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Service and Supply in the Achaemenid Army

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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Service and Supply in the Achaemenid Army

by

Sean Manning

A THESIS

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Abstract

At the end of the fifth century BCE, Cyrus the Younger, son of the Achaemenid king Darius II, decided to challenge his older brother for the throne. Several famous Greek writers described this revolt, and some aspects (such as the battle of Cunaxa) have been frequently studied by scholars. This study uses the revolt of Cyrus as a case study in how Persian armies were raised, organized, and supplied. Beginning with the historical background, it considers the resources which Cyrus had available, how Cyrus used those resources to raise an army, and what happened to this army as it marched east. It uses demographic history, prosopography, and comparative evidence to fill out the Greek and Latin sources. These different forms of evidence suggest that raising an army and marching it to Babylon was no simple process.

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List of Abbreviations

I have tried to limit my use of abbreviations, as what is clear to the author can be a barrier to the reader. Nevertheless, a few are so common or so widely recognized that it seems better to use them than not.

- APA: *American Philological Association*
- BNJ: Ian Worthington ed., *Brill's New Jacoby* (Brill Online: Leiden, 2013)
- CAH: *Cambridge Ancient History*
- DB: An inscription of Darius the Great, in R.N. Sharp trans., *The Inscriptions in Old Persian Cuneiform of the Achaemenian Emperors* (Central Council of the Celebration of the Twenty Fifth Century of the Foundation of the Iranian Empire: Tehran, 1964)
- DN: An inscription of Darius the Great, in R.N. Sharp trans., *The Inscriptions in Old Persian Cuneiform of the Achaemenian Emperors* (Central Council of the Celebration of the Twenty Fifth Century of the Foundation of the Iranian Empire: Tehran, 1964)
- DNP: Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider, and Manfred Landfester eds., *Der Neue Pauly* (Brill Online: Leiden, 2013). For readers with little knowledge of German, an English translation is available under the title *Brill's New Pauly*.
- FGrH: Felix Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischer Historiker* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1957)

- RE: A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll eds., *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (J.B. Metzler: Stuttgart, 1893-1980)

All names of individuals and cities have been Latinized but not Anglicized.

Ancient literary texts are cited by their author's name and the work's title, if multiple works by that author exist. The names of frequently-cited ancient authors and texts have been abbreviated according to the system defined in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition revised. All dates are BCE unless otherwise noted.

Chapter 1 Introduction to Sources

1. Introduction

In the Achaemenid Empire founded by Cyrus the Great, the deaths of kings were usually accompanied by strife as their heirs fought over the throne and their subjects tried to free themselves. At the end of the fifth century BCE, two of the sons of Darius II began a struggle for succession which culminated in the battle of Cunaxa in 401 BCE. Although this struggle was no more or less important than a dozen others, it is famous because two Greek authors, Xenophon and Ctesias, were involved and described their experience in writing. The surviving Greek sources on these events are wonderful starting points for all sorts of inquiry. They can reveal many things about literary technique, Greek self-identity, everyday political life, and even Achaemenid courts. This thesis, however, will use them to begin an investigation about the practical details of military life in the Achaemenid army.

Achaemenid military affairs are a neglected topic. Two English books, one German thesis, some chapters in surveys, and a handful of articles comprise the basic studies.¹ Students of Greek military and political affairs often touch on Persian matters, but frequently do so from a Greek perspective and desiring to answer questions in Greek

¹ English books: Duncan Head, *The Achaemenid Persian Army* (Montvert: Stockport, 1992), Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (University of California Press: Berkeley and LA, 1968), Nicholas Sekunda, *The Persian Army, 560-330 BCE* Osprey Elite 42 (Osprey Publishing: Botley, Oxford, 1992). German book: Stefan Bittner, *Tracht und Bewaffnung des persischen Heeres zur Zeit der Achaimeniden* (Karl Friedrich: München, 1987). Chapters: See eg. Pierre Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* (Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake IN, 2002) trans. Peter T. Daniels ch. 17/3 and J.M. Cook, *The Persian Empire* (Schocken Books: New York, 1983) Ch. X; Articles: See especially the works of Nicholas Sekunda and Christopher Tuplin. A forthcoming book by John MacGinnis on cuneiform military records will be a welcome addition.

history. The vast scholarship on Xerxes' invasion of Greece or the Peloponnesian War includes much useful work on Persian warfare, but this has not yet been linked together into a cohesive sub-field like Roman army studies. This reflects Achaemenid history's lack of an institutional home, but also the difficult sources. The source problems will be discussed in the following sections. Nevertheless, the attempt to understand Achaemenid armies is worthwhile. The Achaemenid Empire was the first empire to control a significant fraction of a continent, and as an empire it depended on military power. A dedicated study of its military affairs can reveal things hidden to scholars who must briefly touch on the topic as part of a study of other areas.

Three phases of Achaemenid military history are reasonably well documented: the wars over Greece, Macedonia, and Thrace at the beginning of the fifth century, the complicated struggle over Ionia in the decades around 400 BCE, and the war between Darius III and Alexander of Macedon which began in 336 BCE and ended the dynasty. This study focuses on one stage of the second phase, the revolt of Cyrus the Younger against his brother the King. Cyrus' revolt has several attractions as a subject for study. A considerable amount of contemporary evidence survives, whereas for the Persian invasion of Greece we are dependent on poetry and the indirect evidence of Herodotus. At the same time, the scholarly problems are more manageable than those of Alexander history. The smallness in space and time of this war also makes it more appropriate for study within a master's thesis than the Persian invasion of Greece or Alexander's wars.

2. The Sources

An Achaemenid military historian must work with a wide variety of sources: literary, documentary, epigraphic, artistic, archaeological, and comparative. None of these is as good or plentiful as might be wished. For reasons which will be discussed below, this study is based on literary and comparative evidence.

3. Literary Sources

It is a commonplace that modern historical writing about the Achaemenid Empire is based on Greek and Latin texts by Greeks, Romans, and Roman Greeks. This reflects the accident that the Greeks produced a voluminous literature about their neighbours, a small fraction of which survives, whereas literature in Aramaic and other languages from this period has been almost completely lost. This emphasis is especially true for events in Anatolia, where the only sources in other languages are a handful of inscriptions. One advantage of using Cyrus' revolt as a case study is that two writers who strongly influenced the Greco-Roman tradition, Xenophon the Athenian and Ctesias the Cnidian, were participants in the war. Nevertheless, they were both Greeks, and their observations and comments were shaped by their culture.

Xenophon

Xenophon the son of Gryllus was an Athenian *hippeus* born during the Archidamian War in the 420s BCE.² In his youth he was a companion of the famous Socrates, although not one who Plato chose to mention in his Socratic works. He began

² J.K. Anderson, *Xenophon* (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1974) 10

his adult life as a military hanger-on to one of Cyrus' generals, but after the battle of Cunaxa became a general in his own right, first in his own service and then in service to a series of Spartan commanders fighting Artaxerxes in Anatolia. After the Spartans had been driven out of Anatolia he settled down to spend his middle age managing an estate in the Peloponnese and visiting his Peloponnesian friends. His quiet retirement was disrupted by the collapse of Spartan hegemony after the Battle of Leuctra, but he still found time to write three books and a variety of essays. In later centuries Xenophon was seen as a model of Greek style, so his writings were preserved through the troubles of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages when the vast majority of ancient literature was lost.

Xenophon lies at the heart of any study of Cyrus' revolt. He was an actual participant in the revolt, and wrote a lengthy account of his experiences (the *Anabasis*) as well as describing it and its aftermath in several of his other works. Xenophon gives us a treasury of information about Cyrus' revolt and its attendant circumstances.

Unfortunately, he is a phenomenally difficult source. Xenophon's fundamental concern was the improvement of his peers, not historical accuracy, and he was very careful about what he did and did not say. His silences are sometimes pointed, marking things which he either did not approve of or was embarrassed about.³ The first book of the *Anabasis*, in particular, is a line drawing purged of every excess stroke. The details of Cyrus' conspiracy with the Spartans and Xenophon's own political difficulties in Athens are missing, and as little detail as possible is given about Cyrus' non-Greek troops. The later reinforced the picture of a struggle between Greeks and barbarians which he develops in the rest of the *Anabasis*, but it may have also reflected his peers' lack of interest in

³ I tend to agree with the remarks of George Cawkwell in the introduction to Rex Warner tr., *Xenophon: A History of My Times* (Penguin: London, 1979)

barbarian commoners, or his own lack of interest at the time in things out of his immediate vicinity. At the same time, Xenophon often failed to notice things, understood them poorly, or forgot about them. His general statements about the organization of the Persian empire are not easy to reconcile with each other and with the other evidence, and his description of his travels in Mesopotamia is frequently criticized for mistakes and gaps.⁴ Given the gap of several eventful decades between Xenophon's adventures with Cyrus and his writing career, some lapses in memory are not surprising. Deciding what Xenophon did not notice, what he forgot, and what he chose to leave out is a difficult and subjective task. Nevertheless, when read carefully, Xenophon does provide considerable information about the practical details of Cyrus' army. His other writings, especially his didactic historical novel *Cyropaedia* and his essays *Peri Hippeis* and *Hipparchicos*, present many things as general truths which may be based on his time campaigning with Cyrus.

The *Anabasis*

Xenophon's *Anabasis* deserves some special comment, since it is the single most important source for this thesis. The title refers to Cyrus' march inland to fight his brother, but this only occupies the first of seven books. The remaining six deal with the aftermath of the Battle of Cunaxa, where the Greek mercenaries, suddenly without a paymaster, tried to find their way back to the Aegean. Xenophon states that he joined the

⁴ For one case study of Xenophon as geographer, see R.D. Barnett, "Xenophon and the Wall of Media," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol. 83 (1963) 1-26. For Xenophon as a source on Persian institutions, see Christopher Tuplin, "Xenophon and the Garrisons of the Achaemenid Empire," *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* Vol. 20 (1987) 167-245

entourage of Proxenus, a guest-friend⁵ of Cyrus, as neither a general nor captain nor common soldier. This may be defensive, as elsewhere Xenophon is anxious to insist that the soldiers were respectable men not penniless mercenaries, but an Athenian *hippeos* did not need Cyrus' drachma a day, and Xenophon states that at the start of the battle of Cunaxa he had nothing to do but go to Cyrus and ask if he needed a message carried.⁶ The first book is therefore concise, and Xenophon had both less distractions and less motive to be observant during that stage of his adventures.

The date at which Xenophon finished the *Anabasis* is unknown, and a variety of dates have been suggested based on events outside his main story which he happens to mention.⁷ His reference to hunting boar with his sons at Scyllus in the Peloponnese implies a date after 380 BCE, as he was childless when he served with Cyrus and probably only married when he returned to Greece in 394 BCE.⁸ This separation in time between the march and the memoir must have affected the version he wrote down.

Xenophon had some written sources when he composed the *Anabasis*. The *Anabasis* has so many specific references to days marched, distances marched, and halting points that moderns are inclined to believe he had notes.⁹ On the other hand,

⁵ See the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* s.v. "Friendship, ritualized" for an introduction to this concept

⁶ Defensive: Xen. *Anab.* 6.4.8; Xenophon at Cunaxa: Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.15

⁷ Malcolm MacLaren Jr., "Xenophon and Themistogenes of Syracuse," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* Vol. 65 (1934) 244-247 presents arguments for various dates but prefers ones before 380 BCE, Cawkwell (in Rex Warner tr., *Xenophon: The Persian Expedition* 16) suggests a date after 375 BCE on the grounds that Xenophon's sons would have been too young to hunt boar before then. Christopher Tuplin, "Xenophon (1)," *Oxford Classical Dictionary* Third Edition Revised (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2012) simply says that the date of composition is disputed.

⁸ For his life at Scyllus, see Xen. *Anab.* 5.3.7-13; for his childlessness, see Xen. *Anab.* 7.6.34

⁹ Carlton L. Brownson, *Xenophon in Seven Volumes: Anabasis* Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1922) x-xi and J. Roy, "Xenophon's Evidence for the *Anabasis*," *Athenaeum* New Series Vol. 46 (1968) 43 and R.D. Barnett, "Xenophon and the Wall of Media" 1 all assume that Xenophon took notes during the expedition. George Cawkwell (in Rex Warner tr., *Xenophon: The Persian Expedition* 21-23) refers to this as the accepted theory but disagrees. Roy provides a good

bringing writing materials, finding opportunity to write, and preserving those writings through his wandering would have been difficult, and Greek education stressed memory training. At one point he cites the account of Ctesias, who will be discussed below. Some sort of geographical work, such as Ctesias' book on roads, might have helped Xenophon describe the geography.¹⁰ A medieval scholar mentions the work of one Sophanetus who wrote his own account of the expedition, and it seems plausible that this is the general Sophanetus the Stymphalian.¹¹ If so, it is likely that his work was circulated first and that Xenophon wrote in response. In his *Hellenica* Xenophon refers readers to the *Anabasis* of one Themistogenes of Syracuse for more information, and as no other information about this author survives, Plutarch and many modern writers have suggested that this was a pseudonym for Xenophon himself.¹² If the soldiers had kept any sort of central records, it is likely that these were long lost by the time Xenophon began to write.¹³ In short, it is likely that Xenophon relied on his own memories and those of other participants when he wrote the *Anabasis*.

Xenophon probably wrote the *Anabasis* for the same reason that most memoirs are written: he wanted to present and preserve his side of the story. It is possible that he

introduction to the problem.

¹⁰ Cawkwell suggests that Xenophon drew all his distances and travel times from Ctesias in his introduction to Rex Warner tr., *Xenophon: The Persian Expedition* (Penguin: London, 1972) 21-22

¹¹ Jan Stronk, "Sophanetos Stymphalikos (109)," *BNJ* and Klaus Meister, "Sophanetos," *DNP*

¹² Malcolm MacLaren Jr., "Xenophon and Themistogenes," *Transactions and Proceedings of the APA* Vol. 65 (1934) with references; Klaus Meister, "Themistogenes," *Oxford Classical Dictionary* Third Edition Revised (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2012) agrees. J.M. Bigwood ("The Ancient Accounts of the Battle of Cunaxa," *The American Journal of Philology* Vol. 104 No. 4 (Winter 1983) 343 n. 13) dismisses the idea that Themistogenes was anything other than Xenophon's pseudonym. On the other hand, Pitcher ("Themistogenes of Syracuse (108)," *BNJ*) reminds us that most ancient works were lost without a trace, so the absence of citations could simply mean that his work was lost early or not prestigious.

¹³ Roy, "Xenophon's Evidence for the *Anabasis*" 43-44 argues that Xenophon sometimes used such records, apparently on the assumption that Xenophon knew he should supplement his memory with such things.

felt that he had been slighted in other versions which were circulating, such as that of Sophocles. His complete absence from Diodorus' summary of Cyrus' adventures does suggest that there were versions circulating which gave him a less prominent role than Xenophon gave himself. In later books of the *Anabasis* Xenophon is anxious to emphasize his own importance and justify his actions, giving himself long speeches which invariably convince their audience, but it is possible to make too much of this. The *Anabasis* also emphasizes the military weakness of the Persians and the feasibility of a pan-Hellenic war against the King. These ideas likely developed during Xenophon's campaigns with Agesilaus in Anatolia in the 390s, and any passage which promotes them should be read very sceptically, but again it is difficult to show that Xenophon wrote in order to spread these ideas.¹⁴ The *Anabasis* clearly shows that the expedition of Cyrus was no happy adventure.

Ctesias

Ctesias of Cnidus, a doctor, provided the most influential alternate account. As a young man Ctesias was taken prisoner and brought to the court of Darius II to serve as physician.¹⁵ He was eventually sent home and turned to writing, producing a long book of Persian history (the *Persica*) and a short one of Indian history (the *Indica*). Ctesias' writings were very popular, and were familiar to Xenophon and most later writers who discussed Cyrus' revolt. Unfortunately, his *Persica* did not survive the Middle Ages, and

¹⁴ On Xenophon, Agesilaus, and panhellenism, see G.L. Cawkwell, "Agesilaus and Sparta," *Classical Quarterly* Vol. 26 No. 1 (1976) 62-84

¹⁵ A good summary of the slender evidence for Ctesias' biography is Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones and James Robson tr. , *Ctesias' History of Persia: Tales of the Orient* 11-18; see also T.S. Brown, "Suggestions for a Vita of Ctesias of Cnidus," *Historia* 27 (1978) 1-19.

is chiefly attested through citations by later authors and a summary by the Byzantine patriarch Photius.¹⁶

Ctesias gave the Greek tradition a source who was with the King at the battle of Cunaxa. Unfortunately, many of the surviving fragments of his work appear sensational and fantastical, especially in the earlier parts of his history. His accounts emphasize the achievements of eunuchs and women where most Greek writers focus on noblemen, and this has caused some to believe that his sources were merely the gossip of palace servants.¹⁷ But eunuchs could be powerful and respected courtiers, and aristocratic men had their own limitations as sources. Recent opinions on his *Persica* have ranged from a desperate attempt to out-do Herodotus by inventing new stories, to a sort of historical novel that attempted to give Greeks a Persian perspective on eastern history.¹⁸ Without direct access to his works, it seems best to take what he says about the events during his own lifetime seriously, and to keep him in mind as a possible source for later writers who do not cite him. Ctesias was among Xenophon's sources for the *Anabasis*.¹⁹

Diodorus

Diodorus of Sicily, a contemporary of Julius Caesar, wrote the longest surviving alternative account of Cyrus' revolt as part of his history of the world from mythical times to Caesar's Gallic wars. Diodorus devoted much of his life to this task, relying on earlier

¹⁶ See J. Augerber, *Ctesias, Histoires de l'Orient* (Paris, 1991).

¹⁷ For a strong disparagement of Ctesias' sources, see Robert Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History* (Centre for Hellenic Studies: Washington, DC, 1973) 106-108 For eunuchs at Achaemenid courts in general, see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 274-277 or an unpublished conference paper by Waldemar Heckel, "Eunuchs at the Achaemenid Court: Some Very Impotent People"

¹⁸ Compare Drews, *Greek Accounts* 103-116 with Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones and James Robson tr. , *Ctesias' History of Persia: Tales of the Orient* 80-86 (a book whose introduction contains a good summary of other opinions)

¹⁹ Xenophon cites Ctesias at *Anabasis* 1.8.27

narrative histories and chronicles. Diodorus tells his readers that he wanted to benefit his readers by giving them the benefit of experience, encouraging them to great and virtuous deeds, and improving their powers of speech, and that to this end he had written a concise history of as many places and times as possible with a clear chronological system.²⁰ These goals met the needs of medieval readers, and fifteen of the forty scrolls of his history survive, the last copy of the rest perhaps having been destroyed in the Turkish sack of Constantinople.²¹

Diodorus is a frequently criticized writer. V.J. Gray, for example, argued that even when Diodorus used trustworthy sources, his summarizing and reworking spoiled them.²² J.M. Bigwood concluded that “if we wish to reconstruct what happened at the Battle of Cunaxa, we would do well to concentrate on the account of Xenophon. Sophocles, Ctesias, and Diodorus have remarkably little that is useful to offer us.”²³ A tradition established by Volquardsen in 1868, and still held by commentators such as Victor Parker, portrays him as a clumsy summarizer most useful as evidence for what lost writers such as Ephorus said.²⁴ This view is now opposed by scholars like Peter Green, Kenneth Sacks, and Frances Pownall who emphasize Diodorus' adaption of his sources to meet his needs.²⁵ In Diodorus' defence it can be said that his task was very difficult, that

²⁰ Diod. 1.1-5

²¹ Jona Lendering claims this at <http://www.livius.org/di-dn/diodorus/siculus.html> but does not state a source. Peter Green (*Diodorus Siculus, Books 11-12.37.1: Greek History 480-431 BCE, The Alternative Version* [University of Texas Press: Austin, 2006] 32) suggests that it was lost in the Latin sack of 1204 but cites different opinions.

²² V.J. Gray, “The Value of Diodorus Siculus for the Years 411-386 BC,” *Hermes* Vol. 115 No. 1 (Spring 1987) 72-89

²³ Bigwood, “The Ancient Accounts of the Battle of Cunaxa” 356

²⁴ Christian August Volquardsen, *Untersuchungen über die Quellen der Griechischen und Sicilischen Geschichten bei Diodor, Buch XI bis XV* (Kiel, 1868) and Victor Parker, “Biographical Essay F. Use of the Work by Diodorus.” in “Ephorus (70),” *BNJ*

²⁵ Diodorus Siculus, Peter Green tr. and intr., *The Persian Wars to the Fall of Athens: Books 11-14.34 (480-401 BCE)* (University of Texas Press: Austin, 2010). Frances Pownall, *Lessons From the Past: The*

he never claimed to be writing an authoritative guide to the details of past events, and that it is much better to have his version than nothing. His serious attempt to be comprehensive makes him less biased towards the deeds of Greeks in the Aegean than Xenophon is, and he provides much more information about events at Artaxerxes' court and the aftermath of the revolt than Xenophon does. No narrative is without difficulties as a source, and it would be perverse to reject his evidence without considering each piece individually.

As Diodorus is at best a secondary source, it would be very helpful to know where he got his information. Unfortunately, relatively little scholarship in English or German has been devoted to the sources of the parts of books 13 and 14 which deal with Cyrus' revolt.²⁶ Volquardsen used Diodorus' citations and a comparison between Diodorus and the fragments of earlier historians to show that Diodorus probably relied on Ephorus for the history of the eastern Mediterranean in this period. Ephorus was born in roughly 400 BCE, and his histories covered from legendary times to the middle of the fourth century BCE.²⁷ Ephorus, in turn, seems to have used Thucydides and the anonymous *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* as his most important sources for Cyrus' lifetime.²⁸ Recent writers tend to postulate a chronological source or sources which Diodorus used to date events in his history.²⁹ As Peter Green wisely points out, he would have been familiar with

Moral Use of History in Fourth-Century Prose (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2004), Kenneth Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 1990)

²⁶ The commentary of Stilianou, *A Historical Commentary on Diodorus Siculus Book 15* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) starts too late. Peter Green rejects *Quellenforschung* in his translations of Diodorus. I am unable to read the plentiful scholarship on Diodorus written in Italian.

²⁷ Statements about Ephorus are based on Victor Parker, "Biographical Essay" in "Ephorus (70)," *BNJ*

²⁸ Parker, "Biographical Essay C. Ephorus' Sources and His Use of Them" in "Ephorus (70)," *BNJ*

²⁹ "Recent writers" eg. Victor Parker, "Biographical Essay" in "Ephorus (70)," *BNJ*

Thucydides, Xenophon, Ctesias, and other writers as part of his reading, even if he chose to base his account on Ephorus.³⁰

Other Writers

Some of Xenophon's contemporaries, such as Thucydides and Andocides, provide background information on Cyrus' revolt while writing on other topics. These sources, and the few contemporary Greek inscriptions, are both precious and limited. They are especially useful for the context of the revolt.

A variety of late writers, such as Cornelius Nepos, Frontinus, and Plutarch, can supplement the main sources. These writers often summarize and rework traditions from the fourth century, introducing mistakes but writing with the tranquility of distance. As they rarely cite their sources, the origins and accuracy of these traditions are usually difficult to determine. Most of them are writing in genres other than history, so felt less need to show context or be factually accurate than a historian would have.

On the whole, by the standards of classical history the revolt of Cyrus is a well-documented event. At least three contemporary traditions, those of Ctesias, Xenophon, and the sources of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, are attested. It is unfortunate that the literary sources are essentially Greco-Roman, but this is typical for Achaemenid history.

³⁰ Peter Green, *Diodorus Siculus, Books 11-12.37.1 : Greek History 480-431 B.C., the Alternative Version* 24-25 with references and Peter Green, *Diodorus Siculus, the Persian Wars to the Fall of Athens* 6-7 without. As he says in the later, "The texts of the great classics were easily available; it would be extraordinary if he had *not* read them as part of his basic education."

4. Documentary Sources

This study makes little use of documentary evidence. While some documents from the Achaemenid empire deal with military matters, these are few and often unpublished or untranslated. The largest and most useful corpus, from Elephantine on the Nile, describes life in garrison far from Cyrus' revolt.³¹ Matthew Stolper's work on military service and land tenure in Mesopotamia is relevant to the study of Artaxerxes' army but not Cyrus'. John MacGinnis' book on cuneiform military records has not yet been published. Nor did Persian soldiers have a passion for inscriptions like their Roman counterparts. This study therefore makes less use of such evidence than would be expected in, for example, a work on the Roman army.

5. Comparative Evidence

The literary sources have limits, and documentary evidence is very scarce indeed. This study therefore makes considerable use of comparative evidence. Where possible, it is drawn from other ancient armies in the Mediterranean and Southwest Asian worlds, but occasionally comparisons are taken from loci as distant in space and time as 19th century Canada. This decision may surprise some readers, due to the tradition, recently exemplified by Victor Davis Hansen, which presents the ancient Greeks as “us” and the Persians as the “other.” I do not agree with this view, and believe that this thesis provides strong evidence against the idea that Greek and Persian armies were fundamentally different.

³¹ Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (University of California Press: Berkeley and LA, 1968)

Users of comparative evidence face the challenge of proving that two things are indeed comparable. This is not a straightforward process, particularly when one of the things compared is poorly understood. Passionate debates in ancient economic history about what modern analogies best fit the ancient evidence chasten any scholar who attempts to use comparative evidence for ancient history.³² The reader will judge whether I have been successful, but I have tried to follow three main principles.

First, it is best to draw comparisons from things close in time, space, and culture. Distance in any of these areas increase the chance that unknown factors make the comparison invalid. For example, changes in cart construction or road quality might vitiate a comparison of transport capacity. Ideally each aspect of the two situations would be tested for similarity, but this is not always possible.

Second, comparative evidence is best when it gives a plausible interpretation of things hinted at in other sources. Any writer does not know some things, and has implicit knowledge of others. Xenophon, for example, was very familiar with the details of military life due to his own campaigns and conversations with military friends. Not all of this knowledge is explicit in his writings, in part because he expected his audience to be familiar with it. The reader interested in military life must therefore use comparative evidence to understand some of his hints.

Third, when comparative evidence is used quantitatively, it is better used to suggest a plausible range of values than to set a specific value. Modern scholars must go

³² For an overview, see Walter Scheidel, Ian Morris, and Richard Saller eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007) chapters 1 and 3; see the works of Mogens Herman Hansen and Geoffrey Kron for forthright criticism of the confident use of 19th century parallels for ancient economics and demography

beyond the ancient evidence to put numbers to many things. Xenophon does not say how many soldiers were sick on a given day, or how much weight was typically loaded on a donkey, but documentary sources from other places and times can help answer these questions. In this case, it is best to use many comparisons and derive a range of likely values, rather than to use a single comparison to establish a plausible upper limit. This avoids the risk that the first comparison which comes to mind might be unusually high or low. Attempts to limit estimates of ancient populations based on 19th century census figures from the same region have been widely criticized.³³

In any event, the use of comparisons is inevitable. No writer can avoid comparing the words of his sources to his ideas about how things work, and no reader can avoid associations being called to mind as he reads. An interpretation with many close parallels is more plausible than one without any. Making them explicit at least encourages both the writer and the reader to consider whether these parallels are reasonable, and whether a difference in opinion about plausibility simply reflects different assumptions and background knowledge.

³³ Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Shotgun Method: The Demography of the Ancient Greek City-State Culture* (University of Missouri Press, Columbus, 2006); see also chapter 3 of this thesis

Chapter 2 Historical and Political Context

1. Background

From the perspective of the Achaemenid court, the last decades of the fifth century BCE were filled with the thousand minor problems of any successful empire. After the death of Artaxerxes I, and a year of civil war, the new King Darius II sat firmly upon his golden throne.³⁴ To judge by Photius' summary of Darius' reign, every few years there was a significant revolt or plot which was suppressed relatively quickly.³⁵ When word reached court that another war had broken out amongst the Yauna-Across-the-Sea, it is unlikely that King Darius paid it much attention. The Yauna (as the Persians called the Greeks, after the Ionian Greeks of western Anatolia who had first come to the attention of their eastern neighbours) were irritating, and occupied cities which Ahura Mazda had given to his chosen kings, but they were at once too weak to do serious harm and too strong to punish. The Athenians had committed some hostile actions during Artaxerxes' reign, but after Darius took the throne they had become more agreeable.³⁶ For the court, there was no clear reason to prefer the Spartans to the Athenians, unless the Spartans could be persuaded to let the Persians recover their lost cities in the eastern Aegean. On the western fringe of the empire, however, local magnates began to look for

³⁴ Photius' summary of Ctesias (*FGrH* 688 F15.47-51) describes how after the death of Artaxerxes, several men claimed the throne. The most important struggle was between Ochus and one Sogdianus or Secyndianus, both sons of Darius by concubines. Ochus overthrew Sogdianus, adopted the throne name Darius, and became King. Pierre Briant, Peter T. Daniels tr., *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, IN, 2002) 588-589 has a concise summary of these events, noting that cuneiform sources suggest that Artaxerxes died between December 424 and February 423 BCE.

³⁵ Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F15.51-56 (Photius' epitome)

³⁶ Samuel K. Eddy, "The Cold War Between Athens and Persia, ca. 449-412 BC," *Classical Philology* Vol. 68 No. 4 (October 1973) 256-257

ways to use the war to advance their own interests. The year was 414 BCE in our calendar, and the eighteenth year of Thucydides' history.³⁷

For at least a century, western Anatolia had been divided into a number of satrapies and subject states.³⁸ The most important of these were governed from Sardis in Lydia and Dascylium in Hellespontine Phrygia. Caria and Ionia were traditionally included in Lydia, with a dividing line between the two satrapies somewhere near the town of Antandrus.³⁹ A third district, Greater Phrygia, had an impressive capital at Celaenae but is less prominent in Greek texts and often appears to be controlled by the satrap of Lydia.⁴⁰ The satraps governed their territory, maintained troops, and sent tribute back to the King. When asked to do so, they also provided ships and soldiers for royal armies. In the reign of Xerxes, all of the islands and the coast from Chalcedon in the north to Cnidus in Caria had been lost to rebellions backed by the Athenians. Thirty years of war had ended in the Peace of Callias, in which both sides recognized each other's holdings and the King agreed not to bring his fleet into the Aegean or Propontis.⁴¹ After

³⁷ Diod. 13.8.8 puts it at the end of his entry for 414/413 BCE (the archonship of Tisandrus) and Thuc. 6.105 in the eighteenth year of the war, also 414/413 BCE (cf. Thuc. 6.93 for the previous "So the winter ended" entry)

³⁸ Herodotus attributes the organization of the empire into satrapies to Darius the Great, and most subsequent writers have followed him. The other main source for Persian political organization is lists of peoples or lands in royal inscriptions; both sources are controversial. Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 63-67, 172-183, 390-392 describe some of the difficulties.

³⁹ Status of Caria and Ionia: Stephen Ruzicka, "Cyrus and Tissaphernes, 407-401 BC," *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 80 No. 3 (February 1985) 204 against *CAH* 2nd ed Vol. 4 88-91, 211-216. Dividing line: Thuc. 8.108.4-5 has Antandrus in Tissaphernes' domain, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.1.24-5 has it in Pharnabazus' domain. The narrative of Xenophon, *Hell* 3.1.10ff makes it clear that the Troad was Pharnabazus' territory.

⁴⁰ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 559, 1011 and *CAH* 2nd ed Vol. 6 78-79, 217. This picture of Lydian dominance may be misleading, since the Greek sources are most interested in the Aegean coast in wartime, while Phrygia is inland. Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 497-505 discusses some of the problems.

⁴¹ The Peace of Callias is very controversial, since it falls into the poorly documented period between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars. The sources are vague on its date, terms, and significance, and some doubted that it existed at all. In particular, two later writers report that Theopompus said that the Athenians fabricated the peace with "the barbarians" or "King Darius" and that they had posted a copy in Ionian letters which had not been used in Athens at that date (*FGrH* 115 F153, 154). Plut. reports that Callisthenes, the court historian of Alexander the Great, denied that there had been any treaty in 449

he took the throne, Darius had made a similar treaty with the Athenians.⁴² The new King had many other things to worry about, and a war with the Athenians would be a long and expensive task.

When there was a large war to fight along the coast, the King sometimes appointed a general of the lowlanders to take charge.⁴³ The first men attested in this role are Megabazus and his successor Otanes at the end of the sixth century, who Herodotus calls “generals of the coastal people” (στρατηγὸς τῶν παραθαλασσιῶν ἀνδρῶν); he also mentions a certain Hydarnes who was “general of the coastal people in Asia” (στρατηγὸς δὲ τῶν παραθαλασσιῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ) in the reign of Xerxes.⁴⁴ Thucydides prefers “general of the lowlanders” (στρατηγὸς τῶν κάτω) which seems to have the same meaning.⁴⁵ Xenophon says that Cyrus “was going to be leader of all those by the sea” when he reached Sardis (ἄρξων πάντων τῶν ἐπὶ θαλάττῃ) and that in this capacity he was

BCE and said that Artaxerxes had just acted as if there was one (Plut., *Cim.* 13.5 = *FGrH* 124 F16). Although Thucydides does not mention any treaty between Artaxerxes I and the Athenians, he strongly implies that Athens and Persia were at peace in 431 (Thuc. 1.82.2 and 2.7.1 have leaders on both sides speak as if Persia is a neutral power), and that by 413 there was an agreement between Darius II and the Athenians which restricted the actions of both sides (Thuc. 8.56). The orator Andocides explicitly mentions such a treaty (3.29). Ernst Badian (“The Peace of Callias,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 107 [1987] 1-39), George Cawkwell (*The Greek Wars: The Failure of Persia* [Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2005] 136-141), Russell Meiggs (*The Athenian Empire* [Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1972] Ch. 8 and Apx. 8) and A.T. Olmstead (*History of the Persian Empire* [University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1948] 111-112) accept such a treaty. Briant (*Cyrus to Alexander 557, 558, 579, 580, 967, 968*) and Lewis (*Sparta and Persia* [E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1977] 50, 51) agree that there was a peace but are not certain how formal it was. The most influential argument that there was no peace is Klaus Meister, *Die Ungeschichtlichkeit des Kalliasfriedens und deren historische Folgen* (Franz Steiner: Wiesbaden, 1982) and German scholars seem more inclined to doubt the peace than English-speaking ones. *CAH* 2nd edition Vol. 5 121-127 makes the wise points that although the details are uncertain, it is clear that there was a peace of some kind, and that it was not Greek practice to make peace without a formal treaty.

⁴² Andocides 3.29 is the classical source, and Thuc. 8.56 implies that such an agreement existed in 413 BCE.

⁴³ For modern treatments of this office, see Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 83, 84, 86; Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums* Vol. 5 69, 70, Gomme et al., *Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 4 13-16, and Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides* Vol. 3 766-769

⁴⁴ Otanes: Herodotus 5.25. Hydarnes: Herodotus 7.135 στρατηγὸς δὲ τῶν παραθαλασσιῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ

⁴⁵ Thuc. 8.5.4

satrap of a domain (σατράπης of an ἀρχή).⁴⁶ Exactly what he meant by these and other phrases will be discussed in chapter 3. During the coming war, first Tissaphernes, then Cyrus, would hold this office. Unfortunately, no surviving text describes the powers of a general of the lowlanders. It is likely that they had the authority to fight a war which might rage across several satrapies, and some claim to the support of other satraps and subject states. The office might come with troops, ships, or money to fight such a war. There are hints that these generals had the authority to command other satraps, but each time the satrap in question considers disobedience.⁴⁷ While this may be an illusion, reflecting our sources' greater interest in the behaviour of aristocrats than the administrative details of the Persian empire, it is not hard to find examples of other societies where proud nobles found it difficult to cooperate.

2. The Actors

At this time, the two greatest magnates in western Anatolia were Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus. Tissaphernes was the son of Hydarnes, an otherwise unknown noble.⁴⁸ A number of noble Persians named Hydarnes are known, including Xerxes' "general of the coastal people in Asia" and the father of Artaxerxes II's wife Stateira, but the name of Hydarnes is not rare and there is no clear evidence that Tissaphernes' father was related to any of these.⁴⁹ Tissaphernes' family origins seem to have been to the east. He entered

⁴⁶ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.4.3: The Lacedaemonian and Boeotian ambassadors told the Athenians that Cyrus ἄρξων πάντων τῶν ἐπὶ θαλάττῃ. Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.2: (Δαρείος) Κύρον δὲ μεταπέμπεται ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἧς αὐτὸν σατράπην ἐποίησε

⁴⁷ Cyrus and Pharnabazus: Xenophon, *Hell* 1.4.4-7 Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus: Xenophon, *Hell* 3.2.13. A hypothetical general and Pharnabazus: Xenophon, *Hell* 4.1.37. Since all these anecdotes are in Xenophon, and deal with authority over a particular satrap, using them as a model for all relationships between a general and his peers is dangerous.

⁴⁸ The Xanthus stele (*Tituli Asiae Minoris* 1.44c)

⁴⁹ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 83-85; "Hydarnes," *DNP*, and chapter 2.1 of this thesis

the vision of Greek historians when he and two other generals were sent west by Darius II to suppress the revolt of Pissuthnes the satrap of Lydia. This was a serious threat, because Pissuthnes was probably the grandson of Darius the Great and nephew of Xerxes through his father Hystaspes.⁵⁰ He had served Artaxerxes I faithfully, but for some reason differed with Darius II, perhaps because Darius was a son of a concubine who had seized the throne.⁵¹ The generals bribed Pissuthnes' Greeks to desert him, and Pissuthnes surrendered, was brought to court, and was killed. Tissaphernes received his satrapy as a reward.⁵² It did not escape attention at court that Lycon, an Athenian, commanded Pissuthnes' Greeks.

The date of Tissaphernes' trip west, and therefore of his first known office, is only approximately known. The revolt of Pissuthnes falls within the period when Thucydides chose to ignore affairs in Asia, and Diodorus does not mention it either. Photius' epitome of Ctesias implies that Pissuthnes revolted in the first half of Darius' reign, perhaps circa 420 or 415. Some scholars prefer to put the end of the revolt in 413, shortly before Thucydides first mentioned Tissaphernes, but there is no basis for this; Thucydides does not mention Pissuthnes' revolt at all.⁵³ Brown has suggested that Ctesias joined the revolt and was captured by the royalists.⁵⁴ Since his seventeen year stay in Persia ended in 398/397, this implies that Pissuthnes' revolt ended in 415/414. If we accept Brown's

⁵⁰ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia*, 55

⁵¹ Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F15.47 (Photius' epitome)

⁵² Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F15.53 (Photius' epitome). For modern takes on this story see J. Roy, "The Mercenaries of Cyrus," *Historia* Vol. 16 No. 3 (July 1967) 322, Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 80, 81; Westlake, "Athens and Amorges" 321, 322

⁵³ Some scholars: Rüdiger Schmitt, "*ČIΘRAFARNAH" *Encyclopaedia Iranica* online edition <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/cirafarnah-elamite-zi-ut-ra-bar-na-assyrian-si-dir-pa-ar-na-ni-gk>, Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 358, Roy "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 322, Josef Wiesehöfer, "Tissaphernes," *DN* Thucydides: According to Thuc. 8.5.4, various people came to Sparta καὶ παρὰ Τισσαφέρνους, ὃς βασιλεῖ Δαρείῳ τῷ Ἀρταξέρξου στρατηγὸς ἦν τῶν κάτω, πρεσβευτῆς ἅμα μετ' αὐτῶν παρῆν.

⁵⁴ Brown "Suggestions for a Vita" 5-10

argument and assume that Tissaphernes was aged 20 to 30 when he came west, then he was born circa 440.

In 413, Tissaphernes controlled Lydia and inland Caria, and had a claim to Ionia and the Carian coast if they could be pried away from Athens. To judge by Photius' brief comment, these territories were inherited from Pissuthnes.⁵⁵ This domain made him a major power in his own right, with large resources of cash and soldiers. As mentioned earlier, he was also general of the lowlanders with some sort of special military authority. He had a number of military problems to deal with. Many of the upland peoples of Anatolia, such as the Mysians and Pisidians, periodically revolted, and a bastard son of Pissuthnes named Amorges held out along the coast. He had managed to persuade the Athenians to help him, so that he could retreat to Iasus on the coast if Tissaphernes attacked him with a larger army. When the Athenians ignored his complaints, Tissaphernes probably sent word to the King that they were supporting a rebel.⁵⁶

It appears that Tissaphernes did not like Greeks, nor they him.⁵⁷ Thucydides and Xenophon did not like him, and the Greek tradition about him is uniformly hostile. In their view, Tissaphernes was a schemer too cautious to face Greeks in battle, too shiftless to keep his word, and too predictable to avoid the wiles of others. The record of his career

⁵⁵ Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F.15 (Photius' epitome)

⁵⁶ Exactly how and when Athens came to support Amorges is not recorded. It falls within the period where both Thucydides and Diodorus concentrate on events in Sicily. The little scholarship on Amorges is focused on chronology and the question whether Athens gratuitously offended the Persians by supporting him. See A. Andrewes "Thucydides and the Persians," *Historia* Vol. 10 No. 1 (January 1961) 1-18, Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 1987) 29-32, Lewis *Sparta and Persia* 85-87, and H.D. Westlake, "Athens and Amorges," *Phoenix*, Vol. 31 No. 4 (Winter 1977) 319-329

⁵⁷ Thus Cawkwell (*Greek Wars*, 153, 157, 158) and Westlake ("Ionians in the Ionian War," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series Vol. 29 No. 1 (1979) 42, "Decline and Fall of Tissaphernes" 278, and "Tissaphernes in Thucydides," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 35 No. 1 (1985) 54). Sherylee Bassett, "Innocent Victims or Perjurers Betrayed?" *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 52 No. 2 (2002) 447-461 portrays Tissaphernes as treating Cyrus' Greeks with almost sociopathic distance. The main counter-example is the whirlwind career of Alcibiades, who spent a year as Tissaphernes' courtier and, at least in the beginning, managed to become very friendly to him.

tends to support this version, and it is otiose to wish for a more sympathetic tradition with which to compare it.

Pharnabazus inherited the satrapy of Hellespontine Phrygia from his father Pharnaces at some time between the spring of 414 and the winter of 413/412.⁵⁸ He had at least one adult brother with political influence.⁵⁹ Members of his family had controlled Dascylium for at least fifty years, and spent much of their lives in the satrapy. By 413 he had a network of Greek clients and a clear understanding of how to make friends with Greek aristocrats. Western Anatolia was a cosmopolitan region, where artists and hangers-on from half a dozen cultures mixed at the courts of magnates. Greek sculptors carved images of Iranian religious rites, and Lycian nobles boasted of their Iranian virtues in Greek.⁶⁰

In 413 Pharnabazus controlled the territory along the Propontis which Greeks called Hellespontine Phrygia. He faced raids from the Mysians and Bithynian Thracians who sometimes obeyed him and sometimes ravaged his territory. Most of the Greek cities in his territory were to the south, in Aeolis and the Troad, but further north Sestos, Abydos, Cyzicus, Chalcedon, and Byzantium were attractive targets. Beyond the coast, most of his territory was flat and rural. He seems to have had less money and fewer

⁵⁸ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia*, 52. Aristophanes referred to Pharnaces as if he were alive in *Birds* lines 1027-1030, first performed in April 414 according to the scholia.

⁵⁹ A.W. Gomme et al., *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1945-1981) Vol. 5 139, 140; Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1991-2008) Vol. 3 773, 774; Michael Weiskopf, "Dascylium," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* online edition <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/dascylium>. Xenophon, *Hell* 3.4.13 mentions his illegitimate brother Bagaesus, and Plut., *Alcib.* 39.1 mentions a brother Magaeus (are these the same person?) Thuc. 8.58 (the "third treaty") has "the sons of Pharnaces" as signatories.

⁶⁰ *CAH* 2nd edition Vol. 6 214-217. The excavations at Dascylium (modern Hisartepi) begun in 1988 seem to have produced no synthesis. A survey of the papers that have been published is beyond the scope of this thesis; Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 51, 52 and Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 501-3 provided a starting point but are dated.

soldiers than Tissaphernes, and was probably expected to cooperate with Darius' general of the lowlanders.

Despite his generally good relations with Greeks, Pharnabazus is a somewhat colourless character in the surviving Greek sources. He is portrayed as a forthright leader who was loyal to the King, fought with more determination than success, and could be ruthless and clever in punishing his enemies. This may reflect his distant relations with Alcibiades and Xenophon, whose versions of the events during his lifetime have been very influential on later writers. Sometimes they appear to use him as a foil for characters such as Tissaphernes and Agesilaus.⁶¹ Anecdotes in shorter or less reliable sources suggest that there may have been Greek writers closer to Pharnabazus.⁶²

Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes must have come to know each other fairly well. They were the senior Persian officials on the Yauna frontier, and shared concerns such as Mysian raids. Unfortunately, there is no evidence of their relationship before 413, when they appear as rivals for Spartan support.⁶³ Whatever their personal feelings about each other, they were competing for the King's support, and for that of other powers such as the Spartans. Both wanted more power, more authority, and more money. Achaemenid ideology prized loyalty and good service by individuals.⁶⁴ Within a broad framework of royal orders, the western satraps could act independently, and Tissaphernes and

⁶¹ I thank Waldemar Heckel for this insight.

⁶² For example, an anecdote about Pharnabazus outsmarting Lysander (Nepos, *Lys.* 4; Plut., *Lys.* 19, 20; Polyaeus, *Strategems* 7.19). Compare how Xenophon (*Hell.* 3.2.13-20) and Diodorus (14.39.4-6) treat the confrontation of the Spartans and Persians at Ephesus: while agreeing that both Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus were present, Xenophon presents Tissaphernes as the senior leader, and Diodorus Pharnabazus.

⁶³ Thuc. 8.5ff

⁶⁴ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 302-304

Pharnabazus often did. Their basic responsibilities were to keep order, pay tribute to the King, and provide soldiers when asked.⁶⁵

3. Darius Enters the War

Around the time that the Athenian invasion of Sicily was staggering towards disaster, Darius responded to Tissaphernes' complaints by commanding him to pay the tribute owed by the cities on the coast, and to take Amorges dead or alive.⁶⁶ Unless the Athenians abandoned Amorges and their pretensions to defending the cities of the coast from the Persians, this would mean at least a local war between Tissaphernes and his allies on one side, and the Athenians and their allies on the other.

Exactly why the King changed his policy towards the Yauna is not clear. Modern scholars disagree about the main reason for his decision. One view sees this decision as opportunistic, in response to Athens' terrible losses.⁶⁷ However, it is likely that the King only had a general knowledge of events in Sicily, and no ancient source presents the Persian decision as simple opportunism. The closest is Justin, who says that the King was spurred by ancestral hatred of Athens.⁶⁸ The other approach sees this as a response to the Athenian provocation of supporting Amorges.⁶⁹ This view has several advantages. It is

⁶⁵ For the duties of a satrap, see Josef Wiesehöfer, "satrap," *DNP* and Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander*, 338-347 and 390-394

⁶⁶ Thuc. 8.5. Donald Kagan, *Fall of the Athenian Empire* 29-32 makes the remarkable suggestion that the alliance with Amorges was a defensive response to actual or expected Persian intervention. I cannot see how this can be reconciled with the words of Thucydides or Andocides, our only sources for this event. It also seems more likely that Thucydides would neglect to mention an alliance in the period down to 413, when he ignored Persian affairs, than the winter of 413/412 when he was interested in portraying Athens' desperation and Sparta's relations with Persia.

⁶⁷ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 592 sees the change in policy as triggered by the Athenian disaster in Sicily. Donald Kagan, *Fall of the Athenian Empire* 29-32 also blames the disaster in Sicily. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 87 n. 25 sees opportunism as the accepted motive, but insists that revenge for supporting Amorges was also a factor.

⁶⁸ Justin, *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus* 5.1.708

⁶⁹ Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 359; Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides* Vol. 3 772-773

supported explicitly by an Athenian orator shortly after the war, who charged that the Athenians often offended strong allies to gain the support of weak ones.⁷⁰ As one example, he stated that when the Athenians chose to support Amorges against the King, the King responded by giving the Spartans five thousand talents with which they destroyed Athens' power. This theory is supported implicitly by Thucydides, who mentions Amorges, but no other Anatolian, in his short description of the King's orders to Tissaphernes.⁷¹ It also links the decision to a well-known part of Achaemenid ideology, the hatred for rebels.⁷² And it gives more plausible chronology. Until the Athenian fleet and army were destroyed in September 413, it was by no means obvious that the Sicilian Expedition would be a serious blow.⁷³ But by the winter of 413/2, Tissaphernes had already received his orders. Since it could take months for a messenger to travel from Sardis to Susa, and the King was not particularly interested in events on the Yauna frontier, it is unlikely that the King had time to learn of the defeat, discuss the decision with his advisors, and decide to turn against Athens.⁷⁴

In the summer of 413, Athens suffered two blows. First, the entire armament in Sicily was captured by the Syracusans. The Athenians and their allies lost tens of

in Thucydides 8.5.5

⁷⁰ Andocides 3.29. On this, see Westlake, "Athens and Amorges"

⁷¹ Thuc. 8.5. On this, see Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 85-7 and Gomme et al., *Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 5 16

⁷² The *loci classici* are Darius' inscriptions DB and DN (in R.N. Sharp trans., *The Inscriptions in Old Persian Cuneiform of the Achaemenian Emperors* [Central Council for the Celebration of the 25th century of the Founding of the Iranian Empire: Tehran, 1964]); for modern works see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 122-127

⁷³ For the date, see Kagan, *Fall of the Athenian Empire* 1 and F. Richard Stephenson and Louay J. Fatoohi, "The Eclipses Recorded by Thucydides," *Historia* Vol. 50 No. 2 (2011) 249

⁷⁴ Travel time: Herodotus 5.49 ff., Aristophanes *Acharnians* 65-95, Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 357-359. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 57 notes that messages could travel faster, but important messages usually came with an advocate or advocates to speak in their support. Royal interest: Darius' only significant intervention in the Aegean was sending his son with money in 407. This does not suggest that events in the Aegean were more important than any other frontier.

thousands of men and over a hundred ships.⁷⁵ Second, the Spartans marched into Attica and occupied the town of Decelea. In the previous war they had only stayed for a few weeks each summer, but now they wintered in Athenian territory, raiding the countryside and collecting runaway slaves.

4. Negotiations at Sparta, winter 413/412 BCE

When news of the defeat in Sicily reached Ionia, certain Ionians began to talk of revolt.⁷⁶ Many Ionians were angry that their defensive alliance had become dominated by Athens, and that the Athenians demanded heavy tributes which they used to fight their own wars and decorate their city.⁷⁷ Cities which refused to join or tried to defect were brutally punished: Thucydides devotes much attention to Mitylene in 427 and Melos in 416.⁷⁸ Many Ionians must have lost kinsmen in the Sicilian expedition, since the Athenians hired rowers from amongst their subjects.⁷⁹ Some wanted political independence, and trusted the Spartan promise to “free Greece.”⁸⁰ Others were opposed

⁷⁵ CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 460-462

⁷⁶ It is difficult to understand what the Athenians’ allies thought of the empire, since almost all the texts are from Athens, and strongly influenced by domestic politics. Critics of the Athenian democracy, such as Thucydides, tended to believe that the Athenians were hated by their subjects. No doubt every city, in every year, had a different spectrum of opinion. Some overviews of the problem are Meiggs, *Athenian Empire* (especially ch. 11, 14, and 21), 290; Donald Bradeen, “The Popularity of the Athenian Empire,” *Historia*, Vol. 9 No. 3 (1960) 257-269; CAH 2nd edition Vol. 5 127-133; and G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, “On the Character of the Athenian Empire,” *Historia* Vol. 3 No. 1 (1954) 1-41

⁷⁷ Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, Ch. 9. Thuc. 2.13 (Pericles’ speech before the first Spartan invasion) is one of many passages in the first and second books of Thucydides where his speakers assume that Athens uses and will continue to use the tributes for its own ends.

⁷⁸ Mitylene: Thuc. 3.36-50, Melos: Thuc. 5.84-116. The copious literature on these incidents, and on the speeches which Thucydides composed for them, cannot be discussed here.

⁷⁹ Thuc. 1.121.3-4 (speech in favour of war by the Corinthians), 1.131 (rebuttal by Pericles), 6.43 (on allied ships in the first Sicilian expedition of 415). Brief references to this practice are scattered across modern writers: Hans van Wees, *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities* (Bristol Classical Press: London, 2004) 209 only cites ancient source for it, but Meiggs *Athenian Empire* 439-441 has a brief analysis.

⁸⁰ Thuc. 2.8.4

to the current regime in their own city, and hoped that breaking free from Athens would be the first step to taking power at home.⁸¹

In the winter of 413/2, several delegations came to Sparta. One included Chians, Erythraeans, and an unnamed (and therefore probably barbarian) representative of Tissaphernes.⁸² They wanted the Spartans to send a fleet to Ionia and encourage revolt. Another included two exiles, Calligeitus the Megarian and Timagoras the Cyzicene, from Pharnabazus' court.⁸³ They wanted the Spartans to send a fleet to the Propontis and help bring over the cities to Pharnabazus. The Syracusans also had representatives, since they had sent a fleet to help punish the Athenians, and the Lesbians had sent an embassy to King Agis in Decelea.⁸⁴ Even the Euboeans, so close to Attica, were willing to rebel if the Spartans would help them.⁸⁵ The allies of the Spartans in mainland Greece, such the Boeotians, had their own views.

The satraps seem to have done this at their own initiative.⁸⁶ Tissaphernes' orders, as reported by Thucydides, did not mention how he was to recover the cities of the coast, but seeking help from other enemies of Athens was a reasonable step. Under the peace

⁸¹ Thucydides' comments on the revolts at Chios (Thuc. 8.9.3, 8.14, 8.38) are a good example.

⁸² Thuc. 8.5. I find Hornblower's comment on this unclear (see Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 3 773)

⁸³ Thuc. 8.6

⁸⁴ Thuc. 8.5 says the Lesbians appealed to Agis, Plut., *Agesilaus* 24.1 says that they reached Sparta

⁸⁵ Thuc. 8.4

⁸⁶ Modern accounts often report this action without stating who gave the orders (Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 359, Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 591-592, CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 464-465, Meiggs *Athenian Empire* 351-353). Cawkwell (*Greek Wars* 147-155) and Kagan (*Fall of the Athenian Empire* 28-32) see Tissaphernes as obeying explicit royal instructions; Lewis (*Sparta and Persia* 87) notes that Thucydides says nothing of the sort, and Westlake ("Tissaphernes in Thucydides" 45) agrees. The salient points seem to be these: Thucydides states that Tissaphernes can pay the Spartan fleet, but only implies that Pharnabazus can do the same (8.6, 8.29, 8.99); Thucydides has Tissaphernes explain that he can only pay a moderate wage without permission from the King (8.29); and Thucydides' source amongst Alcibiades' party believed that Tissaphernes was paying the fleet at his own expense (8.45). The simplest explanation is that Tissaphernes made the alliance himself, asked Darius for a subsidy to pay for it, and was answered with the promise of a Phoenician fleet. Cawkwell's argument is strong, but remains speculative.

treaty between Darius and the Athenians, the King had agreed bring ships into the Aegean. The same rule clearly applied to his satraps, who in any case had hardly any ports in which to build a fleet.⁸⁷ Without a fleet, Tissaphernes could only take those cities on the mainland which cooperated or had no walls, and they would still be vulnerable to sudden Athenian attacks unless he dispersed his forces and drained his purse on garrisons. Exactly which cities were walled and which were not in this period is a difficult question to answer: Thucydides states that in the 5th year of the war, Ionia was unfortified.⁸⁸ Yet fortified cities often appear in his narrative of the war in Ionia, and many rebellious cities built or rebuilt walls.⁸⁹ Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes were dependent on others for a fleet: on the Ionians, the Spartans, or the King.

The debate at Sparta must have been as complex as any of the great conferences of the Second World War. Everyone present wanted something slightly different. The immediate question was how much help Sparta should send, and where. Tissaphernes' representative could argue that Ionia contained a larger part of the Athenian empire, with greater revenues and military resources. The Chians alone promised to provide sixty ships.⁹⁰ On the other hand, a revolt there would not be fatal to Athens as long as it held the islands and could import grain from the Black Sea. Calligeitus and Timagoras could point out on Pharnabazus' behalf that a superior fleet in the Propontis or Hellespont could end the war in a few months. With the Spartans at Decelea, it was no longer practical to bring in food from Euboea, or to work the land between Spartan incursions. Pharnabazus'

⁸⁷ Diod. 12.4.5-6 mentions Persian ships. Plut. *Cim.* 13.4, 19.4 mentions the King's ships. A list of other sources with the Greek texts is available in Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, 487-489.

⁸⁸ Thuc. 3.33.2 has the genitive absolute ἀτειχίστου γὰρ οὐσης τῆς Ἰωνίας. Meiggs, *Athenian Empire* 149 takes this as a given., as do Gomme et al, *Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 2 294, 295 and G.L. Cawkwell, "The Peace Between Athens and Persia," *Phoenix*, Vol. 51 No. 2 (Summer 1997) 122-125 and *The Greek Wars* 141

⁸⁹ Thuc. 8.14. Meiggs, *Athenian Empire* 149-151 takes this as a given.

⁹⁰ Thuc. 8.6

supporters also had an immediate incentive in the form of 25 talents of silver.⁹¹ Aside from these strategic arguments, everyone involved must have invoked or developed personal and family connections. The best documented example of this is Alcibiades, the flamboyant Athenian exile then staying in Sparta. He came from a noble family with blood or marriage ties to many leading Athenians, an old tradition of being Sparta's agents (πρόξενοι) at Athens, and a close connection to the Spartan ephor Endius.⁹² According to Thucydides, he was persuaded to support the Chians and Tissaphernes, and asked his friends and relations at Sparta to support him.⁹³ The future status of Ionia must have also been controversial. Many Spartans were reluctant to cooperate with the barbarian, and took their promise to liberate the Ionians seriously. This was unacceptable to the Persians, who at minimum wanted to collect tribute from the cities of the coast. Others wanted to collect tribute from Ionia, and ensure that the right sort of people were in charge there. A third group were most concerned with winning the war and humbling Athens, and were willing to make whatever concessions were necessary to win Persian support. Susa was far, but Athens was near.

Finally, the Spartans decided to act with moderate force.⁹⁴ The assembly decided to send a fleet of forty ships to Chios, with Agis sending ten to Lesbos, after confirming that the Chians did indeed have a fleet ready. Tissaphernes promised to pay the fleet if it came to his territory.⁹⁵ Pharnabazus' representative were dismissed with a vague commitment to send another fleet later, and replied that they would contribute their

⁹¹ Thuc. 8.8

⁹² A good recent overview of Alcibiades' family is Walter M. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, (Routledge: London, 1989) 1-17 which suggests that Alcibiades was related to Peisistratus, Cleisthenes, Pericles, and the Spartan ephor Endius (on whom see Ellis, *Alcibiades* 113 n. 8).

⁹³ Thuc. 8.6, Plut., *Alcib.* 24.1

⁹⁴ Thuc. 8.6

⁹⁵ Thuc. 8.29 (mentioned retrospectively, in a typical example of the roughness of book 8)

money when such a fleet was ready.



Map by Richard A. LaFleur, Tom Elliott, Nicole Feldl, Alexandra Retzleff, and Joyce Uy.
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Figure 1: Western Anatolia in 412 BCE⁹⁶

5. The Ionian War

Meanwhile, Tissaphernes was raising and organizing his army. Although the Greek sources do not describe this, he must have kept in contact with his sympathizers in Ionia, and tried to understand what was happening in Sparta. He waited patiently for the Spartan fleet, but none came. Finally, in midsummer he heard that a fleet had reached

⁹⁶ This map is adapted from the Ancient World Mapping Centre map “AEGEUM MARE (Wheelock’s Latin Reader)” version 3 which is available under a Creative Commons BY-NC 3.0 license

Chios and persuaded the Chians to revolt- but a fleet of only five ships! Clazomenae and Erythryae had joined the revolt, and their citizens marched and sailed south along the coast towards Miletus. Tissaphernes' officer Stages hurried towards them with his army, joined the rebels at the town of Teos, which had been hastily evacuated by an Athenian fleet of eight ships, and slighted the town.⁹⁷ Tissaphernes met with the rebels at Miletus, which joined in the revolt. There he heard a sorry tale of indecision and defeat.⁹⁸ The Spartans had debated and discussed and changed their minds until it was time for the Isthmian games, which included a sacred truce during which Athenians could travel to Peloponnesian territory.⁹⁹ When they set out with 21 allied ships, the Athenians were ready for them and drove them ashore near Corinth. After more delay, the Spartans had sent their admiral Chalcideus to Chios with five ships from Laconia, the only ones available.

Now that Spartan forces had finally arrived, it was necessary to make a more formal agreement about the future of Ionia.¹⁰⁰ On behalf of their respective leaders, Tissaphernes and Chalcideus agreed to wage war together against the Athenians and to make no separate peace. They agreed to prevent the Athenians from collecting anything from their allies. They agreed that each would help punish anyone who revolted from the other. And they agreed that the King's territory included all the territory and all the cities which the King or any of his ancestors had held. This agreement was a triumph for

⁹⁷ Thuc. 8.16-17

⁹⁸ Thuc. 8.7-12

⁹⁹ The Isthmian games appear to have been in or around the Attic month of Hecatombaeon, roughly June or July. The difficulty is that 412 BCE was an Olympic year, and the Olympic games in July or August required most of the preceding month for training and ceremonies. See A.W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, and K.J. Dover, *A Commentary on Thucydides* (Clarendon, 1981), Vol. 5 23, 24; Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides* Vol. 3 782-783, "Olympic Games," *Oxford Classical Dictionary* Third Edition Revised (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2012); and Donald Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World* (Blackwell, 2007) 114

¹⁰⁰ Thuc. 8.18

Tissaphernes; it gave him a claim to most of the Aegean, and a lasting alliance against Athens, but committed him to very little. It was probably at this time that Tissaphernes first met Alcibiades, the Athenian exile who had urged the Spartans to send ships to Chios. He had sailed east with Chalcideus.

Meanwhile, Amorges had heard of the revolt and was hurrying north to help the Athenians.¹⁰¹ Thucydides is unfortunately unclear whether Amorges was south of Ephesus, threatening Miletus, or north, threatening the rebels near Chios. Tissaphernes certainly turned north, touching the coast at Teos before turning inland, and one plausible explanation was that he was chasing Amorges. Whether or not he got as far north as Chios, Amorges escaped south to Iasus, an island city just off the Carian coast, but was unable to interfere with the Chians and Peloponnesians.

For the rest of the summer, small Athenian and Peloponnesian fleets sped east. One of the largest Athenian fleets brought thirty five hundred hoplites under three generals to attack Miletus.¹⁰² Tissaphernes and the Peloponnesians hurried to defend the town, forming up with the Milesians. Each army won on one wing, Tissaphernes and the Peloponnesians being driven back but the Milesians defeating their opponents. Tissaphernes withdrew, but his army was intact and he could call up reinforcements. After starting to wall in Miletus, the Athenians abandoned their spoils and sailed north when they heard that an enemy fleet was approaching. This was made up of Peloponnesians and their Syracusan allies who had come east to punish the Athenians.

¹⁰¹ Thuc. 8.19-20. Kagan, *Fall of the Athenian Empire* 54 n. 12 does not address the juxtaposition of Amorges and Tissaphernes, or that the rebels had small holdings on the mainland which were vulnerable to Amorges' army.

¹⁰² Thuc. 8.25-28

When Tissaphernes heard that the fleet had arrived, he realized that he had a wonderful opportunity. Amorges was at the island city of Iasos, only 40 kilometres south of Miletus, with no fleet to protect him, no stone wall to stop invaders, and no idea that he had been abandoned.¹⁰³ He hurried to the coast and persuaded the Peloponnesians to attack Iasos by sea. The attack was a complete success; the defenders assumed that the approaching fleet was Athenian, and the attackers stormed the town. The Peloponnesians sacked Iasos, captured Amorges and his people, and sold them and the town to Tissaphernes. The revolt of Amorges was over.

Elsewhere in the Aegean, the war went badly for Tissaphernes and his allies. Athenian reinforcements continued to arrive, reinforce the loyalists and harass the rebels. A coup at Samos killed or expelled the Spartophiles, and Lesbos remained grudgingly loyal.¹⁰⁴ Without an overwhelming Peloponnesian fleet on the coast, many cities were reluctant to commit themselves to a revolt. This was particularly true of the islands, which the Athenians could attack without fear of Persian counterattacks. Rather than revolting together, the Ionians remained divided between rebels and loyalists. By winter, it was clear that the war would last several more years. The situation was so urgent that both sides risked sailing in winter, when poor visibility and sudden storms confined most sailors to port.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ For the insularity of Iasos, see Hans Kaletsch, "Iasos [5]," *DN* The stone fortifications at Iasos seem to be no earlier than the fourth century; see Simon Hornblower, *Mausolus* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1982) 317 with notes and photos.

¹⁰⁴ Samos: Thuc. 8.21; Lesbos: Thuc. 8.23, 24

¹⁰⁵ Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1995) 270-272

6. Negotiations at Miletus, winter 412/411 BCE

Not long after the Battle of Miletus, Alcibiades fled to Tissaphernes and asked for sanctuary.¹⁰⁶ He said that his enemies at Sparta had sentenced him to death, and offered to serve as a counsellor using his knowledge of the Spartans and Athenians. Tissaphernes accepted the offer, because Alcibiades was clever and could be very charming when he wanted to be. There was a story that Tissaphernes even named his favourite park after Alcibiades.¹⁰⁷

Now that there was a Spartan fleet at Miletus, Tissaphernes fulfilled his promise and started to pay it.¹⁰⁸ He offered six obols per man per day for the first month, but explained that he would only be able to pay three thereafter without permission from the King. The Spartan commander Therimenes agreed, but the Syracusan commander Hermocrates objected. Years later, Alcibiades would say that he had persuaded Tissaphernes to reduce the pay and to bribe the Peloponnesians to agree. But three obols a day was a reasonable wage for rowers, and created no hardship in the fleet.¹⁰⁹ The good state of their alliance was reflected in a coordinated military action some time later. Tissaphernes entered into communications with some Cnidians, and persuaded them to revolt as soon as a fleet of one dozen ships from the Peloponnese arrived.¹¹⁰ Arrive it did, and the Athenian counterattack took six of the ships but not the town. By early in the winter, Tissaphernes' subordinate Tamos the Egyptian could be called "lieutenant-

¹⁰⁶ Thuc. 8.45, Plut. *Alcib.* 24.1-3, CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 468-9

¹⁰⁷ Plut., *Alcib.*, 24.5

¹⁰⁸ Thuc. 8.29, 8.45

¹⁰⁹ Thuc. 8.36, 8.45

¹¹⁰ Thuc. 8.35

governor of Ionia” and give orders to an Ionian town.¹¹¹ Although Tissaphernes did not yet have firm control of most of Ionia, his control was expanding. Unfortunately, this expansion is only described when the Peloponnesian fleet was involved.¹¹²

Shortly afterwards, a new Spartan commander arrived at Miletus, and the Spartans asked to renegotiate their treaty with Tissaphernes on the grounds that it was too favourable to him.¹¹³ Thucydides in fact says that no less than three treaties between the Peloponnesians and the King were made this winter, and these create a number of difficulties. Moses Finley opined that the first two were mere drafts, with vague wording and no date attached, and that only the third was authoritative.¹¹⁴ Pierre Briant, David Lewis, and Adam Andrewes are more inclined to take Thucydides literally.¹¹⁵ George Cawkwell points out that it is unprecedented for a Greek state to make a treaty then immediately demand its renegotiation, and calls the first few treaties “drafts” which were rejected at Sparta or Susa.¹¹⁶ Although the treaties required ratification by the Spartans and the King, we hear nothing about what either thought of each version.

The new treaty was broadly similar to the first, but each side made a concession. The Spartans agreed that they and their allies would not collect tribute from the King’s territory, and the King agreed to pay for any force which he had asked to come to his country. It is difficult to understand why either change was necessary. There is no record

¹¹¹ Thuc. 8.31 Τάμωσ Ἰωνίας ὑπαρχοσ ὄν; cf. 8.87

¹¹² See Thuc. 8.87 where he mentions that Tissaphernes had controlled Miletus and Cnidus. Except in this aside, both cities only appear in his narrative when the Athenian or Peloponnesian fleet did something significant there.

¹¹³ Thuc. 8.26

¹¹⁴ Rex Warner tr., Moses Finley intr., *Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian War* (Penguin Books: London, 1972) 618

¹¹⁵ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 592-593, Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 90-96, 103-107, Andrewes in CAH 2nd edition Vol. 5 467-471, 473-474

¹¹⁶ Cawkwell, *Greek Wars* 149-150

that the Spartans had tried to collect tribute from any Anatolian city, and Tissaphernes had already agreed to pay the Spartan fleet.

Some time after the December solstice, however, a new Peloponnesian fleet made landfall at Caunus on the south shore of Caria.¹¹⁷ This fleet of 27 ships carried a board of a dozen men with the authority to replace the current commander and to send an expedition to the Hellespont if that seemed wise to them. After some delays and a small battle, the two fleets met at Cnidus, and Tissaphernes came to meet them and plan the next year's campaign. These new commanders were upset with the current arrangements, one Lichas in particular professing outrage that the terms of the treaty gave the King claim to the islands and much of European Greece and asking to negotiate a new treaty. Tissaphernes stormed out, and the Peloponnesians sailed off to seize control of Rhodes as a base and source of funds out of Tissaphernes' control. They stayed there, Thucydides says, for eighty days.¹¹⁸

Tissaphernes had been disappointed by his allies. They had sent too few ships too late to convince all of Ionia to revolt. Rather than accept the price of his help, they kept quibbling over terms and demanding that he renegotiate. When Tissaphernes was young, Artaxerxes I had sent word to Sparta that he was tired of hearing different things from each ambassador, and would only negotiate if they made a single clear proposal.¹¹⁹ Clearly, the Spartans had not learned their lesson over the following thirteen years. At the same time, they now had little to offer Tissaphernes. From the Hellespont to Cnidus, no city except Halicarnassus appears to have been loyal to Athens.¹²⁰ While many of these

¹¹⁷ Thuc. 8.39-43

¹¹⁸ Thuc. 8.44.4 τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἡσύχαζον ἡμέρας ὀγδοήκοντα

¹¹⁹ Thuc. 4.50

¹²⁰ Working through a list of cities, Thucydides book 8, and Westlake "Ionians in the Ionian War,"

cities hovered vaguely between independence and submission to Sparta or Tissaphernes, the Spartans were unable or unwilling to force them to submit to Tissaphernes. It was probably at this time that Tissaphernes let his pay for the Spartans fall into arrears.¹²¹

Meanwhile, Alcibiades was playing a dangerous game.¹²² While continuing to advise Tissaphernes, he made overtures to the Athenians saying that he was hampering Tissaphernes' attacks on them and would try to get him to support Athens if they replaced their democracy with an oligarchy. He said that he had caused the Peloponnesian fleet not to be paid. Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch all repeat statements that seem to derive from him or his friends, and these statements should be treated with caution. For example, Thucydides gives two stories about how the Spartan fleet began to be poorly paid. One links the pay cut from six to three obols per day, the start of irregular payment, and Alcibiades' advice to Tissaphernes. The other story says that the pay cut was not a hardship, and suggests that pay became irregular around the time when the Spartans sailed off to Rhodes in a huff. The former sounds like a mix of retrospective blurring of a complicated series of events and Alcibiades' version for Athenian consumption.

As a result of Alcibiades' messages to the Athenians, a group of eleven men of oligarchic sympathies went to Tissaphernes and offered to make concessions in exchange for peace.¹²³ They offered to surrender Ionia and the islands and other things, but refused when Alcibiades proposed that the King should be able to bring his fleet into the Aegean.

Halicarnassus stands out as a place of refuge and source of funds for Athens. As Westlake points out, many Ionian cities tried to be neutral. Hornblower, *Mausolus* 5-6, 28-29 provides other evidence.

¹²¹ Thucydides has two statements on this subject, at 8.36 (apparently from the perspective of the Peloponnesian fleet) and 8.45-47 (a summary of the story that Alcibiades told to the Athenians)

¹²² Thucydides 8.45-47, Malcolm F. McGregor, "The Genius of Alcibiades," *Phoenix* Vol. 19 No. 1 (Spring 1965) 37-41

¹²³ Thuc. 8.56, CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 472, 473

According to Thucydides, Tissaphernes was still more frightened by the Athenians than the Spartans, and Alcibiades made excessive demands rather than admit that he did not have the power to make peace. As David Lewis points out, Tissaphernes would have had a hard time explaining to the King why he had abandoned his alliance with the Spartans and made peace with the Athenians who had stolen his cities and supported the rebel Amorges.¹²⁴ Negotiations with Athens might win a dramatic concession which would satisfy Darius, but would almost certainly give him a pulley to haul the Spartans back from Rhodes.

At the end of the winter, Tissaphernes and the Spartans made a third agreement.¹²⁵ This one stated that the King's territory was in Asia, and that Tissaphernes would pay for the Peloponnesian fleet until the King's fleet arrived. As Thucydides later makes clear, Tissaphernes expected a fleet of three hundred Phoenician ships to arrive in the spring. As Andrewes points out, Thucydides never explains how or when the decision was made to bring in a royal fleet.¹²⁶ Tissaphernes had no power to order such a thing, but he could have requested it; just as likely, the King could have decided to send a fleet west, and Tissaphernes used it to help negotiate better terms. There are signs that the King had given his views on the rate of pay for the allied fleet, and on how his territory should be defined.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 101-103

¹²⁵ Thuc. 8.57-59

¹²⁶ CAH 2nd ed Vol. 4 469, 470. On the Phoenician fleet, see also David Lewis, "The Phoenician Fleet in 411," *Historia* Vol. 7 No. 4 (1958) 392-397

¹²⁷ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia*, 104, 105; CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 472, 473

7. The Athenian Recovery, 411-407 BCE

The war continued in the summer of 411 in an atmosphere of general distrust. The Peloponnesians waited for the Phoenician fleet to arrive, their pay falling more and more in arrears. While they waited, Pharnabazus' requests for help were finally answered by a land expedition under Dercyllidas.¹²⁸ Abydos and Lampsacus immediately went over, but the Athenians sent ships north, recaptured Lampsacus and settled at Sestos on the European side of the Hellespont. Neither Pharnabazus nor the Peloponnesians were able to get troops to Lampsacus in time to defend it, but they could keep the Athenians from settling down on the Asian side. Later that summer Clearchus the Spartan also came by land, and with ten ships which had arrived separately brought about the revolt of Byzantium; Chalcedon on the Asian side of the strait may have gone over at this time.¹²⁹

Tissaphernes continued to fall behind on paying the fleet. Whether this failure to pay reflected a real shortage of money or a deliberate choice by Tissaphernes cannot be determined. Tissaphernes had to maintain both his own army and the Peloponnesian fleet, while building fortifications along the coast, and at least his mercenaries required payment in silver. It is clear, and more important, that most of the Peloponnesians and Syracusans *believed* that Tissaphernes was cheating them. Whereas Cyrus would later convince Xenophon that his failure to pay his men was due to factors beyond his control, Tissaphernes was unable to do the same. In any case, the rowers and marines could not afford to serve at their own expense until pay arrived.

¹²⁸ Thuc. 8.61, 8.62

¹²⁹ Thuc. 8.80. Thucydides does not mention Chalcedon, except at 4.75.2 where it appears friendly to Athens. It paid tribute to Athens before the war (Meiggs, *Athenian Empire* 248, 270) and it would be unusual if a land force in Asia caused Byzantium on the European side of the straits to change sides, but not Chalcedon on the Asian side. Xenophon, *Hell.* 1.1.35 has Clearchus arrive in winter 411/410 with authority over Byzantium and Chalcedon.

Meanwhile the Phoenician fleet reached Aspendus on the south coast of Anatolia, and Tissaphernes travelled there leaving Tamos in charge of the fleet at Miletus.¹³⁰ The fleet never reached the Aegean. Exactly why was not known to any surviving writer, but there were many theories. Even Thucydides chose to list several possibilities, rather than following his usual practice and only mentioning the explanation which he favoured. Some argued that the fleet was a mere ploy to weaken the Peloponnesians by delay and desertion, as he and Tamos failed to provide enough pay. Others argued that Tissaphernes just wanted to make money out of the fleet but not use it (this might have involved skimming from their pay, selling them his goods at high prices, or taking bribes). Still others argued that he was really eager to prove himself to the Spartans. Thucydides decided to default to his theory that Tissaphernes wanted to drag out the war and weaken the Spartans. Two explanations for the halting of the fleet are attributed to Tissaphernes; Thucydides has him say that too few ships had been collected, Diodorus that the fleet had been called back to defend Phoenicia.¹³¹

If Tissaphernes was afraid of the Spartans, refusing to bring up a fleet was a strange choice. A fleet of 147 ships would have made him the strongest sea power in the Aegean, able to crush the Athenians and make the Peloponnesians cooperate. Once he controlled Ionia and its ports, he could build his own fleet to deter the Spartans. The Spartans had accepted the approach of a royal fleet, and there is no sign that they had asked Tissaphernes or Pharnabazus to only fight on land.

¹³⁰ Thuc. 8.87

¹³¹ Thuc. 8.87, Diod. 13.46

It is more likely that events outside of the Aegean prompted the King to recall the fleet.¹³² Contemporary documents suggest that there was some sort of unrest in Egypt, linked with an attack on the Jewish-Aramean military colony at Elephantine in 410. There are also references to a Median revolt, an Arabian threat, and trouble on Cyprus.¹³³ If the fleet did halt at Aspendus for some time, as Thucydides implies, perhaps it was torn between instructions to go elsewhere and Tissaphernes' attempts to bring it to his satrapy.¹³⁴

The Spartans eventually tired of waiting without pay and sailed north to the Hellespont.¹³⁵ Pharnabazus had continued to ask them for help in recovering the cities in his territory which were still loyal to Athens. For a few days they had 86 ships in the Hellespont against eighteen Athenian ships, but soon the main Athenian fleet arrived and won a victory at Point Cynossema. The Peloponnesian fleet withdrew to Abydos on the Asian side of the strait. As a mark of their discontent with Tissaphernes, they supported a delegation of Antandrians who wanted to throw out Arsaces, the garrison commander appointed by Tissaphernes.¹³⁶ Thucydides links this with two similar events: one at Miletus the previous winter, which he presents as an impulsive popular action, and one at Cnidus, which he mentions nowhere else.¹³⁷ Once again, one wishes that he had chosen to describe the spread of Persian control in Ionia in greater detail.

¹³² Lewis, "Phoenician Fleet in 411," Olmstead *History of the Persian Empire 363-367*. Brian, *Cyrus to Alexander 596-597* gives a sceptical view with recent citations.

¹³³ Median revolt: Xenophon, *Hell* 1.2.19 (an interpolation). Arabs: Diod. 13.46, Cyprus: Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire 367* note 39

¹³⁴ The fleet still appears to be at Aspendus at Thuc. 8.99, and Tissaphernes is still there at 8.108 in late summer.

¹³⁵ Thuc. 8.99-107

¹³⁶ Thuc. 8.108

¹³⁷ Miletus: Thuc. 8.84-85. Cnidus: Thuc. 8.35.1 and Gomme et al., *Commentary on Thucydides* Vol. 4 357

In the winter of 411/410 there was another battle in the Hellespont, near Abydos.¹³⁸ The Athenians won this battle, but Pharnabazus was present with his army, so they could do little harm once the Peloponnesians got ashore. Tissaphernes arrived after the battle, tried to explain why the Phoenician fleet had not arrived, and arrested Alcibiades when he approached him on behalf of the Athenians.¹³⁹ Some months before he had deserted Tissaphernes for the Athenian fleet at Samos, travelled to Aspendus to stop the fleet coming in on the Peloponnesian side, then travelled to the Hellespont.

The Spartan fleet and Pharnabazus' army travelled east to Cyzicus, which the Athenians had seized after the battle of Cynossema.¹⁴⁰ They took it, and the Athenians launched their usual naval expedition to retake the city. The Spartan fleet withdrew close to shore, and the Athenians launched a simultaneous land and sea attack by disembarking some of their crews. Pharnabazus' mercenaries and some of the Peloponnesians turned to face them, but the Spartan commander was killed, and his men turned and fled. The Athenians captured the fleet and the city, but were unable to pursue inland because of Pharnabazus' cavalry. While Pharnabazus consoled the Peloponnesians that ships were easier to replace than men, the Battle of Cyzicus had been a disaster for Pharnabazus' cause. The Spartans even offered to make peace, but the Athenians refused.¹⁴¹ This offer cannot have pleased Tissaphernes or Pharnabazus, although Tissaphernes had done the same by accepting an Athenian embassy two years before.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Xenophon, *Hell.* 1.1.408, Diod. 13.45.1-13.47.2

¹³⁹ Xenophon, *Hell.* 1.1.9-10, Diod. 13.46 (attributed to Pharnabazus)

¹⁴⁰ Xenophon, *Hell.* 1.1.11-23, Diod. 13.48.2-13.51

¹⁴¹ Diod. 13.52 (is Nepos, *Alc.* 5.5 "horum in imperio tanta commu rerum facta est, ut Lacedaemonii, qui paulo ante victores viguerant, perterriti pacem peterent" a reference to this?)

¹⁴² Thuc. 8.56

The Peloponnesians still controlled Byzantium and Chalcedon, and with them the straits that connected the Propontis and the Black Sea. For the next two years, the fighting concentrated in this area. The chronology is complicated, because Xenophon seems to have forgotten to note the end of one campaigning season and the beginning of another.¹⁴³ At first, an Athenian fleet settled at Chrysopolis near Chalcedon, and another ravaged Pharnabazus' territory.¹⁴⁴ When the Athenians began to circumvalate Chalcedon, the Spartan garrison sallied forth while Pharnabazus' men tried to break in.¹⁴⁵ Another expedition attacked Byzantium on the European side of the strait.¹⁴⁶ The Athenians walled in Byzantium, which was defended by its citizens and a Peloponnesian garrison. As the siege of Chalcedon progressed, the Athenians offered Pharnabazus a deal; they would end their siege if Pharnabazus let them bring ambassadors to the King, and Chalcedon paid them tribute and a fine. Pharnabazus accepted towards the end of 408.¹⁴⁷ Shortly thereafter, Byzantium fell to treachery while its commander Clearchus was

¹⁴³ All dates in Greek history between the end of Thucydides' narrative in summer 411 and the battle of Aegospotomi in summer 405 are very uncertain. The part of the war narrated by Thucydides can be tied to our calendar by correlating his rigorous system of summers and winter with his references to astronomical events and dates in various Greek calendars. He believed that the war had lasted twenty seven years (Thuc. 5.26). His narrative ends in the summer of the 21st year of his war, 411 BCE. Xenophon divides his account of the remainder of the war into six years, and implies that the first of those years is the winter of Thucydides' 21st (Xenophon, *Hell* 1.1.1, 1.1.9), so at some point he elides over a year's events. The confused chronological interpolations to this part of the *Hellenica* suggest that ancient readers realized the difficulty. There are four possible solutions: one adds a year between Thucydides and Xenophon (the solution of Diodorus, but dismissed offhand by Noel Robertson, "The Sequence of Events in the Aegean in 408 and 407 B.C.," *Historia*, Vol. 29 No. 3 (1980) 282 n. 2), another adds a year in Xenophon, *Hell* 1.1 between the Battle of Cyzicus and Thrasyllus' campaign in Ionia, a third adds a year in Xenophon, *Hell* 1.4 between the arrival of Cyrus and Alcibiades' return to Athens, and the fourth adds a year in Xenophon, *Hell* 1.5 between Cyrus' arrival at Sardis and the Battle of Notium. Overviews of the problem can be found in CAH 2nd ed Vol. 5 503-504 (which favours the second theory) and Noel Robertson, "The Sequence of Events in the Aegean in 408 and 407 B.C." (which favours the third). I will follow the second, not because I am convinced it is correct, but because it seems most accepted by scholars.

¹⁴⁴ Diod. 13.64.2-4, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.3.2-4

¹⁴⁵ Diod. 13.66.1-3, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.3.4-12

¹⁴⁶ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.3.10, 1.13-22, Diod. 13.66.3-6

¹⁴⁷ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.3.8-9 (it is intriguing that Diod. 13.66-67, by a writer generally sympathetic to Pharnabazus, leaves this out)

visiting Pharnabazus in Asia.¹⁴⁸ Not long afterwards, of all the towns in the Hellespont and Propontis only Abydus still resisted the Athenians.¹⁴⁹

Why did Pharnabazus agree to take Athenian ambassadors to the King? It is possible that he was depressed by the failure of the Spartan war effort, and the loss of the cities on the coast. There was political turmoil and a war with Carthage at Syracuse, and he had seen some of the Spartans' Sicilian allies return home. He might have seriously considered making peace if the Athenians would surrender some rights to the cities of the coast.¹⁵⁰ Although he had fought against the Athenians several times, and provided pay and timber to the Peloponnesians, they had not been very helpful allies. His instructions from the King were to collect tribute from the cities, and with the resources he had available it seemed unlikely that he could do that by force.¹⁵¹

Little is recorded about Tissaphernes' actions in this period. He apparently kept to his domain, trying to expand his control over the coastal cities and maintain his position at court. His subordinate Tamos tried to build a fleet. A few years later, he could raise a fleet of 25 triremes to besiege Miletus, not a large fleet, but a useful force and the nucleus of a larger one.¹⁵² In 409 an Athenian expedition raided the cities from Teos to Ephesus.¹⁵³ Once again, Stages was on the scene, and he surprised the Athenians when they tried to raid inland. When they returned to the coast and attacked Ephesus, Tissaphernes had collected an army of Lydians, Milesians, and Spartan sailors to meet them. The Persians won, and the Athenians recovered their dead under truce and sailed

¹⁴⁸ Diod. 13.67, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.3.16-22

¹⁴⁹ Diod. 13.67

¹⁵⁰ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 127-129

¹⁵¹ Thuc. 8.6 implies that Pharnabazus, like Tissaphernes, was expected to recover the cities.

¹⁵² Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.2, Diod. 14.19.5

¹⁵³ Diod. 13.64, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.2.3-15

away. There are signs that Tissaphernes was now satisfied with the situation and willing to make peace. A fragment of an Athenian decree seems to mention him and the King as allies, and in 407 he accepted an Athenian embassy which argued that the King should not support the Spartans.¹⁵⁴

At court, however, the winds were shifting. A Spartan embassy reached the King asking for more help.¹⁵⁵ In the winter of 408/7, Darius decided to send his son Cyrus to take over the war, with a large sum of money and the promise of regular payments to the Spartans. It is not hard to understand why Darius decided to put more resources into the war against Athens. The Athenians still held cities that he had a claim to, and were ravaging his territory. It was clear that Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus had failed to recover the cities and end their depredations.¹⁵⁶ What is surprising is that he continued to rely on the Peloponnesian fleet, and that he put his young son in charge of the war in Anatolia. Cyrus had been born after Darius became King, so can have been no more than seventeen in 407.¹⁵⁷

The decision not to raise a fleet from Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Egypt to attack the Athenians is difficult to explain. Interpolations in Xenophon's *Hellenica* mention a Median revolt which ended in 408/407 BCE and a subsequent campaign led by the king against the Cadusians in the mountains south of the Caspian Sea. These must have distracted the King, but did not affect the coastal provinces which provided ships.¹⁵⁸ It

¹⁵⁴ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 129-131. This decree is suggestive, but so fragmentary that it is very difficult to interpret.

¹⁵⁵ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.4.1-3, Diod. 13.70

¹⁵⁶ Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 368

¹⁵⁷ Plut., *Artax.*, 2.3

¹⁵⁸ I agree with Lewis, "Phoenician Fleet" 397 that these were more important to the King than the other events attested outside the Aegean in this period. The troubles in Egypt seem to have ended in 410; see Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1968) 287

had been so long since a royal fleet fought an Athenian one that it is unlikely that anyone at court believed the Athenians were superior sailors. It would have been difficult to bring a fleet to the Hellespont without Spartan cooperation, although Tissaphernes may have regained control of some cities in the meantime. Lewis suggests that there were other troubles inland in Anatolia which would give a new commander more than enough to do without commanding a fleet.¹⁵⁹ Briant prefers to emphasize Darius' general reluctance to commit large forces to the Aegean, and to spend large amounts of money on the war, although this does not explain why he was reluctant.¹⁶⁰

Perhaps the answer is linked to the other decision, the decision to put Cyrus in charge of the war. It is not hard to understand why Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus were demoted. Tissaphernes had captured Amorges and recovered some of the cities, but since then had withdrawn from the war; Pharnabazus could point to his strenuous military efforts, but few successes. A new commander might be as important as new funds. However, Darius chose the teenaged Cyrus rather than an experienced soldier, and this decision demands explanation. Cyrus' partisans, including Parysatis, may have wanted him to receive a high office where he could do great things and acquire clients.¹⁶¹ It is also possible that there was strife between him and his brother Artabanus which Darius intended to quell by sending Cyrus away.¹⁶² But those who wanted Cyrus to command in the west could see that he was hardly qualified to command a large fleet against the formidable Athenians. Relying on the Spartan fleet promised to both save money and

¹⁵⁹ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 133-135

¹⁶⁰ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 593-599

¹⁶¹ Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* 134, 135; Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 369

¹⁶² Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 600

give Cyrus a manageable responsibility. Photius' epitome of Ctesias certainly suggests that the main concern at court was the doings of courtiers, not wars on the frontier.¹⁶³

8. The Arrival of Cyrus

In any case, Cyrus arrived in the west in the spring of 407. As far as it is recorded, Cyrus' conduct of the war was not very impressive. His main deed was to give the Spartans all the money they needed, even supplementing their pay at his own expense. Since Cyrus was such a young man, it is possible that he was assigned to simply oversee the distribution of more money to the Spartans and force all the Persian magnates to cooperate with the war. Alternatively, he may have been busy inland fighting rebels such as the Mysians and Pamphylians.¹⁶⁴ We hear about no Persian operations along the coast in this period, but we also hear about no Athenian operations south of the Hellespont, and it is not clear that they controlled any cities there except perhaps Halicarnassus. Perhaps there were simply no Athenians for Cyrus to fight. Tissaphernes was offended to be demoted in favour of a boy who listened sympathetically to Spartan complaints about his conduct. Cyrus refused to listen to his proposals to keep the Spartans and Athenians balanced, and could be described as Tissaphernes' enemy in 407.¹⁶⁵ Tissaphernes continued to spend time with Cyrus, however, and slowly won his trust.¹⁶⁶ A few years later he travelled with Cyrus as a friend (ὡς φίλον) but perhaps not a sincere one.¹⁶⁷

Whatever else he was doing, Cyrus formed a close relationship with the Spartan admiral Lysander. Lysander met him at Sardis and asked for better support than

¹⁶³ Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F15.50-56 (Photius' epitome)

¹⁶⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.14

¹⁶⁵ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.5.8-9, Plut., *Lys.* 4.1-2

¹⁶⁶ Ruzicka "Cyrus and Tissaphernes" 207

¹⁶⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.2

Tissaphernes had given them; Cyrus agreed promised to do so, paid up the arrears in pay, and even raised the pay for the ships from three to four obols per man-day at his own expense.¹⁶⁸ Later, Cyrus asked for Lysander to be re-appointed admiral, contrary to Spartan practice.¹⁶⁹ Lysander was a tricky and charming man who was able to please other touchy allies; Plutarch specifies that he was obsequious towards Cyrus.¹⁷⁰ On the other hand, he offended Pharnabazus by allowing his men to ravage Pharnabazus' territory, and after Cyrus' demotion he and Tissaphernes competed for control of Ionia.¹⁷¹ His relations with Cyrus seem to have been better than those with any other Persian leader. It therefore appears that Cyrus made a point of befriending Lysander as a future ally. Was he already thinking of the succession? The loss of Ctesias has deprived us of any evidence whether Darius was old enough, or sick enough, that succession was an immediate concern.

9. A New King and a New Hegemon, 405-404 BCE

In 405, Darius' health declined and he called his sons to court.¹⁷² Some said that the King had other motives: Xenophon, or an interpolator, reports a story that Cyrus had killed two of his cousins for failing to treat him like a King, and that the King really wished to punish him.¹⁷³ Before he left, Cyrus made sure to meet Lysander, to give him the right to collect the tributes (φόροι) which Cyrus had the right to collect, and to advise

¹⁶⁸ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.5.1-7, Plut., *Lys.* 4

¹⁶⁹ Xenophon, *Hell* 2.1.6-7, Plut., *Lys.* 7.1-2

¹⁷⁰ Plut., *Lys.* 4.2

¹⁷¹ Pharnabazus: Polyaeus, *Strategems* 7.18.2, Plut., *Lys.* 19. Tissaphernes: Diod. 13.104.5, where "Pharnabazus" receives a thousand "democratic" exiles from Miletus in summer 405. The next time we hear of Miletus, in 401, it was controlled by Tissaphernes. For both satraps, see A. Andrewes, "Two Notes on Lysander," *Phoenix*, Vol. 25 No. 3 (Autumn 1971) 208-216

¹⁷² Xenophon, *Hell* 2.1.9-15

¹⁷³ Xenophon, *Hell* 2.1.8, 9

him not to fight a naval battle unless he had a great advantage in numbers.¹⁷⁴ Clearly, Cyrus was determined to impress Lysander before he left, but perhaps he also wanted to be present for the final victory. Cyrus and Tissaphernes went east, and Xenophon notes that he considered Tissaphernes his friend (φιλος).¹⁷⁵

While he was away, in the fall of 405, the Spartans under Lysander won a great victory at the Battle of Aegospotomae in the Hellespont.¹⁷⁶ The last Athenian fleet was wrecked or captured, and the Spartans blocked the Hellespont to grain ships from the Black Sea. The Athenian admiral Conon fled to Cyprus and took refuge with King Evagoras of Salamis.¹⁷⁷ Except for Samos, the whole of the Athenian empire either revolted immediately, or yielded to the first Peloponnesian force to approach it. In March 404 Athens surrendered.¹⁷⁸ A committee was put in charge of writing a constitution based on the ancestral laws of Athens, and quickly turned into a lawless junta known as the Thirty.

Whatever Darius' intentions in calling Cyrus to court, he was dying when Cyrus arrived. Cyrus and Parysatis argued that Cyrus should become King, but Arsicas and his supporters prevailed. In practice it is likely that Arsicas had been declared crown prince years before, and that Cyrus' pretensions were never taken seriously.¹⁷⁹ Arsicas was older, and was already in the King's presence.¹⁸⁰ There is a tradition that he was able to

¹⁷⁴ Plut., *Lys.* 9.2; Xenophon, *Hell* 2.1.13-14

¹⁷⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.1

¹⁷⁶ Xenophon, *Hell.* 2.1.16-30, Diod. 13.104.8-13.106.8

¹⁷⁷ Xenophon, *Hell.* 2.1.28-29, Diod. 13.106.6, Plut., *Lys.* 11.5

¹⁷⁸ Date: Plut., *Lys.*, 15; Rex Stem, "The Thirty at Athens in the Summer of 404," *Phoenix* Vol. 57 No. 1 (2003) 18-21

¹⁷⁹ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 615

¹⁸⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.2. On the question whether the Achaemenids preferred their eldest sons as heirs, see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 520-522

speak to Darius on his deathbed, whereas it is not even clear that Darius was alive when Cyrus reached him.¹⁸¹

At first, it was decided to send Cyrus back to his command, and crown Arsicas, who adopted the throne name Artaxerxes. But then several people came to Artaxerxes and told him that Cyrus meant to kill him. These included Tissaphernes and a magus who had been Cyrus' tutor.¹⁸² According to one version, Cyrus was caught skulking in a room where Artaxerxes was about to change his clothing for a ritual.¹⁸³ While Pierre Briant suspects that this story is a later invention intended to slander Cyrus as impious, even Cyrus' defender Xenophon does not say that Tissaphernes was lying.¹⁸⁴ Artaxerxes seized his brother, and would have killed him, but their mother Parysatis interceded. Cyrus was spared and sent back to the coast some time in the year 404, and Tissaphernes returned to his domain.

When he returned to the coast, Cyrus seems to have had much less authority than when he first arrived. Cyrus' domain (ἀρχή), Plutarch says, did not please him; his allowance of provisions had been reduced.¹⁸⁵ The cities of Ionia now belonged to Tissaphernes, and were under his control.¹⁸⁶ One Orontas tried to hold the citadel of Sardis, which had resisted the Ionian revolt a century before, against Cyrus.¹⁸⁷ It is likely that when Cyrus was accused of conspiracy, his previous command was removed, and

¹⁸¹ Athenaeus 12.548e

¹⁸² Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.3-4, Plut., *Artax.* 3 (note how Xenophon tidies up the story, as is his practice in book 1 of the *Anabasis*)

¹⁸³ Plut., *Artax.* 3.4-5

¹⁸⁴ Xenophon says that Tissaphernes διαβάλλει Cyrus, a verb which properly meant "to criticize, accuse, disgrace" but usually implies that the accuser had dishonest intentions. Xenophon implies that he thought badly of the accusation, but he does not deny it, and he is always careful when describing the moral character of his peers.

¹⁸⁵ Plut., *Artax.*, 3.6, 4.1

¹⁸⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6, Ruzicka "Cyrus and Tissaphernes"

¹⁸⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.5-9

that he returned to much more limited authority, perhaps none at all.¹⁸⁸ Cyrus forcefully expanded this authority, expelling Orontas from Sardis and arranging for the cities of the coast to go over to him, but had smaller revenues than before and no authority over Pharnabazus or Tissaphernes. As will be discussed later, by 401 Cyrus seems to have controlled Ionia, Lydia, and Greater Phrygia.¹⁸⁹ Tissaphernes controlled Caria and had a claim to Ionia, and Pharnabazus still controlled Lesser Phrygia. Probably, there was no general of the lowlands at this time, the Greeks and Persians being at peace with one another. Artaxerxes seems to have accepted this situation, at least temporarily.

10. Cyrus' Plot, 404-401 BCE

“And so the civil war in Athens finished, and after this Cyrus sent messengers to Sparta and appealed to the Spartans to show themselves as good friends to him as he had been to them in their war against the Athenians.”¹⁹⁰ In this way Xenophon describes the three years between Cyrus' return to the coast and his revolt against the King. In his *Anabasis* he tried to push Spartan support under the rug, only mentioning the Spartan fleet and mercenaries when they were already in Cilicia, and insisting that everyone but Clearchus sincerely believed that Cyrus was marching to punish rebels and not to rebel himself. This was a sensitive subject; supporting Cyrus had been a disaster for Sparta, and involved an uncomfortable amount of deceit.¹⁹¹ Xenophon had found himself fighting to put a friend of Athens' bitterest enemies on the throne. At Athens, on the other hand, attention was probably on the fragile agreement made at the end of the civil war,

¹⁸⁸ Ruzicka “Cyrus and Tissaphernes”

¹⁸⁹ See chapter 3.5 “The Extend of Cyrus’ Domains”

¹⁹⁰ Xenophon, *Hell* 3.1.1

¹⁹¹ On Xenophon’s attitude to trickery, see Gabriel Danzig, “Xenophon’s Wicked Persian,” in Christopher Tuplin ed., *Persian Responses* (Classical Press of Wales: Swansea, 2007) 27-50

and whether the knives would come out again. The war and the Thirty had roused such bitter hatred that it was unclear whether desire for peace would master lust for vengeance.

As soon as Cyrus returned to the coast, he began to plot against his brother. As will be discussed in a later chapter, he began to do favours for Greek generals on the understanding that they would return the favour when he needed help.¹⁹² He also wrote to Sparta and asked them to show themselves as good friends of him as he had shown of them in their war against the Athenians.¹⁹³ He forced Orontas, who had been loyal to the King, to submit to him; and persuaded Tamos the Egyptian, previously a subordinate of Tissaphernes, to come over to him with his fleet.¹⁹⁴ He also tried to befriend anyone who came to him from the King.¹⁹⁵ He acquired control of Lydia and Greater Phrygia, and persuaded most of the Ionian cities to desert Tissaphernes for him.¹⁹⁶ He continued to pay tribute for Ionia, and implicitly his other provinces, and avoided raising his full army until he was ready to march.

Xenophon makes much of his belief that many men deserted the King for Cyrus, but only Orontas deserted Cyrus for the King.¹⁹⁷ Yet Cyrus' political base was not overwhelming. Tissaphernes was openly hostile, and Pharnabazus took no part in Cyrus' preparations. Four non-Greek followers of Tissaphernes are named before 407, Stages,

¹⁹² Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6-11

¹⁹³ Xenophon, *Hell* 3.1.1

¹⁹⁴ Last seen as "lieutenant governor of Ionia" in charge of paying the Peloponnesian fleet while Tissaphernes was away in spring 411 (Thuc. 8.78), Tamos next appears as commander of Cyrus' fleet and governor of Ionia and Aeolis in 401 (Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.2, Diod. 14.19.5-6). See chapter 3 for a more detailed analysis of his career.

¹⁹⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.5

¹⁹⁶ On Ionia, Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6. The extent of Cyrus' domain in 407 and 407 is discussed in chapter 3

¹⁹⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.29

Tamos, Arsaces, and Gaulites.¹⁹⁸ Of these, only Tamos is attested after Cyrus returned to the coast: he remained governor of Ionia as he had been under Tissaphernes. One would very much like to know what Cyrus offered him. Cyrus' lieutenant, Ariaeus, is not mentioned before 407, so may have come with Cyrus to the coast.¹⁹⁹ After Cyrus' fall, he was pardoned but remained subordinate to Tissaphernes and his successor Tithraustes. At least two Persians of royal blood followed Cyrus, but both of these are mentioned when they were executed for disloyalty. Amongst the Yauna, he found many supporters, including the Spartans, most of the Ionian cities, and several private individuals such as Clearchus and Proxenus. Cyrus' conspicuous generosity was not enough to convert many who had been successful under Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus.

After the revolt, both Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes claimed that they had warned the King of Cyrus' plot. One version said that Tissaphernes complained about Cyrus until he saw Cyrus gathering his army and realized that it was too large for a punitive campaign, at which point he rode to warn the King.²⁰⁰ The other version says that Pharnabazus warned the King in 404, after a tip from Alcibiades, and the King had begun to make preparations further in advance.²⁰¹ As with Diodorus' editing out of Tissaphernes from the period 412-402, this seems to reflect competing traditions, one based on Sardis and one in Dascylium.²⁰² As we have seen, different Greek sources accepted the claims of one or the other, and none was well informed about both satraps

¹⁹⁸ Stages the Persian: Thuc. 8.16, Xenophon, *Hell* 1.2.5 Tamos the Egyptian: Thuc. 8.31, 8.78 Gaulites the Carian: Thuc. 8.85, Arsaces the Persian: Thuc. 8.105

¹⁹⁹ The first references to Ariaeus is Xen. *Anab.* 2.6.28 which implies that Menon became a close friend of Ariaeus when Menon was a youth; the last are Diod. 14.80.8, Polyaeus 7.16.1, and *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* 19.3 which deal with the killing of Tissaphernes and his replacement by Tithraustes

²⁰⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.4-5

²⁰¹ Diod. 14.11.1-4, 14.22.1; Nepos, *Alc.*, 9, 10

²⁰² Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 618-620

and events at court. It is likely that after the revolt, old complaints about Cyrus gained a new significance. It is possible, but impossible to prove, that Artaxerxes removed most of Cyrus' authority when he returned to the coast, heard of his seizure of Lydia and Phrygia and preparations, but decided to wait and focus on other problems. Although the Greek sources only allude to it, a rebellion in the Nile Delta was threatening Persian control over Egypt in this period.²⁰³ There may have been other troubles elsewhere; the start of a new reign was traditionally turbulent. Trying to strip Cyrus of his offices might spark a revolt not prevent it, and would certainly offend the queen mother. At the Achaemenid court, the King's mother had special honour and influence, and Parysatis was a passionate supporter of Cyrus.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* 373-374. Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 619 prefers to link the revolt to the accession of Artaxerxes II.

²⁰⁴ On the queen mother, see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 520 and Maria Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1996) 21-24, 122

Chapter 3 Cyrus' Preparations

1. Introduction

It took time for Cyrus to prepare to revolt. He had to consider his resources, haggle for political support, and determine how large an army he could raise. A thousand things had to be set in order to raise an army of thirty thousand soldiers which could march from Sardis to Babylon. Although the details are lost, the surviving sources often give us enough evidence to suggest the general problems involved and some of the methods which Cyrus and his followers used to solve them. This chapter will describe Cyrus' preparations from his return to the coast to his departure from Sardis around February or March 401 BCE.

2. The Extent of Cyrus' Domain

Exactly what domain (ἀρχή) did Cyrus control when he rebelled? Cyrus' domain was one of the main sources of human and material support which he used for his preparations. To understand Cyrus' resources, both in absolute term and in comparison to the rest of the empire, it is necessary to define this domain as exactly as possible. Despite several seemingly precise statements by Xenophon, the first step is not trivial.

Defining Cyrus' Territory

Cyrus first appears in office in 407 BCE when Darius II sent him to take command of the war against Athens. Xenophon is usually vague about Cyrus' authority: he twice states that Cyrus was archon or satrap of the lands upon the sea and commander

of those mustered on the Plain of Castolus.²⁰⁵ In his pangyric for Cyrus, he specifically states that Cyrus was given Lydia, Greater Phrygia, and Cappadocia.²⁰⁶ This is surprisingly large: the war was on the coast, but Cappadocia was far inland and known for its cavalry. Cyrus' domain probably included Caria, but not the lands around the Sea of Marmara which Pharnabazus governed.²⁰⁷ He did not control very many of the Greek cities of the coast. Diodorus says that Cyrus had been made archon or hegemon of the satrapies upon the (Aegean) sea.²⁰⁸ While Xenophon is our only primary source, one wonders if he, or his source, exaggerated Cyrus' authority over the interior.

The comment about the Plain of Castolus (Καστωλοῦ πεδίου) is hard to understand. The Castolus River seems to be in the hills east of Sardis.²⁰⁹ The title seems to relate to an explanation by Xenophon that each satrap had to maintain a certain number of troops who were inspected once a year at a muster (σύλλογος), by the King or one of his representatives.²¹⁰ In the *Cyropaedia*, his historical novel about Cyrus the Great, he mentions Thymbrara and some point on the river Pactolus, probably Sardis, as musterpoints.²¹¹ Both of these appear to be points where troops from several named regions were gathered. Presumably, the Plain of Castolus was the muster point for the satrapy of Sparda (our Lydia), but a larger area may be meant. Head suggests that “this presumably meant all the troops of western Anatolia.”²¹²

²⁰⁵ Xenophon, *Hell.* 1.4.3, *Xen. Anab.* 1.1.2; for a general discussion of this office see chapter 2

²⁰⁶ *Xen. Anab.* 1.9.7

²⁰⁷ Stephen Ruzicka “Cyrus and Tissaphernes, 407-401 BCE,” *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 80 No. 3 (Feb/Mar 1985) 204-211

²⁰⁸ *Diod.* 14.12.8

²⁰⁹ Richard J. Talbert ed., *Barrington Atlas of the Classical World*, map 62 grid A4 and Nicholas Victor Sekunda, “Achaemenid Colonization in Lydia,” *Revue des Études Anciennes* Vol. 87 (1985) 30

²¹⁰ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.6, Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 4.5-11. See Briant *Cyrus to Alexander* 340, 341 and Tuplin “Xenophon and the Garrisons of the Achaemenid Empire” on these passages.

²¹¹ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 6.2.11

²¹² Head, *The Achaemenid Persian Army* 59

In 404 BCE, Darius died. Arsicas, his older son, “was appointed King, adopting the name Artaxerxes, and Cyrus satrap of Lydia and general of those upon the sea.”²¹³ Cyrus had lobbied to be chosen successor, and was plausibly accused of plotting against his brother. He returned to the west, but probably with diminished authority; he seems to have had to fight just to reclaim Sardis.²¹⁴ His rival Tissaphernes appears to have been given Ionia and Caria, while Cyrus controlled Lydia and Greater Phrygia, and Pharnabazus Bithynia and Hellespontine Phrygia.²¹⁵ If he had controlled Cappadocia in 407, he probably lost it and did not regain it. His remaining domain was still prosperous—especially when the coastal cities rebelled against Tissaphernes and went over to Cyrus—but Cyrus found it difficult to continue his customary largesse.²¹⁶ As soon as he raised his army, he had trouble paying it.²¹⁷

When Cyrus rebelled, then, he probably controlled Ionia, Lydia, and Greater Phrygia. This is exactly the domain which Diodorus says he controlled when he marched east.²¹⁸ The remaining question is whether or not Cyrus controlled Paphlagonia. This hilly area on the south shore of the Black Sea provided a force of a thousand cavalry and possibly other troops. Since we do not have direct evidence of how he recruited these troops, the relationship between Cyrus and Paphlagonia gives a good hint.

The Problem of Paphlagonia

Paphlagonia, the central part of the north coast of Anatolia, is a region not much noted by ancient or modern writers. It was part of the kingdom of Croesus which Cyrus

²¹³ Plut., *Artax.* 2.5

²¹⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.6, Ruzicka, “Cyrus and Tissaphernes” 206

²¹⁵ Ruzicka, “Cyrus and Tissaphernes” 209 especially note 17

²¹⁶ Plut., *Artax.* 4.1 cites a story that Artaxerxes revolted because his allowance was too small to feed his court

²¹⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.11 (Cyrus was unable to pay anything for the first months of the expedition)

²¹⁸ Diod. 14.19.6

the Great conquered.²¹⁹ Herodotus' list of twenty tribute districts puts Ionia and Caria in the first district, Lydia in the second, and Phrygia and Paphlagonia in the third.²²⁰ Persian royal inscriptions usually recognize four peoples in Anatolia: the Yauna (Greeks), Karka (Carians), Sparda (Lydians), and Katpatuka (Cappadocians). The reference to “those by the sea” (*tyaiy drayahya*) in the Behistun Inscription might suggest a separate existence for the peoples along the Sea of Marmara and Black Sea, but the meaning of this phrase remains a mystery. These sources leave it ambiguous whether Paphlagonia was included with Phrygia or Lydia, or a separate administrative unit of its own.

Modern authorities also differ about the status of Paphlagonia, being especially concerned with whether it was part of a satrapy or just a tributary state. Pierre Briant is reluctant to commit himself, but argues that Cyrus the Younger's Paphlagonian cavalry prove that “in normal times Paphlagonia was also required to furnish a troop contingent whenever a satrapal requisition was issued.”²²¹ In other words, he believes that Cyrus had authority to levy troops in Paphlagonia. Peri Johnson argues that it was included with Hellespontine Phrygia, and therefore outside of Cyrus' domain.²²² The *Cambridge Ancient History* suggests that it was tributary under Darius, independent in the early fourth century, reconquered by Datames, and included with Hellespontine Phrygia when Alexander crossed the Hellespont.²²³ In Xenophon's day, Paphlagonia seems to have been a self-governing territory with the obligation to provide troops for the King. Xenophon states in the *Cyropaedia* that Cyrus the Great appointed five Persian satraps in Anatolia.

²¹⁹ Herodotus 1.6

²²⁰ Herodotus 3.90

²²¹ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 642; 618 ff also discuss Paphlagonia

²²² Peri Johnson, *Landscapes of Achaemenid Paphlagonia*, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2010 172

²²³ *Cambridge Ancient History* 2nd Edition Vol. 4 Pt. 1 213, 215, Vol. 4 Pt. 2 194, Vol. 6 221

Paphlagonia and Cilicia did not get Persian satraps but had to pay tribute (δασμός).²²⁴ The whole section is dotted with assurances that as Cyrus did in the sixth century BCE, so the Persians do in Xenophon's day. More likely, the reverse is true, and Xenophon assumes that Cyrus the Great created the arrangements which he saw during his own lifetime. When the Ten Thousand invaded Paphlagonia from the east in 400, they encountered "Corlyas who was at that time archon of Paphlagonia" and he made a peace treaty with them.²²⁵ It was said that the Paphlagonians had refused to send troops to the King because their archon felt strong.²²⁶ A few years later, when Agesilaus invaded from the west he encountered Otys or Gyes, the King (βασιλεύς) of Paphlagonia, who provided a thousand cavalry and two thousand peltasts for Agesilaus' army.²²⁷ Agesilaus was overjoyed, but a short time later the Paphlagonians deserted after a dispute about loot. They went to Sardis to see Ariaeus, Cyrus' old lieutenant. Xenophon explains that they went to him because he had revolted from the King and been pardoned, but this seems like speculation.²²⁸ Perhaps there were connections between Cyrus' friends and the Paphlagonian elite. The political status of Paphlagonia would seem to resemble that of Cilicia with its native kings who paid tribute and provided troops. Although we cannot tell exactly what was happening in Paphlagonia in the decade after Cyrus' revolt, the disorders in Paphlagonia suggest that its leader or leaders had reason to fear Artaxerxes.

There is one piece of evidence against this hypothesis. Diodorus says that Ephorus wrote that shortly before his death, Alcibiades reported to Pharnabazus that Cyrus was plotting against Artaxerxes. Pharnabazus sent messengers to the King, but

²²⁴ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.6.8

²²⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 6.1.2

²²⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 5.6.8

²²⁷ Xenophon, *Hell* 4.1.3, *Hellenica Oxyrynchia* 25.1-3, Plut., *Agesilaus* 11.1-4

²²⁸ Xenophon, *Hell* 4.1.27

Alcibiades insisted on going himself and claiming credit for the warning, so Pharnabazus had him killed as he travelled to the “satrap of Paphlagonia” to ask for a guide.²²⁹ This story is inherently implausible, and a third hand account three hundred years after the fact is not a reliable source for technical jargon.²³⁰ But by itself, it shows that Ephorus believed that Cyrus did not control Paphlagonia when he returned to the coast. Why would Alcibiades expect one of Cyrus' subordinates to help him betray Cyrus to the King?

3. The Population of Cyrus' Domain

Working on the assumption that Cyrus controlled Ionia, Lydia, and Greater Phrygia it is possible to make some estimates of the area, population, and revenues which Cyrus controlled. Unfortunately, any number in this area is quite speculative, due to a shortage of ancient evidence and modern scholarship. The population question, in particular, touches on the very controversial field of ancient demographic history.

Ancient demographic history has always been limited by a shortage of data. Records were not kept in many places and times, and only a few scraps of what records did exist survive. While some writers resort to simple guesswork, serious research relies on three main approaches.²³¹ One approach focuses on ancient written evidence, from records of censuses to army strengths and claims about the population of particular towns, and tries to fill in the gaps.²³² Unfortunately this evidence is never as plentiful and straightforward as we might like, especially in Achaemenid Anatolia. Another approach

²²⁹ Diod. 14.11.3

²³⁰ Walter M. Ellis, *Alcibiades* (Routledge: London, 1989) 95-97 has some criticisms

²³¹ Good overviews of the historiography are available in Hansen, *Shotgun Method* 4-34 and Walter Scheidel, “Roman Population Size, the Logic of the Debate,” *Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics* Version 2.0 (July 2007) <https://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/pdfs/scheidel/070706.pdf>

²³² The classic study here is Peter Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 BC- AD 14* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1987)

focuses on finding the area of settlements in a given place and time and multiplying by an estimated population density and a factor to allow for settlements which have not produced archaeological evidence.²³³ This depends on careful archaeological surveys, methodical tabulation of evidence, and judicious use of comparative data to estimate how many people lived in each hectare of settlement. The third approach uses data from the oldest well-documented period, often in the 19th century, and adjusts up or down depending on the author's beliefs about the productivity of ancient agriculture.²³⁴ While seemingly straightforward, this approach raises very difficult questions about how modern conditions compared to ancient ones. Suffice it to say that it is not safe to use 19th century population, productivity, or cultivated area figures as an upper limit for ancient ones.²³⁵ The ferocity of the debate about such well-documented places as Roman Italy suggests that one should be very tentative in estimating the population of poorly-documented places such as Achaemenid Anatolia.

Beloch provided the classic text-based study in 1886 with the publication of *Die Bevölkerung der griechische-römischen Welt*.²³⁶ As the title suggests, he was not particularly interested in the Achaemenid period or southwest Asia. He limited his study to areas bordering on the Mediterranean and Black Seas with a four-page digression on

²³³ An excellent example is Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Shotgun Method* (University of Missouri Press: Columbia, 2006)

²³⁴ Eduard Meyer used this method to estimate the population of the Achaemenid empire as at least 50 million. Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums* (J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger: Stuttgart, 1954) Vol. 4 Pt. 1 85

²³⁵ Hansen, *Shotgun Method* 12-14 attacks this empirically by comparing 19th century and known ancient population densities, Geoffrey Kron "The Much Maligned Peasant. Comparative Perspectives on the Productivity of the Small Farmer in Classical Antiquity." In L. De Ligt and S. Norwood eds., *People, Land and Politics. Demographic Developments and the Transformation of Roman Italy, 300 BC-AD14*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008) 71-119 attacks its premise that all preindustrial agriculture was equally inefficient.

²³⁶ K.J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der griechische-römischen Welt* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1886)

points east.²³⁷ His most common sort of evidence was army and naval strengths, but he also used censuses, areas of walled cities, and comparative population density where such evidence was available. His earliest population estimates for regions which had been part of the Achaemenid empire are best expressed in the following table:

Table 1: Beloch's Population Estimates

Region	Population Estimate	Date of Estimate	Source
Colchis and Iberia	1.5 million	1 st century BCE	Beloch 1886 252-252
Armenia	2-3 million	1 st century BCE	Beloch 1886 249
Anatolia	11.5-13..5 million	2 nd century BCE	Beloch 1886 242
Syria	5-6 million	1 st century BCE	Beloch 1886 249
Palestine	1-2 million	Assyrian period to Nero	Beloch 1886 248
Cyprus	0.5 million	“die beste Zeit der Insel”	Beloch 1886 249, 250
Egypt	3 million	4 th century BCE	Beloch 1886 250
Lower Mesopotamia	6-8 million	4 th century BCE	Beloch 1886 250
Iran	6 million? ²³⁸	4 th century BCE	Beloch 1886 252
Central Asia	None	n/a	n/a
Afghanistan	None	n/a	n/a
India	None	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	>40 million	n/a	n/a

Beloch also provided a detailed breakdown of the population of Anatolia, although as his focus was on the Roman period he divided Anatolia according to Hellenistic and not Classical geography. A conservative estimate, ignoring the likelihood that his Lydia and Phrygia were smaller than the areas which Xenophon understood by that name, would give around three million people in Lydia, Greater Phrygia, and the Carian coast in the second century BCE.²³⁹ While he later remarked that, at least in

²³⁷ Points east: Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung* 250-254 (three pages out of 520 numbered ones)

²³⁸ Beloch does not give a population estimate for the Iranian plateau, but suggests that Persis had 3.6 people per square kilometre, and that the rest of the plateau was less densely populated. I have assumed an average density of 2.0 people per square kilometre.

²³⁹ Phrygia: 47,000 km² x 20-25 people/km² = 940,000-1,175,000 people. Lydia: 24,000 km² x 50-60

Greece, his estimates were probably 20 percent too small due to caution and incorrect figures for the surface areas of different regions, it seems best to work with this polished figure rather than guess how he might have revised his estimates.²⁴⁰

McEvedy and Jones offer a detailed population estimate for the Achaemenid Empire in their *Atlas of World Population History*. Their study is organized by national borders as of 1978 and gives a population estimate for each region every century from 400 BCE to their date of writing. They estimate the population of modern Turkey to have been 4 million in 400 BCE.²⁴¹ Allowing a large fraction of their 4 million in modern Turkey, plus a small fraction of their 3 million Greeks to represent the offshore islands, and one might guess at a population of 1 or 2 million in Cyrus' domain. They appear to estimate the population of the Achaemenid empire in 400 BCE to have been around 17 million.²⁴² Unfortunately, a study of individual regions gives very little reason to believe their figures. For Anatolia, for example, their only evidence seems to be Pompey's claim that he had conquered 12 million people in his eastern campaigns, and an Ottoman census of 1575.²⁴³ They suggest that modern Iraq, one of the breadbaskets of the ancient world, had a population of only 1 million in 400 BCE- smaller than they allow for Greece.²⁴⁴ They may have been influenced by ideas about progress and exponential growth.²⁴⁵

people/km² = 1,200,00-1,440,000 people. Islands: 500,000 people. Caria: 19,000 km² x 50-60 people/km² = 950,000-1,140,000 people. I have guessed that a quarter of the population of Caria lived along the coast and was included when the cities deserted Tissaphernes for Cyrus.

²⁴⁰ For his later qualification, see K.J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* (Berlin & Leipzig: VVW Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1922) Vol. 3 308, 309 note 1

²⁴¹ Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* (Facts on File: New York, 1978) 133

²⁴² Chart: McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* (Facts on File: New York, 1978) 127. Individual regions: See their figures for Anatolia, Syria/Lebanon, Palestine/Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Caucasia, Russian Turkestan, and Egypt

²⁴³ McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* 136

²⁴⁴ Greece: McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* 113 (3 million people in 400 BCE). Iraq: McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* 151 (1 million people in 400 BCE)

²⁴⁵ McEvedy and Jones, *Atlas of World Population History* 353, 354

Aperghis gives estimates of the population of Achaemenid territories in the fourth through second centuries BCE as part of his studies of the economics of the Seleucid empire.²⁴⁶ He relies on site surveys where they are available and supplements them with written sources and population estimates in other periods. A distinctive feature of his approach is that he does not study demographics in isolation but as part of a study of production, state revenue, and currency. This allows him to test different parts of his model against each other. He estimates that in the late fourth century BCE, the Achaemenid empire contained 30-35 million people.²⁴⁷ He also estimates that Seleucid Asia Minor (defined as Hellespontine Phrygia, the Troad, Aeolis, Ionia, Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Lydia, and Pisidia) had a population of 3 or 4 million people.²⁴⁸ Although he gives no way to break down his estimate by region, it seems likely that half this population dwelled in Ionia, Lydia, Greater Phrygia, and the Carian coast.

Hansen offers an estimate of the number of Greeks in the fourth century in his *Shotgun Method*. His methodology is based on a catalogue of *poleis* with data on walled area and territorial size, and on extrapolating from estimates of walled area, urban population density, and ratio of urban to rural population to get a total. Unfortunately, Hansen does not provide a detailed breakdown of his figures by region. The closest is in his Appendix 2, where he divides the Greek world into six regions and gives a minimum population estimate for each. His regions 3, 4, and 6 contain Anatolian *poleis*, but regions 3 and 6 also contain cities in such places as Thrace and Cyrene. By counting his estimates

²⁴⁶ Makis Aperghis, "Production-Population-Taxation-Coinage" in Archibald et al, *Hellenistic Economies* (2001) and Makis Aperghis, *The Seleukid Royal Economy* (London, 2004)

²⁴⁷ Aperghis, "Production-Population-Taxation-Coinage" 77

²⁴⁸ Aperghis *The Seleukid Royal Economy* 46-48

for region 4 (the east coast of the Aegean) and half of regions 3 and 6, one gets a minimum population estimate of 1.8 million Anatolian Greeks, and a plausible range of 1.8-2.4 million. This is eight times greater than the 0.25 million guessed by McEvedy and Jones.

Each of these studies has limitations as a source for the population of the Achaemenid empire. Beloch and Hansen cover only part of the empire; McEvedy and Jones give little confidence in their methods; and Aperghis deals with a later period and also only covers part of the empire. None specifically guesses the population of Cyrus' domain in Achaemenid times. The following table gives these studies' estimates for the population of Cyrus' domain and the whole empire, guessing where necessary.

Table 2: Estimates of the Population of Cyrus' Domain

Estimator	Population of Cyrus' Domain	Population of Empire	Ratio
Beloch	3m	60m (guess)	5%
McEvedy and Jones	1-2m	17m	6-12%
Aperghis	1.5-2m	30-35m	4-7%
Hansen	>1.8-2.4m	?	?

Of these estimates, McEvedy and Jones can be rejected. Their figures are too low compared to the evidence of site surveys. Mesopotamia serves as a good example, since it is well documented and since many modern writers have tried to estimate its population. McEvedy and Jones guess a population of 1 million on 400 BCE; but Aperghis, Beloch, and the generally "low counting" *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* guess around 5 million.²⁴⁹ McEvedy and Jones' estimate is a mere guess based on

²⁴⁹ Estimates for Mesopotamia: McEvedy and Jones: *Atlas of World Population History* 149-152 guess 1 million; Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 36-40 guesses 4-5 million; Beloch *Die Bevölkerung* 250; Scheidel, Morris, and Saller eds., *Cambridge Economic History* 311, 312, 327

a site survey from the third millennium BCE and censuses from the last two hundred years. Hansen can give a lower bound, but his methods do not address the rural population of non-Greeks. This leaves us with Beloch and Aperghis. While their estimates are far apart, both suggest that Cyrus governed a few million people, about one in twenty of the King's subjects. This would have made Cyrus a significant local power in most times and places before the 20th century. The population of England, for example, probably varied between 2 and 5 million between the 11th and 16th centuries, and this was enough to make most strong kings of England into significant regional powers.²⁵⁰ But it also suggests just how much stronger the King was than his general of the lowlanders.

4. The Revenue of Cyrus' Domain

Evidence for Cyrus' revenue is very scarce. Much of it must have been in kind, and the boundary between his private revenue and that which he controlled as general of the lowlanders was probably fuzzy.²⁵¹ His followers had their own revenues, which he encouraged them to spend on preparing for the campaign.²⁵² The literary sources mostly preserve anecdotes about spectacular benefactions to Greeks. This probably reflects their lack of quantitative interest in the finance of the Achaemenid empire. Most surviving documents are from Persis, Babylonia, and Egypt.²⁵³ They allude to a complex network of treasuries and storehouses which collected taxes, rents, the produce of royal lands, and other produce. These storehouses kept records, sold perishable or excess goods for durable or useful ones, and passed on their contents to various persons. Different

²⁵⁰ Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1989) 4

²⁵¹ Aperghis, "Production-Population-Taxation-Coinage" 77-79, 90; Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 460-461

²⁵² Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.5, 1.9.14-18

²⁵³ For an overview, see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* Ch. 11

individuals and offices had different rights over different storehouses: for example, travellers with a pass could claim a set amount of rations from the King's storehouses along the road, and individual villages apparently kept storehouses to hold goods until their masters came to claim them. Unfortunately, these records are very fragmentary, and give the impression that the system was very complicated, so that even if they were intact interpreting them would be difficult. Slightly more Anatolian evidence is available after the reign of Alexander the Great, as inscriptions become more plentiful and widespread and a theoretical discussion of royal revenues attributed to Aristotle survives. Makis Aperghis has studied this evidence and considers the Aristelian *Oeconomica* to be a reliable guide to public revenues in the Seleucid empire.²⁵⁴ He has found evidence for public revenue from land (including taxes, rent, and tribute and paid in produce, coins, and labour); from forests, mines, and saltworks (probably royal revenue); on irrigation water; on sales; and on herds; as well as tolls and a head tax.²⁵⁵ Many of these taxes may have existed in the Achaemenid empire, although a systematic comparison does not appear to have been done.

Because no quantitative evidence is available for Cyrus' revenue, one approach is to work from references to Cyrus' expenses. The data on Cyrus' expenses are as follows. He gave Clearchus the Lacedaemonian ten thousand darics at some point between 404 and 402.²⁵⁶ At 20 Attic drachmas per daric, and 6000 drachmas per talent, this is about 33 talents.²⁵⁷ He gave Aristippus the Thessalian four thousand mercenaries for six months at

²⁵⁴ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 135, 179

²⁵⁵ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* Ch. 8

²⁵⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.9

²⁵⁷ $10,000 \text{ darics} \times 20 \text{ drachmas per daric} / 6000 \text{ drachmas per talent} = 33.33 \text{ talents}$

some time in the same period.²⁵⁸ Assuming a wage of a drachma a day, this cost 120 talents for wages.²⁵⁹ And he gave Silanus the diviner ten talents when a prediction proved true.²⁶⁰ He paid in three thousand darics, suggesting that one daric was worth 20 drachmas.

During the expedition, Cyrus gained money from unusual sources. Xenophon believed that he received two large cash gifts, one from the Syennesis' wife and one from the Syennesis himself.²⁶¹ There was also a certain amount of plunder once Cyrus left his domain, especially in Cilicia and Lycaonia.²⁶² Whether or not any of this plunder reached a central treasury, the soldiers may have accepted it in lieu of pay. The value of this plunder is difficult to guess, especially since much of it was probably sold on a glutted market by men who wanted quick cash and were unsure of the normal price. The loot of Tarsus was probably the most valuable, although much of it was probably sold back to the Tarsines during the army's long stay at that city, but trying to quantify the value of the loot taken or how much ended up in Cyrus' purse seems too speculative to be worthwhile.²⁶³

Other expenses can be deduced from the sources. Aside from the troops maintained by Clearchus and Aristippus, Cyrus had his garrison commanders enlist as many Greek mercenaries as they could in advance.²⁶⁴ These totalled 4,000 hoplites in the

²⁵⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.10. The exchange rate which I calculate below is accepted by Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 3 834

²⁵⁹ $4,000 \text{ men} \times 6 \text{ months} \times 30 \text{ drachmas/man-month} = 720,000 \text{ drachmas}$ and $720,000 \text{ drachmas} / 6,000 \text{ drachmas per talent} = 120 \text{ talents}$

²⁶⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.18

²⁶¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.12, 1.2.27

²⁶² Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.19 and 1.2.26

²⁶³ Sack of Tarsus: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.26

²⁶⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6

spring of 401: assuming that the force grew from nothing to full strength in a single year, and that the men were paid a daric per month, this would have cost 80 talents for wages.²⁶⁵ He raised a land army that included 1,100 Greek mercenaries to besiege Miletus. At a wage of a daric per month, this force would have cost 3.66 talents per month in wages.²⁶⁶ A one-year siege would have cost 44 talents just in wages for the Greeks. In addition, he was able to maintain a fleet of 25 or 50 triremes from the siege of Miletus to the time when Tissaphernes reached the coast after the battle of Cunaxa.²⁶⁷ Assuming a daily way of three obols per man, and a fleet of 25 triremes, this would have cost 12.5 talents per month just for wages.²⁶⁸ A one-year siege would have cost him 150 talents just to pay his crews. One must add the cost of the barbarian troops, and of the equipment, material, transport, and workers needed for a siege. Even if we assume that these other expenses only cost twice as much as the Greek mercenaries, this adds another 88 talents for a one-year siege. All in all, it is likely that the siege cost at least 280 talents. Of Cyrus' gifts to barbarians one can only remark that they must have been numerous and substantial. Xenophon's encomium of Cyrus at the end of *Anabasis* 1 insists again and again that Cyrus rewarded those who helped him and amazed others by the scale of his gifts.²⁶⁹ Cyrus tried to please those who came to him from the King, and presumably this included conspicuous generosity.²⁷⁰ There may have been other payments to factions in the cities of the coast, or to other magnates to secure their support or neutrality. Tamos,

²⁶⁵ An average strength of 2,000 men \times 12 months \times 1 daric per man-month = 24,000 darics and 24,000 darics \times 20 drachmas per daric / 6,000 drachmas per talent = 80 talents

²⁶⁶ 1100 men \times 1 daric per man-month \times 20 drachmas per daric / 6,000 drachmas per talent = 3.66 talents per month

²⁶⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.2 gives the lower number, Diod. 14.19.5 gives the higher figure

²⁶⁸ Thucydides assumes that for pay purposes a trireme has 200 crew. 25 triremes \times 200 men per trireme \times 0.5 drachma per man-day \times 30 days = 75,000 drachmas or 12.5 talents

²⁶⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.6, 1.9.11

²⁷⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.5

in particular, went over to Cyrus with his fleet. Whether he did it in hope of a reward, or for some other reason, Cyrus must have rewarded him generously.

Combining all of these figures, a few patterns emerge. Cyrus often gave tens of talents to individuals. Silanus' ten talents and Aristippus' 120 bracket the range. In the year before the campaign his garrison commanders spent at least 80 talents on hiring mercenaries, and he spent at least 280 talents on the siege of Miletus. There may have been other unusual military expenses, such as his struggle with Orontas and the Mysians. The expenses of preparing a revolt were great. It seems likely that he spent 500-1,000 talents to this purpose in the year before his revolt. This figure can be corroborated by the evidence in Thucydides that during Darius II's Yauna War, Tissaphernes found it difficult to pay the Peloponnesian fleet roughly 500 talents a year out of his own resources.²⁷¹ Tissaphernes controlled more territory in 411 than Cyrus did in 401, but he was not gambling for death or the throne.

However much Cyrus spent preparing to revolt, he was left with very little for the revolt itself. The only time that Cyrus is recorded as paying his men is at Caystru-Pedium in Phrygia, and most of this was back wages.²⁷² Xenophon insisted that Cyrus would not have failed to pay if he were able. It is likely that one reason that Cyrus chose to revolt when he did was that he could not keep his scaffold of debts, favours, and pretexts intact for another year.

²⁷¹ Thuc. 8.29.1 The initial pay was 30 talents a month for 55 ships, but the Peloponnesian fleet soon grew to almost twice that size (Thuc. 8.44) so an average payment of 45 talents per month and 540 per year is reasonable.

²⁷² Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.11

Obviously, a magnate's expenses in wartime are an unreliable measure of his revenues. Cyrus probably borrowed money, called in favours, and spent savings. He also had ongoing expenses which could not easily be ignored. Taxes needed to be collected, his lands needed to be worked, and his court needed to be maintained. In other times and places, overextended aristocrats often found it difficult to reduce their expenses, because any reduction would spoil their reputation for spectacular generosity and warn their creditors that they were in difficulties. One might imagine Cyrus delaying maintenance on his properties, giving more promises and less immediate rewards, and being less generous to those who could not offer him military or political help. Our only hints of these difficulties in the Greek sources are Cyrus' difficulty paying his mercenaries and a tradition reported by Plutarch that Cyrus revolted because his allowance was insufficient to feed himself and his followers.²⁷³

Another approach is to assume that revenues were roughly proportionate to population. This would have the advantage of removing one step from a speculative process. The difficulty here is that different regions must have had different levels of production per capita, and that some regions were probably much more able to convert produce into silver than others were. Aperghis suggests that silver tax rates per capita in the Seleucid empire varied threefold between areas with a coin economy, and areas with an economy based on produce.²⁷⁴ Cyrus' domain was likely richer in silver than most, since the cities of the coast made heavy use of coins. Until the early fourth century BCE, the only mints in the Achaemenid empire were located in western Anatolia, and their

²⁷³ Plut., *Artax.* 4.1

²⁷⁴ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 251

coins mostly stayed in that region.²⁷⁵ The rest of the empire used weights of metal and volumes of grain for money. Aperghis guesses that public revenue in the Seleucid empire ranged from 0.5 to 1.5 talents per thousand people depending on local conditions, and that western Anatolia was at the top of this range. A tax rate of 1.5 talents per thousand people applied to Cyrus' 1.5-3 million subjects would give a revenue of 2,250-4,500 talents per year.

Herodotus provides another resource in his famous list of satrapies. Herodotus lists peoples, organized into twenty districts, or νομοί, which he says paid tribute to Darius I around 500 BCE. According to him, the districts of Anatolia were as follows:

- First nome: The Ionians, Magnesians in Asia, Aeoleans, Carians, Lycians, Milyeans, and Pamphylians contributed together 400 Babylonian talents of silver each year

- Second nome: The Mysians, Lydians, Lasonians, Cabalians, and Hytenneans contributed 500 talents together each year

- Third nome: Those upon the right side of the Hellespont as one sails in from the Aegean, the Phrygians, Thracians in Asia, Paphlagonians, and Mariandynians, and Syrians (Herodotus' name for the Cappadocians)²⁷⁶ together paid 360 talents each year

- Fourth nome: Cilicia paid 500 talents and 360 white horses, of which 140 talents were used to pay cavalry and 360 talents went to the King.

²⁷⁵ J.E. Curtis and N. Talis eds., *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) 200

²⁷⁶ Herodotus 1.72

The total tribute of these districts was 1760 Babylonian talents of silver and 360 horses per year. Herodotus says that Darius I's annual revenue was 12,480 Babylonian talents per year plus a large contribution in kind.²⁷⁷ A third of this value came from India in gold, and it is likely that Herodotus or his source confused a value of gold with a weight of gold. This would reduce the total to 8,190 Babylonian talents per year plus revenues in kind.

Using this list as a source for the two brothers' revenues faces several difficulties. First, there is little evidence to judge whether Herodotus' numbers are reliable, since he does not state who told him the list. The key questions are whether it derives from official sources, or was invented; and whether it accurately reflects a particular place and time, or has been cobbled together. Pierre Briant accepts it as an accurate description;²⁷⁸ T. Cuyler Young trusts the list of districts but is less confident about the tributes;²⁷⁹ and J.M. Cook also trusts the list of districts and suggests that it is useless to reject the tribute figures.²⁸⁰ Makis Aperghis compared his estimate of population in Seleucid times with Herodotus' tribute list and found fairly close correspondence.²⁸¹ On the other hand, Jozef Wiesehöfer scorns the idea that Herodotus' list has anything to do with administrative organization.²⁸² Second, the figures are for tribute to the King a hundred years before Cyrus' revolt, not for tribute to the satrap in Cyrus' day. A century is a long time for a

²⁷⁷ Herodotus 3.94

²⁷⁸ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 390-393

²⁷⁹ *Cambridge Ancient History* Vol. 4 Pt. 1 87-91

²⁸⁰ J.M. Cook *The Persian Empire* (Schocken Books: New York, 1983) 77-82

²⁸¹ Aperghis, *The Seleucid Royal Economy* 51-56

²⁸² Josef Wiesehöfer, "satrap," *DNP*: „Da zudem Satrapienverzeichnisse erst aus frühhell. Zeit vorliegen, Herodots νόμοι/nómoi bzw. ἀρχαί/archai (3,89-94) und die *dahyāva* (Länder/Völker) der altpers. Inschr. zweifellos nicht den achäm. Satrapien entsprechen und man zudem von Funktionsänderungen nach den Reformen des Dareios I. ausgehen darf, verwundert es nicht, daß in der Forsch. höchst unterschiedliche Verzeichnisse achäm. Satrapien diskutiert werden.“

region to grow more or less prosperous. Xenophon makes a point that Cyrus continued to pay tribute, at least for Ionia, in order to seem loyal.²⁸³ A satrap's private revenues, and those due in his capacity as satrap, were distinct from the tribute paid to the King. And third, Herodotus' districts do not map easily to the organization of Anatolia in Cyrus' day. Cyrus controlled part of the first three nomes, but the whole of none of them. Tissaphernes controlled part of the first nome, and Pharnabazus part of the third. At least some Mysians and Pisidians were in revolt and presumably paid tribute to nobody.²⁸⁴

To the first point, it does seem best to work from the assumption that Herodotus' list preserves some factual information. Nothing better is available, and it does appear to be of the correct order of magnitude. Aperghis notes that various offhand references suggest that the Hellenistic rulers of the former Achaemenid empire had a collective revenue around 30,000 talents per year in the third century BCE.²⁸⁵ To the third point, one can tentatively suggest that 75 percent of the revenue of the first nome (the western coast except for Caria and Pamphylia), 75 percent of the second (Lydia and Mysia, of which the Mysians were rebellious), and 25 percent of the third (the north coast, both Phrygia, and Cappadocia, of which only Greater Phrygia was Cyrus') belonged to Cyrus. This would make him responsible for paying 765 Babylonian talents a year, about 10 percent of Darius I's silver revenues.

This leaves the second question, namely how Cyrus' revenues in 401 BCE compared to the amount he would have paid the King a hundred years before. Aperghis makes the desperate suggestion that Herodotus' figures can be reconciled with the much

²⁸³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.8

²⁸⁴ Mysians and Pisidians: Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.14

²⁸⁵ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 248

higher revenues attributed to Alexander and his successors by assuming that the later include revenues which were retained for local use under the Achaemenids.²⁸⁶ Extending a ratio of 30,000 (Attic?) talents/year of public revenue to 9,000 Attic talents/year of royal revenue would suggest that Cyrus' total revenues were about three times what was passed back to the King. He also points out that taxation in kind could be very heavy. Subjects were obliged to feed the King and his court, for example, which could have cost thousands of talents a year while not appearing on Herodotus' list of cash revenues.²⁸⁷ It is also necessary to correct for economic change in the intervening hundred years. Unfortunately, the *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* has no study of Achaemenid Anatolia. Mogens Hansen's study of the Greek population takes a synchronic approach. Robartus Van Der Spek suggests that conditions in Seleucid Anatolia were similar to those in the Achaemenid period and led to gradual economic growth but increased exaction by the new elites.²⁸⁸ Peter Bedford suggests that the population of the Levant, Syria, Assyria, and Babylonia rose from 5.5 million in 750 BCE to 7.0 million in 300 BCE, an increase of about 5% per century.²⁸⁹ On the other hands, he emphasizes that trends could be very different in different regions, reporting a claim that the population of Judah increased about 50 percent between the first and second centuries of Persian rule.²⁹⁰ If we assume 0-50 percent growth in tax revenues in the century between Herodotus' list and Cyrus' revolt, and total public revenues of three times the amount which was passed on to the King, then Cyrus' subjects paid 2,300-3,400 talents per year to their rulers, of which 1500-2300 talents per year went to

²⁸⁶ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 248 and "Population-Production-Taxation-Coinage" 78

²⁸⁷ Aperghis, *Seleukid Royal Economy* 249-251

²⁸⁸ Scheidel, Morris, and Saller eds., *Cambridge Economic History* 416, 427

²⁸⁹ Scheidel, Morris, and Saller eds., *Cambridge Economic History* 312

²⁹⁰ Scheidel, Morris, and Saller eds., *Cambridge Economic History* 311

individuals other than the King. The royal revenues would then be 8,190-12,285 Babylonian and 9,500-14,300 Attic talents in silver. This is about six times the revenue of Cyrus' satrapy but of course a significant revenue in kind must be added to the King's total.

Estimating the population and revenues which Cyrus controlled in 401 BCE is a controversial and speculative endeavour. Nevertheless, the attempt is worthwhile, because it allows comparison with other times and places, and forces one to ask specific questions. It seems reasonably clear that Cyrus controlled several million people and could spend 500-1000 talents per year on his army. He probably controlled 5% of the population and 5-10% of the revenues of the empire. His total revenues are much more uncertain, but a figure of 2,000-3,000 talents per year, a third of which was sent on to the King, might be somewhere near the correct figure. For comparison, one might note that Edward I of England had a revenue of about £30,000 in peacetime years.²⁹¹ By weight of silver, that is roughly 400 talents per year.²⁹²

5. Cyrus' Political Resources

Wealth and population are two obvious military resources to modern eyes, but they may not have been the most important to Cyrus. After all, Cyrus had people to keep his accounts, manage his estates, and squeeze an extra drachma out of a sharecropper, but he wherever possible he dealt with other magnates in person. Both he and Xenophon would probably have approved of the maxim that "Neither armies nor treasuries are the

²⁹¹ Dyer, *Standards of Living* 29

²⁹² Weight of silver: 30,000 pounds at 350 g/money pound = 13620 kg of silver. An Attic talent is 25.86 kg, so 30,000 talents is 400 Attic talents. Since both Attic and English coins were mostly pure silver, I have not bothered to correct for the difference.

guardians of a realm, but rather friends, who you can neither compel by force nor hire with gold.”²⁹³ His behaviour resembled that of Achaemenid kings, who made a point of dealing punishments and rewards in person.²⁹⁴ For example, Plutarch reports that some criticized Artaxerxes II for being too generous with gifts and too mild with punishments.²⁹⁵ Since the revenues of his domain were probably fragmented, and his formal authority over his followers probably limited, he needed to persuade as many men as possible to follow him.

Cyrus’ method of leadership was based on conspicuous rewards and punishments for good and bad service. Xenophon admiringly remarked that those who did good things felt sure of reward, while evildoers were terrified of swift and harsh punishment.²⁹⁶ If a visitor was influential, Cyrus strove to please and honour him. Xenophon speaks of this as a general practice when someone came from the King to Cyrus, but he seems to have treated Lysander and the Spartans in the same way during Darius’ war.²⁹⁷ Reciprocity was the ideal, although Cyrus made a point of outdoing those who helped or hindered him. This ethic of gift- and favour-exchange helped to create political networks that were reinforced by marriage, hospitality, and perhaps common opinions.

Under normal circumstances, this political network would be invisible to historians. Fifth-century magnates in the interior of Anatolia did not produce surviving documents or get mentioned by Greek writers unless they were among the most

²⁹³ Sallust, *Bellum Jugurthinum*, 10.4 “Non exercitus neque thesauri praesidia regni sunt, verum amici, quos neque armis cogere neque auro parere queas”

²⁹⁴ Eg. Plut., *Artax.* 4.3-5.3

²⁹⁵ Plut., *Artax.*, 4.3-5.3

²⁹⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 1.9

²⁹⁷ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.5.1-7, 2.1.10-12

important men of their generation. Cyrus' expedition, however, brought many of these men together and to a place where Xenophon could notice and write about them. Let us then study Cyrus' court, the men close to him during his march inland, and see what it suggests about his political support.

The Court of Cyrus the Younger

About twenty of Cyrus' male courtiers can be identified in the sources, eleven of them by name. This list excludes people associated with the Greek army, and Cyrus' two Greek mistresses. Six of them, namely Ariaeus, Tamos, Glous, Pigres, Orontas, and Procles, are well documented; the rest are often mere names.

Table 3: Cyrus' Courtiers

Name	Ethnos	Name's Ethnos	Attested	Fate	Faithfulness	Office
Ariaeus	Persian? ²⁹⁸		407-395	Spared by A	Philos and syntrapezos, pistotatos	Hyparchos, commanded the barbarian army at Cunaxa
Tamos	Egyptian	Egyptian	410-400	Fled to Egypt	Philos and pistos	Commander of C's fleet, Ionia, Aeolis
Glous	Egyptian	Carian	401-380	Spared by A		Son of Tamos, later admiral to A
Pigres	?	Carian	Before and at Cunaxa	Died at Cunaxa?		Interpreter
Orontas	Persian	Iranian	Before Cunaxa	Killed by C		
Procles	Laconian	Greek	401-399	Spared by A		Ruler of Teuthrania
Mithridates	?	Iranian	After Cunaxa	Spared by A	Pistotatos	
Artaozus	?	Iranian	After Cunaxa	Spared by A	Pistotatos	
Pateguas	Persian	?	At Cun.	?		
Megaphernes	Persian?	Iranian		Killed by C		hyparchos
Artapates	Unknown	Iranian	Before and at Cunaxa	Died at Cunaxa		Rod-bearer
"A certain dignitary amongst the lieutenants"	Unknown	n/a	Before Cunaxa	Killed by C		hyparchos
"The eight noblest of those about him"	Unknown	n/a	Before and at Cunaxa	Died at Cunaxa		
Satiphernes	Unknown	Iranian	At Cun.	Died at Cunaxa	Pistos, noble	
Pariscas	Unknown	?	At Cun.	?	Pistotatos	Court eunuch

²⁹⁸ Since the mercenaries offered to make Ariaeus King, they apparently considered him Persian. He demurred on the grounds that he was not noble enough, not on grounds of ethnos.

Ariaeus

Ariaeus the Persian was one of Cyrus' most important followers.²⁹⁹ He seems to have come west with Cyrus in 407, where he accepted the advances of Menon the Thessalian, a teenager of wealthy birth.³⁰⁰ Ariaeus had a wide network of connections: aside from Menon the Thessalian, he had brothers at the court of Artaxerxes in 401 (Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.1). At Cunaxa he commanded Cyrus' left wing and was wounded (Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.5, 2.2.15). He and his army fled when they heard that Cyrus had been killed. After the battle, he risked waiting a day for the Greeks to join him before he set off for Ionia (Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3, 2.1.5, 2.2.1). The combined army was trapped by Artaxerxes, and he must have been relieved to receive assurances that he would be pardoned. Tensions began to grow between the Greeks and Ariaeus' men, and when the Greek generals were arrested Ariaeus went over to the King. His army helped drive the Greeks into the lands of the Carduchi, but it is not clear that he still commanded it (Xen. *Anab.* 3.4.13, 3.5.1). Xenophon seems to have been deeply offended by Ariaeus' decision to abandon the Greeks. He only mentions Ariaeus once in the *Hellenica*: when some Paphlagonians deserted Agesilaus and went to Sardis to ask Ariaeus for help around the year 395 (Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.27). Diodorus (14.80.8) also mentions that he helped arrest and execute Tissaphernes after Tissaphernes had been defeated by Agesilaus. It appears that Tissaphernes and Ariaeus had reconciled, but that Ariaeus remembered that Tissaphernes had been his and Cyrus' enemy. When Parysatis and the anti-Tissaphernid faction regained power at court, they and Ariaeus were able to take revenge. The *Hellenica*

²⁹⁹ Sources on Ariaeus: Xen. *Anab. passim*, Plut. *Artax.* 11, Xenophon, *Hell* 4.1.27, Diod. 14.80.8, Polyaeus 7.16.1, *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* 19.3

³⁰⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 2.6.28. Menon was apparently still beardless when he entered the house of Ariaeus, yet old enough to command mercenaries in 401. He may be the same Menon who was the namesake of one of Plato's dialogues; see Truesdell S. Brown, "Menon of Thessaly," *Historia* Vol. 35 No. 4 (1985) 387-404

Oxyrhynchia (19.3) reports that Ariaeus and a colleague were appointed “generals in charge of affairs” (στρατηγοὺς τῶν πραγμάτων) a year later when Tissaphernes’ replacement departed for court. Clearly, he was forgiven and allowed to return home.

Tamos

Tamos, the Egyptian from Memphis, commanded Cyrus' navy and was governor of Ionia and Aeolis while Cyrus was away.³⁰¹ Because his name is Egyptian but his son's is Carian, his family seem to have been Carian immigrants to Egypt. While the Greek immigrant community in Egypt is famous, Herodotus noted that Carians too started to arrive in the middle of the 7th century BCE (Hdt. 2.152, 154). He led the mixed Cyrean and Peloponnesian fleet which arrived at Issos with reinforcements, but apparently returned west while Cyrus marched inland (Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.2). When Cyrus was killed and Tissaphernes came west, Tamos fled to Egypt with his sons and his property in 400 BCE (Diod. 14.35.3). He had fought for Cyrus against Tissaphernes in Ionia before 401, and perhaps he did not believe that Tissaphernes would spare him. He hoped that the rebel pharaoh would protect him, but instead he was murdered for his property and triremes.

Glous

Glous, the son of Tamos, was more fortunate.³⁰² He was one of Cyrus' attendants in the march to Cunaxa, and was ordered to take some troops and get some wagons out of the mud (Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.7). After Cunaxa, he was sent by Ariaeus as a messenger to the

³⁰¹ Ethnos: Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.2, Diod. 14.19.6. Sources: Thuc. 8.31.2, 8.78, Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.21, 1.4.2, 2.1.3, Diod. 14.19.5, Diod. 14.19.6, Diod. 14.35.3, Stephen Ruzicka, "Glos, son of Tamos, and the end of the Cypriot War," *Historia* Vol. 48 No. 1 (1999)

³⁰² Filiation: Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3. Sources: Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.16, Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.7, Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3, Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.24, Diod. 14.35.3, Diod. 15.4.3-4, Aeneas Tacticus 31.35, Polyaeus 7.20

Greeks, was spared by Artaxerxes and did not flee to Egypt with his brothers.³⁰³ In fact, he eventually rose to high office; the Greek sources mention that he once had an audience with Artaxerxes, married a daughter of the famous noble Tiribzaus, and was commander of the Persian navy in the Cypriot War (Aeneas Tacticus 31.35, Diod. 15.4.3, 18.1). In 380 BCE he rebelled with his fleet on Cyprus and sent messages to Sparta and Egypt for help but was murdered by two men. He was probably relatively young and low status in 401 BCE. His name is Carian, but Xenophon identifies his father as Egyptian.

Pigres

Pigres the interpreter is a memorable minor character in the *Anabasis*. Although Xenophon does not give his ethnicity, four other attested men named Pigres are all Carians: Pigres the follower of Psammetichus helped to found the 26th Dynasty of Egypt, Pigres son of Hysseldomus was in Xerxes' fleet, Pigres the brother of Artemesia wrote Greek poems, and Pigres of Syangela ruled a town near Halicarnassus in 431 BCE.³⁰⁴ As interpreter, he carried orders from Cyrus to the Greeks, and was told to take some men and help get the wagons out of the Euphrates mud.³⁰⁵ He was with Cyrus at Cunaxa, and probably died with him.³⁰⁶ The wagon incident suggests that while he was physically close to Cyrus, he did not have much authority, since he did not have men of his own.

Orontas

³⁰³ Messenger to the Greeks: Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3. Spared: Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.24. Did not flee to Egypt: Diod. 14.35.3

³⁰⁴ Ancient sources: Polyaeus 7.3 for the first, Hdt. 7.98 for the second, Suda s.v. "Pigres" and Plutarch, *De Malignitate Herodoti* 43 = *Moralia* 873f for the third, and John McK. Camp II, "Greek Inscriptions," *Hesperia* Vol. 43 No. 3 (1974) 316, 317 for the fourth. Modern sources: see Ewen Bowie, "Pigres," *DNP*, Simon Hornblower, *Mausolus* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1982) 26, 355, and *RE* s.v. "Pigres."

³⁰⁵ Passing on orders: Xen. *Anab.*, 1.2.17. Wagons: Xen. *Anab.*, 1.5.7

³⁰⁶ Xen. *Anab.*. 1.8.12

Orontas was a Persian of royal blood.³⁰⁷ He had chosen to be faithful to Artaxerxes rather than Cyrus, holding the acropolis of Sardis against Cyrus and then raising a rebellion in Mysia. Cyrus had defeated him and accepted his pardon, but he remained loyal to the elder brother. He tried to desert to the King with some cavalry after Cyrus crossed the Euphrates, but was betrayed and executed. Xenophon uses the occasion of his trial for a sort of Socratic dialogue between Cyrus and Orontas.

Procles was the descendent of Demaratus the Spartan King who fled to Darius.³⁰⁸ His ancestor had been given several cities, and he still held Teuthrania and Halisarna on the mainland opposite Lesbos.³⁰⁹ He appears as an ambassador between the Greek and barbarian armies after Cunaxa.³¹⁰ Artaxerxes spared him, and allowed him to keep his cities, but this was a mistake; as soon as he returned to the coast, he rebelled and supported Xenophon and the remainder of the Ten Thousand in fighting against Tissaphernes, allying with the Spartan commander Thibron.³¹¹ Procles had enough followers to help Xenophon's 300 men, but it is unclear how many retainers he brought with him to Cunaxa.

Lesser Individuals

Less is known about Cyrus' remaining followers. Two of them were important trustees of Cyrus, Mithridates and Artaozus, who sent friendly messages to the Greeks after Cunaxa but accepted Artaxerxes' pardon.³¹² Pateguas the Persian warned Cyrus that

³⁰⁷ Sources for Orontas: Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.1-11, 1.9.29, Josef Wiesehöfer, "Orontes [1]," *DNP*

³⁰⁸ Sources on Procles: Xen. *Anab.* 2.3.1, Xen. *Anab.* 2.2.1, Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.17, Xenophon, *Hell* 3.1.6
Scholarship on Procles: RE s.v. "Prokles (7)"

³⁰⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3 (Teuthrania), 7.8.17 (Halisarna)

³¹⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.3 and 2.2.1

³¹¹ Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.17, *Hell.* 3.1.6

³¹² Sources on Mithridates and Artaozus: Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.16 and 2.5.35-42 and 3.3.1 and 3.3.6
Scholarship: See RE s.v. "Mithridates (1)"; there is no entry for Artaozus!

Artaxerxes was coming on the day of Cunaxa.³¹³ Aside from Orontas, two other followers enter the tradition because Cyrus executed them on charges of planning to go over to the King. Megaphernes and “a certain potentate among the lieutenants” fall into this category.³¹⁴ Artapates was “the most faithful rod-bearer (σκηπτοῦχος) of Cyrus.”³¹⁵ In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon has Gadatas the head of the rod-bearers manage the King’s household, oversee banquets, and pass requests between the King and petitioners.³¹⁶ In the *Anabasis* the only task explicitly given to Artapates is the punishment of Orontas, and Briant suggests that the title was an honour with no specific duties, but it is almost certain that Cyrus needed men to run his household.³¹⁷ According to Xenophon, no less than eight of Cyrus’ friends and tablemates were killed with him at Cunaxa; this number may include Pigres, last seen at Cyrus’ side at the start of the battle, and Artapates the rod-bearer.³¹⁸ In Ctesias’ less heroic version of Cyrus’ death, Artaxerxes killed one Satiphernes when his thrown spear missed Cyrus (Plut. *Artax.* 11.1 = Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F. 20). Satiphernes was “a man well-born and trusted by Cyrus.” Ctesias also said that a certain Pariscas, “most trusted of the eunuchs,” protected Cyrus’ body when he was killed (Plut. *Artax.* 12.1 = Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F. 20).

Analysis

Of the twenty-one, only Ariaeus, Artapates, Tamos, Pariscas, and Pigres have a clear office. Ariaeus and Tamos commanded Cyrus’ army and fleet respectively. Pigres was the interpreter who passed on Cyrus’ orders to the Greeks. Artapates was one of

³¹³ Xen. *Anab.*, 1.8.1

³¹⁴ Sources on Megaphernes and the “certain other potentate”: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.20

³¹⁵ Sources on Artapates: Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.11 and 1.8.28, Aelian, *De natura animalium* 6.25

³¹⁶ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 191, 259, 271, Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.4.2

³¹⁷ Briant *Cyrus to Alexander* 259

³¹⁸ Xen. *Anab.*, 1.8.27

Cyrus' rod-bearers, and Pariscas was one of the court officials who Greeks called eunuchs but who may not have all been mutilated.³¹⁹ Another follower, Mithridates, is attested as having attendants (θερόπωντες). These apparently numbered two hundred cavalry and four hundred archers and slingers.³²⁰ Procles, the descendent of King Demaratus the Spartan, also probably had followers from his cities in Mysia.³²¹ It is likely that many of the others had responsibilities and followers which the Greek sources do not record. Xenophon implies that Artapates was one of a group of rod-bearers when he says that he was the most faithful of them, and the office is very visible in his *Cyropaedia*.³²² But it seems clear that Cyrus was accompanied by a number of well-born men with vague responsibilities who hoped to impress him. As Proxenus brought along Xenophon, so Cyrus brought along several dozen well-born followers aside from his soldiers. The stories of Pateguas riding to warn Cyrus that Artaxerxes was coming, Orontas asking Cyrus for some cavalry to lay an ambush, and Mithridates asking Tissaphernes for troops to destroy the Greeks, fit this pattern; as does the anecdote about Cyrus telling Glous and Pigres to take some troops and free some wagons from the mud. The Italian court life described by Castiglione is an interesting parallel.³²³ Castiglione wrote for wealthy young men who would travel to court and try to impress someone there with their military service, learning, or athleticism. While the successful might be given a post, a true gentleman would put his hand to whatever he was asked to do.

³¹⁹ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 274-277

³²⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 3.3.2 and 3.3.6

³²¹ At *Anabasis* 7.8.17 he is able to help some Greek bandits who were being pursued by hundreds of enemies

³²² E.g. the character of Gadatas the eunuch, Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.4.2

³²³ Baldassarre Castiglione, tr. and intr. George Bull, *The Book of the Courtier* (London: Penguin, 2004)

Xenophon also speaks of the lieutenants or junior commanders (ὑπαρχοί) of Cyrus. Ariaeus was one of them, but apparently there were a group including Megaphernes and an anonymous potentate who Cyrus executed for plotting against him.³²⁴ This term clearly implies a hierarchy, but it is hard to be precise since the Greek sources give so few details.

The Greeks in the army were aware of distinctions of status inside Cyrus' court, based on blood, visible honours, and closeness to Cyrus. Orontas and Megaphernes were Persians with royal blood; in both cases Xenophon mentions their status when they were executed for plotting against Cyrus. Clearchus offered to make Ariaeus King, but he refused on the grounds that there were many Persians better than him.³²⁵ Clearly the Greeks recognized that he was the most important of Cyrus' followers left alive, but did not fully understand the military or political situation. Some friends of Cyrus received visible honours such as a golden akinakes, torc, bracelets, and Persian robe.³²⁶ Signs like these let even a newcomer pick out the most important men at court, and reflected the Persian ideology of rewarding good service. Finally, some courtiers were especially close to Cyrus. Xenophon calls them friends (φίλοι), and tablemates (συντράπεζοι) or companions (ὁμοτράπεζοι) in the old sense of people who shared bread. Other Persians are marked as faithful or trusty (πίστος). Ariaeus, Artaozus, Mithridates, Pariscas, Satiphernes, and Tamos have this honour. Achaemenid ideology glorified the personal loyalty of small men to big ones.³²⁷ Faith held society together in difficult times such as revolts, and was to be generously rewarded. In battle these men normally rode with their

³²⁴ Ariaeus: Xen. *Anab.*, 1.8.5; Mithridates and the anonymous one: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.20

³²⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.4, 2.2.1

³²⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.27 (the Syenensis), Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.29 (Artapates)

³²⁷ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 324-326

lord; another sign that their responsibilities were vague, since clearly they were not needed to command a particular unit. At least eight of them died with Cyrus at Cunaxa; Xenophon excuses Ariaeus for living because he was on the left wing commanding the cavalry.

It is unclear how the faithful, friends, and tablemates relate to each other, but it is clear that they refer to men who were close to Cyrus in space and friendship. Pierre Briant suggests that “friend” and “tablemate” were recognized court titles, with “friend” perhaps more important.³²⁸

Conclusions

In summary, Cyrus had an inner and outer circle of retainers. The outer circle included cavalry, domestics, and other men of relatively low status, and was hundreds or thousands strong. These men are almost invisible to the Greek sources, except when some of them appear in descriptions of Cyrus' army lined up for battle. The inner circle included many Iranians but some Greeks and Carians, and was apparently several dozen strong. Some of these held civil or military offices, but others simply followed Cyrus with their own followers and helped him in whatever way they could. Cyrus often handed out assignments informally, and followers with clever ideas asked him for support. Pierre Briant suggests that this sort of informal assignment of tasks and requests for advice was typical of the Achaemenid court.³²⁹ Xenophon seems to have found this situation familiar.

The Greek sources do not permit us to see a clear military hierarchy. They do let us see a general division between Cyrus' fleet and his army, and that many of Cyrus'

³²⁸ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 307-309

³²⁹ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 128-137, 258

followers brought their own followers. It seems likely that the hierarchy was similar to the one in the Greek army: Cyrus, then Ariaeus, then the leaders of large retinues or regional units, then leaders of companies. Herodotus believed that the Persian army was divided down to tens which might add a fifth level.³³⁰ The only equivalent in the Greek army was the messes, informal groupings of men who camped and ate together.

Cyrus and other magnates

Cyrus also tried to deal with the other magnates of Persian Anatolia. He certainly came to an arrangement with Syennesis and Epyaxa, the rulers of Cilicia. The details are murky, but it is clear that Epyaxa came to visit him on the Anatolian plateau, and that Syennesis put up less of a fight than could have been expected. It rather looks like Syennesis agreed to give Cyrus money and not oppose his progress, while Cyrus agreed to put on a show of force so that if he lost, Syennesis could pretend to have been loyal to Artaxerxes. Diodorus reports a tradition that Syennesis sent money to Cyrus and some of his sons to Artaxerxes, and this is plausible as well.³³¹ If so it was not enough, since the native rulers of Cilicia disappear in the fourth century, perhaps because of their attitude towards Cyrus.³³² Because a strong defence of the passes of Cilicia could have blocked him indefinitely, it is likely that Cyrus did not march until he was sure that he could get through. As will be described below, Cyrus somehow gained access to a thousand Paphlagonian cavalry, despite Paphlagonia not being part of his domain. Perhaps coincidentally, this is the number of cavalry which the king of Paphlagonia would lend to his ally Agesilaus a few years later, when Paphlagonia appears in rebellion.³³³ Raising a

³³⁰ Hdt. 7.81

³³¹ Diod. 14.20.3

³³² Head, *Persian Army* 12, Josef Wiesehöfer, "Syennesis," *DNP*

³³³ Xenophon, *Hell* 4.1.3, *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* 22.2

thousand cavalry required some sort of understanding with a Paphlagonian leader. It is possible that he contacted Pharnabazus to see if he might support a revolt, but if so it happened without coming to the ears of the Greek sources. As was discussed in chapter 2, alternative traditions either leave Pharnabazus out of the story of the revolt, or insist that he was the one who warned the King about it.

Cyrus' Mercenary Followers

Aside from Anatolians, Cyrus also had a network of Greek followers and associates. These are somewhat better documented, and have been well studied. Two especially important monographs are Roy's "The Mercenaries of Cyrus," which focuses on the generals, and Lee's *A Greek Army on the March*, which focuses on everyday life.³³⁴ Nevertheless, it is worth reviewing their relationships with Cyrus.

From the time of his first trip to the coast, Cyrus had cultivated relationships with Greek noblemen. Men came to his court for various reasons, seeking work or favours, representing their city, or following a greater man. Of these, a number would lead sizable contingents in his army: the original list was Xenias, Proxenus, Sophaenetus, Socrates, Pasion, Menon, Clearchus, and Chirisophus. Two other generals, Agias and Cleanor, appear later and seem to have replaced Xenias and Pasion after their desertion.³³⁵

These generals joined the army for various reasons. Clearchus, for example, had been exiled from Sparta for trying to build a private kingdom at Byzantium. Xenias had been appointed by Cyrus to command the Greek garrisons of the coastal cities. Proxenus the Boeotian had come in hopes of winning riches and fame as a general.³³⁶ Menon had

³³⁴ J. Roy, "The Mercenaries of Cyrus" 287-323

³³⁵ Roy, "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 289

³³⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 2.6.16-21

apparently been sent by Aristippus the Thessalian to repay Cyrus for past support.³³⁷ Cyrus had also written to Sparta asking them to help him as he had helped them in the war, and received a force of Peloponnesian mercenaries under Chirisophus the Spartan. Cyrus offered to generously reward anyone who fought for him, but where possible he appealed to past favours as well as future rewards. Some had other connections to Cyrus or his court. Menon the Thessalian, for example, had been Ariaeus' lover when he was a teenager, and had commanded Ariaeus' mercenaries for him. Xenophon reports this as part of a damning picture of Menon's character, but the core of his story is plausible and refers to events which would have been public knowledge. It is possible that Aristippus the Thessalian sent him, but cannot be ruled out that Ariaeus sent for him and that he came on his own initiative.

These men were all important because they had significant armed followings (even if, as with Chirisophus or Xenias, they had been given those followings by someone else). Many of them probably had their own hangers-on. Xenophon explains that he was invited to come along by the inexperienced Proxenus, and had done so at his own expense, since he did not ask to be enlisted as a common soldier or captain.³³⁸ While no other such adventurers can be identified, Xenophon rarely tells how someone ended up in the army, and most of his references to other individuals are after the killing of the generals where he, and presumably other gentlemen amateurs, had been forced to take a regular place in the army. It is likely that a significant number of the captains in the less professional contingents were hopeful young adventurers like Xenophon. Roy has pointed out that Xenophon mentions several Athenian captains, despite Attica not being a

³³⁷ Roy, "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 299 reports this without qualification

³³⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 3.1.4

common origin for mercenaries.³³⁹ Similarly, several diviners (μάντεις) are named by Xenophon, and it is likely that these were followers of individual generals or Cyrus himself. The generals certainly brought slaves and servants, although to Xenophon's aristocratic eye these are as invisible as the postman in G.K. Chesterton's "Invisible Man."

6. Raising an Army

One of the most significant questions about Cyrus' army is how many men it contained. This has been deferred to the next chapter. As will be argued there, the strength of his army likely varied dramatically over time, and the question of combat, paper, and total strengths is tied to questions of supply. Nevertheless, it is worth discussing here how Cyrus raised his army.

Xenophon is very concise about how Cyrus raised his barbarian army. He first says that Cyrus encouraged his subjects to be prepared for war, perhaps by measures such as conspicuously rewarding those who did good military service.³⁴⁰ Next, he says that he raised an army to besiege Miletus on behalf of some exiles. The only specific information which he gives about this army was that it included the Milesian exiles and the mercenaries of Socrates and Pasion. However, it is most likely that it included a large barbarian contingent. Xenophon does not mention Greek generals or mercenaries when he says that "Cyrus, having raised an army, besieged Miletus by land and sea."³⁴¹ He later mentions that he called Sopaenetes the Stymphalian to come and help him fight Tissaphernes at Miletus, and implies that only Socrates arrived in time to join the

³³⁹ Roy "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 307-308

³⁴⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.5 and 1.9.14

³⁴¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.7

siege.³⁴² This suggests that first the siege began, and then some Greek contingents arrived. He later says that Pasion and Socrates were “of those campaigning about Miletus” which implies that there were other commanders.³⁴³ It is also very improbable that the large city of Miletus would be besieged by the 1100 men of Pasion and Socrates, who included no slingers or archers. A recent attempt to besiege Miletus during the Decelaeon War had involved 3500 hoplites and 48 ships.³⁴⁴ Finally, he says that when Cyrus was ready he called all his forces, and many who owed him military support, to come to Sardis to attack the Pisidians of southern Anatolia. This grand army included Greek and barbarian forces.³⁴⁵

Modern commentators are almost as concise. A favourite phrase is “satrapal levy” or occasionally “feudal levy.”³⁴⁶ These vague phrases seem to suggest that men who were not normally soldiers, but had military obligations based on their residence or property in western Anatolia, were called up for service according to a simple and well-recognized system. Diodorus refers to the barbarian troops as “those troops raised from Asia” and “those from Phrygia and Lydia” and but gives no details of how the Greek or barbarian forces were assembled.³⁴⁷ The Greek verb which Diodorus uses, στρατολογέω, literally means “to pick up (λέγω) an army (στράτος),” and is usually used for a leader recruiting men who owe military service (rather than, for example, hiring mercenaries or asking for

³⁴² Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.11 and 1.2.3

³⁴³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.11 ἤν δὲ καὶ οὗτος καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης τῶν ἀμφὶ Μίλητον στρατευομένων.

³⁴⁴ Thuc. 8.25

³⁴⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.1

³⁴⁶ John W.I. Lee, *A Greek Army on the March* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007) 2, 44, 143, 153; H.W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers: From the Earliest Times to the Battle of Ipsus* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1933) 23. Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 620, although unusually detailed, still speaks of “troops drafted from Lydia and Phrygia” and “horsemen levied of the Persians of the imperial diaspora.” Paul A. Rahe “The Military Situation in Western Asia on the Eve of Cunaxa,” *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 101 No. 1 (Spring 1980) 89 has “feudal levy”

³⁴⁷ Diod. 14.22.19 στρατολογηθέντας and 14.22.5 τὸ δὲ θάτερον μέρος ἐπεῖχον οἱ τ' ἀπὸ Φρυγίας καὶ Λυδίας

volunteers).³⁴⁸ Thus, when Antipater heard that Alexander the Great was dead and that the Greeks were about to revolt, he appointed Sippas general of Macedonia and told him to raise (στρατολογεῖν) as many troops as possible while Antipater marched into Greece with most of the troops who were ready. On the other hand, one word is not very strong evidence. Just what did raising an army from Lydia and Phrygia involve?

The evidence for military service in Achaemenid Anatolia is fragmentary and complex. It appears that the Achaemenid military system included both ‘regular’ and ‘reserve’ soldiers, men who were paid to devote themselves to military service and men who could be obliged to serve in wartime but spent most of their time on other things. For example, at the end of *Cyropaedia* Xenophon distinguishes between the cavalry who large landowners must provide in war and the men who are hired to garrison the countryside.³⁴⁹ He also states that the satraps were expected to organize the Persians and allies into units, entertain those who had received land grants at court, and train their sons in war and hunting.³⁵⁰ In this context, the “allies” seem to be western Iranians such as Medes and Hyrcanians.³⁵¹

Xenophon’s categories are supported by other sources. For example, there is a variety of evidence of Persian settlement in western Anatolia, and of local magnates having retinues of cavalry.³⁵² These would seem to be the landowners and followers who

³⁴⁸ Diod. 14.54.6 (The Carthaginians shipped a hundred thousand men to Sicily and raised thirty thousand there), Plut. *Caesar* 35.1 (As he invaded Italy, Caesar took over the levies of Pompey), Appian *Bellum Civile* 2.36 (When Caesar invaded Italy, the senate told Pompey to raise troops), Joesphus *Antiquitates Judaicae* 5.114 (A quarrel amongst the Jews was resolved, and Joshua was glad that he would not have to raise an army and fight a civil war)

³⁴⁹ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.8.20 (this passage is sometimes attributed to a later writer)

³⁵⁰ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.6.10

³⁵¹ N. V. Sekunda, “Persian Settlement in Hellespontine Phrygia,” in Amélie Kuhrt & Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg eds., *Achaemenid History III: Method and Theory* (Leiden 1988) 183

³⁵² Christopher Tuplin, “All the King’s Horse: In Search of Achaemenid Persian Cavalry,” in M. Trundle and G. Fagan eds., *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 153-156,

Xenophon describes. Satraps seem to have imitated the bodyguards of Persian spearmen and cavalry which the King maintained.³⁵³ Herodotus tells that Oroites, governor of Lydia, Phrygia, and Ionia when Darius took the throne, had a bodyguard of a thousand Persian spearmen.³⁵⁴ The cuneiform sources from Mesopotamia reveal a complicated system of bow-, horse- and chariot-land which obliged its owner to serve as an infantryman, cavalryman, or charioteer when asked.³⁵⁵ By the time the sources become plentiful in the late 5th century BCE, ownership had become divided in various ways, and many owners fulfilled their obligations with a cash payment instead of service. Many of these bow lands were associated with a foreign ethnic title. Hired troops are also visible, although most of the Anatolian evidence deals with Greeks. Xenophon mentions that when he was engaged in banditry in Mysia, he and his men were attacked by a force including Assyrian hoplites and Hyrcanian cavalry, both of whom were the King's mercenaries.³⁵⁶ The best documented mercenary community is the Jews and Arameans who garrisoned Elephantine on the upper Nile.³⁵⁷ The men of the community received pay, while they and their spouses owned property on the island. Sekunda's studies of western Anatolia found much evidence for Persians who were granted estates, but relatively little and weak for communities of foreign mercenaries such as Egyptians or Hyrcanians.³⁵⁸

Sekunda, "Persian Settlement in Hellespontine Phrygia" 175-178, 182-185

³⁵³ Sekunda, *Persian Army* 19

³⁵⁴ Herodotus 3.127

³⁵⁵ Matthew Stolper, *Entrepreneurs and Empire: The Murashu Archive, the Murashu Firm, and Persian Rule in Babylonia* (Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul: Istanbul, 1985) ch. 4

³⁵⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.15

³⁵⁷ Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony*. University of California Press: Berkeley and LA, 1968.

³⁵⁸ Sekunda, "Persian Settlement in Hellespontine Phrygia" 195, "Achaemenid Settlement in Lydia," "Achaemenid Settlement in Caria, Lycia, and Greater Phrygia"

Infantry “reserves” are worse documented. It is not clear that these included Iranians, although it is certainly plausible that some Iranians settlers were not rich enough to maintain a horse. Xenophon’s comment about those obliged to muster in the Plain of Castolus might be taken to refer to men who had intermittent military responsibilities. Periodic musters were used in other societies, such as late medieval England, to ensure that men liable for military service had appropriate kit and skills.³⁵⁹ However, after carefully analyzing Xenophon’s general statements about the Achaemenid army Tuplin concluded that these musters were carried out by paid troops from the surrounding region.³⁶⁰ Various sorts of people in Babylonian could be obliged to do military service, but Babylonia is far from western Anatolia.³⁶¹ Anecdotes in the Greek sources are not very helpful. Herodotus reports a story that Cyrus forbade the Lydians to own arms, and obliged them to wear elaborate clothing and teach their sons to keep shops and play music, so they would become effeminate and not rebel again.³⁶² This story contains at least one fictional element, the presence of Croesus as a wise advisor to Cyrus, and draws on Greek stereotypes about effeminate easterners. Sekunda has accepted it as evidence of a general policy of ending mass military service amongst the subject nations, but such a story is a weak branch to hang an argument on.³⁶³ Xenophon tells a story that when Thrassylius threatened Ephesus, Tissaphernes sent riders in every direction telling everyone to come defend Ephesus.³⁶⁴ His words strongly suggest that at the end of the 5th

³⁵⁹ Bruce McNab, “The Military Arrays of the Clergy, 1369-1418” in Jordan, McNab, and Ruiz eds., *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages* (Princeton University Press, 1976) 293-314

³⁶⁰ Tuplin, “Xenophon and the Garrisons” 173, 174

³⁶¹ John MacGinnis, “The Role of Babylonian Temples in Contributing to the Army in the Early Achaemenid Empire,” in J. Curtis and St John Simpson eds, *The World of Achaemenid Persia* (I.B. Taurus: London, 2010) 495-502, Matthew W. Stolper “Fifth Century Nippur: Texts of the *Murašûs* and From Their Surroundings,” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, Vol. 53 (2001) 123-127

³⁶² Herodotus 1.155, 156

³⁶³ Sekunda, *Persian Army* 23

century, many people living in Lydia had military obligations, although they do not rule out the possibility that Iranian settlers and foreign mercenaries were the only men who replied. When satrapal and Spartan forces confronted each other outside Ephesus a decade later, the satrapal forces included Carian and Persian infantry.³⁶⁵ During the revolt of Datames in the 360s, we also hear of an infantry force including 5,000 Lydians and 10,000 Phrygians, although in principle these could be “soldiers based in Lydia and Phrygia” rather than “ethnic Lydians and Phrygians.”³⁶⁶ On the balance it seems that while evidence is weak, there probably were some men liable to military service other than full-time soldiers in western Anatolia. The Greek sources tend to ignore barbarian infantry, whereas magnates and their cavalry followers get some attention. Infantry “reserves” were also a familiar Greek practice, so may have seemed less worthy of description than large standing armies.

In short, most of Cyrus’ men probably had formal military obligations. Some were paid regulars; others were retainers who stood ready to serve in wartime. Yet others may have been militia or reserves drawn from foreign settlers or the native population of each region. There was probably an accepted system for calling an army together, but the Greek sources do not preserve the details. If, as argued in chapter 2, Cyrus controlled his domain *de facto* but not *de jure*, this must have complicated the usual system for raising an army. Xenophon implies that there was a distinction between soldiers responsible to the satrap, and soldiers responsible to the King.³⁶⁷ Although corroborating evidence is difficult to find, conflicting loyalties may have further complicated the muster.

³⁶⁴ Xenophon, *Hell* 1.2.6, 1.2.8

³⁶⁵ Xenophon, *Hell* 3.2.15

³⁶⁶ Nepos, *Datames* 8.1, Head, *The Achaemenid Persian Army* 66

³⁶⁷ Tuplin, “Xenophon and the Garrisons” 168-175 with citations

Some of Cyrus' followers may have been given an offer that they could not refuse. Glous, for example, was the son of a man in whom Cyrus had invested a great deal of trust. While bringing him on campaign gave the young man a way to prove himself, it also gave Cyrus a hostage if Tamos had taken advantage of the situation. It is stimulating to wonder what Glous thought when he learned that his father had fled to Egypt without him. Xenophon mentions that Cyrus had kept the wives and children of at least two of his mercenary commanders under guard in Caria.³⁶⁸ Similarly, some of the allied troops in the army of Alexander the Great seem to have been brought along as much as to ensure the loyalty of the communities that had sent them as for their effectiveness in combat.³⁶⁹ Even in Xenophon's idealized view, Cyrus carefully blended menace with benevolence.³⁷⁰ Then one thinks of the slaves, servants, and concubines who more lofty followers brought with them. Few of them had any choice where they went. Although few or none of them were combatants, they were a necessary part of the army.

Others served for less formal reasons. Xenophon focussed on the exchange of Greek military service for Cyrus' favours. Sometimes, as with Clearchus the Lacedaemonian or Aristippus the Thessalian, Cyrus did someone a favour on the understanding that they would provide military service when asked. Other times, as with the Spartans, he invoked old favours and requested that they repay them with military support. Yet others, Cyrus offered to reward anyone who helped him at an indefinite future time. Xenophon claims to have come on such terms without any formal military

³⁶⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.8

³⁶⁹ Stephen English, *The Army of Alexander the Great* (Pen & Sword Books: Barnsley, Yorkshire, 2009) 87-92

³⁷⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.11-13

role.³⁷¹ At least in theory, the gentlemen who came on such terms were not mercenaries but friends or followers.

The Paphlagonian cavalry are probably an example of favour exchange, although they also show the limitations of our sources. As was shown in chapter 2, Cyrus did not control Paphlagonia, which probably paid tribute to the King but was governed by its own ruler or rulers. Yet somehow Cyrus' army contained a thousand Paphlagonian cavalry and possibly other troops.³⁷² What were a thousand Paphlagonian cavalry doing in his army, if they were not the product of a levy of his subjects? A thousand cavalry from a single region was a very large number to collect through the chance recruitment of mercenaries. The simplest explanation is that Cyrus persuaded at least one Paphlagonian leader to provide him troops, perhaps through an intermediary with *xenoi* in Phrygia like Ariaeus. Perhaps they came for pay, perhaps out of loyalty to their leader. The call may have been no more formal than when Cyrus called his Greek friends to come with whatever troops they had. The Paphlagonians are not proof of a mechanical levy, but of the power of patronage.

Favour exchange had its disadvantages however. It was not certain who would respond to a request, and it was not certain how many men they would bring. For example, Cyrus gave Aristippus the Thessalian a mercenary force and pay so he could go back to Thessaly and fight his enemies there until Cyrus needed his help. When Cyrus called him, however, he never appeared, although one Menon the Thessalian did join the army at Celaenae. Although Xenophon does not explain, a good guess is that Aristippus was busy with his enemies in Thessaly and decided that he could not risk leaving himself

³⁷¹ Xen. *Anab.* 2.1

³⁷² Diod. 14.22.5-6, Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.4-7

or sending away all his mercenaries. Instead, he may have sent Menon and a smaller army as a partial repayment. One must imagine similar scenes all over western Anatolia as men either failed to come or made delicate calculations about how many followers to bring.

Yet others came for pay. Although both were called mercenaries (μισθοφόροι) by Greek writers there is a clear difference between men who brought their families and served for years, and men who travelled alone and signed on for a few months or a campaign. The governors of the coastal cities were able to enrol 4,000 men in addition to the minimum needed to hold the acropoleis. While men like Clearchus may have seen themselves as trading favours for favours, their men were likely more practical. There is no reason to believe that mercenary service was limited to Greeks and Thracians. Western Anatolia contained many poor, warlike peoples whose men might be willing to fight for a charismatic leader like Cyrus.

Much has been written about the military virtues of Cyrus' Greek hoplite mercenaries. But hiring mercenaries had other advantages. For one thing, they were a way to quickly raise a larger army than usual. While obliging more men to do military service, or distributing land to men who agreed to do service for it, would take time and cause trouble, hiring mercenaries could be as simple as sending a messenger to the mainland with an offer. Xenophon points out another advantage, namely that a wandering army overseas whose general owed Cyrus a favour was less conspicuous than an army camped at Sardis.³⁷³ For another, they were already organized and experienced soldiers. It is difficult to tell how many of the mercenaries had served in the Decelaeon War, the many little struggles as Sparta tried to solidify its hegemony after the war, the turmoil in

³⁷³ Xenophon. *Anabasis* 1.1.6, 1.1.9, 1.1.10

European Thrace, or the periodic small wars and raids between “rebel” and “loyal” territories in Anatolia. Roy is sceptical that many of them were veterans of the Peloponnesian War, despite a comment by Diodorus to this effect.³⁷⁴ Clearchus the Lacedaemonian, and possibly Menon the Thessalian if he had really been sent by Aristippus, lead combat-hardened forces, and Cyrus’ injunction to his garrison commanders to hire as many and good men as possible would seem to imply that he wanted experienced soldiers.³⁷⁵ It certainly seems likely that mercenaries were more experienced than the average men eligible for military service. Returning to the advantages of mercenaries, they had no local interests which might tempt them away from loyalty to Cyrus. A rich landowner in Lydia, for example, would likely have his own opinion of the legitimacy of Cyrus’ revolt, and his kin would have their own. He had to balance his responsibilities to Cyrus with his responsibilities to his estates and family. A wandering general like Clearchus, on the other hand, could bring his property and family with him wherever money and supplies were to be found. While Peloponnesian hoplites could certainly be formidable troops, there is no need to appeal to Cyrus’ supposed confidence in the superiority of Greek hoplites over all other infantry to explain his interest in Greek mercenaries.

The disadvantage of mercenaries was that they expected to be paid in cash. Although, as will be suggested in the next chapter, it is likely that a significant fraction of these wages returned to Cyrus’ treasuries in exchange for food, they probably required more coins than other types of troops did. The Swiss mercenaries of the 15th century gave rise to the proverb “Point d’argent, point de Suisse” (freely translated “When the money

³⁷⁴ Roy, “Mercenaries of Cyrus” 321-323

³⁷⁵ Cyrus’ injunction: Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6

runs out, the Swiss walk out”) and Xenophon portrays his comrades as equally willing to go home if there was no more pay. While aristocrats like Xenophon or Clearchus could afford to live off their savings or borrow money in the hope of future rewards, common soldiers could not be so cavalier.

In short, very little was simple or automatic about raising an army. There certainly were systems for raising an army in western Anatolia, and their invisibility to our sources should not cause us to underestimate their sophistication. As will be described in more detail in chapter 4, Cyrus’ army seems to have functioned very well up to the Battle of Cunaxa, suggesting that it was well enough organized to solve everyday problems. But these systems probably left room for negotiation and evasion, and they were not the only way that Cyrus raised troops. Favour exchange and mercenary service were also important. Until Cyrus’ army was actually assembled, he could not be certain of its strength and composition, because he could not control how many mercenaries would be available, how many acquaintances would respond to his requests, or how many men they would bring.

Cyrus may have encouraged his followers to bring as many men as possible, but there were practical difficulties with this. For one, not all troops were equally effective or equally ready to move. At the start of the Peloponnesian War Athens had boasted 29,000 hoplites of whom 13,000 were citizens ready to go on expeditions and 16,000 were older and younger citizens and resident aliens who were only given garrison duties.³⁷⁶ Particularly amongst retainers and the militia, there must have been men who were liable to serve but by age, health, inexperience, or poverty would have made poor soldiers. For

³⁷⁶ Thuc. 2.13.6-7. Gomme et al., *Commentary on Thucydides* defends the figures in the manuscripts *ad locum*.

another, bringing everyone would have left his lands unprotected. There were many threats, from ‘rebels’ like the Mysians, to opportunistic bandits, to the followers of other Persian magnates who had not joined Cyrus. Aside from simple loot, an aggressor might try to seize disputed property or kill a vulnerable enemy while his protectors were away. While Cyrus was gambling for death or the throne, win or lose his followers could hardly look forward to the possibility of returning to find their properties ravaged. Xenophon mentions that even Cyrus ordered Xenias to leave some mercenaries in the acropoleis when he marched to Sardis.³⁷⁷ As will be explored in the next chapter, bringing too many men would also slow down the army and make it hard enough to find enough food and water. Bringing every warrior might work for a village attacking its neighbours, but not for a realm like Cyrus’ trying to put its leader on the throne.

7. Gathering Supplies

Cyrus also had to gather supplies and equipment for his army. The details of his consumable supplies will be discussed in chapter 4, but for now it is sufficient to note that an army’s capacity to feed itself was much greater if supplies were collected in advance. Grain, wine, oil, vegetables, preserved meat, livestock, hay, and other foodstuffs could all be prepared in advance.

An army also required considerable durable supplies. Archers required arrows, and slingers shot. Spearmen required spare spearheads and body armour. Muleteers needed spare tunics and sandals, and drivers spare reins and harness. Common soldiers needed tents and blankets, and great lords pavilions and carpets. The army needed great numbers of pack and draft animals, and pack saddles and wagons to carry the loads. A

³⁷⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.1

supply of leather, seasoned timber, and tools helped keep the army moving as its original equipment began to wear out. Under preindustrial conditions, it was difficult to procure these things quickly on a large scale. Pack animals, for example, took time to breed and train, so collecting large numbers of animals on short notice usually involved taking them away from the countryside, by purchase or force. Aeneas Tacticus alludes to an extensive arms trade in fourth-century Greece, and this might have helped meet Cyrus' needs.³⁷⁸

In principle, Cyrus did not need to worry about equipping many of his soldiers. His mercenaries, for example, mostly came armed. It is occasionally suggested that Cyrus equipped his men, based on the number of them who came from poor regions and Xenophon's report that Ariaeus told the Greeks to surrender their arms because they had belonged to Cyrus and now belonged to the King.³⁷⁹ Other studies argue about who provided mercenaries' arms in general.³⁸⁰ But Lee's argument that many of Cyrus' men came straight from wars, that those poor regions were not so poor, and that providing enough arms of the right sort to equip every soldier would have been difficult, seems best.³⁸¹ The comment about Cyrus owning their arms may simply reflect a blurring between dependence and ownership: if the mercenaries were the King's men they should do whatever he asked with their equipment. Similarly, those of his subjects with military responsibilities presumably had to provide their own equipment. In Babylonia, we know that when there was a disagreement about who would do military service for a property

³⁷⁸ Aeneas Tacticus 24, 29, 30

³⁷⁹ Roy "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 310. Xenophon's comment: *Xen. Anab.* 2.5.38

³⁸⁰ General studies: H.W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers: From the Earliest Times to the Battle of Ipsus* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1933) 105-106 (Iphicrates punished some mercenaries by expelling them from camp without their arms: "This was the severest penalty which could be inflicted on a mercenary (short of death or enslavement) for it both prevented him from deserting to the enemy and from continuing in his employment *til he could purchase fresh arms.*"), David Whitehead "Who Equipped Greek Mercenary Soldiers?" *Historia* Vol. 40 No. 1 (1991) 105-113 and Paul McKetchie, "Greek Mercenary Troops and Their Equipment," *Historia* Vol. 43 No. 4 (1994) 297-305

³⁸¹ Lee, *A Greek Army on the March* 126, 127

with complicated ownership, one point of contention was who would provide the equipment.

But things were not quite so simple. For one thing, Cyrus may have been expected to provide arms for some of his dependents. Babylonian temples are attested arming their dependents, but similar evidence from Anatolia does not seem to exist.³⁸² For another, it was useful to have some equipment to distribute as gifts or loans to those who needed it. And there were obvious risks in trusting that the camp followers would provide enough spare equipment of all kinds. In particular, many generals found it wise to have a central supply of ammunition in addition to that which individual soldiers provided. Later medieval Europe provides well-documented examples of the complexities which could arise when an ethic of self-equipping met practical difficulties and a tradition of aristocratic generosity. Kings and magnates bought thousands of shields, crossbows, and pieces of armour to distribute to their men.³⁸³ In any case, whatever Cyrus did not provide, his subjects still needed to acquire one way or another.

The quantities of supplies involved could be quite substantial. Consider, for example, the task of providing spare arrows for a force of 5,000 archers. The famous cavalryman Gadai-Iama from a Babylonian document was to be provided with 100 arrows, a generous supply but one which could be shot through in an hour.³⁸⁴ A general who wished to have 60 spare arrows for 5,000 men would need to manufacture 300,000 arrows. Purchases of this size were common in later medieval Europe.³⁸⁵ Moreover, these arrows needed to be reasonably standardized, since unfamiliar arrows are difficult to

³⁸² MacGinnis, "Role of Babylonian Temples" 499

³⁸³ Mattias Pfaffenbichler, *Armourers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 33

³⁸⁴ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 598

³⁸⁵ Matthew Strickland and Robert Hardy, *The Great Warbow* (Sutton Publishing: Phoenix Mill, 2005) 125

shoot well, and packed securely enough that they would not be bent or lose their fletching in transport. When he invaded France in 1513, Henry VIII brought two bows, 31 bowstrings, and four sheaves of arrows per archer at his own expense, all carefully packed into wagons.³⁸⁶ The number of wagons and pack animals needed to carry these supplies could also be great. Roth estimates that a Roman legion of 4800 soldiers required 1400 pack mules and 160 wagons just to carry necessary military supplies, with a significant additional train to carry the officers' baggage, sick and wounded soldiers, engineers' stores, and the like.³⁸⁷ Chapter 4 will attempt to estimate the size of Cyrus' transport.

8. Conclusion

Between his return to the coast and his revolt in the spring of 401, Cyrus gathered his resources, called in favours, and prepared an army. It is unfortunate that his return to the coast is not dated, and that it is not clear how long and hard Cyrus had to fight to establish his control over his domain. Xenophon's story of how Otontas fought against Cyrus and was pardoned is very interesting, but it does not answer how many other men resisted Cyrus or for how long. When Cyrus was ready he called his forces to Sardis and marched east. Cyrus' preparations were over, and his campaign was beginning.

³⁸⁶ Strickland and Hardy, *The Great Warbow* 394

³⁸⁷ Jonathan Roth, *The Logistics of the Roman Army At War (264 BC – AD 235)* (Brill: Leiden, 2012) 82-91

Chapter 4 Cyrus' Army on the March

1. Introduction

Any army has a historical and political context, and must be raised and equipped. In the end, though, a massed army usually marches and fights. This was the stage of Cyrus' revolt in which the sources were most interested, and which continues to fascinate readers. This chapter will focus on Cyrus' army on the march, considering organization, transport, logistics, and numbers. It is not a detailed discussion of the route and Cyrus' decision-making, although a brief review will be included.

Questions of organization arguably belong in chapter 3, since they had to be decided as Cyrus raised his army. Instead, they are discussed here. For one thing, they are inextricably tied to numbers, which are linked to logistics. The size and organization of Cyrus' army also changed over time, particularly the Greek contingent. An army on the march constantly changes, and narratives which give organization and numbers at a single point can mislead.

2. Organization

Cyrus left Sardis with a large and well-organized army, but its composition and organization continually changed. Contingents joined and found a place, small forces left for separate missions, and individuals and small groups fell out or deserted. While stories about ancient armies often try to give a snapshot view at a particular place and time, this is always artificial.

As neither Xenophon nor Diodorus was writing a work on Cyrus' army, they are not as helpful as one might wish. Their figures for troop strengths are mostly meant to impress not to precisely measure quantity. They give some information on organization, but do not explain everything. Neither author chose to compose a set-piece describing the army on the march, although this was a common literary device in Greek descriptions of Persian armies.³⁸⁸ In Xenophon's case, this might reflect his lack of interest in barbarian soldiers, or his desire not to add excess details. Diodorus' choice probably reflects his concern with concision. Cyrus' army was not great or famous, so taking the time to describe its appearance would have consumed space to little purpose. Even his descriptions of famous armies are short and plain.³⁸⁹

Xenophon presents Cyrus' army as divided into Greek and barbarian sections, with expressions such as "the Greek force" and "the barbarian force."³⁹⁰ This model is simple, and may reflect his desire to emphasize Greek unity against the barbarian. Nevertheless, it corresponds to a split in our knowledge of the army: much more is known about Cyrus' Greek forces than his barbarians. It will often be used to organize material in this chapter.

The various mercenary forces which joined Cyrus were organized into large contingents under generals (στρατηγοί). In most cases, the man who led a contingent remained its general. One Sosis the Syracusan is never mentioned after he arrived with 300 hoplites, and may have been made captain (λοχαγός) inside a larger contingent.³⁹¹ A simple interpretation of the evidence of Xenophon gives eight generals, namely Xenias,

³⁸⁸ See eg. the many descriptions of Xerxes' army in Herodotus 7, or Q. Curtius Rufus' of the army of Darius III at Curtius 3.3.8-25 (by a Roman, but dependent on Greek sources)

³⁸⁹ Diod. 11.2 and following (Xerxes), Diod. 17.31.2 (Issos), Diod. 17.53.2 (Gaugamela)

³⁹⁰ Eg. Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.5 τὸ βαρβάρικον

³⁹¹ Roy, "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 287 note 4

Proxenus, Sophraenetus, Socrates, Pasion, Menon, Clearchus, and Chirisophus.³⁹² Xenias and Pasion deserted in Cilicia, and they were apparently replaced by Cleanor and Agias, although Xenophon does not mention how they were chosen and only mentions them in passing.

This organization changed over time. As different contingents arrived they were incorporated into the army: when Chirisophus landed with his men they became a separate command inside the Greek force.³⁹³ During the mutiny of the Greeks in Cilicia, more than two thousand of the soldiers of Xenias and Pasion deserted to Clearchus, and Cyrus allowed them to remain under Clearchus' command when they agreed to proceed.³⁹⁴

Many of these contingents contained diverse types of troops. Clearchus, for example, brought Greek hoplites, Thracian peltasts, Cretan archers, and Thracian cavalry. It appears that on the march, the generals commanded all of their troops rather than different types being separated into their own commands. The only clear example is a quarrel on the march, where Clearchus was attacked by some of Menon's soldiers and led his Thracians to avenge the insult while his hoplites and archers waited in the camp.³⁹⁵

These large contingents had a very simple internal organization by modern standards. The large contingents were divided into companies (λόχοι) whose average strength was probably something close to one hundred men.³⁹⁶ As Lee has argued, the company was the basic unit for marching, foraging, and small-scale fighting, and

³⁹² Roy, "Mercenaries of Cyrus" 289

³⁹³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.3

³⁹⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.3.7

³⁹⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.11-17

³⁹⁶ Lee, *A Greek Army on the March* 80-86; see also the list of who visited Tissaphernes with Clearchus at Xen. *Anab.* 2.5.30-31

generally had no clerks or internal subdivisions. Instead, the men organized themselves into messes (συσκήνιαι) for cooking, dining, and camping. These groups were probably very important to the soldiers, and useful in the “bottom up” organization of necessary tasks inside a Greek army, but they could not be ordered as a group. Evidently, Cyrus saw no need to impose a more sophisticated and formal system on his mercenaries.

The Greek sources have not preserved any information about the internal organization of the Greek cavalry and light-armed infantry.³⁹⁷ Xenophon usually refers to them as formations under officers (τάξεις under ταξίαρχοι), vague words which provide little specific information. One can only suggest that large units such as 200 Cretan archers or 800 Thracian peltasts must have contained smaller units for ease of battlefield command, march organization, and camp arrangement. Perhaps Miltocythes the Thracian, who deserted after the battle with 40 cavalry and 300 peltasts, was one such leader.³⁹⁸ The informal organization of the hoplites, and the decentralized societies from which many light-armed hailed, suggests that the organization of the other troops was probably simple.

The relative status of different generals seems to have been undefined. At the start of the campaign, Diodorus says that Cyrus commanded various barbarians, Clearchus, Proxenus, Socrates, and Menon, and that each of these leaders commanded smaller units.³⁹⁹ While he trims down the list of generals, and edits out the details of how the army slowly came together, if he had believed that Clearchus had been in charge of all the Greeks he could have shortened his list even further. Whenever a difficult decision needed to be made, there were councils of the generals and individual units trying to take

³⁹⁷ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 95, 96

³⁹⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 2.2.7

³⁹⁹ Diod. 14.19.8

the initiative. This happened at Tarsus, where the soldiers tried to press on, and Clearchus first tried to make his men advance then called a meeting of his soldiers to announce that he was reluctant to desert Cyrus, but would support them.⁴⁰⁰ He then called an informal meeting of “his own soldiers, those having come over to him, and any others who wished to” where he primed speakers to lead the discussion in the direction that he wanted it to go.⁴⁰¹ While Xenophon gives the impression that this meeting decided what the whole army did, he suggests that Clearchus did not believe he could simply tell the other generals what to do. At Thapsacus on the Euphrates Cyrus called up all the Greek generals and told them that he was going to march to Babylon and that they should tell their men.⁴⁰² The generals, plural, called an assembly, but while they were haggling terms with Cyrus, Menon convinced his men to cross the river to show their loyalty to Cyrus.⁴⁰³ In Babylonia Cyrus called a council of war when he believed that Artaxerxes was near.⁴⁰⁴ There was another meeting on the evening after Cunaxa when the Greeks were not sure whether they should return to camp, or bring the camp to their new position.⁴⁰⁵ This was typically Greek; when Thucydides praised the Spartan command structure, he assumed that readers would not be familiar with a chain of command proceeding in small, regular steps from files to generals.⁴⁰⁶

Why did Cyrus accept such an informal system? This looks particularly strange in light of the court hierarchy discussed in chapter 3, and the evidence from Persepolis of an intricately graded system of rank in Persis. Perhaps he was aware that Greek men were

⁴⁰⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.3-4

⁴⁰¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.3.9

⁴⁰² Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.11

⁴⁰³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.13-18

⁴⁰⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.1-9

⁴⁰⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.16-18

⁴⁰⁶ Thuc. 5.66.4 καὶ αἱ παραγγέλσεις, ἦν τι βούλωνται, κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ χωροῦσι καὶ ταχεῖαι ἐπέρχονται· σχεδὸν γάρ τι πᾶν πλὴν ὀλίγου τὸ στρατόπεδον τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ἄρχοντες ἄρχόντων εἰσὶ

very sensitive about being subordinate to anyone else. A formal system of relative honour could cause quarrels of its own. However, it also helped him keep his generals loyal and anxious to please him. The leaders of authoritarian states are usually suspicious of their generals, since they depend on armed power to keep control. Cyrus and Artaxerxes probably had some knowledge of the career of Dionysius I, who had seized power at Syracuse in 405 BCE with a force of a thousand bodyguards.⁴⁰⁷ There are also signs that Egypt had fallen to Cambyses after the defection of the Egyptian admiral; certainly, that same admiral did very well under Cambyses.⁴⁰⁸ One common solution was to import foreigners, but foreign generals with their own armies created their own problems. Renaissance Italy, and the relations between western crusaders and the eastern empire, give many later examples. Cyrus was certainly concerned with this since he kept the wives and children of some of his captains hostage in Lydia.⁴⁰⁹ In the time of Darius III, Memnon of Rhodes would send his wife and children to the King because he hoped to be appointed supreme commander of the King's forces in the Aegean.⁴¹⁰ The repeated mutinies of the Greeks during the march must have heightened this concern. Keeping the mercenary force divided, with leaders uncertain of their status, was one way to keep them from plotting against him.

There are some signs that Greek leaders were appointed for the battle. At the battle of Cunaxa, Clearchus was stationed on the extreme right wing, a place of honour in

⁴⁰⁷ Our best ancient source for Dionysius I is of course Diodorus Siculus, plus the so-called "Letters of Plato." For a modern overview, see D.M. Lewis, "Sicily," *Cambridge Ancient History* Second Edition Vol. 6 Chapter 5

⁴⁰⁸ The admiral was one Udjahorresnet. For a brief mention of his career see Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 54 and for a longer one see A. B. Lloyd, "The Inscription of Udjahorresnet: A collaborator's testament," *JEA* 68 (1982) 166-180. I believe that Jona Lendering most recently reminded me of this theory.

⁴⁰⁹ The wives and children of Xenias and Pasion hostages: Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.8

⁴¹⁰ Waldemar Heckel, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great* (Blackwell: Malden, MA, 2006) s.v. "Memnon [1]" 162

a Greek army if not in a Persian.⁴¹¹ Although his description of Cyrus' array is ambiguous about whether Clearchus commanded the whole right wing or just the right wing of the Greeks, Diodorus clearly believed that Clearchus had the power to command the whole Greek army during the battle.⁴¹² Xenophon also has Cyrus send a messenger to Clearchus telling him to lead his men left so that they would face the King and not just his left wing. While this passage has been debated, it seems most likely that Cyrus wished all the Greeks to drift left as they advanced, rather than instructing just Clearchus and his men.⁴¹³ This implies that Clearchus was the senior Greek commander during the battle, although Menon, whose troops made up the left wing of the Greek phalanx, may also have been important. We also hear of Episthenes of Amphipolis, who was leading the peltasts at Cunaxa.⁴¹⁴ Xenophon implies, but does not state, that he was in charge of all the Greek light-armed. If so, he must have been appointed for the battle, and disappears from our sources thereafter.

In short, from Cyrus' perspective his Greek troops had a two-level command structure. His troops consisted of large contingents lead by generals, subdivided into companies. At Cunaxa, he probably appointed Clearchus as commander of the wing, just as Parmenion served at Gaugamela. This further simplified communications: he could give orders to Clearchus and Ariaeus and expect the whole army to obey.

⁴¹¹ For Greek armies, see eg. Everett L. Wheeler, "The General as Hoplite," in Victor Davis Hanson, *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (Routledge: London, 1991) 147, 148. For Persian armies, the *locus classicus* is of course Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.22

⁴¹² Description of Cyrus' array: Diod. 14.22.5-6; also see 14.23.1 (Clearchus commands all the Greeks to advance slowly then charge when they come into arrow range), 14.24.2 (Clearchus calls the Greek army to halt)

⁴¹³ See Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.12 and Lendle, "Der Bericht Xenophons" 441, 442 who considers that Clearchus "hatte, wie jeder andere griechische Feldherr auch, Kommandogewalt nur über den von ihm befehligten Söldnerhaufen." I am not convinced by this, nor by his theory that Cyrus thought Clearchus was supreme commander of the Greeks but had forgotten to inform the other generals of this fact.

⁴¹⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.7

Less information is available about the organization of Cyrus' barbarian army. Xenophon implies that it was raised in two stages: one force which besieged Miletus, and one force which was called to Sardis to campaign against the Pisidians in the mountains of southern Anatolia.⁴¹⁵ Characteristically, Xenophon gives no information about either army except which Greek contingents were included in it. Both forces, however, seem to have included both Greeks and barbarians. Xenophon says that "Cyrus, having collected an army, besieged Miletus by land and sea", and continues for over 20 lines before he says that Cyrus summoned three Greek generals, Sophaenetus, Pasion, and Socrates, to Miletus.⁴¹⁶ If the Greeks were the only forces besieging Miletus, Xenophon would not put these events in this order. He later says that Pasion and Socrates were "of those campaigning about Miletus" which implies that there were other commanders.⁴¹⁷ It is also very improbable that the large city of Miletus would be besieged by the 1,100 men of Sophaenetus, Pasion, and Socrates, who included no slingers or archers.

As for Sardis, Xenophon states that when Cyrus was ready to act, he "gathered both the barbarian force and the Greek force."⁴¹⁸ While he does not explicitly say that he gathered both to Sardis, he does not state that the Greek commanders were called to Sardis either, merely that they arrived at Sardis. He also summoned the forces besieging Miletus, which included both Greeks and barbarians. Similarly, Diodorus states that "Cyrus, having gathered both the troops raised from Asia and thirteen thousand mercenaries to Sardis," appointed officials to govern while he was on campaign.⁴¹⁹ Lee

⁴¹⁵ Force called to Miletus: Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.7, 1.1.11, 1.2.3. Force called to Sardis: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.1

⁴¹⁶ Collected an army: Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.7 ὁ δὲ Κῦρος ὑπολαβὼν τοὺς φεύγοντας συλλέξας στρατεύμα

⁴¹⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.11: ἦν δὲ καὶ οὗτος καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης τῶν ἀμφὶ Μίλητον στρατευομένων.

⁴¹⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.1 ἀθροίζει ὡς ἐπὶ τούτους τό τε βαρβαρικὸν καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν (tr. Manning)

⁴¹⁹ Diod. 14.19.6 Κῦρος δὲ τοὺς τε ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀσίας στρατολογηθέντας καὶ μισθοφόρους μυρίους τρισχιλίους ἀθροίσας εἰς Σάρδεις (tr. Manning)

supposes that since Cyrus had command over those obliged to muster on the plain of Castolus 30 miles east of Sardis, the barbarian army mustered there and then marched east to join the Greeks and the troops from Sardis after they had marched for several days.⁴²⁰ This is an interesting suggestion, but both Xenophon and Diodorus imply that all the troops came to Sardis on this occasion.

As discussed in chapter 3, Cyrus' men came from many areas for different reasons. There is very little evidence for their internal organization. Nicholas Sekunda infers that Persian cavalry settlers were organized into "dukedom" of several hundred riders led by a noble.⁴²¹ Other military colonies probably had their own internal organization, especially if they were compact like the Jewish and Aramean garrison at Elephantine. It is plausible to imagine a division between the troops from Lydia and those from Phrygia, since those appear to have been separate administrative units.⁴²² If Cyrus did raise a militia, its organization may have reflected local traditions and political divisions. But in the absence of documents, or a detailed narrative description, few details can be known.

Herodotus famously believed that the Persian army of the early fifth century was organized along a decimal system, from tens to ten-thousands.⁴²³ Other Greek authors imply that this was the case: for example, units of a thousand cavalry are commonly

⁴²⁰ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 44 n. 12

⁴²¹ This theory was developed in a series of three articles: Nicholas Victor Sekunda, "Achaemenid Colonization in Lydia," *Revue des Études Anciennes* Vol. 87 (1985) 7-30, N.V. Sekunda, "Persian Settlement in Hellespontine Phrygia" in Amélie Kuhrt & Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg eds., *Achaemenid History III: Method and Theory* (Leiden 1988) 175-196, Nicholas Sekunda, "Achaemenid Settlement in Caria, Lycia, and Greater Phrygia," in H.S.W. Sancisi-Weerdenburg & Amélie Kuhrt eds., *Achaemenid History VI: Asia Minor and Egypt* (Leiden 1991) 83-143. See especially page 10 of his study of Lydia.

⁴²² See Chapter 2.1

⁴²³ Herodotus 7.81 Τούτου ὧν τοῦ στρατοῦ ἦρχον μὲν οὗτοι οἱ περ εἰρέαται καὶ οἱ διατάξαντες καὶ ἐξαριθμήσαντες οὗτοι ἦσαν καὶ χιλίαρχος τε καὶ μυριάρχος ἀποδέξαντες· ἑκατοντάρχης δὲ καὶ δεκάρχος οἱ μυριάρχοι.

mentioned, and various writers after the time of Alexander mention the χιλίαρχος or χιλίαρχης (*chiliarchos*, “commander of a thousand,” Old Persian *hazarapatish*) as an important official at the Achaemenid court.⁴²⁴ Documentary evidence confirms the existence of units from tens to thousands, although units were usually considerably below strength.⁴²⁵ With no contrary evidence, it is reasonable to assume that most of Cyrus’ troops were organized along these lines. Some short-service irregular troops may have kept their native organization: the Greek mercenaries are the only clear example, but Herodotus ends his description of the decimal system by saying that there were other leaders of the remaining nations.⁴²⁶

Xenophon does make some comments on the organization of the army at Cunaxa. He divides the army into a left wing, a centre, and a right wing. Cyrus was in overall command, and ordered a unit of 600 armoured cavalry in the centre. Ariaeus commanded the left wing, the troops from Lydia and Phrygia. Clearchus commanded the right wing, which mainly consisted of the Greek troops. This organization implies that the Greek and barbarian armies had similar strength and occupied similar lengths of ground. If they had been much more numerous than the Greeks, Cyrus would have needed to divide them into several large commands, and if they had taken up much more ground, the centre of his army would not have been between the Greeks and the barbarians but somewhere inside the barbarian army.

Xenophon’s casual comment about the Paphlagonians creates further difficulties.

“As for the barbarian force, Paphlagonian cavalry to the number of a thousand stood

⁴²⁴ Head, *The Achaemenid Persian Army* 17; Nicholas Sekunda, “Achaemenid Military Terminology,” *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* Vol. 21 (1988) 70-71

⁴²⁵ Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (University of California Press: Berkeley and LA, 1968) 28-32

⁴²⁶ Herodotus 7.81 Τελέων δὲ καὶ ἐθνέων ἦσαν ἄλλοι σημάτωντες.

beside Clearchus on the right, and the Greek peltast force; and on the left Ariaeus, Cyrus' lieutenant, and the other barbarian force."⁴²⁷ Here Xenophon creates a distinction between the main barbarian force and the Paphlagonians, and seems to describe the Greek light-armed as part of the barbarian army. Is this distinction between the Paphlagonians and the other barbarians based on location in the line or organization? Did he really mean that the light-armed were part of the barbarian army, or did he simply forget to mention them before and rush to mention them when he was about to describe the left wing? Xenophon does give the impression that the Greek light-armed, and possibly the Paphlagonians, fought their own battle on the right wing. On the other hand, the Paphlagonians are only mentioned this once. Since Xenophon was eager to describe barbarian troops fleeing or deserting, this suggests that they returned to Ariaeus after the battle and were not considered part of the Greek army as much as, for example, Clearchus' Thracian cavalry were. A plausible guess is that Ariaeus detached them from his command for the battle, but it is impossible to know who was in charge of the right flank guard, if indeed there was a single commander.

Considering all these things, one can roughly guess at the organization of Cyrus' army. The command structure of the Greek army was simple with *lochoi*, contingents, and Clearchus at the top. These levels can be seen when Clearchus left the Greek camp for his unlucky meeting with Tissaphernes, and Xenophon says that he was accompanied by five generals and twenty captains for the meeting and two hundred soldiers (στρατιώται) who came along to visit Tissaphernes' market.⁴²⁸ The barbarian army probably had more levels, with tens, hundreds, thousands, large regional commands, and

⁴²⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.5

⁴²⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 2.5.30-31; see also Xenophon's comment at *Anabasis* 3.1.4 that he was οὔτε στρατηγὸς οὔτε λοχαγὸς οὔτε στρατιώτης on the night that the generals were killed

Ariaeus. The more sophisticated organization of the non-Greek troops may have been one significant difference between the two forces. Our sources focus their attention on a few of the most important Greek commanders, and the organization of the Greek hoplites.

The evidence also suggests that Cyrus' army had a fluid organization. Aside from the Greeks, we see Glous, Pigres, and Orontes being given special temporary commands. It is possible that Xenophon's vagueness about organization does not just reflect his interests and goals, but reflects real ambiguities. This would have had some advantages, including flexibility and the ability to play different leaders against each other. On the other hand, the cuneiform evidence reminds us that parts of the empire were very bureaucratic.

3. Numbers

One of the most fundamental questions about an army is how many men it contains. The size of an army is easy to understand and quantify, even if it cannot account for differences in equipment, firepower, goals, and training. Unfortunately, this is also one of the most difficult questions to answer, and the answer depends on difficult choices about who and how to count. Let us then look at the general theoretical difficulties with counting an army.

To estimate the size of an army, one must decide who to count. This is not a trivial decision, especially not in the ancient world. Consider Xenophon the historian. Although "neither private nor captain nor general," he nevertheless marched with Cyrus and bore arms at Cunaxa.⁴²⁹ It is not clear what he did during the battle. He bore arms but

⁴²⁹ Xenophon's status: Xen. *Anab.* 3.1.4. Cunaxa: Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.15 (is Xenophon's silence about his deeds at Cunaxa a mark of modesty, or of embarrassment that he had not fought?)

did not receive pay or have a formal position, so was he a combatant or a noncombatant? Did he include men like himself in his figures for the strengths of different contingents? From some offhand comments, we learn that Clearchus' contingent included 40 Thracian cavalry who were not included in Xenophon's description of Clearchus' contingent when it arrived, apparently because they were much less numerous than Clearchus' other types of soldiers.⁴³⁰ The Milesian exiles which Xenophon mentions at the beginning of the *Anabasis* also tend to vanish from later accounts. Does this imply that they were also few in number? The continued debates about the US government's employment of armed civilians in war zones reminds us that troop strengths and casualty figures are still the product of choices of who to include.

The counting process itself was difficult. If the count is conducted by subunits, they all must make counts at the same time using the same definition and send them in to a central point where they can be tallied. The individual units might give inaccurate counts: a common scam in other times and places was for a commander to claim pay or rations for more men than he actually commanded and keep the surplus as profit. They also might count in different ways. Interpretation of the records of the English musters of the clergy is hampered by the decision of different musters to use different categories, and the surviving paperwork of the Roman army often varies in format.⁴³¹ Once all the individual records had been created, there was opportunity for arithmetic error, lost records, or double-counting to affect the total. If the count was conducted for the whole army, it would be necessary to get all the troops in one place at one time, and count them

⁴³⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.13, 2.2.7

⁴³¹ *Musters of the Clergy*: Bruce McNab, "Obligations of the Church in English Society: Military Arrays of the Clergy, 1369-1418," in W. Jordan, B. McNab, and T. Ruiz eds, *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 1976) 303-305

within a few hours. If the count was indirect, such as estimating the size of an army by the number of standards it supported, amount of horse-dung it produced, or size of camp it occupied, then these indirect methods had their own limitations and inaccuracies. Xenophon mentions such methods at one point in the *Anabasis*, when he says that one of Cyrus' Greeks remarked that some hoof-prints and dung were as much as about two thousand cavalry would make.⁴³² In his *Hipparchicos* he describes various ways that a general could make his forces look larger or smaller than they actually were, such as hiding part of a force in woods or giving weapons to the servants.⁴³³ Simple guesses by men untrained at estimating the size of crowds, or choosing numbers for symbolic reasons, could be wildly different from the actual size of an army. Recent disagreements about the size of political demonstrations and marches suggest the problem which ancient soldiers would have faced.⁴³⁴ Demonstrators and the authorities often disagree by a factor of five to ten, and modern newspapers have not been reluctant to publish wild guesses. Estimates are often drawn towards symbolic numbers, or simple multiples or fractions of numbers associated with other famous demonstrations. Significantly, modern sources tend to publish the estimate and estimator but not its basis. In this respect, ancient writers are not so different. For claims about the size of modern crowds, the advice remains the same as for claims about the size of ancient armies: "When in doubt- discount."⁴³⁵

In addition, under any definition the size of an army is constantly changing. Men leave, become unwell, die, or move around inside it. Contingents join or are sent away. An accurate count at the start of a long campaign might be wildly inaccurate by its end.

⁴³² Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.1

⁴³³ Xenophon, *Hipparchicos* 5.2ff

⁴³⁴ Clark McPhail and John McCarthy, "Who Counts and How: Estimating the Size of Protests," *Contexts* Vol. 3 No. 12 (2004)

⁴³⁵ Gerald D. Sturges, "1000 + 1000 = 5000: Estimating Crowd Size," *Society* (April 1972) 42-44, 63

In his *Hipparchicos*, Xenophon notes that the Athenian cavalry were significantly under strength, and that any commander should be sure to recruit replacements as men left the cavalry for one reason or another.⁴³⁶ Glenn Bugh discusses some of the difficulties of being sure just how under strength the cavalry were, but agrees that the Athenian cavalry were often under strength and that “Xenophon seems to be quite concerned about recruitment.”⁴³⁷

Finally, the numbers that we have are incomplete, inconsistent, and not always supported with evidence. The ancient sources for the size of Cyrus’ barbarian army are all very large round numbers, with no reason to believe them given. They appear to be part of a literary trope, at least as old as the Persian Wars, in which barbarian armies were said to be of unimaginable size in order to inspire the audience with awe.⁴³⁸ Similarly, Xenophon’s figures for the Greek army have two difficulties which will be discussed below: the “problem of the two Sophereti” and a discrepancy between the strengths of individual contingents and the total said to have mustered in Babylonia.

Otto Lendle suggested that we should not blame Xenophon for his vagueness about numbers: to him, the masses of the friendly and hostile barbarians blurred in the desert dust to immeasurable size.⁴³⁹ Still, Xenophon could have paid attention at the musters, or asked his experienced friends to estimate the size of the whole army.

The number of soldiers in the Greek army can be known with some confidence. Xenophon gives three pieces of evidence: the strength of individual contingents when the

⁴³⁶ Xenophon, *Hipparchicos* 1.2

⁴³⁷ Glen Richard Bugh, *The Horsemen of Athens* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1988) 154-158

⁴³⁸ George Cawkwell, *The Greek Wars: The Failure of Persia* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2005) appendix 3

⁴³⁹ Otto Lendle, „Der Bericht Xenophons über die Schlacht von Kunaxa,“ *Gymnasium* Vol. 73 (1966) 441

joined the army, the number of soldiers who mustered at Celaenae in Phrygia, and the number of soldiers who mustered in Babylonia a few days before Cunaxa.⁴⁴⁰

All the manuscripts of the *Anabasis* report that two men named Sophaenetes joined the army before Celaenae, each with a thousand hoplites.⁴⁴¹ One was from Stymphalia, a town in Arcadia, and the other was from Arcadia. There is no sign of two Sophaeneti elsewhere, and editors have been quick to change the manuscripts on the hypothesis that either the second Sophaenetes is a slip for another Arcadian general such as Agias, or that Xenophon was confused about when Sophaenetes joined.

These corrections affect what might be known as “the problem of sums.” The number of men said to have appeared at Celaenae is given in thousands and matches the sum of the sizes of individual contingents listed to that point. The strength given in Babylonia is 800 hoplites less and 200 peltasts more than the sum of individual contingents minus lost men, and since it is given in hundreds this difference is significant. Any change to the text about the two Sophaeneti affects the sums at Celaenae and Babylonia.

Neither solution is gentle to the manuscripts, and each creates other difficulties. If one of these forces never existed, then the total of men at Celaenae is 1,000 hoplites too great. If only the name of the general is in error, then a similar number of men are missing from the muster in Babylonia. Our text of Xenophon’s works includes many glosses which have slipped into the text, and some of these involve numbers. Perhaps the clearest example is the gloss at the end of the *Anabasis*: a list of the royal territories

⁴⁴⁰ Celaenae: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.9. Babylonia: Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.10; individual contingents, see the chart in Lee, *Greek Army on the March* Table 2

⁴⁴¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.4 and 1.2.9

which Xenophon traversed, with their governors, then a summary of the length of the march in marches, parasangs, and months.⁴⁴²

These problems had a long literature when Parke discussed them in 1933. He suggested that the total at Celaenae was a gloss, and that the second Sophaenetus and his force were a mistake.⁴⁴³ This solution has dominated subsequent commentary in English. Roy deletes one Sophaenetus and alludes to but rejects the theory that the second Sophaenetus was really a slip for Agias.⁴⁴⁴ Lee also deletes the second Sophaenetus and his thousand hoplites, while assuming that 200 hoplites became peltasts between Babylonia and Celaenae.⁴⁴⁵ Lee is so confident in this drastic emendation that he does not mention the problem in his body text. Otto Lendle's 1995 *Kommentar zu Xenophons Anabasis* gives a recent German view. He considers that the two Sophaeneti are probably a mistake of Xenophon's (and less probably a copyist's error) and suspects that Xenophon meant to write Agias the second time.⁴⁴⁶ He does not suggest a solution to the problem of sums, suggesting that the number of soldiers overcome by sickness or exhaustion would not have reached a thousand.⁴⁴⁷

These armchair calculations are interesting, but they should be considered in light of the practicalities of the situation. It is usually assumed that the total at Babylonia should match the strengths of the individual contingents. But this ignores the purpose of a muster and the passage of time. In the words of Xenophon, Cyrus held a review of his army in the plain, "and the number of Greeks in arms came to ten thousand four hundred

⁴⁴² Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.25, 7.8.26

⁴⁴³ Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers* 41, 42

⁴⁴⁴ Roy, "The Mercenaries of Cyrus" 287 note 4 and 288 note 6

⁴⁴⁵ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 47, 48, and Table 2

⁴⁴⁶ Otto Lendle, *Kommentar zu Xenophons Anabasis Bücher 1-7* (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt, 1995) 18

⁴⁴⁷ Lendle, *Kommentar* 58

hoplites and two thousand five hundred peltasts.”⁴⁴⁸ This looks very much like a muster, and the purpose of a muster in other cultures was to count how many men were present and able to fight. The sick and wounded were not in arms, and after months of gruelling summer marching through strange country there must have been significant numbers of both. Likely disability rates will be discussed below, but comparative evidence suggests that it would not be unusual for 10 percent or more of an army on campaign to be unable to fight. Similarly, many of Xenophon’s contingent strengths are very round, and he does not count some groups such as Clearchus’ cavalry and the Milesian exiles. The “gain” of 200 peltasts and “loss” of 200 hoplites is as likely to reflect small groups of troops left out of Xenophon’s figures, or “hoplite” totals which included a few light-armed men, as it is to indicate that some men switched roles. Lee’s assumption that 200 hoplites became peltasts before Cunaxa is possible and symmetrical, but the truth was probably messier.⁴⁴⁹

Unless another source is discovered, any solution to the problem of the two Sophaeneti and the problem of sums is speculative. However, the nature of a muster is strong evidence against Parke’s solution of deleting one Sophaenetus and assuming that 200 hoplites became peltasts. Ancient narratives do not give us the information to tell the exact size of an army at a given point in a campaign, let alone how many men were able to fight. Xenophon gives us enough information to estimate the nominal strength of the Greek force within 10 percent or so, and for that we should be thankful.

Less information is available for the size of the barbarian army. Xenophon was not interested, although he claims that Cyrus had countless soldiers (“ten myriads”) and

⁴⁴⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.10

⁴⁴⁹ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 48; cf. Lendle, *Kommentar* 58

about twenty scythed chariots.⁴⁵⁰ Diodorus gives more details, but also says that Cyrus' soldiers were countless (“seven myriads”).⁴⁵¹ These forces included a large force of infantry, several thousand cavalry, about 20 scythed chariots, and a bodyguard of 600 armoured cavalry. The main facts available for estimating its strength are as follows:

- Cyrus' cavalry at Cunaxa was divided into a force of Paphlagonians on the right wing, a bodyguard in the centre, and another group on the left wing. Xenophon says that the Paphlagonians were a thousand strong, Diodorus “more than a thousand.”⁴⁵² Xenophon says that Cyrus' bodyguard were six hundred strong, Diodorus a thousand.⁴⁵³ Only Diodorus gives a number for the left wing cavalry, “about a thousand.”⁴⁵⁴ Military prudence would suggest that the left wing force was strongest, since it extended into open plains and was vulnerable to being outflanked by Artaxerxes' longer line.
- Xenophon says that Orontas asked Cyrus for a thousand cavalry to lay an ambush. Cyrus told him to collect some from each of the commanders.⁴⁵⁵ This also suggests a force of several thousand cavalry. Orontas believed that a thousand men was the most he could ask for, and Cyrus did not simply lend him a unit of a thousand but told him to collect detachments. Exactly why he did this is not clear: perhaps he wished to hide that a significant fraction of his cavalry was away, or perhaps he wanted Orontas to pick the best cavalry from each unit.

⁴⁵⁰ Cyrus' strength at the muster in Babaylonia: Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.10-11

⁴⁵¹ Diod. 14.19.7

⁴⁵² Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.5, Diod. 14.22.5

⁴⁵³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.6, 1.8.24; Diod. 14.22.5

⁴⁵⁴ Left wing cavalry: Diod. 14.22.5

⁴⁵⁵ Orontas: Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.2

- Cyrus' line at Cunaxa consisted of a left wing of barbarians, a centre of bodyguards, and a right wing of Greeks.⁴⁵⁶ As Xenophon himself tells us, Persian kings usually stationed themselves an equal distance from both ends of their line, so that they would be protected on either side and could send messages to either wing quickly.⁴⁵⁷ Although it is possible that the Greeks were formed up more or less densely than the barbarians, apparently the barbarian infantry had a line about as long as that formed by 13,000 Greeks.
- Xenophon believed that Artaxerxes' line was more than twice as long as Cyrus'.⁴⁵⁸ From his position on Cyrus' right wing, Xenophon would have found it difficult to see Artaxerxes' right wing several kilometres away through the dust and haze, let alone compare it to the length of Cyrus' line. Xenophon's account of the battle makes more sense if Artaxerxes' line was about 50 percent longer than Cyrus' line.⁴⁵⁹
- Diodorus says that Cyrus left Sardis with 13,000 Greek mercenaries and 70,000 barbarians, of whom three thousand were horsemen.⁴⁶⁰ Xenophon says that Cyrus had 100,000 barbarians and about 20 scythed chariots.⁴⁶¹ Both figures for the barbarian army should probably be understood as “very many” or “countless,” much as millions and billions are used in English rhetoric today.

Most scholars have suggested a barbarian force of about 20,000 men. Kromayer suggested about 17,000 barbarians, Lendle 25,000 to 30,000; Lee suggests 20,000

⁴⁵⁶ Line at Cunaxa: Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.4-7, Diod. 14.22.5

⁴⁵⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.21-23

⁴⁵⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.13, 1.8.21-23

⁴⁵⁹ Lendle, *Kommentar* 65 (map), 69, J.M. Bigwood, “The Ancient Accounts of the Battle of Cunaxa,” *The American Journal of Philology* Vol. 104 No. 4 (Winter 1983) 342, Cawkwell, *Greek Wars* 248

⁴⁶⁰ Diod. 14.19.7

⁴⁶¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.10

barbarian infantry and 3,000 barbarian cavalry, and Anderson agrees.⁴⁶² Some recent authors like Cawkwell, Head, and Briant have chosen not to guess.⁴⁶³ Few of the authors who give a number explain how they estimated it. It seems likely that by Cunaxa Cyrus had 10,000 to 20,000 barbarian infantry, 13,000 Greek infantry, and 3,000 barbarian cavalry, for a total army of 26,000 to 36,000 fighting men.⁴⁶⁴

Both contemporaries and later observers often shrink from estimating numbers of noncombatants. Camp followers are difficult to count, less prestigious, and often seen as a burden to the fighting part of an army. Documentary evidence rarely covers them, and narratives are even more likely to ignore them except in anecdotes. Nevertheless, Xenophon and his contemporaries would have had a clear idea about how many people usually followed a camp, and it is the duty of a historian to draw out or reproduce this implicit knowledge as best as they can. The occasional comments in the ancient sources that an army had too many camp followers imply that there were ideas about the proper ratio, although many soldiers might have had difficulty speaking precisely about it.

Xenophon is conspicuously vague about noncombatants in the Greek army. He only mentions one of his servants once, when the servant ran away with his shield in an emergency. Since he mentions that he was embarrassed to have only one slave and some travel money when he visited Seuthes the Thracian on his way back to the Aegean, he

⁴⁶² Johannes Kromayer, *Antike Schlachtfelder* (Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin, 1924-1931) Vol. II 234, Otto Lendle, "Der Bericht Xenophons" 436 and *Kommentar zu Xenophons Anabasis (Bücher 1-7)* 58, Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 44, J.K. Anderson, *Xenophon* (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1974) 99, 100

⁴⁶³ Briant, *Cyrus to Alexander* 620, 629; Head, *Achaemenid Persian Army* 66; Cawkwell, *Greek Wars* 248

⁴⁶⁴ Assumptions: Xenophon's figure of 12,900 Greeks at the battle is roughly correct; totals for Cyrus' barbarians in round numbers are meant to impress not to quantify; Cyrus had roughly equal numbers of Greek and barbarian infantry; Cyrus had one or two thousand cavalry on his exposed left wing to balance the 600 in the centre and 1,000 on the right wing.

clearly had more than one attendant at some point.⁴⁶⁵ He once remarked that the generals ordered their men to release all recent captives, because they doubled the army's need for food.⁴⁶⁶ While one should not trust this number too much, Roth notes a number of Roman anecdotes which suggest that anything like one noncombatant per infantryman was scandalous.⁴⁶⁷ John Lee notes that after Cunaxa, Xenophon implies that few Greek soldiers had a servant. Instead, the soldiers themselves foraged, led pack animals, and divided up the camp chores.

Perhaps the best documentary evidence comes from three centuries before Cyrus. A report by an Assyrian governor to the King survives and has been published, most recently by J.N. Postgate.⁴⁶⁸ The report gives a detailed description of the types and numbers of Assyrian soldiers who were present and available. These totals include many noncombatants, such as bakers, scribes, and donkey-drivers. Maddeningly, however, the document gives only flat totals for two other ethnic contingents. It is therefore unclear whether one should reckon a certain number of noncombatants within their numbers, or assume that the Assyrian bakers, scribes, and so on were sufficient for all contingents. This report does make it clear that Neo-Assyrian governors recognized a significant number of military men as noncombatants. At least 356 of the 1430 men counted (25 percent) were noncombatants, and it is likely that the allied contingents included some servants as well. The chariot teams, and less clearly the cavalry, seem to have been allotted one servant per soldier. Since the Assyrians were mostly cavalry or charioteers,

⁴⁶⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 7.3.20 and Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 263

⁴⁶⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 4.1.13

⁴⁶⁷ Jonathan Roth, *The Logistics of the Roman Army At War (264 BC – AD 235)* (Brill: Leiden, 2012) 114

⁴⁶⁸ Nicholas Postgate, "The Assyrian Army in Zamua," in Nicholas Postgate, *The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur: Studies on Assyria: 1971-2005* (Oxbow Books: Oxford, 2007) 261-280 (previously published in *Iraq*, Vol. 62 (2000) 89-108)

this inflates the ratio of noncombatants per combatant within the Assyrian contingent. Depending on how one interprets and classifies the various terms, the ratio within the Assyrian contingent could be as high as 1.3 noncombatants per combatant.

From the Classical Greek world, the clearest evidence has recently been called into question. Athenian and Spartan hoplites famously expected to bring at least one servant each, and during the Peloponnesian War soldiers expected to receive an allowance for their servants.⁴⁶⁹ However, Van Wees has made a strong case that these ratios applied only to the privileged hoplite classes at Athens and Sparta, but not to all Greeks who fought as hoplites.⁴⁷⁰ As the kit of a hoplite got simpler from the sixth to the fourth centuries, and as the availability of metal increased, men who could not afford a servant could provide themselves with the necessary kit. Mercenaries, in particular, are likely to have been too poor to afford both good kit and a variety of other property.

Other ancient and early modern armies provide some comparative figures. Frontinus records that Philip the Great limited Macedonian soldiers to bringing one groom per cavalryman and one servant per ten infantrymen.⁴⁷¹ Based on this, and allowing for some unofficial followers, Engels suggested that Alexander's army had a total of one noncombatant per three combatants until after the battle of Gaugamela.⁴⁷² Roth guesses that the Romans had about one servant per four soldiers.⁴⁷³ In the 16th and 17th centuries, Hapsburg armies marching from Italy to the Low Countries often

⁴⁶⁹ Hans van Wees, *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities* (Bristol Classical Press: London, 2004) 68 and W. Kendrick Pritchett, *Ancient Greek Military Practices Part I* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1971) 49-51

⁴⁷⁰ Van Wees, *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities* 68-71

⁴⁷¹ Frontinus, *Strategemata* 4.1.6 "Philippus, cum primum exercitum constitueret, vehiculorum usum omnibus interdixit, equitibus non amplius quam singulos calones habere permisit, peditibus autem denis singulos, qui molas et funes ferrent."

⁴⁷² Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1978) 13, 14

⁴⁷³ Roth, *Logistics of the Roman Army* 114

demanded food for five men per three soldiers. A French authority suggested in 1720 that one should allow for 0.5 extra person per soldier, and this was a low estimate.⁴⁷⁴

Modern authors have seldom dared to suggest a figure for the number of Cyrus' camp followers. Lendle guessed two servants per three soldiers.⁴⁷⁵ Lang guessed that after Cunaxa the Greeks had an average of one noncombatant per three combatants, but admitted that she was unsure.⁴⁷⁶ Neither of these figures appears to be based on much evidence, although Lang did feel that it would have been hard to find enough food for even that many followers.

How can we choose amongst these comparative figures and guesses? One might observe that many hoplites were from poor regions such as Arcadia, and were therefore likely to be able to afford few servants. While the scarcity of servants in the middle books of the *Anabasis* may reflect the loss of camp followers when Cyrus' camp was sacked, the Greeks had plenty of opportunity to take new captives after the battle.⁴⁷⁷ Similarly, Cyrus' army seems to have had only three thousand cavalry in thirty thousand soldiers, so grooms probably did not inflate the total.⁴⁷⁸ Cyrus made a long march with little loot, and it is possible that many camp followers chose to depart around the time when he crossed the Euphrates. Camp followers shared in the fortunes of the camp that they followed, gathering loot after a victory and running for their lives after a defeat. It is more difficult to suggest whether the followers of the barbarian camp were few or many. Comments

⁴⁷⁴ G. Perjes, "Army Provisioning, Logistics, and Strategy in the Second Half of the 17th Century," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Vol. 16 (1970) 3 note 9, 5

⁴⁷⁵ Otto Lendle, "Der Marsch der 'Zehntausend' durch das Land der Karduchen," *Gymnasium: Zeitschrift für Kultur der Antike und humanistische Bildung*, Vol. 91 (1984) 209

⁴⁷⁶ Alice Lang, *Provisioning the Ten Thousand* (MA Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1992) 26

⁴⁷⁷ I thank Waldemar Heckel for pointing out that the scarcity of servants in the later books could reflect the loss of the camp at Cunaxa

⁴⁷⁸ Xenophon's reference to the practice of asking for a leg up, rather than vaulting onto horseback, as "the Persian manner" (*Hipparchicos* 1.17, *Art of Horsemanship* 6.12) implies that each Persian cavalryman had a groom.

such as Lendle's allusion to the "more tightly organized Greek camp" do not seem to reflect the ancient evidence, but the presence of cavalry, the "Lydian market," and many important dignitaries in the barbarian camp does suggest that the ratio was probably higher in the barbarian camp than the Greek.⁴⁷⁹

So what estimate of the number of noncombatants should we choose? The number of noncombatants probably changed even more rapidly and drastically than the number of combatants. There were several incidents where the soldiers seized a large number of captives then had to let them go, such as in Cilicia after the Syennesis made peace with Cyrus. As was noted at the beginning of this section, even deciding who counts as a noncombatant is difficult. A fair guess at a typical ratio of noncombatants to combatants before Cunaxa might be 1:2, similar to several other armies which relied upon private merchants and servants. That would make a total of 13,000-18,000 noncombatants and 26,000-36,000 combatants. Whatever the numbers, we should imagine Cyrus' army as a diverse collection of militias and merchants, household troops and satraps' clerks, mercenaries and allies. Relations amongst the barbarians were probably as complicated as they were inside the Greek army.

4. The March

The march of Cyrus' army from Sardis to Cunaxa is vividly described by Xenophon. Not only does he give an itinerary, but he also describes the local sites and the length of march between different points. Relating Xenophon's description to modern geography and archaeological remains has been a popular scholarly task, and will not be

⁴⁷⁹ Lendle's allusion: Lendle, *Kommentar* 58 ad 1.7.10: The column of Persian soldiers, wagons, beasts, and civilians likely „den Eindruck von unermesslicher Größe ... auf die Mitglieder der straffer organisierten griechischen Heeresgruppe gemacht haben.“

repeated here. Nevertheless, a brief summary of the route and the challenges of each stage is worthwhile. This section is based on Xenophon's narrative and Lee's comments in chapter 2 of *A Greek Army on the March*.

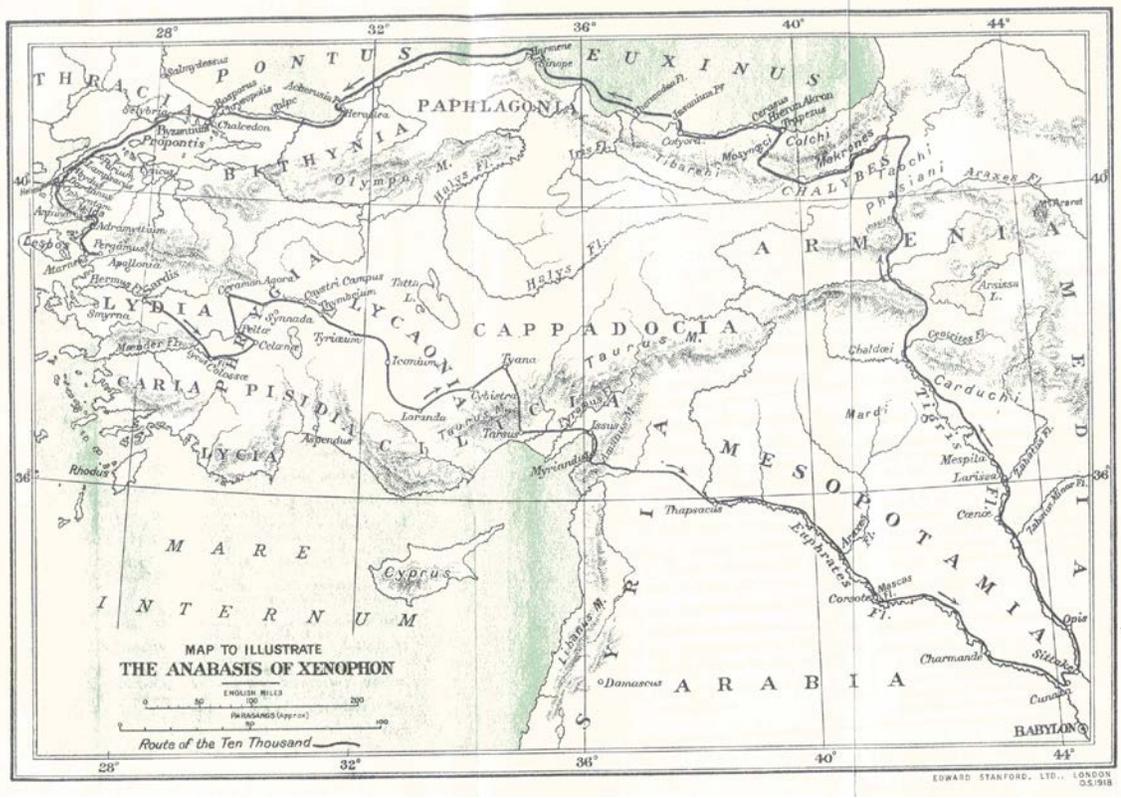


Figure 2: Route of Cyrus' Army⁴⁸⁰

Raising such a large army constrained Cyrus' route. He needed to pick a route with good roads, plenty of towns at which the army could replenish its supplies, sufficient water, and not too many difficult points which could slow down the whole army. There had to be sufficient fodder for his cavalry, pack, and draft animals. He was fortunate that much of the march was through lands he knew well and controlled.

⁴⁸⁰ This is a facsimile of the map included in Carleton L. Brownson trans., *Xenophon in Seven Volumes: Anabasis* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1922) attributed to Edward Stanford Ltd. of London.

Cyrus called his forces together at Sardis, the Persian capital of Lydia. These consisted of the garrisons of Ionia, the soldiers of Lydia and Phrygia, the households of himself and his followers, and the army which had been besieging Miletus. Many of those who owed him a favour, or wished him to own them a favour, did not arrive before he departed. The army followed the road south and east, crossing the upper Maeander and passing through Colossae and Celaenae. There they waited, enjoying the plentiful water and gardens and waiting for more of Cyrus' friends to arrive with troops. Then Cyrus turned north, skirting the edge of the flatlands of central Anatolia and passing through several towns too obscure to find a place in the *Barrington Atlas*. From Cyrus' perspective, this allowed him to maintain the pretence that he was going to attack the Pisidians of the coastal mountains while moving slowly towards his brother's territory. To the soldiers, it must have been easy going: mild weather, good roads, plenty of breaks, and no enemy. The many inhabited towns which Xenophon mentions must have provided good opportunities for the soldiers, and the camp merchants, to buy supplies. The only difficulty was a lack of pay, and at one town Cyrus paid his men some back wages. Camp gossip said that Epyaxa the queen of Cilicia had given him her money and her favours when she visited the army.⁴⁸¹ Eventually the army came to Iconium, then and later a crucial road junction in southern Anatolia. Xenophon believed that Iconium was the last city of Phrygia.

From Iconium, Cyrus turned south, avoiding the direct road to Susa described by Herodotus and passing through Lycaonia and over the passes into Cilicia. He was now in open revolt, although few of his soldiers may have realized it. As with every other part of

⁴⁸¹ Epyaxa: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.12

his expedition, the march through Cilicia had been preceded by careful negotiations. Xenophon does not claim to understand what happened, but hinted that Cyrus and Epyaxa had come to an understanding.⁴⁸² Certainly, she visited the army and despite having her own bodyguard went home by an alternate route accompanied by a guard of Cyrus' soldiers. Upon the approach of these soldiers and Cyrus' fleet, the Cilicians abandoned the passes and allowed Cyrus and his men to cross into the Cilician plains. Cyrus eventually made peace with the Syennesis and they exchanged gifts. The alternative tradition, preserved in Diodorus and Photius' summary of Ctesias, portrays Syennesis as the agent, sending soldiers and one son to fight for Cyrus and another son to fight besides Artaxerxes.⁴⁸³ Once again, political arrangements were just as important as operational ones to Cyrus.

This should have been another happy time for the soldiers: they did not have to fight and could ravage the countryside with little resistance. Xenophon speaks warmly of the towns and fields of the Cilician plain.⁴⁸⁴ However, the Greeks became unhappy because they suspected that they were being lead to fight against the King, and because some of Menon's men had disappeared in the narrow valleys of the Taurus Mountains. The dangers of a campaign against the King were much greater than those of a punitive expedition into Pisidia. Eventually they were persuaded by an increase of pay and a promise that Cyrus was only fighting the satrap of Syria.

The army continued south along the coast, over the mountains of Lebanon, and across Syria to Thapsacus on the Euphrates. The local garrisons withdraw towards the

⁴⁸² Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.12

⁴⁸³ Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F 16.63, Diod. 14.20.3

⁴⁸⁴ Verdance of Cilicia: Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.22-24

King rather than fight Cyrus' army alone. As far as one can tell the army continued to follow good roads with plenty of towns to buy and sell at, but the terrain and climate would have been unfamiliar to most of the soldiers. Xenophon has many comments on the animals and plants of Phoenicia and Syria, and it is likely that other soldiers were just as bemused. It was now summer, and temperatures were rising.⁴⁸⁵ The march was probably less happy for the country folk. Although Xenophon only mentions that the army sacked and burned a palace and its surrounding gardens, now that they were in the country of Cyrus' enemies it is likely that soldiers and their followers began to take what they liked from the locals. Xenophon mentions one occasion when the soldiers were billeted in villages belonging to Parysatis, Cyrus' mother, and perhaps this reflects his memory of the soldiers being told to behave themselves. Cyrus may not have approved, since he would have to rule Syria if he won, but it is difficult to see how he could have prevented the occasional stolen cow, trampled garden, or raped shepherd. At least the Syrian army did not add to the locals' troubles, except by seizing and burning the boats on the Euphrates so that Cyrus could not use them to cross.⁴⁸⁶ Cyrus took advantage of unseasonably low water to ford the river, entering the land between the Tigris and Euphrates.

In the land between the rivers, Cyrus followed the left bank of the Euphrates south, rather than trying to cross the plains between the Tigris and Euphrates as Alexander would do a century later. In this stretch we often hear of the army halting to provide itself with food, presumably by confiscating it from the locals. In one difficult thirteen-day march through empty countryside many baggage animals died, and the price

⁴⁸⁵ For dates and 20th century temperature, I am following table 1 of Lee, *Greek Army on the March*

⁴⁸⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.18

of grain rose so high that few soldiers could afford it. Those who could not afford grain had to eat the flesh of starving pack animals. The army must have presented an ugly spectacle, with men falling out to slaughter faltering animals, redistributing or abandoning their loads, and trying to catch up with their comrades. Xenophon mentions the shortage of food, fodder, wood, and water and the narrow, muddy roads but the summer heat was growing steadily worse as the army continued south.⁴⁸⁷ Lee suggests that the army began to march at night so that they could rest during the heat of the day.⁴⁸⁸ Difficulties like these were among the reasons that large armies usually kept to main roads and accepted routes. A small army at the end of the desert could have brought disaster, and a devastated baggage train was hard to replace on campaign. It is likely that Cyrus hoped to surprise his brother by taking a shorter but more difficult route. Following the left bank of the Euphrates also avoided crossing the Tigris, since Cyrus had limited capability to cross rivers.

The final stage of the march was through Babylonia. There were cities and better roads again, but the local soldiers were riding ahead of the army burning whatever might be useful for Cyrus' men. Xenophon places two long stories here, the treason trial of Orontas and Cyrus' preparations to cross a canal which he believed the King would defend. When the King did not appear the soldiers were relieved, and began to think that the King would not fight. On the day of Cunaxa, Xenophon tells us, the soldiers were out of order and many of them had packed their arms on baggage animals or carts.⁴⁸⁹ When a messenger revealed that the King was just a short distance away with a large army, the

⁴⁸⁷ Xenophon's comments: Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.2 ("wood there was none"), 1.5.5-7

⁴⁸⁸ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 147, 148

⁴⁸⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.20

soldiers at the front had to rush back for their equipment and get into formation while the soldiers in the back caught up with the head of the army.⁴⁹⁰ In the end Artaxerxes chose a stately approach rather than rushing ahead with his cavalry, and Cyrus' soldiers had time to arrange themselves before battle.

Cyrus' path was shaped by both physical and human geography. His southern route through Anatolia avoided the empty country of the central plains, but also helped him avoid open revolt as long as possible. Halts helped his men recover from the strain of the march, and allowed reinforcements to catch up, but they also gave time to finish negotiations with unsteady dynasts and unruly soldiers. The difficulties of some routes help modern readers understand why large armies usually kept to the main roads. Shortcuts, like Menon's road into Cilicia or Cyrus' path along the Euphrates, usually involved narrow and difficult roads where it was easy to get lost and hard to find enough food, water, and fodder for a large army.

5. Changes in Numbers

As Cyrus' army marched, it changed. From time to time reinforcements arrived, or merchants with new food and equipment for sale. There were a few lengthy pauses where the soldiers could enjoy themselves in summer in a strange land. At the same time, men, beasts, and kit were weakening. Xenophon does not give many examples in book 1 of the *Anabasis*, perhaps because the army's difficulties after Cunaxa were so much greater. However, he mentions this problem elsewhere.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁹⁰ On the practical difficulties here, see Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 147-151

⁴⁹¹ Xenophon, *Hipparchicos* 1.2 and 6.5.2

An army on campaign is an unhealthy environment. Crowding, poor shelter, unhealthy food, dangerous equipment, haste, and fear all lead to accidents and sickness. John Keegan once deplored the new dangers introduced by mechanization, but creaky carts and balky oxen imposed their own risks.⁴⁹² Assembling an army and marching it through new areas exposed the soldiers to new diseases. The physical and mental rigours of campaigning weakened soldiers' resistance. Soldiers who were careless with weapons could accidentally injure each other. Quarrels between men with weapons to hand could become lethal. Just after the difficult march along a deserted area of the Euphrates, a riot broke out when one of Menon's soldiers threw an axe at Clearchus.⁴⁹³ Clearchus had recently ordered one of Menon's men beaten, and the victim's comrades felt insulted. After Cunaxa, when Cyrus' men had made peace with the King and were marching home, many fights broke out between the Greeks and Ariaeus' men.⁴⁹⁴ The Greeks suspected that Ariaeus was going to abandon them; the barbarians' views are not reported. Ornerly baggage animals and worn-out carts were more than capable of breaking legs or necks. John Lee of Santa Barbara has described some of the dangers in his *Greek Army on the March*.⁴⁹⁵ This section will not attempt to duplicate his work, but will attempt to determine how disability, desertion, and death weakened Cyrus' army as he marched to Babylon.

Probably the most common reason for a man to leave the ranks was injury or sickness. Unfortunately, Xenophon gives no anecdotes about this until after Cunaxa. The closest comparative source for likely disability rates comes from Roman Britain. A

⁴⁹² John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (Penguin: New York, 1976) 318

⁴⁹³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.12

⁴⁹⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.11

⁴⁹⁵ Lee, *Greek Army on the March* ch. 9

document from the First Cohort of Tugurians at Vindolanda from about the year 95 CE records that of the men present at the fort, 265 were healthy, 15 sick, 6 wounded, and 10 with eye infections.⁴⁹⁶ Just over 10 percent of the soldiers at a garrison in peacetime were disabled on a given day in May. Unfortunately, the publishers of this tablet were unable to find any parallel documents from the Roman world.

The Tugurians' sick list may seem large, but not by 19th century standards. One garrison of 75-100 men in British North America typically had two to four men on the sick list in the 1840s, a rate of 2-5 percent.⁴⁹⁷ Rates on campaign would presumably have been higher. During the American civil war, army surgeons could refer to the health of their army as excellent while as many as 20 percent of the soldiers were disabled by illness.⁴⁹⁸ While these comparative figures must be used with caution, due to the differences between 19th century North America and the ancient near east, they do suggest that the Tugurians' disability rate could have been normal. On campaign, how many of these soldiers would have been able to continue, and how many would have been left behind? The story about the massacre of the hospital before the Battle of Issos suggests that later armies recognized the problem.⁴⁹⁹ Our sources on classical and archaic Greek warfare strongly suggest that effective medical care was only available for a minority of sick or wounded soldiers.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁶ *Tabulae Vindolandeses* II.154. The Latin categories are *valentes*, *aegri*, *vulnerati*, and *lippentes*. I thank David Wills and Duncan B. Campbell of the Roman Army Talk forum for the reference.

⁴⁹⁷ Jacelyn Duffin, "Soldiers' Work, Soldiers' Health," *Labour/Le Travail* Vol. 37 (Spring 1996) 37-80

⁴⁹⁸ Jeffrey Sartin, "Infectious Diseases During the Civil War: The Triumph of the 'Third Army'," *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 16 No. 4 (April 1993) 580

⁴⁹⁹ Curtius 3.8.13-15, Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 2.7.1

⁵⁰⁰ Van Wees, *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities* 145-148

Desertion could also quietly weaken an army. Not least in the problems of managing an army is keeping the soldiers together through hardships and boredom. Modern armies use a complicated infrastructure to keep soldiers in place, but few ancient armies could support anything so sophisticated. Classical Greek armies seem to have relied on social pressure and accepted a certain rate of losses. Sick soldiers who began to straggle or left the march to rest could have either given up and gone home, or failed to catch up to the army. A regular system for the treatment of the wounded makes it easier to keep track of such stragglers, but the Greek army at least had no such system.

Xenophon gives the impression that desertion was very rare. Before Cunaxa Xenophon only lists one act of desertion, that of Xenias and Pasion, and he has speakers remind the soldiers that they are isolated in a foreign land and do not even know the way home.⁵⁰¹ He mentions several desertions after Cunaxa, including Clearchus' Thracians and Nicarchus the captain. This appears to be strong evidence that desertion was a negligible problem, because the Greeks were loyal to Cyrus and did not know how to get home. On the other hand, Xenophon chooses to emphasize Greek unity, and does not provide a comprehensive list of every small event. It is therefore fair to assume that men left the Greek army in ones and twos, and perhaps in tens and twenties, without his noting them. Journeys to buy food, gather firewood, or find pasture would have given an easy excuse. Evidence for the barbarians is weaker. Xenophon claims in his panegyric of Cyrus that nobody deserted Cyrus for the King except Orontas, and that Orontas found that his friends preferred Cyrus to him.⁵⁰² In context, however, "nobody" seems to mean no Persian aristocrat. It is unlikely that Xenophon heard of any individual barbarians who

⁵⁰¹ Xenias and Pasion desert: Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.7; difficulty of returning alone: Xen. *Anab.* 1.3

⁵⁰² Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.29

left the army, and even desertions by small units could easily have escaped his memory or have been held back.

Some sick, wounded, or overworked soldiers died. While Xenophon remarked that the Cyreans who died of disease were few in comparison to those killed by winter or the enemy, that remark was after the terrible winter march through Armenia.⁵⁰³ In British North America, about 1 percent of the British garrison died each year.⁵⁰⁴ In 18th century France, about 6 percent of soldiers died or deserted in a given peacetime year, and 12 percent in wartime.⁵⁰⁵ In the Hapsburg army in the Low Countries, good troops lost about 24 percent of their strength each year, and rates could grow as high as 84 percent per year for reluctant soldiers in difficult conditions.⁵⁰⁶ The Hapsburg troops were tardily paid and badly treated, and conditions on campaign were often terrible. They therefore provide a gloomy vision of a worst-case scenario in sharp contrast with Xenophon's depiction of good health. Cyrus' men probably had low deaths and desertion by preindustrial standards, but "low" could have meant hundreds of men out of such a large army.

All in all, it is likely that by the morning of Cunaxa Cyrus had lost a few thousand of his men to death and desertion, and that a few thousand more were disabled that morning by malaria, gastrointestinal illness, blisters, and other campaign hazards.⁵⁰⁷ If

⁵⁰³ Xen. *Anab.* 5.3.3 (I thank Lee, *Greek Army on the March* 248 for the reference)

⁵⁰⁴ Peter Burroughs, "Tackling Army Desertion in British North America," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 61 No. 1 (1980) 32 note 6 implies about 60 dead per year out of a garrison in all the Canadian colonies of about 6,000 men. Note 91 states that annual death rates of 8-13% were common in the West Indies with their tropical diseases.

⁵⁰⁵ Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road 1567-1659* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1972) 209

⁵⁰⁶ Parker, *Army of Flanders* 207, 209

⁵⁰⁷ If, for example, we take a death rate of 0.75% per month, similar to the French army in the 18th century, then in seven months the strength of the army would become $(1.0 - 0.0075)^7 = 95\%$ of its original strength. In an army of 30,000 men that would be at 1500 dead or deserted soldiers. Soldiers

the figure for Greek troops before Cunaxa really does reflect a muster, then this could well explain the “problem of sums.” Otto Lendle alluded to this in his *Kommentar zu Xenophons Anabasis* but did not believe that it was plausible for a thousand hoplites to have been disabled.

Like most ancient accounts of a campaign, Xenophon's story of Cyrus' march to Cunaxa leaves out the everyday accidents of an army on campaign. This does not mean that we should think that they did not happen. Cyrus' men were just as vulnerable to kicking horses, unclean water, drunken quarrels, and malaria as soldiers in other times and places, and what evidence we have suggests that the Greek half of the army at least was not particularly well equipped to prevent and treat these problems. Lee's *A Greek Army on the March* gives a vivid picture of life amongst the Greek soldiers, and the other troops would have faced many of the same problems. Estimates of the size of Cyrus' army are useful, but one should always remember that they are approximate snapshots which hide the natural fluctuations in strength which any army experiences.

6. Engineering

Armies often bring tools, materials, and skilled workers to make roads, cross rivers, clear woods, break rocks, and attack fortifications. Cyrus' engineering capability seems to have been limited. This affects our understanding of his army's organization and logistics, because each engineer and shovel needed to be carried with the army.

temporarily disabled would add to that figure.

Cyrus' army often crossed rivers. They normally used an existing boat bridge or waded across at a ford.⁵⁰⁸ Frustratingly, Xenophon indicates that the army kept wagons with them as they crossed the canal-cut plains of Mesopotamia, but does not indicate how the wagons were moved across canals and rivers when there was no bridge.⁵⁰⁹ He mentions the soldiers cutting down palm trees to cross a canal, but this does not seem sufficient to carry a wagon.⁵¹⁰ Perhaps the wagons were unloaded, manhandled across the canals, and loaded again on the other side.

Cyrus never attacked a fortified place. When he besieged Miletus, he just blockaded the town by land and sea.⁵¹¹ This may have been a stratagem, since the siege was just a pretext for Cyrus to muster his army and fleet. A serious attack might have ended the siege before he was ready, or have cost him too many men and too much money. When he prepared to march south from Cilicia, the pass was blocked by two walls which ran across the pass from the mountains to the sea. One of the walls was defended by Cilicians, who abandoned it, and one was defended by Syrians. Cyrus proposed to land hoplites on both sides of the wall and overpower the defenders, but instead the defenders marched off towards the King.⁵¹² While it is certainly possible that Cyrus brought along materials and craftsmen to build ramps, towers, rams, and other siege equipment, there is no evidence of this, and extra supplies would have slowed down the army.

⁵⁰⁸ Boat Bridges: Maeander, Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.5, Phryscus, Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.25. Fords: Euphrates, Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.17-18, rivers in Lebanon, Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.9, 1.4.10

⁵⁰⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 3.2.27

⁵¹⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 2.3.10

⁵¹¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.7 (the verb is ἐπολιόρκει “to besiege, blockade”)

⁵¹² Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.5

The rebels do not seem to have fortified their camp. Xenophon makes no clear reference to camp fortifications until a year after Cunaxa when the army was in Paphlagonia.⁵¹³ When the camp is threatened, men run to their arms but not to the walls.⁵¹⁴ When someone approached the camp a few days after Cunaxa, he approached the guards in front of the camp (προφύλακες) not the gates (θύραι).⁵¹⁵ The Greeks did later build ditch and palisade when they settled at Calpe Harbour in Bithynia, but only after they had been there for days and had lost many men to a surprise attack.⁵¹⁶ After Cunaxa, the whole barbarian half of Cyrus' army fled through their own camp (στρατόπεδον).⁵¹⁷ Unfortunately, Xenophon is not clear on whether there was time to set up a proper camp before the royal army was upon them. While Xenophon gives the impression of a delay of several hours between hearing of the King's army and fighting it, he also says that Greeks were still hurrying to their places when the enemy drew near. This picture of unfenced camps matches other sources on Achaemenid armies.⁵¹⁸ Artaxerxes built a camp with a ditch and a wall of carts before Cunaxa, but he used it to shelter his excess baggage and noncombatants so that he could advance quickly with the best part of his army.⁵¹⁹

In short, Cyrus' engineering capabilities seem to have been fairly basic. They served his needs, although it is not clear how he would have crossed the Euphrates if it had not been unusually shallow, so that his men could ford it. Abrocamas had taken away all of the boats. Perhaps he would have made skin floats, as Darius had done decades ago

⁵¹³ Lee, *Greek Army* 206 and note 207

⁵¹⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 6.4.27

⁵¹⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.15

⁵¹⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 6.5.1

⁵¹⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.1

⁵¹⁸ Head, *Persian Army* 60

⁵¹⁹ Diod. 14.22.3-4

and as the Greeks later did.⁵²⁰ This suggests that he did not need a large number of extra men, beasts, and vehicles to carry engineering equipment. While in the decades before 479, Persian armies had impressed their Greek opponents with their ability to build, Cyrus' engineering capacities seem to have been no greater than those of a large Greek army.

7. Transport

Cyrus' men were well-supplied from Sardis to the Euphrates. Only when they had crossed the river, and had to advance through barren country that had been ravaged by the enemy, did food, drink, and fodder run short. Xenophon's descriptions of supply problems later in his adventures makes a vivid contrast with the first few chapters of the *Anabasis*, and suggests that Cyrus' supply system worked well enough that Xenophon did not have to think about it. Diodorus believed that Cyrus had worked to ensure that his men had plenty of supplies, so they would be willing to march against the King.⁵²¹

John Lee has produced a detailed study of transport amongst the Greek mercenaries, although he focuses on the period after Cunaxa. The soldiers carried some equipment and supplies themselves, and the Greek camp included oxen, donkeys, and wheeled vehicles.⁵²² The best evidence comes from around the time of the battle of Cunaxa, when the Greeks began to have problems with their baggage train. On the day of the battle, Xenophon observes that Cyrus and his men were careless: they marched in disorder, and many of the soldiers' arms were carried on vehicles and yoke-animals (ἐπι

⁵²⁰ Darius: DBe, 1.18 (in R.N. Sharp trans., *The Inscriptions in Old Persian Cuneiform of the Achaemenian Emperors* [Central Council for the Celebration of the 25th century of the Founding of the Iranian Empire: Tehran, 1964]). Greeks: Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.10

⁵²¹ Diod. 14.19.9

⁵²² Oxen and donkeys: Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.6; wagons, Xen. *Anab.* 3.2.27

ἀμαξῶν καὶ ὑποζυγίων).⁵²³ During the battle, the Greek camp was ravaged.⁵²⁴ The Greeks had to slaughter oxen and donkeys from among the yoke-animals for food and burn abandoned shields and arrows for fuel.⁵²⁵ While ancient and modern moralists often object to wagons on the grounds that they are slow, prone to breaking down, and encourage soldiers to carry unnecessary things, wheeled vehicles were very common in Greek armies.⁵²⁶ Greek armies did not normally use horses as beasts of burden, but two months after Cunaxa, when the Thracian cavalry had deserted, there were at least 50 horses left in the Greek army.⁵²⁷ Xenophon states that some were from his camp, other had been left behind by Clearchus' Thracians, and many others were carrying baggage having been captured. Mules are only attested once, camels not at all; the latter were a novelty when Agesilaus brought some back to Greece after his campaigns in Asia Minor in the 390s.⁵²⁸ Since Xenophon frequently comments on unusual plants, animals, and terrain in the *Anabasis* he would likely have remarked on camels if he had seen them.

The size of the Greek baggage train is hard to estimate. As we have seen, many supplies were carried by merchants who stayed in the barbarian camp, or bought when the army passed a city that was willing to do business. The Greeks took loot (including the two-legged and four-legged kinds) in Lycaonia and Cilicia, lost many animals on the march through the deserts on the east bank of the Euphrates, and had their camp ravaged at Cunaxa. As Lee notes, after Cunaxa the Greeks had a chronic transport problem; when

⁵²³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.19-20

⁵²⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.18-19

⁵²⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.6

⁵²⁶ J.F. Lazenby, "Logistics in Classical Greek Warfare," *War in History* Vol. 1 Nol. 3 (1994) 8, N.G.L. Hammond, "Army Transport in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* Vol. 24 No. 1 (Spring 1983) 27-31

⁵²⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 3.3.19-20

⁵²⁸ Mules: Xen. *Anab.* 5.8.5 (apparently missed by Lazenby "Logistics in Classical Greek Warfare" 7), Lee, *Greek Army* 132, 133. Camels: Xenophon, *Hell* 3.4.24

they left a site with plenty of supplies they were often hungry a few days later.⁵²⁹ This suggests that they did not have a large number of animals to carry consumable supplies. Lee suggests one animal per 20 or 30 Greeks, or 400-600 animals in all, but ventures no guess at the ratio between horses, donkeys, and oxen or between carts and pack animals.⁵³⁰ While this number is an estimate, it gives a lower bound. Before the camp was ravaged at Cunaxa, and before the army decided to discard most of its supplies and march through the mountains of Armenia in winter, there was probably more and better transport.

Comparative evidence can suggest a range of possibilities, although the best documented examples tend to be from the early modern period. An ideal comparandum would be an army which had to carry its own food through unfamiliar terrain, relied on wagons as much as mules or donkeys, had limited artillery or siege equipment, and was mostly composed of infantry. Documents from Achaemenid Babylonia imply that temple soldiers were allotted one donkey per ten men.⁵³¹ This should be seen as a minimum figure, since some soldiers might bring their own and many animals did not belong to individual soldiers. Engels is reluctant to pick a number, but seems to have believed that Alexander had at least 6,700 pack animals for an army of 48,000 soldiers, or at least 140 animals per thousand soldiers. He assumes that Alexander had no wheeled vehicles.⁵³² Roth estimated that a Roman legion of 4800 men had 1400 mules to carry supplies other

⁵²⁹ Lee, *Greek Army* 135-136

⁵³⁰ Lee, *Greek Army* 135-136

⁵³¹ John MacGinnis, "The Role of Babylonian Temples in Contributing to the Army in the Early Achaemenid Empire," in J. Curtis and St John Simpson eds, *The World of Achaemenid Persia* (I.B. Taurus: London, 2010) 497

⁵³² Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1978) 19 "The army could only carry about a ten-day grain ration." I have plugged this number into his equation relating days of supplies to numbers of animals.

than artillery, ammunition, the hospital, and the general's baggage.⁵³³ He does not venture a guess of how many mules and wagons these later would have added, since there is little evidence and all of these must have varied by circumstances. This suggests a ratio of at least 300 mules and some wagons per thousand soldiers. In the early Middle Ages, the tactical manual attributed to Emperor Maurice recommended two wagons and one or two pack horses per dekarchy of infantry.⁵³⁴ The size of a dekarchy is not clear, but if we read this as a file of 18 soldiers, this is 55 wagons and 28-55 pack animals per thousand infantry just to carry the baggage of the common soldiers. Stores belonging to the army or senior officers would have increased the proportion significantly.

Later comparisons are also interesting, and often better documented. During the Hapsburg campaigns against the Netherlands, communities along the "Spanish Road" from Italy to Flanders had to provide transport for the soldiers. A common ratio was 20-40 mules or 2-4 wagons per company, with a nominal strength of about 250 men per company.⁵³⁵ The exact choice of transport depended on the local terrain, the prosperity of the soldiers, and the size of the available animals, mules being preferred in the mountains and wagons in the plains. This gives a ratio of 80-160 animals or 8-16 wagons per thousand soldiers. This allowance did not include transport for food, which had to be provided by the communities where the soldiers were billeted each night.⁵³⁶ In the 17th century, several European authorities recommended allowing two horse rations per three soldiers, of which one would go to a cavalry horse and another to a pack, draft, or spare

⁵³³ Roth, *Logistics of the Roman Army* 82-84

⁵³⁴ Maurice, *Strategikon*, 12b6

⁵³⁵ Parker, *Army of Flanders* 95

⁵³⁶ Parker, *Army of Flanders* 89

animal.⁵³⁷ This is a ratio of about 330 baggage horses per thousand soldiers, similar to Roth's estimate for the Roman army. In the same period, the Ottoman army could hire as many as 77,444 camels to bring supplies to a single siege.⁵³⁸ An expert recommended in 1660 that the sultan should bring 11,500 animals on campaign, including 2,000 for the Janissaries and 500 for the imperial tents.⁵³⁹ A large army of this period started the campaign with 50,000 horse and 20,000 foot, so this is a minimum of 164 animals per thousand soldiers. The ratio for the Janissaries, who may have been less likely to provide their own transport than other troops, is 100 animals per thousand soldiers.

All of these comparisons suggest that Lee's figure of 30-50 animals per thousand soldiers is too low for the army before Cunaxa, unless almost all of the army's baggage was carried on wheeled vehicles. The classical sources imply that porters, donkeys, and carts were common in Greek armies, Xenophon' refers to Cyrus' men loading their arms upon carts and pack-animals before Cunaxa, and after Cunaxa he mentions that the Greeks slaughtered oxen and donkeys from the baggage animals.⁵⁴⁰ In earlier periods of Near Eastern history, donkeys and carts were seen as equivalent means of military transport.⁵⁴¹ The presence of chariots in Cyrus' army also makes it clear that he accepted the advantages and disadvantages of bringing wheeled vehicles along. All of this evidence implies that both carts and pack animals were important. A figure on the order of 100-300 animals per thousand soldiers is more likely. The presence of many carts, few cavalry, and little siege or bridging equipment suggest that something in the lower end of

⁵³⁷ Perjés, "Army Provisioning, Logistics, and Strategy" 14

⁵³⁸ Rhoads Murphy, *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick NJ, 1999) 77

⁵³⁹ Murphy, *Ottoman Warfare* 72

⁵⁴⁰ Lazenby, "Logistics in Classical Greek Warfare" 6-8, Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.20 and 2.1.6

⁵⁴¹ William J. Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East: Holy Warriors at the Dawn of Time* (Routledge: Oxon, 2006) 203-204

that range is most likely, with the barbarian half of the army perhaps having more transport than the Greeks.

Table 4: Transport Ratios of Different Armies

Army	Date	Transport Type	Per Thousand Soldiers	Notes
Babylonian	5 th century BCE	Donkeys	100	Minimum
Alexander	4 th century BCE	Pack animals	140	Guess (Engels)
Roman	Early CE	Mules	300	Guess (Roth)
Byzantine	6 th century CE	Horses And Wagons	28-55 And 55	Minimum
Hapsburg	16 th and 17 th centuries CE	Pack animals Or Wagons	80-160 Or 8-16	No food was carried
Austrian	17 th century CE	Animals	330	For an army with many guns and horses
Ottoman	16 th and 17 th centuries	Pack Animals	164	Sultan's animals only, for an army with many guns and horses

In short, Cyrus' army depended on a train of donkeys, mules, pack-horses, carts, and possibly camels. It is likely that these came from a wide variety of sources, including the personal property of soldiers and merchants, the estates of Cyrus and his followers, rental, and confiscation. Whether one believes in the story of the four hundred wagons or not, a group of 400 wagons was an ordinary sight in ancient armies. A considerable fraction of the bodies in Cyrus' army were not human, and a great amount of effort was necessary to guide the animals, provide them with forage and water, keep them healthy and clear away their waste. The aristocrat Xenophon brushes over these details in the *Anabasis*, but they must have been important concerns for poor soldiers and their servants. His essay on horsemanship shows that he had some things to say about the troubles of keeping one's animals healthy when it suited him.

How many animals and vehicles were in this train? As with the noncombatants, only a rough guess is possible, and any number may mask change over time. If we use the ratio of Babylonian temple donkeys to temple soldiers as a rule of thumb, we might guess something like three thousand animals for about 30,000 soldiers. This number should be read as indicating an order of magnitude: a figure as low as one thousand or as high as ten thousand is unlikely. More precision is impossible, since so little is known about the ratio between different types of transport. An oxcart can carry much more than a pack donkey, but both were present in Cyrus' baggage train. Can we hope that excavating the site of a lasting military camp, or a document dealing with the collection of baggage animals, might one day allow a more specific answer? Achaemenid archaeology and cuneiform studies are still young fields, and in coming decades they may have more to contribute to military affairs.

8. Conclusion

The army that wove its way up the foothills onto the Anatolian plateau, over the Taurus into Cilicia, across the Syrian deserts and down the Euphrates to defeat at Cunaxa was a complex collection of merchants and mercenaries, donkey trains and wagon parks, slaves and scribes. Individuals and groups continually joined and left, but the army as a whole continued onwards. Xenophon gives us the most details about the internal arrangements of the Greek soldiers after Cunaxa, but comparative evidence and his comments on the march to Cunaxa allow many details to be reconstructed.

This chapter cannot address in detail the experience of the march or the route of the army in detail, and other studies are available. Instead, it has tried to focus on some

details of numbers, transport, and logistics and to pay more attention to Cyrus' barbarian troops than is customary.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

1. The Aftermath

Despite its elaborate preparations, Cyrus' revolt ended in a few hours of fighting on the Babylonians plains near the town of Cunaxa.⁵⁴² Cyrus was surprised and barely had time to arrange his army in line before Artaxerxes was upon him. On his right his Greek soldiers drove their opponents in flight, and on the left his men held their own. Cyrus saw his brother and charged him and a confused cavalry fight broke out. In the dust and confusion, Artaxerxes was wounded and Cyrus and his closest companions were killed. When they learned that he had been killed, Cyrus' barbarian followers fled, while the Greeks returned from their pursuit to find a sacked camp and no paymaster.

With no candidate for the throne, Cyrus' followers began to think of escape or submission. When Clearchus desperately suggested that Ariaeus could claim the throne, he replied that this was impossible because there were many other Persians nobler than he.⁵⁴³ The Greek and barbarian armies reunited and tried to retreat north through lands which they had not stripped bare on their march inland, but Artaxerxes trapped them. Rather than risk another battle against desperate men, he negotiated a truce. Then he returned to Babylon, rewarded those who had fought well, and punished those who had fought badly.⁵⁴⁴ He gave Tissaphernes fine presents, his daughter in marriage, the title "most trusted friend," and the office which Cyrus had once held. He then gave

⁵⁴² My account of Cunaxa is based on Xen. *Anab.* 1.8-10, Diod. 14.22-24, Plut., *Artax.* 7-13 and Sherylee Bassett, "The Death of Cyrus the Younger," *Classical Quarterly* 19 (1999) 473-483

⁵⁴³ Xen. *Anab.* 2.2.1

⁵⁴⁴ Diod. 14.26.4 and Plut., *Artax.* 14

Tissaphernes an army and told him to return to the coast with Cyrus' soldiers and regain control of Cyrus' domain. Diodorus says that Tissaphernes offered to destroy the Greeks if the King would make peace with Ariaeus, and it is hard to believe that the King meant to let an army of mercenaries wander back into a territory that he was about to reclaim.

The armies marched north along the Tigris.⁵⁴⁵ The Greeks became increasingly worried, as they had little money to buy food, and could see how difficult it would be to continue if Tissaphernes resisted them. Clearchus and Menon began to squabble over the right to represent the army when dealing with Tissaphernes. Ariaeus and Cyrus' other followers, in contrast, decided to accept the King's pardon. Greek jealousy, and Persian fear of losing the King's favour, increased the tensions between the two forces. Some of the Greeks began to provision themselves at nearby villages rather than at the market.⁵⁴⁶ One day Tissaphernes asked the generals to visit him, and a majority of the soldiers approved. They entered his tent, and a short while later Tissaphernes seized them and ordered his men to kill all the Greeks who they could catch. Xenophon hints that Tissaphernes accused the generals of plotting against the King or breaking their oath to get food by buying it from the market, and although both Xenophon and Ctesias accuse him of plotting against the generals he was probably technically accurate.⁵⁴⁷ The Greeks were dismayed, but elected new generals and decided to continue their march home. Tissaphernes was unable to destroy them, but he did drive them into the mountains of Armenia in winter. Many of the Greeks were killed as they fought their way to the sea

⁵⁴⁵ See Xen. *Anab.* 2.4-5, Diod. 14.26.5, Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F27.68 (Photius' epitome) and F.28 (=Plut. *Artax.* 18), Sherylee Bassett, "Innocent Victims or Perjurers Betrayed?" *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 52 No. 2 (2002) 447-461

⁵⁴⁶ Xen. *Anab.* 2.5.37: On the day when Tissaphernes arrested the generals *Χειρίσοφος δὲ ἐτύγγανεν ἀπὸν ἐν κώμῃ τινὶ ξὺν ἄλλοις ἐπιστιζομένοις.*

⁵⁴⁷ Bassett, "Innocent Victims or Perjurers Betrayed?"

then along the northern coast of Anatolia. Tissaphernes and his army took a different route, marching inland through Cappadocia towards Cyrus' former domain.

In the spring of 400 Tissaphernes and his troops reached the coast.⁵⁴⁸ Most of the magnates either submitted to him or fled overseas. The dominant faction in the cities of the coast, however, asked the Spartans for help and the Spartans came. After supporting Cyrus' revolt they had little hope of friendship with the King. It took another dozen years of war before the King was firmly in control of Ionia, but in the end he was victorious. In the course of the war Tissaphernes was seized and killed on the King's orders after losing a battle outside of Sardis. His enemies said that he was going to revolt rather than accept a diminished rank, and there may have been something to the charge.⁵⁴⁹ Artaxerxes reigned for more than forty years.

2. Parting Thoughts

This thesis is a study of a single campaign, one all too dependent on a single primary source. Nevertheless, it suggests a number of things about the Achaemenid empire in general.

First, comparative evidence is a valuable tool for filling in the gaps in our evidence for the Achaemenid empire. This study has drawn mostly on later evidence from the Mediterranean and Atlantic worlds, but earlier and later Southwest Asian societies clearly offer valuable material for comparison. So do Classical Greece and the Hellenistic kingdoms. There is much room for disagreement about which comparisons

⁵⁴⁸ For Tissaphernes' adventures and Artaxerxes' Yauna war see Xenophon, *Hell* 3.3ff., Plut., *Artax.* 20-23 and *Ages.*s 8-15, Nepos, *Alc.*, Ctesias, and Westlake, "Decline and Fall of Tissaphernes"

⁵⁴⁹ Westlake, "Decline and Fall of Tissaphernes" 268-275

are best, but such debates are more likely to be fruitful than ones based on instinctive judgements of plausibility.

Furthermore, Cyrus' army appears quite ordinary by preindustrial standards. Indeed, in most respects Cyrus' army resembles a large Greek army of Xenophon's day. His army relied on soldiers' own vehicles and pack animals for transport, bought food in small quantities from merchants, consisted mostly of infantry who fought in a line, and had very limited engineering capabilities. It is likely that Xenophon's silence and prejudice makes Cyrus' army look less sophisticated than it was, but it would be very difficult to find a way in which it was inferior to a well-run Greek army. And indeed, Xenophon's central criticism of Persian soldiers was moral, based on the idea that Persian soldiers in his day were cowardly and decadent not brave and tough.⁵⁵⁰ Why then did Greek armies so often beat Persian ones on the field of battle? Neither Herodotus' technological explanation, nor Xenophon's moral one, is entirely convincing. More systematic study of war amongst the Greeks' neighbours would provide a basis for systematic comparison.

A serious problem in Achaemenid history is how to reconcile the Greek sources (and in particular Xenophon), who present a loosely organized empire dominated by brawling aristocrats, and the cuneiform and Aramaic sources, which imply a tightly organized and bureaucratic empire. This study can contribute little to this question, beyond confirming that to Xenophon Achaemenid Anatolia looked a lot like the wilder parts of Greece and Thrace. But is this so implausible? The Achaemenids tended to make use of existing military systems, such as the *hatru* system in Babylonia and the colony of

⁵⁵⁰ The clearest statement of this is Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.8 which may be an interpolation.

Jewish and Aramean soldiers at Syene, and by 401 BCE there had been extensive cultural mingling in western Anatolia. Xenophon himself saw good in some aspects of Persian military affairs, such as cavalry equipment and systematically dividing an army into groups with leaders who could be models to their men.⁵⁵¹ If this is correct, Cyrus' army may have been very different from, for example, a large royal army raised in Iran, and the study of Achaemenid armies may be even more complicated. Detailed studies of the evidence from Egypt or Mesopotamia should provide food for thought.

Finally, it is worth while asking questions about aspects of Persian military affairs which the sources brush over. For example, it is possible to say more about the origins of Cyrus' troops than "Cyrus called up the satrapal levy of Lydia and Phrygia"? Cyrus' army probably consisted of a mix of standing troops, reserves, men drawn by pay, men drawn through favour exchange, and attendants of men in one of the other categories. While we cannot know much about the experience of soldiers outside the Greek army and Cyrus' immediate retinue, these categories at least give us a range of ways by which soldiers came to the army. Similarly, it is worth considering Achaemenid logistics outside of a few famous campaigns. The literary sources provide considerable anecdotal evidence, and a broad study might be helpful for the debates about Xerxes' invasion of Greece, the various Persian invasions of Egypt, and Darius III's decision to advance into Cilicia. The question of population and revenue is also important, albeit very difficult to answer with certainty.

⁵⁵¹ Xenophon, *Art of Horsemanship*, 12.11-12 and Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 2.1.22 (also a Spartan custom of course)

Studying Achaemenid military affairs is always speculative, but the attempt is worthwhile. The first empire to control a significant fraction of a continent was not created or maintained without an effective military system. For all their limitations, the Greco-Roman literary sources have things to tell us other than a story of failure and decadence. If this thesis has done anything to shed light upon service and supply in the Achaemenid Persian army, it has been successful.

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