

**Macquarie Ancient Languages School. Summer 2019.**

**Intermediate Ancient Greek A.M. Session.**

Tutor: Elizabeth Stockdale

Text: *Xenophon's Symposium* I-VI.



Kylix (drinking cup) titled: Men and Women at the Symposium

Attributed to Painter of London E 55. Previously attributed to Douris, Greek (500-460BCE)

480-470 BCE

Object Number: 1959.124

Location: Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University.

The *Symposium* (Συμπόσιον) was written by Xenophon in the late 360s B.C. It is a Socratic dialogue, and one of Xenophon's smaller works. The precise nature of its relationship to Plato's *Symposium* has been a subject of considerable controversy. There is though a definite relationship between them.

Xenophon's Συμπόσιον is written in Attic Greek.

The themes of the work are Eros – in which Xenophon explores its meaning and the different ways humans react to and are affected by the power of 'love,' Wisdom – in which the guests at the party share with everyone the one thing they value most and then try to defend it, and Virtue – where it is discussed whether virtue can be taught to a person or whether it is inherited. Socrates argues that women too can be taught virtue by their husbands. Socrates finishes the discussion with arguing that a man wishing to make his lover also a good friend, should himself first be virtuous.

Xenophon's Συμπόσιον is a light-hearted discussion. It is both playful and serious, and much of the dialogue is intended to be both comical and ironic.

We will be reading sections I to VI. I hope everyone enjoys it.