point where he openly espouses the traditional republican perspective of judging the prevalence of materialism accompanied by the loss of civic virtue as the most prominent symptom of a political crisis leading to anarchy and tyranny (Hont, 2005: 1–37; cf. Pocock, 1975).

Given the nature and also the commercial success of the book, it comes as no surprise that Fénelon was elected as tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, son of the Dauphin, in 1689 (Daniélou, 1955). Coinciding with the outbreak of the Nine Year's War, his entry into the royal society was a reflection of, and a stimulus to, the growing reformist voice across the country. At the forefront of the mounting public grievance and criticism was the aggressive foreign policy of Louis XIV (Lynn, 1999). As a leading reformist thinker Fénelon conceived of his Homeric epic for the purpose of educating his prince-pupil about the ills of the unjust hegemonic wars of his grandfather "undertaken for reasons of glory and vengeance" since the War of Devolution (1964: 301). As he penned in his unsent letter to Louis just before his dismissal from his preceptorial post, Fénelon was convinced that "all the disasters which have afflicted Europe for the past twenty years, the blood that has been shed, the deeds of violence, the ravaged provinces, the towns and villages burnt" were "the deadly fruits of that war of 1672" (302). "In order to undertake and maintain useless conquests beyond its borders," Louis had dragged the country into a hopeless condition where "cultivation is almost at a standstill, population in town and country is falling, trades of all kinds are dying out and producing ever fewer workmen; commerce is non-existent" (303). Worst of all, France was "reduced to destitution in order to maintain a state of prodigal and incurable luxury at Court". This, to Fénelon, was unmistakable evidence that "reference was made no longer to the State and the laws of the State, but only to the King and the King's good pleasure" (299–300). His message was unequivocal: the Sun King was simply a tyrant pursuing his private interest at the expense of the welfare of his nation (1741, 1964: 304–309).

Most noticeable in Fénelon's criticism of Louis is his antipathy towards the Machiavellian statecraft that distinguished the realm of politics from that of morality in the belief that they were governed by two entirely different sets of values, one by "the power-impulse" prompted by necessity, and the other by "moral responsibility" (Meinecke, 1957: 4–6). Any attempt to justify or act upon the independency of politics from morality, regardless of the urgency of the situation, from his moralistic and holistic perspective, was diametrically antithetical to the true interest of the state. Politics, according to Fénelon, was and should always be guided by moral principles, and the foremost responsibility of the prince was to make it so by his exemplary sense of justice and commitment to the common good. "Let your virtues and your good actions be the ornaments of your person and palace, and your guards," wrote Fénelon, wishing that his prince-pupil be the paragon of virtue (1994: 332). "Examine your morals very minutely," the Archbishop strongly beseeched his prince, for "every ambiguous word is liable to a bad construction; every appearance of gallantry, every passionate air, or over-earnest look shall give scandal, and have a tendency to corrupt the manners of a whole nation" (1741: 13, 15). He also wrote in his political epic that "the king must not think it below him to keep a watchful eye himself, as well as make others watch over the education of youth" (1994: 195). All in all, the despotic rule of Louis and the corruption of the contemporary French society, particularly its seemingly uncontrollable obsession with luxury and grandiosity, in his critical eyes, were simply two sides of the same coin, and his model prince Telemachus was to save the country from such ills by his exceptional virtue and sense of justice.

Remember, O Telemachus, that there are two grievances in government in which are scarcely ever guarded or remedied: the first is an unjust and violent authority assumed by kings; the second is luxury, which corrupts manners (296).

Relentless and unbending in his criticism of the abuse of absolute kingship, Fénelon, nonetheless, did not resort to any radical political plans of constitutionally restraining royal prerogatives as in England. Never had he thought of exploiting such an extremist resistance theory of tyrannicide even to inhibit the Duke of Burgundy from becoming a despot, as his Scottish predecessor George Buchanan did to his boy king James VI, later James I of England (Mason, 1987: 125–151). His firm belief in the liberal pedagogy, particularly its philosophical supposition of the universality of reason, as well as in the traditional Christian definition of princely rule as shepherdic or fatherly guidance of the people (1994: 194–195, 324), which had a close affinity with the Humanist conception of kingship that derived from Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*, as we shall see more closely in the following sections on his Scottish and English heirs, did not permit him to impute the mischief of Louis entirely to the king himself. Instead Fénelon assailed his obsequious and morally corrupted preceptors.

It was those who were responsible for your upbringing who taught you that, in order to govern, you should be jealous, suspicious, haughty, mistrustful of virtue and fearful of outstanding merit, that you should show favour only to men of servile dispositions and that your own selfish interests should ever be held to be paramount (1964: 299).

Of particular significance is the way in which Fénelon accused those who were responsible for the education of Louis. It illuminates the philosophical bedrock of his “disinterested statesmanship” incarnated in Telemachus and his Mentor, the goddess Minerva in disguise (cf. Riley, 1994: xxiv). One of the key features of Fénelon's monarchist ideal is the recognition of the ineluctable tendency of power to corrupt. “It is authority,” Mentor cautioned Telemachus who was greatly disappointed to find out mistakes and injustice of his patron and hero Idomeneus, king of Salente, Fénelon's model state, that “which puts talents to a severe trial, and brings great defects to view”. “Learn, O Telemachus,” he added, “not to expect from the greatest men more than is compatible with human capacity”. Mentor even went on to claim, denouncing the Divine Right of Kings, “a king, however wise and good he may be, is still only a man. Both his understanding and virtue must be limited and imperfect. He must have passions, humors, habits, which he cannot always control” (1994: 158–159). That Fénelon did not trust human nature is also evident in Mentor's own summary of moral and political lessons of their long journey in search of Ulysses.

When you ascend the throne, let the great object of your ambition be to renew the golden age. Let your ear be open to everyone, but let your confidence be confined to a few. Beware of trusting too much to your own judgement, and thereby deceiving yourself... Above all, be upon your guard against your own humour and caprice, which is an enemy that will never quit you till death, but will intrude into your counsels and betray you, if you listen to its suggestions (1994: 332).

Evidently Fénelon's strong distrust of power and authority is constructed upon a quasi-Calvinist/Jansenist understanding of human nature. He believed that we are inherently vulnerable to the temptations of luxury and glory as descendants of Adam and Eve. It is not so much reason as self love that governs us, Fénelon admitted. Nonetheless, the Archbishop maintained that it is our destiny to seek and imitate God's pure love by renouncing our particular and selfish interest. Our desire for earthly goods, in other words, must be conquered by adopting complete passivity to God's will (cf. Hirschman, 1977: 9–66; Keohane, 1980). This Christian solution to the republican problem of virtue and corruption also runs through his political novel. For instance, Mentor stressed in his last advice to Telemachus that the fear of the gods is “the greatest treasure the heart of man can be possessed of: by it you will obtain wisdom, virtue, peace, joy, genuine pleasure, true liberty, sweet plenty, and unspotted glory” (1994: 333).

Sadly however, the force and intensity of our natural proclivity to compare ourselves with one another is such that it is almost impossible to redirect or harness it individually without artificially creating a social milieu where “jealous emulation” and “violent passions” are collectively condemned and suppressed (50). “Vice is a contagious poison,” Fénelon thus warned his royal student (1747: 14). He deemed that unless we build a “society of saints” under the moral guidance of a virtuous prince, there is absolutely no hope of escaping from the ill consequences of wealth and power or, in his own words, “the effects of a blind passion” (1994: 84). His Christian prescription, after all, was not very different from the one formulated by Rousseau in his famous *Discourses* in 1750. What Fénelon took great pains to grapple with was exactly the kind of human nature that his Genevan republican inheritor endeavoured to capture with his controversial notion of *amour propre* or competitive self-love, carefully distinguishing it from *amour de soi-même* or self-interest common to all living creatures (Rousseau, 1997: 3–321). Arguably the only difference between them was that whilst Fénelon found his answer in his royal student Duke of Burgundy, Rousseau had his fellow citizens of Geneva in mind (cf. Force, 2003).

Last but not least, Fénelon's continuous insistence on proscribing envy and vanity by substituting simplicity for immoral luxury, peace for military glory, and agriculture for corruptive commerce (cf. Hont, 2006: 379–418), accounts for, and is indissolubly intertwined with, his repeated emphasis on the role of advisors in begetting and sustaining moral leadership. He was fully aware of the fact that the sovereign was always exposed to the dangers of flattery and jealousy owing in part to the closed nature of the royal court and to the unlimited power conferred on the throne. “Even the wisest kings are often deceived, notwithstanding all the precautions they can take not to be,” Mentor told Telemachus (Fénelon, 1994: 157). Similarly, Idomeneus, Telemachus's patron, exclaimed after realizing that he was maliciously deceived by one of his closest cohorts, “happy the king who is guided by wise counsellors”. “A wise and faithful friend is more serviceable to a king than victorious armies,” he emphatically added (154). This unquestionably was also Fénelon's explanation of the decline of France under the Sun King. Louis was “born with a heart that knows the meaning of justice and honesty,” but lost his inherent moral as well as political probity because of his unscrupulous courtiers, Fénelon lamented (1964: 299).

How then could the Duke of Burgundy, Fénelon's Telemachus, ward off such a deadly trap that had caught his grandfather with a devastating effect on France and beyond? Unless he was educated from an early age to be pious and righteous, brought up in an ethically-conscious environment, and always surrounded by a coterie of equally virtuous and religious ministers, there seemed no possibility that he would at least attempt to become like Telemachus. But since he cannot be kept completely apart from the already corrupted French court, the only way left was to teach and alert him persistently of the harmful effects of passions, hoping and believing that he was born with unyielding, God-like moral rectitude as well as natural capacity to understand and exploit human nature in general and *amour propre* in particular for his grand draconian design. Only then could he initiate his subjects into the ideal polity, giving rise to what Bernard Yack has dubbed “total revolution” (1992), by resetting high moral standards. Unfortunately for Fénelon and his reformist colleagues, the Duke of Burgundy died prematurely almost a decade before the death of his infamous grandfather in 1715, leaving the question of reforming the country by revivifying the Humanist-cum-Christian concept and practice of ethical leadership widely open once more. Fénelon's educational thought, nevertheless, had enduring intellectual influence over the reform-minded political theorists across Europe, and it was his Scottish disciple Andrew Michael Ramsay who later became tutor to Charles Edward, the young Pretender, that first took up his unfinished work of founding a republican monarchy or a monarchy with republican principles. Besides, or perhaps more importantly, it was Ramsay who openly embraced the Xenophontine tradition of virtuous kingship for the first time.

3. Ramsay's a *New Cyropaedia or the Travels of Cyrus*

Born at Ayr, Scotland in 1686, and educated at the University of Edinburgh, Andrew Michael Ramsay crossed the English Channel in spring 1710 in the heat of the Spanish War of Succession after spending agonizing years of spiritual quest in London. Soon afterwards Ramsay joined the religious camp of Archbishop Fénelon which was established in support of the converted Huguenots (Lyttle, 1940: 12; Henderson, 1952). Enthralled by the progressive educational and religious teachings of the Archbishop, Ramsay converted to Catholicism and became his faithful, but not altogether uncritical apostle. He rendered his major theological and aesthetic writings, such as *A Discourse on the Love of God* and *Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, as well as other miscellaneous allegorical works into English. He even became the first biographer of the French Archbishop some years after his death in 1715. Given all this, it is hardly surprising that Andrew Ramsay shaped and sharpened his theory of princely rule in the mirror of Fénelon's notion of “disinterested statesmanship” (Cherel, 1970: 116–141).

Despite his significance in the emergence, diffusion, and development of the radical Enlightenment, Chevalier Ramsay has been largely neglected even in the history of early modern European political thought (Shackleton, 1970: 389–394). But his politico-philosophical epic, *The Travels of Cyrus*, first published in 1727 in French and translated into English in the same year, was exceedingly popular across Europe, running through scores of editions in different formats and languages (Smith, 2005: 48–49; Tatum, 1989: 27–29). Moreover, he was a close friend of leading philosophers of the so-called Scottish Enlightenment, corresponding regularly with David Hume and Francis Hutcheson. They exchanged their views on various philosophical topics and discussed their future research plans as well as the rapidly changing intellectual climate of the flowering European republic of letters especially since the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 which marked the end of the prolonged and exhausting wars of Louis XIV (Baldi, 2002; cf. Pocock, 2005: 206). Ramsay was also a founding member of the Parisian *Club de l'Entresol*, arguably the most distinguished association of European diplomats, politicians, literary critics, and philosophers in the eighteenth century. There Ramsay exchanged his ideas on religion, politics, and scientific research with such eminent figures as the abbé Saint-Pierre, Montesquieu, D'Argenson, and even with the exiled Tory Secretary of State Viscount Bolingbroke whose monarchist reform plan we shall be discussing in the next section (Nicholas, 1953: 513–514; Childs, 2000).

Ramsay's first political work, *Essai de Politique*, appeared in 1719. It was republished in 1721 after major revision, and appeared in English translation a year after under the somewhat deceptive title of *An Essay upon Civil Government*. In stark contrast to Locke's exposition of a radical political platform on the basis of the natural right theory of the social contract with a similar title, it was composed with the aim of salvaging the monarchical form of government in general and royal power in particular tottering under the onslaught of the escalating republican sentiment on both sides of the Channel (1722: 207–210). As Ramsay himself clearly indicated at the front cover of his pamphlet by means of subtitle, his main objective was to vindicate royalist ideology by comparing “different forms of sovereignty with observations on ancient government of Rome and England, according to the principles of the late Archbishop of Cambray”. First of all, Ramsay as a devout Freemason was much more open and serious than his French teacher Fénelon with regard to the natural law tradition (cf. Jacob, 2006). He was explicit about his espousal of its key philosophical suppositions. He accepted that there existed a set of rules derived from “the Rule of the Divine Being” that “every intellectual Being ought freely to follow, in order to reasonable”. He also embraced that “Man is born a Sociable Creature,” another, lately added tenet of natural law theorists (1722: 10–11; cf. Pufendorf, 1991; Tuck, 1981; Hont, 2005: 159–184).

His seemingly promising alliance with them, however, ends here. Instead of extracting radical conclusion as to the question of the origins of political institutions as Locke had famously done, he employed the theory of natural sociability to defend not only his Freemasonic idea of “a mutual Commerce of Friendship” ordained by “the Sovereign Being,” but more significantly, his pseudo-Filmerian definition of “Paternal Power” (1722: 23–35). To be more specific, “the first Principle of Union and Society,” according to Ramsay, was our “essential Resemblance to the Common Father of Spirits”; the second “the Indigence of Man” which signified the ultimate intention of “the Author of Nature” to necessitate “reciprocal Friendship”; and the last “the Order of Generation” (25–27). His overall emphasis was laid upon the final principle of the creation of human society, namely family. Even though Ramsay plainly departed from the Filmerian ideology of absolute kingship, firmly holding the opinion that neither “paternal power” nor “the Order of Generation” was “the source of Authority,” he envisaged that familial hierarchy, because it was naturally formed, was the matrix

of any meaningful human association (27–30). To shore up his argument in favour of familial politics, Ramsay went on to make a slight, but not insignificant modification in his interpretation of the law of nature. He emphatically maintained that “tho’ man may be of all the same Species, capable of the same Happiness, and equally Images of the Divinity,” “Men much differ from one another, according to their personal Qualities”. In other words, “their Being is of the same Species, but their Manners are infinitely different”. It is this difference in “the Order of Minds” that, according to Ramsay, determined “the Foundations of a Superiority antecedent to every Contract,” together with “the Order of corporeal Generation” (30–31). What Ramsay strove to do, in brief, was to deduce from the natural law theory of Hugo Grotius and Samuel Pufendorf a synthesis of familial politics and meritocracy as a justification for his Fénelonian “republican monarchism”.

As Ramsay’s aim was to strike, so to speak, a happy medium between absolutism and republican patriotism without destroying the political framework of the monarchy, he also needed to reconfigure the psychological foundation of his ideal society. Most importantly, Ramsay thought that there was nothing worse than presupposing the state of nature as the state of war as Thomas Hobbes had done in his *Leviathan*. The idea that “Man is naturally and originally obliged to be sociable, only for fear of being oppressed,” in his Freemasonic eyes, was to deny both the actual history of humankind and “the Order of Providence” (29–30). Although he admitted that “Fear, Avarice, and Ambition, and other Passions, render Government and Subordination necessary,” Ramsay contended that it was “the Paternal Respect,” a natural emotional obligation to our parents in return for “the Protection of our Bodies and the Education of our Minds,” that constituted the basis of “the Love of our Country” (28, 33). Any argument in support of “a State of Equality and Independency, wherein all Man would have an equal Right to judge and command,” according to Ramsay, was to give free rein to “self-Love” that “makes Man idolize themselves and tyrannize over others” (34–35). Like Fénelon, Ramsay viewed that both competitive self-love and reason were part of human nature, but that the ultimate purpose of human life was to suppress the former and establish a humane civil order in accordance with the latter. Anarchy, Ramsay argued, was caused by “Immoderate Self-Love” that rendered “Men capable of two Passions, unknown even to Brute Beasts, viz. Avarice and Ambition”. Unless we collectively bring such “a savage Liberty” under control, it is unavoidable that we fall into a despotic society where every one becomes “a slave of the Strongest” (37). “All Men have their Passions; Sovereign Authority is a Great Temptation”. “Every Man carries in his own Breast the Very Principle of Tyranny, which is Self-Love,” he warned (83). For much the same reason, Ramsay disapproved any radical political change whether from a republic to a monarchy or the other way round, brooding over its social and moral ramifications (208–209). The *raison d’être* of government, to Ramsay, was the establishment and preservation of a moral order of the society in conformity with the law of nature. His political aim, in short, was to contain “the Ambition of turbulent Spirits” by institutionalizing filial duties and respects (54–55).

By this moralistic redefinition of the *raison d’état*, Ramsay was, on the one hand, alerting his English audience to the increased level of corruption and immorality as a consequence of the protracted military engagement on the continent since the Glorious Revolution, and, on the other, bringing the urgent need to reinvigorate patriotic zeal and sense of justice against the legacy of luxury and bellicosity created by Louis and his evil ministers to the attention of his French readers (94–96). His advice to both was to instruct the person next in line as early and rigorously as possible about his or her political responsibilities. The right to punish their misrule may not be in our hands, but it is our duty and right to guide them to take the right way. Accordingly, like his Catholic predecessor, Ramsay put particular stress on the centrality of transforming the culture of the royal court in “taming the prince” (cf. Mansfield, 1993).

Sovereignty being exposed to much Hatred, violent Temptations, and often to voluntary Mistakes, which have such dreadful Consequences as Sovereigns cannot prevent; we must therefore maintain a particular Safety for their Persons, and this is the unanimous Opinion of all Nations (1722: 96).

For Ramsay, the only remedy for the rampant pursuit of self-interest, that is, without instigating the Durkheimian anomie conducive to tyranny and despotism, was to infuse the king with the spirit of fatherly care and pure charity. Luckily he had his chance to implement his ambitious pedagogical scheme. In 1724 Ramsay was selected as tutor to the Young Pretender Charles Edward who was in his exile in Rome desperately looking for his time to regain the British throne now in the hands of the Hanoverians. But much to his dismay, Ramsay was dismissed only a year after his appointment due mainly to the internal power conflict at the Stuart court, and failed to put his plan into practice (Henderson, 1952). Nor did Charles’s restoration plan prove successful. Nevertheless, Ramsay’s succeeding publications, most notably the *Travels of Cyrus*, provide further insights into his anti-Machiavellian theory of political leadership, not least his immense intellectual debt to the now much neglected student of Socrates Xenophon.

Although it was modelled after his teacher’s political epic, Ramsay’s *Travels of Cyrus* not only betokens the popularity of Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus* as a mirror-for-princes (cf. Strauss, 1958, 1963, 1970, 1972), but also reveals the extent to which Ramsay and Fénelon had been influenced by the Hellenic idea of kingship (cf. Wood, 1964: 33–66; Newell, 1988: 108–130). First, in terms of political objective and the means to achieve it, Ramsay’s *Travels of Cyrus* does not diverge from what he had set forth in his *Essay upon Civil Government*, nor does it from Fénelon’s *Adventures of Telemachus*. His goal was to inform his ex-pupil Charles Edward of how vanity and jealousy had ruined the ancient civilizations in the Mediterranean, and instruct him of the maxims that had brought the prince of Persia unparalleled love and respect from all over the world. Again Ramsay underlined, borrowing the mouth of Pythagoras, Cyrus’s sagacious mentor, that both “the Desire of unbounded Authority in Princes, and the Love of Independence in the People, expose all Kingdoms to inevitable Revolutions” (1727: 53). At the heart of Pythagoras’s political teachings was the primacy of Fénelonian moral statesmanship. “The true method of preventing such corruptions is by the

education of young princes,” wrote Ramsay in his letter to his Jacobite friend (Clark, 1988: 6). For Ramsay this was much more important than establishing “the impersonal rule of law”.

The Safety and Happiness of a Kingdom do not depend so much upon the Wisdom of Laws, as that of Kings. Neither is it the Form of Government which makes Nations happy. All depends upon the Conduct of Governors, their steady Execution of Laws, and their own strict Observation of them. All sorts of Government are good, when those who govern seek only the publick Welfare; but they are all defective, because the Governors, being but Men, are imperfect (1727: 53–54).

The key question for him and also for Fénelon was not the form of government. Rather, as Fénelon had asserted in his novel, “the supreme and perfect government consists in governing those who govern”. He, like his Scottish disciple, was adamant that only “those who have principles to direct them in government, and who are acquainted with human nature, who know what they are to expect, and the means of obtaining it” should be allowed to wield the sovereign power (1994: 299, 301). This injection or accentuation of meritocratic ideas in their political thinking is of paramount importance for two obvious reasons. First, it enabled them to avoid the difficulty of explicating the economic resilience of the French absolutist state that troubled many contemporary political theorists across Europe who believed in the neo-Roman theory of the greatness of a free state (cf. Dunn, 1994: 209–210). But it is much more significant to our purpose in that it leads us to their hitherto unrecognized source of inspiration, Xenophon.

Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus* was fundamentally built upon the idea that the king must “excel his subjects” in every aspects (Xenophon, 1914: 325). The last chapter of the book in particular is replete with Xenophon's praise of Cyrus's remarkable managerial competency in governing his vast empire effectively and efficiently without sacrificing his moral and ethical standards (304–453). It had even been extensively exploited by James VI and I not only in the reconstruction of the financial system of his recently united kingdom of Scotland and England but also to strengthen his political authority (1994: 1–61; Cramsie, 2002: 13–66). And as England's first Stuart monarch had shrewdly comprehended, the secret of Cyrus's astonishing success was his exemplary concern for the common good (1994: 42–61; cf. Newell, 1983: 889–906). One of the first actions that Cyrus took after securing the whole Persian Empire was to procure “at court great correctness of conduct on the part of his subordinates” in the belief that “whenever the officer in charge is better, the administration of the institutions is purer; but when he is worse, the administration is more corrupt” (Xenophon, 1914: 309, 321). It was his firm conviction that “he could in no way more effectively inspire a desire for the beautiful and the good than by endeavouring, as their sovereign, to set before his subjects a perfect model of virtue in his own person” (317). Aside from the fact that Xenophon's Cyrus was basically a military genius, and that he was inherently virtuous and courageous, while both Telemachus and Ramsay's Cyrus had judicious mentors throughout their voyages and were essentially peace-loving, it is not difficult to draw a parallel between their model kingdoms. They all subscribed to the Xenophontine analogy between princely rule and filiality that “a good ruler is not at all different from a good father” (305). Besides, there is nothing in Xenophon's description of Cyrus that is essentially at odds with Christianity apart from his pagan origin. The Bible, in fact, had high opinion of the Persian emperor, and it even eulogized his divinely ordained role as the saviour of the oppressed and wandering Jews (Ezra, 1: 1–2, 6: 3–22). Although Xenophon chose not to include the Jewish episode of his altruistic and philanthropic prince in his account, his pagan conception of moral leadership was perfectly in accord with the biblical portrayal of Cyrus as God's shepherd (Isaiah, 44: 28). The Persians were fulsome in their praise of Cyrus because he governed the country according to the idea that “the duties of a good shepherd and of a good king were very much alike” (Xenophon, 1914: 339; cf. Foucault, 2000: 298–325).

Thus, whereas Fénelon had to turn Telemachus's pre-Christianity discreetly to his advantage (Riley, 1994: xxix, 2007: 78–100), Cyrus had already personified Christian charity as well as the patriotic concern for the prosperity of his people, waiting to be exploited by Ramsay. In summary, by taking his cue directly from Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*, Ramsay was able to achieve an advantage over his Catholic teacher of entwining much more closely the Christian model of kingship, particularly its concept of pastoral guidance, with that of the Humanist based on the Hellenistic understanding of moral politics. He was also able to bring to the fore his Freemasonic belief in the mathematical nature of the world by appointing Pythagoras as the mentor of his boy Cyrus (Ramsay, 1732; Whatley, 1729; cf. Jacob, 2006: 80–111). But it is in Bolingbroke's political pamphlet, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, that Xenophon's lasting intellectual influence on the development of “republican monarchism” becomes most salient.

4. Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*

Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke was a Tory leader during the reign of Queen Anne. In early modern British history, he is commonly known for his service as Secretary of State in the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713. But it was his literary talent that earned him international fame even after his death in 1751 (cf. Dickinson, 1970a,b; Kramnick, 1968). He was a good friend and patron of such prominent figures as Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, and led a vehement pamphlet war against Sir Robert Walpole, Britain's first Prime Minister. Among the myriad of writings of Bolingbroke, one that stood out in its popularity, influence, and depth of thinking, is doubtlessly his advice-book for princes, *The Idea of a Patriot King* (Armitage, 1997a: xxi–xxiii, xli–xliv, 1997b: 397–418). This highly evocative political tract was composed in 1738 on the eve of the War of Jenkins's Ear and originally dedicated to Frederick, Prince of Wales (Varey, 1983; Young, 1937). Although it mainly deals with the Humanist notion of kingly virtue, it also has a strong undertone of self-vindication. Bolingbroke did not feel the need to justify his association with the exiled Stuart court upon escaping the country after the Hanoverian Succession of 1714 in fear of impeachment for his secret negotiation with France during the war (cf. Gerrad, 1944; Petrie, 1937). But as we shall see, he remained steadfast in his belief that his decision to terminate the prolonged and expensive war with France was a patriotic deed which ultimately saved the country from impending economic meltdown (1997c: 274–279; cf. Barrell, 1988; Cottret, 1992, 1997).

As a manifesto of the Country opposition *par excellence*, Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*, however, occupies a somewhat enigmatic place in the British tradition of civic humanism because of the immensity of stress it had put on the role of a prince as a God-like moral safeguard against national corruption (Burt, 1992: 87–109). The idea that the Crown should take the non-partisan position and be mindful of the public interest at all times was certainly not new. The famous eighteenth-century republican editor of James Harrington's oeuvre John Toland, for instance, maintained in his longest work, *The Art of Government by Parties*, published in the midst of what J. H. Plumb, a leading English historian, has called “the rage of party” (1967: 133–60), to the effect that one of the main features of despotism could be found in the exploitation of continuous strife within and without the government, putting the blame squarely on the chain of divisive policies of the Stuarts from Charles I to James II (1701: 21–50). Toland, nevertheless, held firm the republican credo that “the only Remedy against all Mischief of Parties, is a Parliament equally constituted” (86–87, 103–109). Bolingbroke himself, too, had previously touched on this issue of non-partisan leadership in several occasions. But his main focus so far had been given to the patriotic Country party which he deemed to have the moral and political integrity to become a single defender of the free and mixed constitution, truly representing the interest of the British people (1997a: 30–37, 76–78, 122–131, 1997b: 193–216; cf. Skinner, 1975: 93–128). Consequently, this sudden change of topic and direction within his political thinking has left his audience, modern as well as contemporary, to wonder what had inspired him to concentrate on kingship at this particular juncture, and who had helped him intellectually in taking this new approach towards the traditional republican conundrum of the eternal fight between civic virtue and moral degeneration.

Many still believe, to start with, that it was Machiavelli's *Prince* that inspired Bolingbroke to come up with his monarchist concept. In his classic study on the English reception of the Florentine thinker, Felix Raab, for instance, confidently proclaimed that “Bolingbroke, the next great English Machiavellian used the ruler with *virtù* as a model for an English king who would be able to rise above the new factionalism” (1964: 254; cf. Hart, 1965: 144–163). Although a careful student of the *Prince*, Bolingbroke also criticised Machiavelli. “Machiavel is an author,” wrote Bolingbroke, “who should have great authority with the persons likely to oppose me”. “The only difference between us,” he stressed, “is, I would have the virtue real: he requires no more than the appearance of it” (1997c: 241). In every respect, Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King* took an overtly anti-Machiavellian posture. Unable to identify its place in the tradition of classical republicanism, a leading British intellectual historian has recently jumped to the conclusion that Bolingbroke's patriot king is simply “a republican oxymoron” (Armitage, 2000: 187, 2002: 29–46). We are even told that Bolingbroke modelled himself on Cicero, and that his mirror-for-princes might be defined as a misguided travesty of his great Roman republican hero's magnum opus, *De Officiis* (Armitage, 1997a,b: xxii).

By sharp contrast, the Archdeacon William Coxe has come to a very different conclusion in his much celebrated biography of Robert Walpole at the end of the eighteenth century. Notwithstanding his blatant endorsement of the conventional Whiggish prejudice against the untrustworthy Tory anti-Machiavellian writer, Coxe detected that Bolingbroke was simply transcribing Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus* and his French inheritor Archbishop Fénelon's *Adventures of Telemachus*.

In this extraordinary attempt to reconcile the ideas of a government by prerogative, with those of liberty and happiness, he [Bolingbroke] endeavours to bribe the imagination instead of convincing the judgement, by an artificial and brilliant display of all those scenes of splendour and domestic felicity which are so lavishly and exquisitely portrayed in the *Cyropaedia* of Xenophon, and Fénelon's *Telemachus*; scenes which adorn the page of the speculative philosopher, but must be considered as mere puerilities from a practical politician (1798: 213).

The tradition of political discourse that Bolingbroke had resorted to was neither the Filmerian Divine Right of Kings nor the Lockean social contract theory (Kramnick, 1968: 84–187). “Popular liberty without government,” he argued, “will degenerate into licence, as government without sufficient liberty will degenerate into tyranny” (1997c: 243). It was instead the Renaissance Humanist idea of kingship, a political ideology that has been believed to have miserably failed to find its proper place in England even in its heyday of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, partly due to the prevalence of a mythical belief in the common law and the ancient constitution, partly to the growing extremist tendencies on both sides of the government, on the part of the Parliament regicidal republicanism, and on the side of the Crown French-style absolutism and Hobbes's civil science for Leviathan (cf. Figgis, 1922: 137–176; Pocock, 1975: 333–400; Skinner, 1978b: 65–108).

Worse still, as discussed above, there exists a tacit, yet firmly institutionalized Whiggish consensus that such a royalist political doctrine had become completely extinct by the time of the Revolution Settlement of 1688 (Dickinson, 1977: 13–192). For example, Maurice Ashley, younger brother to the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, a student of John Locke, dedicated his 1728 English translation of Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus* not to his master George II but to his sister. Even Hume who had retained some reservations about the prevailing Whiggish understanding of the constitutional development stated a year after his Tory leader's death that Xenophon's political fiction was “altogether a romance” (1944: 154). The legendary British historian Edward Gibbon went even further. He wrote in his grandiose work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, that “the *Cyropaedia* is vague and languid” (1994: 951). In view of the long history of the denigration of the Humanist conception of princely rule in England, it is hardly surprising that Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King* has been characterized as a belated and misguided intellectual and political venture (Hart, 1965: 83–116).

It is, however, still questionable whether Bolingbroke's project was too far-fetched and doomed to failure both in theory and in practice. Theoretically, there is nothing inherently contradictory and entirely new in his visualization of “a king on whom the eyes of a whole people are fixed, filled with admiration, and glowing with affection” (Bolingbroke, 1997c: 293; cf. Armitage, 2000: 186). For his description of a patriotic prince who is “possessed of absolute power, neither usurped by fraud, nor maintained by force, but the

genuine effect of esteem, of confidence, and affection” corresponds remarkably to Xenophon’s image of Cyrus (Xenophon, 1914: 293). Cyrus, according to Xenophon, believed that “it was not possible for him to incite others to good and noble deeds, if he were not himself such as he ought to be” (311). “He practiced what he preached” and galvanized “in his people a spirit of emulation in what was beautiful and good,” Xenophon added (345, 347). As a paragon of virtue, wielding absolute moral authority over his subjects, Cyrus was Xenophon’s patriot king and Telemachus (cf. Nadon, 2001; Newell, 1981). Bolingbroke’s depiction of a patriot king as “the most powerful of all reformers” was a philosophical replica of Xenophon’s detailed biographical account of his Persian emperor (1997c: 251). In point of fact, the Tory reformist royalist proclaimed in his short pamphlet called *On Luxury*, while criticizing the contemporary infatuation with operas and masquerades, that “what people are more distinguished than the Persians under Cyrus, nursed up in virtue, and inured to labor and toil” (1844: 474). Although his reference there was made to Herodotus, it is evident that Bolingbroke was well aware of Cyrus’s princely virtue that Xenophon had exquisitely described. He wrote in his lengthy treatise on the study of history that “the images of virtue, represented in that admirable picture of the *Cyropaedia*, were proper to entertain a soul that was fraught with virtue” (1754a: 270). Besides, Herodotus’s description of the first Persian emperor in his *Histories* does not diverge very far from the one given by Xenophon except on the cause of Cyrus’s death (1997: 56–117).

Not only did Bolingbroke share Xenophon’s emphasis on the pedagogical role of the king, but he also concurred with his Greek teacher that the popularity of the monarch was dependent on his or her appearance. For instance, Bolingbroke stated that “kings, they must never forget that they are men; men, they must never forget that they are kings” (1997c: 289). As Cyrus held the opinion that he ought to “cast a sort of spell upon” his people through his clothes and manners (Xenophon, 1914: 325), Bolingbroke’s English Cyrus, Queen Elizabeth, “saw how much popularity depended on the decorum, the decency, the grace, and the propriety of behaviour” (1997c: 287). They both understood that “the sole true foundation of that sufficient authority and influence” was “popularity,” and that to acquire it they needed to excel their subjects “not only in point of being actually better than they,” but at the same time “should observe the decorum necessary to preserve the esteem” (Xenophon, 1914: 325; Bolingbroke, 1997c: 289). Deeply seated in the royalist thought of Bolingbroke was “the idea of an aristocracy of talents” that Xenophon artfully laid out in his Socratic story of Cyrus’s remarkable ascendancy (Mansfield, 1965: 74–80).

One may argue at this point that since Elizabeth was essentially a limited monarch under the rule of law, whilst Cyrus was at best a benevolent oriental despot unrestrained by any kind of legal and constitutional procedures, bracketing them together is to blur the most central difference between tyranny and a free state (cf. Collinson, 1994: 31–57). Indeed, this was one of the points that Bolingbroke took great pains to stress throughout his advice-book, making a detailed comparison between Elizabeth and Louis XIV, apparently in fear of the mounting public accusation of Jacobitism (1997c: 286–289). However, it is wrong to juxtapose hurriedly the neo-Roman theory of a free state, in particular its overriding principle of non-domination, with Cyrus’s Persia, categorizing the latter as fundamentally oppressive and autocratic (cf. Pettit, 1997; Skinner, 1998). “We must distinguish ourselves from slaves in this way,” declared Chrysantas, Cyrus’s faithful lieutenant, “that, whereas slaves serve their masters against their wills, we, if indeed we claim to be free, must do of our own free will all that seems to be of the first importance” (Xenophon, 1914: 307). This Hellenistic idea of “absolute rule over free and willing subjects,” as the Dutch philosopher Erasmus has succinctly phrased, summarizing Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus*, is also put forward by Cyrus’s father, Cambyses (1997: 1). While teaching his son that “people are only too glad to obey the man who they believe takes wiser thought for their interests than they themselves do,” Cambyses clearly drew a line between “compulsory obedience” and “willingly obedience” (Xenophon, 1914: 107). His wife even went further to caution her son Cyrus, who was in sojourn to his grandfather’s court in Media, not to confuse the Persian ideal of justice with the Median and return with a knowledge acquired from his despotic grandfather. “In Persia,” she said, “equality of rights is considered justice” and Cambyses’s standard is “not his will but law” (43). Moreover, Xenophon underlined that one of the key principles of the Persian education was “the equal freedom of speech,” anticipating his French Catholic follower’s liberal pedagogical thought (37; cf. Whidden, 2007: 539–567). Although expelled from Athens for voluntarily serving under the ally of its foremost rival, Sparta, Xenophon was well versed in his teacher’s celebrated distinction of kingship and despotism, “a government of men with their consent and in accordance with the laws of the state” and “a government of unwilling subjects and not controlled by laws, but imposed by the will of the ruler” (1923: 345).

Given the striking similitude between Bolingbroke’s patriot king and the notion of “disinterested statesmanship” that Fénelon and Ramsay had respectively formulated with strong religious overtones, and their shared intellectual debt to Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus*, it is no surprise that Bolingbroke’s conception of the law of nature as well as his explanation of the origins of political society had much in common with the ones proposed by his predecessors. He certainly was more of a cynic and libertine than both the Catholic Archbishop and the Freemason, and was frequently lampooned by his political foes throughout his hectic career as a leading anti-minister essayist for his debauchery and promiscuity, and thus for the inconsistency between his personal life style and his republican moralism (cf. Dickinson, 1970a,b). Further, his philosophical examination of religion at best was Erastian in content as his many other practically-minded civic humanist colleagues tended to be (Cottret, 1997: 8). But despite his idiosyncratic indifference or functionalistic approach to ecclesiastical issues and topics, Bolingbroke did not hesitate to endorse Fénelonian or Ramsayan understanding of human nature. In his strangely underappreciated treatise on the law of nature, Bolingbroke literally restated what Fénelon and Ramsay had remonstrated earlier with the Hobbesian reticulation of human psychology and the necessity of yielding to the sovereign power.

Instinct is an inferior principle, and sufficient for the inferior ends to which other animals are directed. Reason is a superior principle, and sufficient for the superior ends to which mankind is directed... Happiness is continued enjoyment of these, and that is an object proportioned to reason alone. Neither is obtained out of society; and sociability therefore is the foundation of human happiness. Society cannot be maintained without benevolence, justice, and other moral virtues...

Self-love operates in all these stages. We love ourselves, we love our families, we love the particular societies, to which we belong, and our benevolence extends at last to the whole race of mankind (1754b: 81–82).

Inseparably conjoined with this moralistic distinction of passion and reason is his attention to the role of family both in the creation of political society and as a model of his ideal polity. In agreement with Fénelon and Ramsay, but in opposition to Locke, Bolingbroke insisted that “civil governments were formed not by the concurrence of individuals, but by the association of families” (Kramnick, 1968: 92, cf. 1967: 571–594). He also concurred with them on the existence of natural law prior to the formation of civil society and its ethicality. Although utility and fear had played an important part in bringing families to a social compact, it was the law of nature that ultimately determined the nature of political society (Bolingbroke, 1754b: 115–116). The end of government, in his anti-contractual eyes, resided not merely in the protection of private property and life but more in the realization of the law of nature embedded in family by Providence. From reasoned self-love comes filial duties and respects, from paternal care and moral authority patriotism, and from civic concern for the common good under the disinterested leadership of a patriot king irenic sociability and mutual prosperity. “The true image of a free people, governed by a Patriot King,” Bolingbroke thus concluded, “is that of a patriarchal family, where the head and all the members are united by one common interest, and animated by one common spirit” (1997c: 257–258).

Lastly, as to the efficacy of Bolingbroke's patriot king scheme, much has been investigated and discussed recently in relation to the ideological origins of the British Empire (Armitage, 2000: 125–198). Compared to both Fénelon and his Scottish protégé, Bolingbroke, because of his political experience as Secretary of State during the Spanish War of Succession, was noticeably specific about the policy implications of his adaptation of “disinterested statesmanship”. His emphatic explication of the so-called “blue water policy” which took up almost one third of his advice-book in particular has been duly regarded as the finest exposition of British maritime strategy in the age of commerce and overseas trades (Baugh, 1988: 33–58, 1994: 185–223). “The situation of Great Britain, the character of the people, and the nature of her government,” Bolingbroke passionately asserted, “fit her for trade and commerce”. “The sea,” he added, “is our barrier, ships are our fortresses, and the mariners, that trade and commerce alone can furnish, are the garrisons to defend them” (1997c: 247, 277). By minutely defining what constituted the true interest of Britain, Bolingbroke was condemning the Williamite foreign policy of the continental commitment for introducing a regime of war finance that not only put the security of its people in grave danger but, more importantly, generated a detestable economic system of public debt which resulted in national corruption and moral hypocrisy in the name of defending the Protestant interest (Hont, 2005: 337–339). In other words, by placing patriotism at the centre of his monarchist plan, and clearly delineating it in the context of the mounting international commercial rivalry, he was able to come up with a powerful solution to the perennial political question of how to reconcile political expediency with moral principles, in republican terminology empire with liberty, and vindicate his highly controversial decision as to the 1713 Utrecht peace settlement in a most elegant way. More specifically, in portraying himself as the forerunner of English isolationism which, merged and embellished with the Newtonian notions of the Enlightenment, developed into liberal internationalism on the other side of the Atlantic soon after, Bolingbroke succeeded in criticizing his German rulers, George I and George II, for embodying the Machiavellian notion of the *raison d'état* at the expense of the welfare of their subjects (Gilbert, 1961: 26–43; cf. Haslam, 2002; Hinsley, 1967: 161). It is only a historical irony that George III's ambitious attempt to become a Bolingbrokean patriot king ended in disaster because of his expansionist colonial policy in America (Liddle, 1979: 951–970; Colley, 1984: 94–129; Armitage, 1997b: 397–418).

5. Conclusion

Unlike Strauss, all three of our royal pedagogues found the epitome of virtue in Xenophon's Cyrus. For them, Cyrus was not so much a military genius as a shepherd-like ruler whose first priority was the wellbeing of his people. Their common archenemy was Machiavelli's cunning and power-driven prince, and they viewed the ruling dynasties of Europe as embodying such political amorality. In this respect, what characterises their politics of royal education is a desperate search for a new anti-Machiavellian political leadership. To paraphrase Kant, they wanted their young royal pupils to be a “moral politician”, “one who so interprets the principles of political prudence that they can be coherent with morality”. By contrast, Machiavelli's prince, in their critical eyes, was a “political moralist” who “forges a morality to suit the statesman's advantage” (1983: 128).

Sadly though they all failed to put into effect their respective reform programmes in spite of their high hopes. Fénelon's Telemachus died in adolescence, Ramsay's re-born Cyrus failed to regain the crown, and Bolingbroke's patriot king was unable to rise up against his domineering father. Yet, their common anti-Machiavellian efforts are indicative of widespread longing for an alternative paradigm of statesmanship in the early phase of nation-building. In retrospect, it may be maintained that the end purpose of what Harvey Mansfield called “taming the prince” was to transform him into the embodiment of the *raison d'état* broadly defined (1993; cf. Claydon, 2004: 129–134). Broadly defined, I say, because it was in opposition to the prevailing political and economic order that such a proto-nationalist political discourse was first formulated, and favourably circulated and reproduced, as we have seen (cf. Foucault, 2007: 237–367; Miller, 1994). In stark contrast to what Friedrich Meinecke has asserted after personally experiencing the horrors of Nazism and Fascism in his classic study of the conceptual history of the *raison d'état* (1957), it was not so much the cold-blooded realism of Machiavelli's *Prince* as the Renaissance image of virtuous princely rule which found its perfect expression in Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*, particularly Book VIII of the book, that had pervaded the political language of royal education (cf. Vattel, 2008: 99–103). Besides, the first Persian emperor also appealed to the god-fearing people of early modern Europe for his benevolent policy towards the oppressed Jewish people (cf. Bossuet, 1976: 33).

Last but not least, what Fénelon, Ramsay, and Bolingbroke had respectively advised to their unfortunate princes does not conflict profoundly with the democratic ideas of citizenship. Rather they supplement it. Xenophon's Cyrus, in essence, was a virtuous leader

who not only fought for the prosperity of his subjects, but more crucially, instilled in them the paramount importance of civic virtue. Conversely, as our ill-fated royal advisors had repeatedly emphasised, the success of patriotic leadership hinged on having entourage of no less public-spirited people. Although neither “republican oxymoron” nor “republican monarchism,” in my opinion, fully represents the vibrancy and complexity, as well as the nature of the politics of royal education, the fact that they have been recently coined to describe early eighteenth-century reformist royalism may be favourably referred to as an indication of such a possibility (Armitage, 2000, 187; Blom et al., 2007). All in all, it is the recent surge of interest in leadership, or to be more specific, statesmanship in social and political sciences after more than two centuries of passionately studying the relationship between democracy and citizenship, and in the face of enduring international rivalries, despite the rosy promises of globalization, that paradoxically takes us back to the royal courts of the three ancient régimes (cf. Barber, 1994; O’Flannery, 2003: 41–64; Walker, 2006: 138–145).

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