

Chapter 1

Beyond the Hill: Tactical Assets

The people who collected or supplied information are the subject of this and the next two chapters. Most are faceless, their individuality lost by the scale of history and the passage of time. Yet however anonymous they may be singly, their experience and influence can be recalled in outline from a collection of scraps compiled from varied sources. To this end, reports of their activities have been categorized according to context and type, and this information has been drawn into a more or less coherent picture.

Reconnaissance and Surveillance

Into modern texts and manuals has descended from the Greeks a conception of tactical intelligence that encompasses two distinct but related modes: reconnaissance and surveillance. The distinction rests primarily on method and to some extent on aims. The relationship is indicated by terminology.

Reconnaissance entailed agents entering and exploring a hostile or unknown area to acquire tactical information—the location and disposition of the enemy, the terrain and roads by land, the coast and anchorages by sea.¹ Strategic information was not generally available to them, except insofar as they might capture officers or couriers while scouting.² Surveillance involved regular, protracted observation of an area or a military force to note changes, such as the advent or withdrawal of men or

1. E.g., location and disposition of the enemy: Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.52; Aen. *Tact.* 27.15, 28.4; Q. Curtius 4.10.9; Diod. Sic. 17.33.1; Arrian *Anab.* 1.13.2, 2.7.2, 3.7.7; Plut. *Eum.* 9.5. Topography and geography: Hdt. 7.177; Thuc. 6.50.4; Arrian *Anab.* 1.20.5, 2.8.1, 3.9.4, 4.30.5–6, 6.19.3, 6.23.2, 6.26.5; Arrian *Ind.* 32.11, 42.5; Plut. *Nicias* 14.

2. Diodorus Siculus (19.25.1), however, mentions plans learned by Eumenes' and Antigonos' *kataskopoi* before Gabene. For capture by reconnaissance parties, see Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.16–18, 6.3.10; Arrian *Anab.* 4.30.5–6; Q. Curtius 3.13.2; Plut. *Lys.* 28.2; Plut. *Nic.* 14.5. Cf. Diod. Sic. 11.21.4–5. Cf. also [Nicephorus] 2 on Greeks of the Byzantine era.

ships. While reconnaissance normally involved movement and exploration, surveillance was often sedentary, although it could also be conducted along fixed patrol routes on the periphery of a friendly area.

Nomenclature is somewhat confused and evolves over time.³ The following identifications can, however, be made. All reconnaissance and some surveillance agents can be called *skopoi*. Reconnaissance agents can also be called *kataskopoi*—a word with a range of meanings, encompassing those serving in a vanguard (also called *prodromoi*), those reconnoitering with a small team or alone, an official investigator, and spies (usually—but not always—infiltration agents, rather than “agents in place” or “provocateurs”). Surveillance agents who are active during daylight may be called *skopoi* or *hemeroskopoi* (day-observers); those active during the night are called not *skopoi* but *phulakes* (watchmen or guards). Unlike *hemeroskopoi*, *phulakes* are less concerned with long-distance surveillance than security; like them, they are typically stationary. A *peripolos* is similar to a *kataskopos* in that he is mobile but, like a *phulax* or *hemeroskopos*, he is bound to protect and keep an eye on an area and operates out of established bases.

Reconnaissance Agents (*Skopoi*, *Kataskopoi*)

Before proceeding to a general discussion of reconnaissance in antiquity, a case must be made for its very existence, especially in the earlier years. It has been argued that military intelligence was generally neglected by the Greeks; indeed, one prominent scholar, W.K. Pritchett, has gone so far as to say that there are no examples of the use of scouts with a marching army before the age of Xenophon (i.e., the early fourth century).⁴ His

3. The word *episkopos*, for instance, has a wide range of meanings in Homer, from “spy” to “overseer”; in later times the latter meaning eclipsed the former, and the term eventually acquired the primary meaning of “bishop.” It is noteworthy that Aristarchus (citing *Od.* 8.163 and 22.396; cf. also 10.324 and 342) remarked on Homer’s failure to differentiate between compounded and un-compounded forms of *skopos*; also, the scholia to the *Iliad* (e.g., 10.38d [Hrd.]) used *kataskopos* in reference to Odysseus, Diomedes, and Dolon, who are called *skopoi* and *episkopoi* by Homer; the author of the *Rhesus* did likewise (125–29, 140, 523, 591).

4. Pritchett 1:132 (see, generally, 127–33). Spence follows him (*Cavalry*, 145 and n. 87; but see 149–50 and 149 n. 109) and, in an otherwise admirable treatment of the role of cavalry in reconnaissance, unfortunately falls into the error of thinking that if cavalry were not used for this role in earlier times, no one was (cf. 134), attributing the cause to “the nature of hoplite warfare” (147).

statement has two foundations: an absence of successful candidates for his qualifications for a scout, and a number of examples of intelligence failures, which ought never to have happened had scouts or observers been in use. It in turn provides a basis for his more general theory: that the Greeks neglected both reconnaissance and surveillance.⁵

In one respect, he is quite right: if one defines a scout as he does, there are no examples. But is his definition suitable? It demands the following qualifications: “(1) The whereabouts of the enemy is not known. (2) The scout merely acts as an advance eye for the army. (3) It is not the express purpose of the scout to find the enemy. (4) The armies are not static. (5) The scout functions separately from the army.”⁶

This definition is in accord with neither ancient nor modern practice and terminology; it resembles most the concept of the “Indian scout.”⁷ As will be seen shortly, *kataskopoi*, like their twentieth-century heirs, operated jointly more often than separately, with a variety of purposes and degrees of reluctance to use arms. Clear parallels exist between their practices and those recommended for those termed “scouts” in modern military histories and manuals. In any case, scouting was (and is) a subset, rather than the whole, of reconnaissance operations, and to deny the latter on the basis of an absence of the former is not logical.

With regard to surveillance, there is epigraphic testimony going back to the Mycenaean era, and there are examples in historical narrative in the text of the Father of History; these are treated later in this chapter. Specific historical examples of the successful use of reconnaissance teams on land before the late fifth century are less forthcoming, but the Homeric poems leave no doubt as to their existence. Reconnaissance is found in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—the most lengthy example being the so-called *Nuktegersia* of Odysseus and Diomedes, those most comparable to later Greek practice being the men sent forth by Odysseus upon landing on the shores of strange and exotic islands.⁸ It would be rash to believe that Homer’s contemporaries did not send out men to explore newfound lands and peoples in the age of colonization or that they never tried to

5. This point of view is also found in Adcock’s *Greek and Macedonian Art of War* (40–41) and is echoed by S. Lewis (esp. 175 n. 10).

6. Pritchett 1:128.

7. As Spence (*Cavalry*, 149–50 and 149 n. 109) has also noted, most modern reconnaissance operations do not meet Pritchett’s criteria.

8. *Iliad* 10.206–10; *Od.* 9.88–90, 9.147ff., 10.100–102. While the exact date of the tenth book of the *Iliad* is open to question, it is generally accepted to have been in existence by the time of Pisistratus.

reconnoiter the positions of their foes. The first unequivocally historical examples of land-based reconnaissance by Greeks are found in Thucydides. In one instance, in 422 B.C., the Athenian *strategos* Cleon reconnoitered the territory around Amphipolis. Pritchett cited this very example as evidence for a lack of scouts, since a large portion of the army was involved; but in any case this is an example of a reconnaissance in force.⁹ A few years later, the Syracusans, on their ill-advised march on Catana, were preceded by cavalry who discovered the Athenian ruse.¹⁰ It may be that the *Skiritai* and “fore-traveling cavalry,” who preceded the Spartan king on the march, were used in reconnaissance roles in yet earlier periods, but this cannot be positively ascertained.¹¹ It can, however, be demonstrated that fleets under sail were preceded by scouting detachments of ships at least as early as the second decade of the fifth century.¹²

A potentially more serious objection is Pritchett’s list of intelligence failures. It is worth noting, however, that many of his citations are instances of movement under cover of night and reflect more on the nocturnal *phulakes* than on *skopoi*.¹³ Even still, must these be taken as evidence for absence rather than imperfection? An intelligence failure does not necessarily indicate a lack of intelligence resources. Should one operate on this assumption, one must conclude that Lee neglected reconnais-

9. The passage at issue is Thuc. 5.7.3–4. The problem with gathering early examples can be exemplified by Thucydides’ depiction (at 5.8.1) of Brasidas, the Spartan general, who learned that Cleon and his men were on the march and took measures to ambush them. How did he learn this? His source is unspecified—indeed Thucydides merely used the word εἶδε (which is translated in the Loeb edition as “saw,” but which can here equally be “learned” unless he kept the Athenians under personal observation). Such a lack of specification cannot be interpreted to mean a lack of information gatherers—indeed, one can only conclude the opposite.

10. Thuc. 6.65.3; see also Plut. *Alc.* 34.5.

11. See Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 13.6. The *Skiritai* first appear in Thucydides (e.g., Thuc. 5.67.1, 71.2–3, 72.1—at Mantinea, drawn up on the left wing, as was customary) but were not distinguished as a vanguard, nor are the functions of the *hippeis* securely established. Cf. chap. 3, Covert Agents in Laconia; and also Lazenby 10–12, and Anderson 245–49.

Herodotus (7.208) portrayed a mounted Persian scout at Thermopylae in his tale of the Spartans preparing for death. I strongly suspect that such a use, if historical, was not limited to the Persians; if fictional, reflected Greek expectations at the time of Herodotus’ composition in the mid-fifth century.

12. Hdt. 7.179; Thuc. 6.50.

13. Pritchett 1:127 (i.e., Hdt. 8.76.3; Thuc. 7.81, 7.73.3, and possibly 5.66.1). In the last instance, Pritchett’s protest (citing Thuc. 7.44.1) against Gomme’s proposal of a night move (4:99–102) is irrelevant, since the battle of Mantinea was fought by day; more damaging to Gomme’s case is the Τῆ δ’ ὑπεροίῳ opening 5.66.1. In any event, the exceptional nature of the Lacedaemonian surprise is explicitly mentioned by Thucydides at 5.66.2.

sance because of his misjudgments prior to and at Gettysburg in July 1863—instead, one must ask why Stuart failed to apprise him of Meade’s advance. Equally, one would posit that reconnaissance patrols were not employed by the American army during World War II, since the Germans achieved tactical surprise at the opening of the Battle of the Bulge—rather, one must look to weather and miscalculation. To return to the Greeks, Alexander was obviously ignorant of Darius’ movements before Issus yet was not by any means heedless of reconnaissance.¹⁴ Therefore, failure cannot be taken to mean absence or neglect; further, it may not even mean utter incompetence, since counterintelligence and deception measures were prevalent among the Greeks.

In conclusion, the theory that the Greeks did not use reconnaissance before the final years of the fifth century is not tenable. Yet Pritchett’s argument has merit, if adapted. It may be more accurate to say that the age of Xenophon appears to herald a marked increase in emphasis on reconnaissance. Whether this appearance reflects reality or is merely a result of the accident of the survival and extinction of sources is debatable. On the one hand, it was not until the fourth century that Xenophon emerged to write descriptive and critical commentary on the subject, and this suggests an increased interest in the subject.¹⁵ On the other hand, to argue, as Spence does, that the fourth century brought about conditions unknown in these earlier years, when the hoplite ruled supreme in battles on familiar ground, is reasonable, if perhaps Athenocentric, in outlook. Yet the perimeters of the Greek world were expanding throughout the eighth and following centuries, and conflict with other peoples at these frontiers was all but perpetual. A need for information on terrain and

To the failures described by Pritchett (1:127–28), Spence (*Cavalry*, 145–46) adds (1) Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.18–19, the surprise of Thibron by Struthas (here one must ask how Struthas knew Thibron was overconfident and susceptible to attack) and (2) Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.14–20, Dercylidas all but running into a Persian army drawn up for battle. Spence (148 and n. 104) also adds the battle of Tegyra (375), in which he proposes that the report of the enemy came via a member of the front rank rather than a scout—in any event, little warning was given. Spence does, rightly, mention the use of cavalry for reconnaissance from the late fifth and early fourth centuries (149).

14. See Delbrück 206, contesting Koepf’s criticism of Alexander’s generalship: “There he [Koepf] underestimates the difficulty of conducting a reconnaissance 2 days march away, over mountain passes, in enemy country . . . Such uncertainties and surprises are inevitable in war and very frequent, and they do not necessarily indicate any laxness.”

15. Yet while the *Anabasis*, *Cavalry Commander*, and *Cyropaedia* are rich in detailed information, the *Hellenica*, a more general history, gives no greater emphasis to reconnaissance than the analogous works of Thucydides and Herodotus.

enemy forces (a need historically met by reconnaissance units) was certainly present, and since the Homeric poems testify that the idea of reconnaissance existed, one can maintain that reconnaissance was employed at this time, and attribute a lack of examples to the utter paucity of historical sources.

The apologia concluded, let us turn to the details. While reconnaissance units by definition sought to collect information, the relative emphasis on collection versus combat varied, and this affected the size of the units. These varied in size from a few men to about a thousand. On the smaller scale, reconnaissance tended to blend with espionage—as Dulles’ ghostwriters put it: “At its simplest, espionage is nothing more than a kind of well-concealed reconnaissance.”¹⁶ There is almost certainly a link in Greek practice, with the cavalry class effecting the join—this is discussed in the section on infiltration agents in chapter 3.¹⁷ Large forces, generally composed of cavalry (sometimes mixed with light-armed troops), operated in advance (and sometimes on the flanks) of an army, as *prodromoi*—in effect a vanguard. These could, but did not always, conduct skirmishes or engagements, and there is some debate as to the relative importance of combat and information gathering—it is perhaps most accurate, if least definite, to say that the relative emphasis varied according to commander and circumstance.¹⁸ On his southward march along the Aegean coast, Alexander was preceded by *skopoi*—who amounted to no less than an *ilé* of Companion cavalry and four *ilai* of *prodromoi*, over a thousand men. Just before the battle at the Granicus River, the *sarissa*-bearing cavalry (*sarissophoroi*) and five hundred light troops (*psiloi*) reconnoitered and reported the presence of the Persians; they did not, however, engage in advance of the main force.¹⁹ In the ini-

16. Dulles 58.

17. To which category, for instance, do the nocturnal adventures of Odysseus and Diomedes belong? An interesting conflation of the categories, from the last years of the fourth century, occurred during the siege of Rhodes by Demetrius (Diod. Sic. 19.17.3–5; cf. 37.22b [= Const. Exc. 3.209–10]). There being communication between the warring sides because of mines opened up beneath the walls, Demetrius’ men undertook to bribe Athenagoras, a Milesian mercenary who had been entrusted by the Rhodians with the command of their guard. This man promised to turn traitor and admit by night a Macedonian officer to conduct a reconnaissance of the area under his charge, where Macedonian troops might assemble. A Macedonian *philos* (in this context meaning more than “friend,” it denotes also the idea of “officer” or “henchman” of a Hellenistic king) was sent to do this, but Athenagoras was playing a double game and turned him over to the Rhodians.

18. Cf. A. Pauli, “Πρόδρομος,” *RE* 23, no. 1 (1957): 102–4.

19. Arrian *Anab.* 1.12.7, 13.1.

tial contacts before Gaugamela, the *prodromoi* maintained a covering screen, without engaging, and sent riders back to Alexander—first with preliminary reports of Persian presence, then with an estimate of numbers. No attack was made until Alexander so commanded, and then only when reinforced with two *ilai* of Royal and Companion cavalry. The Persians, said to number “no more than a thousand,” were also referred to as a reconnaissance force.²⁰ One might note that Alexander’s vanguard served to some extent as a screening force, preventing the Persian cavalry from getting close enough to his main body to get a good look. Yet in this instance we see a complementary and deleterious aspect of large reconnaissance forces—their very presence indicated the proximity of a large army. The ancients recognized both positive and negative aspects and attempted various solutions. Xenophon portrayed Cyrus disguising his preceding *psiloi* as brigands—these men would attempt to capture any who saw them, but even those who escaped would be led by the disguise to misinterpret their presence.²¹

The use of very large vanguards seems more of a Macedonian and Persian than Greek phenomenon. The difference in practice should not be surprising—a survey of different reconnaissance methods of the belligerents in World War II indicates that even within a brief period there can be considerable variation.²² One tries with difficulty to apply Clausewitz’s axiom that the size of the vanguard is determined by the amount of time needed by the commander to effectively deploy his main body (i.e., the larger the vanguard, the more time that could be bought). There seems no such correlation in the classical world. Rather, the critical factor may have been availability of cavalry, since non-Macedonian Greeks did on occasion send cavalry ahead of their forces when it was available, and these could offer battle with varying degrees of success—one of the more memorable incidents being the stand of the Athenian cavalry against Epaminondas before Second Mantinea (362), which bought the

20. Arrian *Anab.* 3.7.6–8.2; the Persians are called *kataskopoi* at 3.9.1.

21. Xen. *Cyr.* 2.4.23. For reconnaissance forces evading, capturing, or killing all they encounter, see Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.1–2; Polyb. 8.26.4, 27.2. For the danger of reconnaissance activity giving away intent, see also Simonyan and Grishin 4.

22. Cf. Applegate 73–83. During World War II, the Russians in particular but also to a lesser extent the Germans and Japanese gave emphasis to reconnaissance in force by large (battalion-sized) forces (see also Simonyan and Grishin 140). One may find Carthaginian and Roman reconnaissance forces large enough to sustain losses of 200 and 140, respectively (Polyb. 3.45.1ff.); cf. 220 casualties at Livy 27.26.11, and 80 at Polyb. 8.26.4.

Mantineans time to seek the shelter of their city's walls.²³ A more typical action for a cavalry vanguard, perhaps, was a skirmish between Agesilaus' and Tissaphernes' cavalry during the course of a reconnaissance in advance of their respective armies—numbers are not given, but Xenophon tells us that the Greek and Persian formations were roughly equal but drawn up differently: the Greeks in a wide phalanx four deep, the Persians in a formation twelve men wide but very deep—hence the numbers involved on each side must have been considerably more than forty-eight, perhaps as many as two hundred.²⁴

Xenophon recommended the use of two separate contingents, one preceding the other, in especially dangerous country. There are no recorded examples of such practice, but the suggestion indicates at least one mind alive to the consideration of reconnaissance doctrine and may perhaps originate in his own experience. Certainly there were successive layers of surveillance; it may be that a similar principle was applied to reconnaissance. However, we may have here an example of a divergence between doctrine and practice, not unlike that found in the Italian army in World War II.²⁵

More generally, reconnaissance units involved in interpolis warfare were relatively small and did not engage the enemy. They typically numbered two or three for covert operations, around thirty for general

23. The Athenian cavalry were not explicitly acting as a reconnaissance force. Cf. Buford at Gettysburg. Other examples of forces preceded by cavalry include Thuc. 6.63.3; Xen. *Anab.* 6.3.22, 7.3.41; Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 13.6. Cf. Polyaeus 3.9.24; Onas. 6.7.

24. Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.12–13. It seems Agesilaus' entire cavalry force preceded him. He was not given cavalry by his own state (3.4.2), but Spithridates, a Persian noble who defected to his cause, had two hundred horsemen whom he might have brought into the combined force. There are two complications with identifying this contingent as the combatants here: (1) Agesilaus' cavalry are specified as Greek (3.4.13); (2) Spithridates had left his cavalry behind (3.4.10) when he came to Agesilaus. Hence one must presume (1) that the cavalry were identified not by ethnicity but by alliance, or that these were Greek mercenaries; or (2) that the cavalry had since joined Spithridates and Agesilaus. Such presumptions do not strain credibility; still, I hesitate to declare *ex cathedra* that these two hundred must be the ones shown here, as Agesilaus may have done recruiting prior to the scene at 3.4.15.

25. The recommendation is at Xen. *Cav. Com.* 4.5. In critiques of reconnaissance methods of the belligerents of World War II, Applegate (76) mentions that the Wehrmacht employed three separate contingents in a reconnaissance in force: the lead unit was highly mobile and lightly armed, the second retained an emphasis on mobility but gave more attention to firepower, and the rear unit was less mobile but heavily armed. The second and especially the third were support groups, providing a solid, if moving, base for the advance unit. For an assessment of the disparity between theory and practice in Italian reconnaissance, see Applegate 75.

duties.²⁶ Such groups were employed primarily to collect information, rather than fight: Xenophon recommended fear as the appropriate ally to such a force, as they would be more likely to avoid contact than provoke it; consequently mobility and speed were more important than arms.²⁷ Xenophon further admonished, “a few are no less able to look out as many,” and censured Iphicrates for sending out his whole cavalry force as *skopoi* to reconnoiter the Thebans’ position, since they hindered each other with their numbers and not only failed in their mission but suffered losses.²⁸ On the other hand, fear could impede reconnaissance: Menidas, when sent ahead by Alexander to find Darius’ camp, heard the noise of men and horses from Mazaeus’ troops camped nearby and feared to go further; hence he returned with only vague information.²⁹

Reconnaissance teams were drawn from the cavalry or light-armed troops (*psiloi*), the former being attested more frequently in Sicily and Asia Minor than in the more rugged areas of mainland Greece. The two were often used in conjunction, particularly as screening forces ahead of a moving army, but also as complementary bodies, the cavalry breaking the path of the army, the *psiloi* on more difficult terrain along the flanks. Xenophon also suggested that when a force passed through difficult

26. For two or three, see *Iliad* 10.206–10; *Od.* 9.88–90, 9.147ff., 10.100–102; Plut. *Aratus* 5.4, Arrian *Against the Alans* 1. For the number thirty, see Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.12; Xen. *Anab.* 3.3.1; and perhaps Thuc. 6.43. Bugh proposed (99 and n. 63 ad loc.), quite sensibly, that the thirty horsemen sent by the Athenians to Sicily were to be used as *kataskopoi*. Cf. also Theophylactus 4.10.7 of *peripoloi*.

27. Xen. *Cav. Com.* 7.7–8. Hence the Greeks relied on cavalry for this purpose when terrain permitted (cf. Q. Curtius 9.9.23).

28. Xen. *Cav. Com.* 7.6; *Hell.* 6.5.52. Some twenty of Iphicrates’ men were killed. It is to be assumed that a smaller troop would have been better able to evade the enemy.

In critiquing the moves of the contestants at Hydaspes, Arrian did not believe that Porus sent his son with sixty chariots against the Macedonians when Alexander crossed the Hydaspes, since he considered such a force too large for reconnaissance but too small to give battle (Arrian *Anab.* 5.14.5–6). Whether or not his argument is correct is peripheral to the issue; it is important that he *perceived* this number to be unsuitable. His thoughts are echoed by modern writers, such as Simonyan and Grishin (93): “Under no circumstances should a large number of men be chosen to conduct a [reconnaissance] raid unless there is a special need for this. The more personnel in the party (subunit) allocated to a raid, the more quickly it may be detected by the enemy and the more difficulty it will have in achieving covertness of action.” The U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps advise that the size of a reconnaissance force should be proportionate to the expected opposition, and they note that reconnaissance in force can bring about an unwanted general engagement (U.S. Department of the Army, *FM* 35 art. 4–48a; U.S. Marine Corps *FM* 2–1 art. 1003a2b, 1003b1c, 1003b2a). Cf. Plut. *Flam.* 8.1–2.

29. Q. Curtius 4.12.4–5.

ground (whether in hostile or friendly country), some of the attendants (*huperetai*) of the hoplites were to find paths in close areas, while cavalry did so in open areas.³⁰ *Psiloi* were used alone when cavalry was unavailable or impractical—on rough ground, when stealth was wanted, and by night. Even though he had a large and skilled cavalry force, Alexander used Thracian peltasts to explore the mountain paths around the Persian Gates.³¹ Xenophon portrayed Cyrus' army marching by night preceded by light-armed troops who scouted with ears as well as eyes; the Ten Thousand sent Democrates son of Temnus with a body of foot soldiers into the mountains to verify sightings of fires.³² Reconnaissance by night tended to be the prerogative of smaller units. Individuals or small teams could hope to approach and even enter camps and cities under cover of darkness, and hence pickets and night patrols were posted to counter this type of threat. Night and especially inclement weather are generally agreed to be an asset to scouts, for while they hinder the agent's vision, they provide security against detection. Reconnaissance by day was undertaken by units of all sizes, the numbers determined by the assignment and the potential for contact with an enemy. A small group of warships might serve for reconnaissance by sea; a single lighter vessel sufficed

30. Xen. *Cav. Com.* 4.4. Cavalry and archers: Arrian *Anab.* 2.8.1. Cavalry and *psiloi*: Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 13.6; Aen. *Tact.* 15.5; Arrian *Anab.* 1.13.1–2, 3.9.5. Cavalry ahead, *psiloi* on flanks and heights: Xen. *Anab.* 6.3.14. Cf. Vegetius 3.6. Arrian noted the utility of light troops armed with missile weapons (javelins and slings) for scouting (*Tactica* 15.5). The Egyptians used mounted archers as scouts, according to Worley (12; cf. also 180 n. 19), who described a picture of a mounted archer with the caption “The scout of the army of the pharaoh.”

31. Q. Curtius 3.4.13 (*Thracas . . . leviter armatos*). Cf. Aelian *Tactica* 17.7; Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.15. Similarly, Antiochus III (in 218) took *euzonoi* to reconnoiter the Plane Tree Pass (described as rocky, narrow, and difficult at 69.1) held by Ptolemy IV's general Nicolaus (Polyb. 5.68.10–11).

32. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.56ff.; Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.15–18. See also Q. Curtius 8.11.22. Vegetius (3.6) pointed out that it was safer to operate by night, but the difficulty of navigation in unfamiliar territory without a compass must have been considerable—it is hard enough with one! Scouts by night (and day) must therefore have relied on landmarks for their bearings, which would have some effect on their routes.

A high proportion of modern reconnaissance by small units is done after dark. However, Simonyan and Grishin (88–89) point out that daylight reconnaissance-oriented raids for the purposes of capturing prisoners have better chances for success and a better ratio of capture to loss than those by night. While this observation may apply to Greek practice, one nevertheless can find a similar (and successful, from the point of the Greeks) mission by night in fiction (the *Doloneia*, where capture is an important component of the instructions) and history (Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.15–18, where it may have been incidental).

when contact with the enemy was not expected or when hostilities were not yet open.³³

While reconnaissance forces were often drawn from particular types of troops, there is no evidence of units organized for the specific and sole purpose of gathering information, although the Lacedaemonians frequently relied on the *Skiritai* for this role.³⁴ Yet the repeated employment of the same men and leaders contributed to a degree of specialization and development of expertise. Commanders of reconnaissance forces determined what was and was not necessary to report back to the commander and they consequently needed a combination of experience and an ability to distinguish reality from appearance and to realize what was or was not important.³⁵ The aforementioned Democrates was described by

33. Examples: (1) the Megarians sent a ship to verify reports of an Athenian landing on Salamis (Plut. *Solon* 9.4.4); (2) the Athenians used ten ships to reconnoiter the harbor of Syracuse in the 415–413 expedition (Thuc. 6.50.4; Plut. *Nic.* 14.5); (3) Alcibiades sailed with twenty ships to Gythium to take a look at the triremes that he had learned the Lacedaemonians were preparing (Xen. *Hell.* 1.4.11); (4) Antiochus, Alcibiades' lieutenant, may have used two or ten ships for reconnaissance at Notium (Russell *passim*, citing Xen. *Hell.* 1.5.11–14; *Hell. Oxy.* 8.1–4; Plut. *Alc.* 35.5–6; Plut. *Lys.* 5.1–2; Diod. Sic. 13.71.2–4); (5) Lysander sent ahead two or three triremes to report back on Athenian movements at Aegospotami (Xen. *Hell.* 2.1.24; Plut. *Lys.* 10.3, 11.1–2; Front. *Strat.* 2.1.18; Polyaeus 1.45.2. Cf. Diod. Sic. 13.106); and (6) Chabrias waylaid a force of twelve Laconian scout ships (Polyaeus 3.11.3). Cf. the exploratory *presbeia* of Phaeax with two ships (Thuc. 5.4.1). See also Hdt. 3.136, 7.179; Xen. *Hell.* 1.4.11.

Smaller ships used for reconnaissance included fifty-oared (Hdt. 1.152), thirty-oared (Hdt. 8.21; Arrian *Anab.* 2.7.2, 7.20.7; Diod. Sic. 17.33.1), and heralds' boats (Arrian *Anab.* 6.19.3). Cf. the use of light ships (*lemboi*) preceding Roman fleets (e.g., Polyb. 1.53.9; Plut. *Cato Minor* 54.5), and cf. the forty-oar ships (variously given as *pictae*, *picati*, and *pecati* in the manuscripts) described by Vegetius (4.37), these latter with sails dyed blue and hulls waxed for silent running.

34. For the *Skiritai*, see n. 11 and Gomme 4:103–4 on Thuc. 5.67.1. Cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 4.2.1. It is curious that the Spartans seem to have had a tendency to use non-Spartiate Laonians (*perioikoi*) for intelligence operations. The *Skiritai* were from a northern district of Laconia (Skiritis), bordering Mantinea—an area that was the stage for numerous battles, marches, and raids—and life in such a milieu could have encouraged the evolution of a breed trained by hard necessity. A parallel might be the Moroccan Ghoums employed by the British during World War II—perceived as being particularly adept at stealth and reconnaissance, the Ghoums were used frequently but not exclusively, and after all, they were not British (or Spartiates!). Alternately, there is the practice of recruiting poachers as gamekeepers: the British in Egypt used patrols of tribal militias recruited from the very people against whom the security was directed (Keegan 143).

35. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.56ff., describing the role of the *arkhon* of the scouts. Cf. Anon. Byz. (s. VI) 20, who called for intelligent, observant, and experienced men (therein called *phulakes*, but the context clearly indicates reconnaissance). One would expect the rank and file

Xenophon as just such an individual and fulfilled his role as commander of scouts admirably. Xenophon recorded a few occasions when generals (Seuthes, Timasion, and himself) went in person to reconnoiter, and in his *Cavalry Commander* he advised the commander to take a look for himself whenever he could do so with minimal risk.³⁶ Alexander sometimes accompanied a reconnaissance in force, and at times he went himself accompanied by only a few men. When he delegated the command of a reconnaissance force to others, they were usually men of note and stature.³⁷

Skopoi relied primarily on their eyes when collecting information, at least by day.³⁸ To obtain an accurate observation, they might approach quite near to an enemy force—there are examples of mounted Syracusan scouts coming close enough to shout insults at encamped Athenians, for instance, and of traps set by commanders for unwary scouts who approached their camps.³⁹ Direct contact was avoided by small teams, except to capture a straggler, or accost a native, who might be questioned. Larger forces used their inherent threat to force the enemy to disclose his own power.

The distances at which land reconnaissance teams operated varied from the immediate locale to two days' journey; seaborne forays could

to be selected for their merits also, since Aeneas Tacticus set forth requirements for observers; see also Vegetius 3.6, who insisted that only the most trustworthy and cleverest (*fidelissimi argutissimique*) should be chosen, and cf. contemporary criteria, e.g., those of Applegate (ix): "An intelligent man of good physique, who is confident, aggressive, and self-reliant, is the best raw material from which scouts and patrol members are made."

36. Seuthes: Xen. *Anab.* 7.3.41. Timasion: Xen. *Anab.* 6.3.22. Cf. Xen. *Cav. Com.* 4.16. One might infer from parallels that this practice was in fact hazardous—M. Claudius Marcellus and an accompanying force of about 220 cavalry and thirty light-armed troops were ambushed by Hannibal's Numidians (who, says Polybius, were accustomed to lie in ambush for skirmishers and outriders [*proporeumenoi*]); the consul met his death in the ensuing fight (Polyb. 10.32.1–12; Livy 27.26.1–27). Polybius censured Marcellus for exposing himself to danger: according to the historian's opinion, a commander ought not to take such risks. Cf. the close call of Scipio in similar circumstances (Livy 24.41.6).

37. Alexander: Arrian *Anab.* 1.20.5, 3.9.4, 4.30.5–6, 6.26.5. Amyntas: Arrian *Anab.* 1.12.7. Hegelochus: Arrian *Anab.* 1.13.1–2. Ptolemy son of Lagus: Arrian *Anab.* 4.24.8. Thoas: Arrian *Anab.* 6.23.2–3. Parmenio: Arrian *Anab.* 3.9.4; Q. Curtius 3.7.6.

38. The word σκοπός is derived from the same root as σκέψομαι (I see); cf. English *spy*. In contrast, ὠτακουστής ("eavesdropper," hence spy—usually in the context of domestic espionage) is from οὖς, ὠτός (ear) and ἀκούω (I hear).

39. Pace Starr (9), who said scouts relied on distant observation; he may have had surveillance in mind. For Syracusans, see Thuc. 6.63.3. Xenophon (*Cyr.* 3.3.25) advocated stationing *prophulakai* well before watch fires for this end (cf. *Anab.* 7.2.18).

extend still further.⁴⁰ Among the aforementioned examples, Democrates and his team advanced no more than a few miles, while before Gaugamela, the contact between Persian and Macedonian vanguards occurred when the two armies were separated by perhaps 150 stadia.⁴¹ According to Diodorus Siculus, a source not always given to accuracy, Eumenes learned from *kataskopoi* that Antigonus was crossing the Coprates River, eighty stadia distant from his camp.⁴² Information on the area covered by a patrol can only be guessed at through comparisons. Apparently British cavalry units in World War I could not be expected to cover an area wider than ten miles, no depth being specified—although even this sounds like the ideal rather than the norm.⁴³ A World War II Soviet independent reconnaissance patrol, traveling on foot, typically penetrated to a depth of about eight kilometers, with squads sent out two to three kilometers from the main axis of movement.⁴⁴

Surveillance Agents

The employment of surveillance agents was a general, but not universal, practice, as Xenophon noted: “All know that it is better to place both day and night watchers before the camp, but even this duty is heeded by some

40. For a day’s march, cf. Diod. Sic. 19.25.1 (of Eumenes and Antigonus One-Eyed in 317); for two days, see n. 30. Numidian cavalry leading Hannibal’s march on Tarentum preceded the main force by a bit less than four miles (thirty stadia). Napoleon *Maxims* 7 (Philips 1:409) merely says “at sufficient distances to allow the main body of the arm to deploy and take up its position.”

41. I.e., Democrates advanced a distance less than that which an army of ten thousand was able to traverse and return in a single day despite snow and difficult terrain (Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.15–22). Arrian (*Anab.* 3.9.2) gives 60 stadia (ca. seven and a half miles) as the distance between the two armies; Curtius (4.10.15) says 150 stadia (about eighteen and a half miles). It is likely Arrian is giving the distance at the end of Alexander’s march *after* the contact, Curtius the distance before it (ten or eleven miles being a reasonable distance in these circumstances). Curtius says that the Persians with whom the Macedonians fell in were stragglers, not scouts, but his own statement that Mazaeus had sent ahead a thousand cavalry (4.9.24), and the relative positions of the armies, suggests that Arrian is in fact correct.

42. Diod. Sic. 19.18.4 (about ten miles).

43. “As to the front of the possible reconnaissance, it should be clearly understood that the maximum width of a zone that can be effectively reconnoitered by a reconnaissance detachment regardless of strength—whether a squadron or a troop—is approximately ten miles. The anticipated difficulty in obtaining the information will determine whether the reconnaissance detachment should be a squadron or a troop” (Schwein 36). A British squadron in World War I contained about 150 men.

44. Simonyan and Grishin 156.

and neglected by others.”⁴⁵ In fact, emphasis on surveillance was a function of perceived security.⁴⁶ In time of war commanders normally assumed that their opponents had placed watchers and, when planning to surprise or elude their foes, took precautions accordingly. When they perceived that their opponents either failed to post watchers or did so carelessly, they were often able to exploit the omission.⁴⁷ An attack during peace promised surprise, as when the Thebans marched on Plataea before war was declared.⁴⁸

Surveillance was generally distinguished according to day (*hemerinaí phulakai*) and night watches (*nukterinaí phulakai*), which began and

45. Xen. *Oecon.* 20.8. This neglect is not necessarily indicative of contempt for tactical intelligence. The Apaches and Sioux were widely admired for their abilities in this field yet, according to Wagner (203), “they post no sentinels after dark, but are on the alert at the first sight of dawn.”

46. Xenophon, in his address to the Greek camp (*Anab.* 5.1.9), proposed posting guards about the camp. This might imply that up to this point the camp had not been guarded, but he was probably warning his troops not to cease such precautions now that they had reached the sea. As may be expected, a general would pay more attention to posting watchers when the proximity of the enemy demanded: the Syracusans did not mount watches in the Sicel cities until they learned the Athenians were at Rhegium (Thuc. 6.45.1); Arrian remarked that Alexander posted forward watches with care when Darius’ army was near (*Anab.* 2.8.2; cf. Diod. Sic. 14.105.1 of Dionysius, 14.108.4 of the Rhegians).

General statements of practice reinforce individual examples. Consider, e.g., Xen. *Hiero* 6.9: “whenever we are on expedition we post sentinels and take dinner and rest in confidence”; *Cav. Com.* 4.8: “do not neglect to post guards even if you have confidence in your spies.”

47. Some examples follow. (1) Thuc. 2.93–94; Diod. 12.49.2: In 428, the Lacedaemonian navarch Cnemus learned through unspecified but obviously effective channels that the Athenians, in overconfidence, had neglected to post guards at the Piraeus docks. He attacked by night and took Salamis by surprise, but the Salaminians were able to flash signal fires to the Athenians, which discouraged him from attacking Athens. After this, the Athenians were rather more careful about guarding Salamis and the Piraeus for a while, but the lesson was not properly learned. In 388, Teleutias sailed into the Piraeus, which he rightly expected to be poorly guarded, and caused havoc (Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.19ff.). (2) Thuc. 6.100.1: the Athenians besieging Syracuse noted a relaxation of the guard and were able to exploit this negligence. (3) Arrian *Anab.* 5.12.4: Alexander, when making a river crossing, tried not to be seen by Porus’ scouts. (4) Arrian *Anab.* 1.6.9: when Alexander noted that Clitus son of Bardylis and Glaucias, king of the Taulantians, had failed to post sentries, he moved into position unobserved and he attacked. (5) Q. Curtius 9.7.2: the citadel of Bactra was carelessly guarded when Alexander was in India, since it was thought safe; rebels took it with relative ease.

48. Regarding Plataea, see esp. Thuc. 2.2.3. In the *Agamemnon* (line 337), the Greeks no longer posted sentries when their victory was complete; the Syracusan demos was often careless of their security after a successful battle, to its grief (Diod. Sic. 16.18; Plut. *Timo-leon* 18.3; cf. Thuc. 7.72–73). Cf. Diod. Sic. 30.10.1 of Perseus.

ended at dinner and dawn, and according to relatively stationary (*phulakes*) and roving (*peripoloi*) parties.⁴⁹ Since the verbal division is reflected in practice, they are treated separately here.

Observers (*Skopoi*, *Hemeroskopoi*)

Agents involved in surveillance by day engaged in protracted observation of an area or force to learn of any significant changes or activities.⁵⁰ They were relatively static and obtained their information chiefly through visual means. They should, according to Aeneas Tacticus, be competent to report on the “enemy’s preparations, his numbers, his line of march, and the other movements of his army.”⁵¹ He also required that they be swift, trustworthy men, experienced in war.⁵²

Records in Linear B indicate that the use of observers dates back to the Mycenaean era. Tablets found at Pylos contain a list of ten captains and their men stationed in small detachments along the Peloponnesian coast under the heading “Thus the watchers are guarding the coast.”⁵³ Among the records are what appear to be various ethnic names. Chadwick was inclined to believe that these represented indigenous peoples who would

49. Dinner marks the posting of sentries in Xen. *Hell.* 4.6.7; Xen. *Anab.* 7.3.34; Xen. *Cyr.* 3.3.33, 7.2.1; Xen. *Hiero* 6.9; Aen. *Tact.* 18.1 (upon a signal). Aeneas Tacticus (27.15) advised that the watch be maintained until the nearby terrain was searched in the morning. The division between night and day watchers is embodied in Xenophon’s verbal distinction (*Cyr.* 1.6.43; cf. Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 12.2–3) and in Aeneas Tacticus’ separate treatment of day and night watches (*hemeroskopoi* in his chap. 6, *phulakes* in chap. 22). A similar division existed among the Romans of Polybius’ day (Polyb. 6.33.7–37.6).

50. So U.S. Marine Corps art. 1001b; see also 1001a1 and a2.

51. Aen. *Tact.* 6.3, Whitehead’s translation. A sampling; Hdt. 7.192; Thuc. 4.26.5–9; Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.27, 7.2.5; Diod. *Sic.* 11.21.5, 14.10.1; Arrian *Anab.* 5.10.4; Onas. 22.2.

52. The exclusion of those who did not meet these standards implies that some degree of specialization did exist, at least by the fourth century. On a less historical note, the watcher (*skopos*) of Aegisthus was hired for the express purpose of looking out for Agamemnon’s return (*Od.* 4.524); the watchman in the *Agamemnon* kept his post continually over a long period (Aeschylus *Ag.* 2).

53. Ventris and Chadwick nos. 56–60; their translation of no. 56, line 1 (*o-u-ru-to o-pi-a2-ra e-pi-ko-wo*). They, quite reasonably, considered the 780 men spread along the coast to be an early warning system rather than a defense (indeed, some units mentioned were as small as ten men). The watchers were in most cases accompanied by “Followers” (*e-qu-ta*, whom Ventris and Chadwick compared to the *hetairoi* [companions] of a king), who possessed chariots and might have served as swift couriers (429). In his later work (*The Mycenaean World*, 176–77), Chadwick thought that since the Followers tended to be distributed in places most at risk, they would likely be present with their troops.

not be trusted in the army but could be trusted as lookouts.⁵⁴ If his notion is right, this would imply that surveillance was perceived by the Mycenaeans as either relatively unimportant or relatively free from manipulation—curious attitudes that have reigned in some times and places, but odd in light of the effort that went into the dispositions. To be sure, the watch failed to avert disaster—after all, the clay tablets are preserved only because they were fired into brick when the palace was burned—but was this a failure in the vigilance of the watchers or in the arms of the soldiers?

After the gap in the written record following the fall of the Mycenaeans, observers reappear in the *Iliad*, in which lookouts are found on the shield of Achilles and again at the funeral of Hector. Their presence continues and extends throughout the period under discussion.⁵⁵

Poets and tacticians alike were inclined to situate one to three men in an elevated observation post (sometimes called a *skopié*), a practice that continues to the present.⁵⁶ Homer depicts the Trojan Polites atop the burial mound of Aesyetes to keep an eye on the Greeks,⁵⁷ and parallels range from the eastern to the western frontiers of the Greek world. The Greeks in Asia Minor encountered and made use of *skopoi* atop heights and burial mounds; *hemeroskopoi* were stationed on the heights of Euboea near Artemisium; Gelon posted *skopoi* on high ground overlooking Himera, in Sicily.⁵⁸ Archebius of Heraclea sent a trumpeter to a treetop for want of higher ground—and such was the vantage of the ill-fated Pentheus in the *Bacchae*.⁵⁹

54. Chadwick 175–76.

55. *Iliad* 18.523, 24.799 (cf. schol. 799); night watchmen are also found in 10.97–101, 180ff., etc.

56. Aen. Tact. 6.2, 6.5; cf. Simonyan and Grishin 54, 66. The contingents on the Pylos tablets were all divisible by ten, but it may be rash to speculate that this was the size of units assigned to individual observation posts.

57. *Iliad* 2.792; his post was criticized by Strabo (13.1.37), who observed that he could have watched from the acropolis of Ilium as effectively and in greater security—quite right, but perhaps less poetic. Aegisthus' anonymous lookout watched for the return of Agamemnon from a *skopie* (*Od.* 4.524); the suitors watched continually for Telemachus from heights (*Od.* 16.365); in his tale to Antinoos, Odysseus speaks of sending out watchers (*opteres*) to heights while in Egypt (*Od.* 17.430). Cf. Paus. 4.19.2 of Aristomenes' watchers in the hills (set in the eighth century, but no doubt an anachronistic detail supplied by Pausanias or Rhianus [s. III], his source).

58. Respectively, (1) Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.14; (2) Hdt. 7.183, 192. Cf. Hdt. 7.219; Plut. *Alc.* 34.6; Bosworth, *Commentary* 1:114, on Arrian *Anab.* 1.13.2; (3) Diod. Sic. 11.21.5.

59. Polyaeus 5.39.1; Eur. *Bacchae* 1061–62. Cf. Simonyan and Girishin 76–77.

Obviously, heights afforded a wide field of vision; less obviously, they often offered a direct line of sight to a main camp or base, thus facilitating signaling.⁶⁰ In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon mentioned an officer in charge of watchers, the *skoparkhes*, who maintained contact with his superior through messengers.⁶¹ The title is found only in this work; otherwise watchers seem to have operated independently, sending back word to their *strategoi* through runners or signals.⁶² Since a *strategos* would not normally have leisure to look out for signals himself, arrangements must have been made for their messages to be relayed to him. While on Corcyra, Iphicrates posted watchers at a predetermined point visible from the city and “established with them how they ought to signal when the enemy ships were approaching and when they anchored.” The news was then relayed to his ship captains via a herald.⁶³

Observation posts were at times established in such a way as to provide relay points for communication. Alexander, for example, set his watchers in a line along the Hydaspes, within sight and earshot of each other, so as to pass on messages.⁶⁴ Eumenes, awaiting the approach of Antigonos, was said to have stationed pickets along the entire length of the Pastigris River, a distance of almost ninety miles (seven hundred stadia), with a similar line of posts extending back into Persia, by which shouted messages could be passed.⁶⁵ More permanent arrangements,

60. Iphicrates at Corcyra went in person to look over the ground for good vantages, where those approaching could be seen by the watchers, and where the watchers themselves could be seen from the city (Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.34). Aeneas Tacticus (6.1) advised posting *hemeroskopoi* before the city on high vantage points. Xenophon attributed to Lycurgus the origin of the Spartan practice of having the daytime guard posts (*phulakai methemerinai*) look inward toward the weapons stores and friendly troops, while the enemy was watched by cavalry from high ground (Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 12.2). Cf. Lysias *Against Simon* 11; Polyb. 4.70.5; Front. *Strat.* 2.5.15; Diod. Sic. 19.96.3, 19.97.1. When heights were unavailable, Iphicrates made use of mast tops (Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.29).

61. Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.6: σκοπάρχης MSS; σκόπαρχος Dindorff. Cf. 6.3.12. See also Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.56; Arrian *Anab.* 1.13.1–2; and Mycenaean practices mentioned in n. 53.

62. Hdt. 7.192 and Aen. *Tact.* 6.5 (runner); Arrian *Anab.* 5.13.1 (horseman). Cf. Shepherd 216, 76 n. 231. Aeneas Tacticus (6.7) deemed it necessary for day watchers to raise their signals at periodic intervals to confirm their presence and safety; in case of there being no line of sight, relays were advocated (Aen. *Tact.* 6.4).

63. Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.33–34. His arrangements worked well and to his advantage. Other examples of signaling by watchers: Thuc. 8.102.1; Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.2, 5.1.27, 7.2.5.

64. Arrian *Anab.* 5.10.4ff.

65. Diod. Sic. 19.17.3. Antigonos the One-Eyed is said to have established (or reestablished) a net of couriers and fire signals throughout the part of Asia under his control (Diod. Sic. 19.57.5; ca. 315). Cf. Herodotus 8.98; [Aristotle] *De mundo* 398b30–35 for Persian precedents.

consisting of towers and forts, were erected in strategic sites: passes, straits, and borders. It has been proposed that interlocking systems of fortified observation posts and strongholds were conceived and constructed in such states as Attica; it has equally been argued that what appear now to be coherent systems were products of accretion not necessarily driven by any sort of plan.⁶⁶ In any event, it has been demonstrated that towers and forts served to keep strategic locales under scrutiny and that those wishing to escape their eyes felt compelled to avoid them.⁶⁷

If not behind hard stone, the observation posts ought to have been concealed—and so say Xenophon and Aeneas Tacticus. Xenophon argued that hidden outposts cause the enemy to feel insecure, since they know they are watched but not from where. Conversely, the watchers are secure.⁶⁸ Aeneas Tacticus mandated that *hemeroskopoi* be sent to their posts before first light, lest they be observed.⁶⁹ Both men knew that, for all their precautions, observers were likely to fall into enemy hands—hence Xenophon’s recommendations to capture them and Aeneas’ monition that these men be given passwords different from those used by the rest of an army.

Pickets and Guards (*Phulakes, Prophulakes*)

Surveillance by night was particularly concerned with security—the detection of enemy reconnaissance elements and the prevention of betrayal from within and tactical surprise from without. Night watchmen were (and are still) usually ordinary soldiers assigned to duty in rotating shifts rather than a specialized corps.⁷⁰ We find in the *Iliad* that the duty was given to the younger men, who were posted outside the walls in seven contingents of one hundred.⁷¹ The proportion of seven

66. For the first position, see Ober; for the second, see Munn. It is worth noting that Agis could see the grain ships in the Piraeus from Decleia (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35). Byzantine military treatises attach considerable importance to these lookouts (then called *biglai*, corrupted from the Latin *vigiles*); see, e.g., Anon. Byz. (s. VI) *Peri Strat.* 9. Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. “Metachoeon” for a Boeotian example.

67. Cf. Papalas on Draconium Icaria.

68. Xen. *Cav. Com.* 4.10–12.

69. Aen. Tact. 6.6. As Simonyan and Grishin note (57; cf. 54–56), most observation posts are compromised when first occupied or when subsequently moved.

70. Xen. *Anab.* 5.1.9; cf. Aen. Tact. 22.5a, 22.26.

71. *Iliad* 9.66–68, 80–88. Cf. MSG T. Damm on modern practice (letter to author, 8 Feb. 1996): “The guards are normally the lowest ranking soldier of the unit and are probably also the least experienced and knowledgeable soldiers. They are controlled by a corporal or a sergeant of the guard, whose job it is to enforce the guards remaining at their job.”

hundred pickets to one hundred thousand men (i.e., 1 man in every 143), by the way, is of some interest, since it is not so far from Frederick the Great's recommendation of three hundred men for an army of forty thousand: 1 man for every 133.⁷² However, Aeneas Tacticus advises: "At times of less immediate danger, the number of men on watch and patrol should be half those enlisted. . . . And during peacetime, when there is no danger, guard-duty ought to represent the least possible inconvenience to the smallest number of people."⁷³ Naturally a smaller force, more typical of that fielded by a smaller polis, would have a much higher proportion, yet this still seems immense, if it represents half the entire population under arms. The solution may lie in Aeneas' rating of recruits according to their fitness for duty. He assigns the third of four classes of troops to guard duty, youth once again being a criterion.⁷⁴ If he is speaking of half this body, his proportion makes a bit more sense.

While one could argue that Aeneas is here making some effort to specialize his men, it is apparent that—as is and was typical—night watchmen were usually the most junior and least experienced soldiers. Only exceptional circumstances (e.g., imminent treachery or attack) seem to have called for senior or wealthier men to undertake this burdensome duty. The Lacedaemonians typically assigned night watches to the *Skiritai* or, later, to *xenoi* (probably mercenaries) when the latter were present.⁷⁵ Once again, this custom may reflect an interest in having a specialized corps, yet one must still note that the Spartiates were not the ones wiping sleep from bleary eyes.

In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon states that the night was divided into watches to enable sentinels not only to be alert for their duty but also to be rested and ready to move with the army or fight during the day (it appears that even in his model army, the task was widely shared).⁷⁶ The shifts numbered between three and five, the variation possibly reflecting the change in the length of the night during the course of the year (i.e.,

72. *Iliad* 9.66–68, 80–88; Frederick the Great 336.

73. Aen. Tact. 22.26, Whitehead's translation.

74. Aen. Tact. 1.8; see 1.4–1.9 generally. The fourth class is the general population, so the distinction is hardly an elevated one.

75. Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 12.3. LSJ (s.v. ξένος IV) and Marchant's Loeb edition read "allies" for ξένων; but, as noted in LSJ (citing Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.10), the word may also be used for mercenaries in Xenophon's works. This particular example is curious, since one would expect *summakhoi* for "allies" who had been regularly campaigning with the Lacedaemonians for some time. Xenophon's remark that this was a recent innovation might in fact indicate that mercenaries were being used; Parke (89) also thought this was the case.

76. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.44; Aeneas Tacticus (22.5–6) also recommended frequent changes to prevent treachery and to keep watchers alert.

perhaps five watches in winter, three in summer) or differing practices in various times and peoples.⁷⁷ The duration of the watches were measured by the stars or by a water clock.⁷⁸

While *hemeroskopoi* were stationed on *skopai* at a distance from the camp, night watchers were posted around the camp, before the gates, or on the side of the camp facing the enemy.⁷⁹ *Prophulakes*, as their name implies, were employed outside the camp, in the area between the *phulakes* and the enemy, to give advance warning.⁸⁰ In the *Cyropaedia* men were sent into the dark around the camp in squads of five and ten, with the double intent of catching anyone who might leave and watching for anyone who might approach.⁸¹ Aeneas Tacticus proposed that dogs be tethered outside the walls of a besieged city for the same purpose, and his recommendation appears to have been followed.⁸² The barking of dogs was supposed to have alerted the Messenians at Eira to the infiltration of the Laconian army into their fortress by night and to have marked Alexander's approach to an Indian town.⁸³ It is probable that in these two accounts the animals were not deliberately posted to aid the sentries, but inscriptions indicate that by the third century, at latest, dogs were enlisted to supplement men.⁸⁴ Certainly dogs are notorious among mod-

77. LSJ (s.v. φυλακή I.4) noted three watches, citing the scholia on [Eur.] *Rhesus* 5, or five watches, citing Stesichorus 55, Simonides 219A, and [Eur.] *Rhesus* 543. Aeneas and Curtius mentioned at least four (Aen. Tact. 18.21; Q. Curtius 7.2.19). In the *Cyropaedia* (5.3.44), Xenophon advocated making watches numerous and short.

78. Aeneas Tacticus (22.24–25) proposed using a water clock, reset every ten days, to ensure that shifts were divided equally as the nights grew longer or shorter. Xenophon (*Mem.* 4.7.4) portrayed Socrates recommending that his pupils learn just enough astronomy for practical purposes, among them setting the watch—his method would be more suitable to an army on the move. Polybius (9.14.4–15.15) treated at some length the importance to a general of telling time by the stars and sun. Curtius (3.8.23) noted that the changes in watch were marked in Alexander's army by the blowing of a *tuba*; this is not otherwise attested and may reflect Roman, rather than Greek, practice (cf. Polyb. 6.35.12).

79. Xenophon proposed the placement of sentinels around the camp (*Anab.* 5.1.9, 6.3.10); sentries in the *Iliad* (10.126–27) were placed before the gates of the Achaean camp.

80. Thuc. 3.112.4; Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.24; Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.15. See also Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 12.3; of *phulakes*, [Eur.] *Rhesus* 523.

81. Xen. *Cyr.* 4.5.5.

82. Aen. Tact. 22.14.

83. Paus. 4.21.1.

84. E.g., SEG 24 no. 154 (dated post-265/4): Epichares, the man honored in this decree, had established additional *phrukteria* and increased the number of dogs assigned to them. See also SEG 26 no. 1306: a provision in a treaty between Teos and Cyrtisus mandated that twenty men and three dogs be assigned to a *phrouarkhos*. Aratus was said to have posted fifty dogs (each with a keeper) at Acrocorinth, knowing well the strategic value of that place and its vulnerability to a stealthy assault (Plut. *Aratus* 24.1). Cf. Hesiod *Theog.* 769 (of Cerberus); Plato *Repub.* 375a, 375d–e, 376a–b; Polyaeus 2.25.1, 4.2.16.

ern soldiers for compromising reconnaissance patrols. So, incidentally, are goats (and their accompanying herders) in the Mediterranean and Near East.⁸⁵ Unfortunately (or fortunately, from the scout's point of view), dogs were not always heeded—perhaps a phenomenon akin to that of the boy who too often cried “Wolf!” is involved. An illustrative example in Plutarch follows.

Aratus was setting out to overthrow Nicocles, the tyrant of Sicyon. Like any able general, he sent three men on a preliminary reconnaissance, to verify the report of an escapee that the walls of Sicyon were vulnerable at a certain point. These men (a fellow exile named Xenocrates, brother to the escapee, and two servants of Aratus) confirmed the report and measured the wall, but they noted that a gardener living near the spot kept a number of small but vicious and vociferous dogs. Therefore, on the eve of Aratus' attack, he sent a team of five light-armed men disguised as travelers, to seek lodging from the gardener and, once admitted, lock up him and his dogs. These men succeeded in securing the gardener, but the dogs evaded them; this they reported to Aratus when he drew near. Aratus' men were disheartened and wished to call off the attack, but Aratus decided to take a risk, although promising to withdraw if the dogs proved troublesome.⁸⁶

At the same time [Aratus] sent ahead the men carrying scaling ladders, whom Ecdelus and Mnasitheus led, while he himself followed slowly, the little dogs already barking loudly and running alongside of Ecdelus and his men. Nevertheless they reached the wall and set the ladders without mishap. But while the first men were climbing the ladders, the man who set the dawn watch was patrolling with the *kodon* [a bell], and there were many lights and the sound of men approaching. But [Aratus'] men, just as they were, cowering there on their ladders, escaped notice without difficulty; but since another patrol was coming up to the first, they came into the gravest peril. Yet when they escaped this patrol also as it passed, at once the leaders, Mnasitheus and Ecdelus, climbed up and, taking the parapets to either sides, sent Technon to Aratus, telling him to hurry up.

There was not much distance from the garden to the wall and the

85. See, e.g., the misfortunes of a British SAS team in Iraq, as described by McNab 103–4, 153–57, 186 (a near miss), 352–53, and 395 (another near miss).

86. This paragraph is a paraphrase of Plut. *Aratus* 4.3–5.5, 6.3, 7.3–4.

tower, in which a large hunting dog kept guard. The dog himself did not sense their approach, either because he was by nature lazy or because he had been worn out after the day. But when the gardener's little dogs were calling on him from below, he growled—faintly and indistinctly at first, then he waxed louder when they passed by. And already a great baying pervaded the area, so that the guard opposite inquired of the dog's master with a loud shout why the dog was barking so savagely and if something strange was happening. But he called back to him from the tower that there was nothing to fear and that the dog was set off by the light of the wall guards and the sound of the bell. This greatly encouraged Aratus' soldiers, since they thought that the dog's master covered for them as one sharing their plan and that there were many other accomplices in the city.⁸⁷

This passage in Plutarch shows, if at some length, how things could and did go wrong for both sides. Even at best, the efficacy of night watchers was rather poor—they seem to have served more as a trip line than an early warning system. When the Athenians landed their troops on Sphacteria, for instance, they were able to take the first guard post of thirty by surprise, as the Laconians apparently supposed that the ships they had seen were sailing as usual to their own watch stations.⁸⁸ There are a number of causes for the frequent failures of the night watch, some of them visible from the Aratus anecdote: the practices of (1) sitting by fires, (2) carrying lights and bells, (3) singing while on duty; to these must be added (4) an inclination to treachery and (5) the failings of human nature in the face of inclement weather, fatigue, and discomfort.

The first category—the practice of posting sentinels by fires—illuminates unequivocally defective doctrine.⁸⁹ Anyone who has sat by a

87. Plut. *Aratus* 7.4–8.3.

88. Thuc. 4.31.2–32.1. These watchers were probably not *Skiritai*, who were not mentioned by Thucydides in his account of Sphacteria; the watchers were called hoplites at Thuc. 4.31.2. See also Delbrück 128ff. on this incident. The Persian sentries facing Alexander fared even worse: when Alexander was making a flanking movement about the Persian Gates, the sentries at the first two posts were killed, and the survivors of the third fled into the hills rather than back into camp, so that Ariobarzanes had no warning of the imminent Macedonian attack (Arrian *Anab.* 3.18.6–7; see also 2.4.3–4). Cf. also Hdt. 7.27; Thuc. 4.110.1, 2.

89. So schol. vet. on Aristoph. *Birds* 841: “—To always bank (ἐγκρουπτ᾽) the fire (so that one may have it, if there would be need of a watch). For they used to burn fires during their watches.”

campfire is familiar with the mesmerizing quality of flames and has experienced fire's deleterious effect on vision outside a limited radius of light.⁹⁰ Further, the crackle and hiss of burning wood obscures noises. Some of the ancients realized that hearing was essential for nocturnal surveillance: Xenophon stated that it was superior to vision at night; Aeneas Tacticus would have craftsmen prohibited to work at night, lest the noise of their work impair the hearing of the sentries.⁹¹ Yet, from the time of

90. On this subject, it is instructive to compare the man in the field with the physician. McNab writes (88–89):

Eyes take a long time to adjust in darkness. The cones in your eyes enable you to see in the daytime, giving color and perception. But they're no good at night. What takes over then are the rods on the edge of your irises. They are angled at 45 degrees because of the convex shape of the eye, so if you look straight at something at night you don't really see it: it's a haze. You have to look above it or around it so you can line up these rods, which then will give you a picture. It takes forty minutes or so for them to become fully effective, but you start to see better after five. And what you see when you land and what you see five minutes later are two very different things. . . . Mark got out the Magellan and took a fix. He squinted at it with one eye. Even small amounts of light can wreck your night vision, and the process must start all over again. If you have to look at something [bright], you close the eye that you aim with, the "master eye," and look with the other.

Dr. Christopher S. Connor, of Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital, was kind enough to comment on this passage (letter to the author 20 Feb. 1996).

The eye starts to dark adapt at 6 minutes and reaches its max[imum ability] at 20 minutes. The rods do take over. They are not at the edge of the iris as stated but have a higher ratio outside the macula (the center of the retina and the vision). The dilatation of the pupil at night permits the more peripheral retina, where the rod concentration is higher, to partake in the visual process while allowing more light to enter. There is still some color vision at night. . . i.e. that greenish gray hue on some nights and the aurora borealis are 2 examples.

The rods come off the back of the eye perpendicular and not at a 45 degree angle. . . they are quite capable of quality vision . . . i.e. reading by moonlight but their concentration drops off the more peripheral one goes and that contributes to the less than sharp peripheral vision mentioned earlier.

91. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.43; Aen. *Tact.* 22.24. Cf. Thuc. 3.23.3–4. Simonyan and Grishin (73 and 83) have the following to say about auditory monitoring: (1) effective range depends on the amplitude of the sound, time of year, time of day, weather, and the acuteness of the listener's hearing; the optimal times are quiet summer and autumn nights; sound carries further at night, but echoes make its origin more difficult to locate; (2) a motor vehicle horn can typically be heard at a distance of 2–3 km, a pick or shovel striking a stone at 1 km, commands at 0.5–1 km, movement of infantry subunits on foot at 0.3–0.6 km, soft speech or a cough at 0.3–1 km.

Homer, *phulakes* stationed near the camp habitually sat by fires.⁹² Xenophon remarked on, and commended, the fact that Seuthes had no *nuktophulakes* stationed near the watch fires but that instead the fires burned some distance in front of them, so that the watchers might be hidden in the dark, while those approaching would be shown up in the light.⁹³ Xenophon also advocated shifting the disposition of the sentries and watch fires relative to their camp, so that enemy *kataskopoi* might be disoriented and thus captured.⁹⁴

Many a *kataskopos* haunting the shadows must have given thanks to Hermes that sentries carried lights and bells as they made the rounds. The life of Aratus provides further testimony: four men were patrolling with a light during Aratus' covert assault on the citadel of Corinth. Aratus' men saw them coming and hid in shadows cast by the moon, where they were invisible to the light-blinded eyes of the guards. Instead of letting the patrol pass unharmed, Aratus' men attacked. It is possible that the *phulakes* spotted one of the intruders—after all, there were about one hundred within the walls at that point. One of the four guards survived a sword slash to his head in the initial attack and fled shouting; at this point a general alarm arose.

In addition to lights, patrols carried bells. These, we are told, were to ensure that guards were vigilant. The scholiasts note that the guards would hear the ringing of the *kodon* carried by their inspector and challenge him.⁹⁵ But if an inspector really wanted to test the vigilance of the

92. *Iliad* 10.188–89; the lines describing the fires of the Trojans at the end of *Iliad* 8 (553–65) are followed by the line: “So the Trojans held their watches” (*Iliad* 9.1). Cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 7.5.27, where the (fictional) Babylonian guards are portrayed drinking by a fire—these are surprised and fail in their task of protecting their king, although their resistance eventually is heard.

93. Xen. *Anab.* 7.2.18; the practice is found again in the *Cyropaedia* (3.3.25).

94. Xen. *Cyr.* 3.3.25. In the *Cavalry Commander* (4.10) he advised setting concealed lookouts and sentinels both to enhance the security of the watchers and friendly forces and to set ambushes for enemy scouts. Watchers therefore must have a different watchword (*sunthema*) from that used in the city, in case they are captured (Aen. *Tact.* 6.7; at Xen. *Anab.* 7.3.34, the sentinels were posted and given a *sunthema*, but it is not specified whether it was the same as that used in the camp).

95. Schol. vet. on Aristoph. *Birds* 842 (mentioning a parallel in the lost *Palamedes* of Euripides). Cf. Aristoph. *Birds* 842, 1160; schol. vet. on Aristoph. *Lysist.* 485; Harpocration *Lexicon on the Ten Attic Orators* 96 (also citing Euripides *Palamedes*); *Suda* s.vv. Ἀκωδώνιστον. Διεκωδώνισεν. and Κωδωνοφορῶν.

In a different context (having guards throw stones over the wall and call out a challenge at the sound), Aeneas Tacticus (22.12–13) realized that such noises give away the position of the guards and could warn intruders away toward quieter areas, but he preferred that both guards and enemy know that the watch was to be vigilant.

guards, why would he warn them of his advent? For he would equally warn intruders of his position and, incidentally, the positions of the guards. The Athenians at Potidaea passed the *kodon* from guard to guard, so that each would be compelled to leave his post to convey it to the next man. Brasidas came close enough to the walls of Potidaea to plant a ladder against them, since he could judge the location of the guard from the noise.⁹⁶ Aratus, as seen in the passage from Plutarch quoted earlier, was luckier still.

There is a decidedly odd aside in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, when Strepsiadēs, sent to lie down on a flea-ridden bed to contrive sophistries, tells Socrates that he is "singing [a song characteristic] of guard-duty" to pass the unpleasant time.⁹⁷ In commenting on this curious phrase (apparently a proverb), the scholiasts explain that while on duty, guards were accustomed to sing to keep themselves and their comrades awake.⁹⁸ While the guards may have remained awake, their attention would be diverted, and any approaching enemy would be alerted to their presence.

Fear of betrayal by guards was endemic. Party faction was a contributing factor, and we find Aeneas Tacticus recommending that only well-off men with a wife and children be appointed gatekeepers. Further, guards were not to know where they would be posted until the last moment, and their companies and postings ought to be constantly changed; only the wealthiest and most respectable men should be placed at the more approachable points.⁹⁹ As is typical with Aeneas, one wonders how much of his theory existed in practice.

Despite other cautions against mercenaries, Aeneas thought their presence might check the designs of would-be traitors among the *phulakes*.¹⁰⁰ And indeed when the Spartan Ischolaus learned that some of his guards planned to hand over Drys to the besieging Athenians, he quietly stationed a mercenary at each post.¹⁰¹

Aeneas Tacticus records that the night watch of some cities was contracted out, and we must infer that this practice had its problems, for he

96. Thuc. 4.135.

97. Aristoph. *Clouds* 721: φρουρᾶς ᾄδων—I here am guided by K.J. Dover's grammatical reconstruction in his commentary ad loc.

98. Schol. vet. on Aristoph. *Clouds* 721a, 721b.

99. Aen. Tact. 5.1, 22.15; see also 5.2, 18.1–22, 22 passim. According to Livy (24.2.9), among the Italian Greeks the "plebian" Locrian guard posts could be counted on to admit the Bruttians (and so they did), while those manned by the "senatorial" class could not.

100. Aen. Tact. 13.3.

101. Polyaeus 2.22.4 (ca. 376–374).

suggests that anyone who failed to meet his obligation should be immediately replaced and fined.¹⁰² The night watch of the town of Cranon in Thessaly was contracted to a certain Dianias who, after performing his service admirably for three years, used his position as a stepping-stone to tyranny.

Inclement weather favors the stealthy by obscuring sight and hearing. When the Plataeans wished to break out of their besieged city, “they kept watch for a night stormy with rain and wind, and at the same time moonless.” The night came, and they stole down from their own walls and climbed those of their foes, eluding the notice of the guards since these “could not see ahead because of the darkness nor discern the sound of their approach because of the deafening clatter of the wind.” Not until some had surmounted the battlements of the besiegers’ wall, and a man grasped at a tile that clattered down to the ground, were the guards alerted. Even then the storm bewildered their senses and delayed their reaction long enough for the fugitives to disappear into the night.¹⁰³ Similar stories are told of Brasidas, taking advantage of rough weather and snow in his advance on Amphipolis, and of Lysimachus’ furtive withdrawal from Dorylaeum.¹⁰⁴ We hear of guards abandoning their posts because of rain.¹⁰⁵ “Pity the tired soldier who must be vigilant through these conditions,” remarked one veteran.¹⁰⁶

102. *Aen. Tact.* 22.29.

103. *Thuc.* 3.22.1–5.

104. *Thuc.* 4.103.1–2; *Diod. Sic.* 20.109.2.

105. E.g., *Paus.* 4.20.7: the Messenians at Eira were said to have fallen victim to the Lacedaemonians because storms had driven the pickets from their posts. While the story is not historical, it is indicative of a real problem.

106. MSG T. Damm, as a commentary on his letter of 8 Feb. 1996:

The sentry is waiting for his shift to end, bored with inactivity, and lulled to a false sense of security [by a lack of continuous stimuli] to put personal comfort over efficiency. The sentry is likely to retreat to shelter, from which his vision and hearing is limited. Even if he does not, rain on his metal helmet dulls his sense of hearing.

Rain limits the guard’s vision, causes him to become wet and tired quickly, covers the sounds of an approaching enemy, and lulls the guard into a state of relaxation because of its repetitive sounds. Sleet and wind only intensify these effects.

Falling snow provides the guard with all of the disadvantages of rain. His vision is obscured and it is even more difficult to remain alert with the snow flakes slowly floating to the ground. Falling snow protects the advancing enemy from view and can quickly cover up the evidence of his travel. It also causes the guard to exert himself while traveling his route and may influence him to shorten the distance covered or the frequency that he travels on it. [However,] fallen snow is dangerous for an approaching enemy for he knows that his passage or presence will quickly be detected.

Even in the best of conditions, eyelids grew heavy. Had not coincidence intervened to wreck a plan based on a wayward signal, the guards of the gates of Cynaetha would have been slaughtered in their sleep—at midday!¹⁰⁷ At least some generals (Iphicrates, Epaminondas, and Alexander among them) personally inspected the watch, with a view to keeping sentries awake and alert.¹⁰⁸ Even still, the order of discipline evidenced by Roman organization of night security was not equaled in classical Greece.¹⁰⁹

The time between two and four in the morning is considered the most vulnerable for guards torn from their regular sleeping cycle. Therefore, it should not surprise us that the Greeks embarked on secret moves and stratagems not during the first watch (when sentries would presumably be most vigilant) but instead during the second or third and sometimes during the fourth. The end of the night watch and beginning of the day was also dangerous, since day watchers were not always posted immediately. This practice—like any routine—could be noted and taken advantage of by the enemy: when the Lacedaemonian and Pellenean night watchmen were withdrawn at dawn, the Thebans attacked and took Oneum (in 369).¹¹⁰ Aeneas Tacticus advised that the *hemeroskopoi* be sent out while

107. Polyb. 9.17.1–10. Cf. Polyb. 4.57.3ff.: an Aetolian who had deserted to Aegeira and spent time there noted that the guards at his host city were often drunk and neglectful of their watch. He reconsidered his allegiance, returned to his general Dorimachus in Aetolia (at considerable risk, one might add), and urged him to attack. Evidently Dorimachus (whom Polybius characterized as rash—one would hardly expect him to praise an Aetolian) decided to trust the twice-turned traitor, although the act of taking him along as a guide suggests that he wanted him in his power to deter further betrayal. Dorimachus attacked by night, slew the guards in their sleep, and met with success.

108. For devices to keep sentries awake, see Aen. Tact. 22.14, 27; Front. *Strat.* 3.12.1. Cf. Q. Curtius 4.13.21; Paus. 4.20.8.

Those sleeping on duty risked severe punishments. Iphicrates is said to have killed a sleeping guard (Front. *Strat.* 3.12.2); Epaminondas is said to have done the same (3.12.3), but Anderson (304 n. 38) doubted the latter story. In any case, there is no evidence that capital punishment was commonly meted out for this offense (but cf. Polybius 6.34.7–37.6 on Roman practice and punishments). The concern lest sentries sleep at their posts dates at least as far back as the *Iliad* (10.181–82).

109. Cf. Polyb. 35.1–37.6 and F.W. Walbank 1:717–19 ad loc.; although it must be admitted that Aeneas Tacticus does have an impressive (theoretical?) prototype in his twenty-second chapter.

110. Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.16 (cf. Polyb. 3.50.7). Note also that the Plataeans met success because they had studied and knew well the Theban guard routine (Thuc. 3.22.3). Cf. Polyb. 8.27.7ff.: Tarentine traitors kept watch on the house of Livius, the captain of the Roman guard at Tarentum, since they knew that if anyone became suspicious they would report to him and that any countermeasures would originate with him.

it was yet night, both to prevent such a risk and to ensure that they would not be seen by enemy *skopoi* en route to their post.¹¹¹ He further suggested that cavalry patrol the area around the city at dawn, before the gates were held open, lest a foe set a nearby ambush under cover of night.

It would seem from the practices described in Aeneas that guard duty bore no relation to the ideals fostered in the modern world, when you are constantly warned that the strike of a match can be lethal, and when emphasis is on seeing and not being seen. Greek guards, as Ovid described women attending the circus, go to see and to be seen. In the context of a city under siege, this can make some sense, even as do the “armed response” signs tidily but obtrusively growing in the lawns all over Beverly Hills. Aeneas has created a system with two essential objectives: to discourage any attempt at infiltration from without and to allow no opportunity for betrayal from within. He intends his watchmen not to actually collect information for exploitation but instead to communicate to the enemy that they are alert. His methods do not, however, belong to the context of a military camp, when revolt is much less a concern than an enemy attack. And perhaps his—alas, lost—work on *Encampments* featured very different methods. So one might hope, given that some of Xenophon’s comments are quite sound. But be that as it may, while there are some examples of alert *phulakes* saving the day, all too often sentries gave the alert with death cries or perished failing at even that.¹¹²

111. Aen. Tact. 6.6; their post is here called a *hemeroskopeia*.

112. Some examples of the latter phenomenon follow. (1) Bithynians attacked the *prophulakes* of the Ten Thousand, killed some, and drove others into camp (Xen. *Anab.* 6.4.26). (2) When Agis marched by night up to the walls of Athens, he escaped the notice of the *prophulakai* posted outside and managed to capture some men, while the others fled within the walls. However, the Athenians learned of his attack at once and responded promptly (Diod. Sic. 13.72.4). (3) Aratus and a few men scaled the walls of Argos by night and killed the sentries stationed on it, but they were dislodged after a struggle the following day. (4) Rhodian *prophulakes* stationed by the moat were killed during the second night watch by picked men sent by Demetrius (Diod. Sic. 20.98.6). (5) Quintus Naevius learned through his scouts that the people of Apollonia were keeping a negligent watch, not expecting a Roman attack; with the help of traitors from within the city, he was able to infiltrate a thousand men into the city under cover of night, before a massacre began in earnest, the noise of which alerted the citizens (Livy 24.40.11).

See also Thuc. 2.2.3, 4.110.2; Plut. *Arat.* 21.3. Small forces set to watch over a particular point were similarly vulnerable: of three Greek ships keeping watch off Sciathus in 480, two were captured, crew and all, by a larger Persian force; the crew of the third escaped only by abandoning their ship (Hdt. 7.179). See also Hdt. 7.27; Thuc. 8.35.

Patrols (*Peripoloi*)

Peripoloi were, in essence, roaming *phulakes*, operating out of bases (variously called *peripolia*, *phulakteria*, and *phrouroi*) situated on interpolis borders.¹¹³ Their use can be securely traced back only as far as the late fifth century, although Orthagoras' rise to power (traditionally dated to 655) is supposed to have been marked by a progression in authority from *peripolos* to *peripolarkhos* to polemarch.¹¹⁴ *Peripoloi* are mentioned in Thucydides but not in Herodotus; the earliest inscription dates to 415.¹¹⁵ These early references suggest that disaffection with the institution festered and perhaps that those serving within it were a potential instrument of instability. In the famous inscription pertaining to the Sicilian expedition, we find a regulation establishing penalties for those not fulfilling their obligation to serve in the *peripoloi*. One can only assume that there was an unwillingness to assume this duty. In Thucydides, we find the *peripoloi* involved in the assassination of Phrynichus, and in this crime their commander (*peripolarkhos*) is also implicated. By the mid-fourth century there were at least two *peripolarkhoi* in Attica, one of whom may have been stationed in the area near Eleusis.¹¹⁶

Most of our evidence, typically, pertains to Athens. In that city, ephebes—young men of eighteen to twenty years—were enrolled into their ranks, at least from the fourth century. According to a scholiast (perhaps Ulpian), in their second year as ephebes these youths received a light shield (*aspis*) and spear from the *demos* in a public ceremony and were dispatched to the frontier to undertake their duties for one or two years.¹¹⁷ The *peripoloi* were not expected to let their weapons lay idle.

113. A scholiast (on Ael. Arist. *Panathenaecus* 152.16) tells us: "Let it be known that those guarding something are not only situated in one place but also move about, scouting up and down; they call those doing this *peripoloi*. This class is different from *phulakes*; for while *phulakes* are situated at a certain spot, *peripoloi* go about everywhere." Cf. the distinction drawn by the scholiast on Thuc. 4.67.2 (*peripoloi*). Yet the two classes are close enough in nature that the scholiast on Thuc. 8.92.2 can intelligibly—if less than precisely—gloss *peripoloi* as *phulakes*.

114. Anon. *FGrHist* 105F2.

115. Thuc. 8.92.2–5; *IG* I³ 93, *stele* II, frag. g, line 42 (= Meiggs and Lewis no. 78; Fornara no. 146; Tod no. 77). Cf. *SEG* 19 no. 42.

116. The plural is used in *IG* II² 204 (dated 352/1). The Eleusinians honor a *peripolarkhos* in *IG* II² 1193 (late s. IV).

117. Aeschines II (*On the embassy*) 167–68 and the schol. vet. thereon. There is some disagreement in the sources of the time and length of service: cf. with Aeschines the scholiast (perhaps Ulpian) on Demosth. III (3 *Olynth.*) 36; the scholia on [Plato] *1 Alc.* 105a; and the *Suda* s.v. Περίπολος. Such equipment is typical of *psiloi*, whom we have already seen used in reconnaissance roles.

We find them involved in skirmishing and ambushes, although not in the more set-piece battles.¹¹⁸ In addition to their arms, their pay was furnished by the state, at least in Athens and Syracuse.¹¹⁹ In Athens, pay was apparently irregular, since Xenophon recommended that this be corrected in his *Poroi*. In Syracuse, the expense was a burden to the state. Patrolling of the Athenian frontier was apparently continuous, but Thucydides mentions that the Syracusans sent men into the *peripolia* after learning that the Athenians were at Rhegium.¹²⁰ It is not clear whether the *peripolia* were previously ungarrisoned or were reinforced when the threat of war was imminent.

There are two indications that the *peripoloi* were active by night: (1) an ambush of the guards at the gates of Megara was set by Plataean *peripoloi* by night and sprung just before dawn; (2) a scholiast notes that their patrolling was nocturnal, describing them “going about the territory [*khora*] by night because of this guard duty and their martial training.”¹²¹

Diviners (*Manteis*)

While it is difficult to conceive of a twentieth-century intelligence organization seeking enlightenment from supernatural agencies, one must not project modern prejudices back in time onto the Greeks. In any case, even rather pragmatic denizens of the twentieth century occasionally find “psychics” and “mediums” cooperating with police when conventional resources fail. As one might expect, Greek attitudes toward supernatural knowledge varied according to individuals. There are a few cases, particularly among the Lacedaemonians, in which divine instruction apparently took precedence over human opinions and ambitions.¹²² There are others in which divine sources of information were despised or ignored.¹²³ Most examples seem to fall in the middle area between these extremes, and their spirit can be generally characterized by Xenophon’s advice: “Those things that the gods enable us to learn, we must learn;

118. E.g., Thuc. 4.67.2; Photius 74a. Cf. Xen. *Poroi* 4.47. According to the *Suda* (s.v. Τεραθρεία), the ephebic *peripoloi* were only used in the less dangerous elements of a battle.

119. Thuc. 7.48.5; Xen. *Poroi* 4.52. Cf. IG I³ 376, face A, line 36 (ca. 409 B.C.).

120. Thuc. 6.45.

121. Schol. on [Plato] *1 Alc.* 105a.

122. Pritchett 3:70, who provides examples; see also Arrian *Anab.* 4.4.2–3.

123. These are frequently found among storytellers who wished to drive home the virtues of piety, but also at Thuc. 5.103.1.

those that are obscure, we can try to inquire of from the gods through the mantic art.”¹²⁴

*Manteis*¹²⁵ were interpreters of signs of divine activity in the physical world, rather than mediums or prophets.¹²⁶ Their art was thought to be based on *techne* (skill) rather than inspiration. Consequently it could be learned, and books, records, and devices were kept and prized.¹²⁷ Various individuals or peoples specialized in different types of divination; the Egyptians, for example, were recruited by Alexander since he believed Egyptian *manteis* superior at reading the heavens.¹²⁸ The craft of all aimed at deriving specific information from divine indicators—such information included prospects of success in endeavors (especially those of military nature) and revelations of plots and dangers.¹²⁹ *Manteis* were generally held in high esteem for such accomplishments.¹³⁰

Manteis frequently served military leaders and occasionally were engaged by political figures as well (particularly when the two realms overlapped). They served for long periods of time—for the duration of campaigns, if not on more permanent bases. Nicias, son of Niceratus, retained a *mantis* in his household; curiously, Nicias let it be known that the *mantis* was engaged for guidance on public matters, while in fact he advised Nicias on his private interests.¹³¹ Nicias’ apparent duplicity suggests that involvement of *manteis* in public affairs was more acceptable than a reputation for private superstition. More generally, an inscription indicates that *manteis* in Athens were supported by *strategoí*.¹³² In

124. Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.9. See also Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.12; Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.46. Cf. Plut. *Alex.* 75.2.

125. There are a number of other terms for diviners (not a few poetic), and the class is subdivided further. As *manteis* are the most relevant to the secular world of decision making, these are the focus of the following summary.

126. Pritchett 3:138.

127. Pritchett 3:73, who provides examples. See also Plut. *Aristides* 27.3, in which passage a tablet (*pinakion*) for interpreting dreams was referred to as a tool of some value.

128. Q. Curtius 4.10.4 (the Latin *vates* was here used for *manteis*); cf. 5.1.22. Telmisi-ans seem to have been particularly valued for interpreting omens (see, e.g., Hdt. 1.78; Arrian *Anab.* 2.3.3), as were the Galeotae (Philistius *FGrHist* 190F47).

129. Some examples: Hdt. 7.219; Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.4; Xen. *Anab.* 6.5.2, 6.6.8; Arrian *Anab.* 1.25.6, 7.16.5–17.5. There are also a fair number of odds and ends, e.g., Arrian *Anab.* 2.18.1, 4.15.8. In legend, a *mantis* served as a guide: Peripoltas guided king Opheltas from Thessaly to Boeotia (Plut. *Cimon* 1.1).

130. Pritchett (3:50–56) argued that they were accorded considerable status; see also Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.18.

131. Plut. *Nicias* 4.2, 5.2–3, 23.5 (Hiero and Stilbides). Cf. Philochorus *FGrHist* 328F135; schol. vet. on Aristoph. *Peace* 1031; Plut. *Dion* 22.6.

132. *IG* II² 17, line 39; cf. Pritchett 3:71.

Sparta, the office of *mantis* was an institutional part of the military: the “general staff” of the Lacedaemonian kings contained at least two.¹³³ Given these opportunities to develop long-standing relationships with commanders, *manteis* could be expected to have some experience and knowledge of temporal, as well as supernatural, matters.¹³⁴ Thus *manteis* are among the few professional intelligence agents with a long-term specialization in their trade.

As *manteis* gained experience in the conduct of campaigns, and hence were better able to relate supernatural data to practical considerations, so commanders often realized the necessity of having at least a cursory knowledge of the mantic art. This realization was based not only on the prospect that a *mantis* might not be available or that a commander might better understand the bases for a *mantis*’ reading of a particular omen but also on a healthy suspicion that *manteis* might manipulate their interpretations of divine will to coincide with personal ambition. Xenophon made this quite clear in his *Cyropaedia*, and his advice was probably based on personal experience.¹³⁵ He had a falling out with a *mantis* accompanying the Ten Thousand, an Ambraciot by the name of Silanus, who leaked to the troops (maliciously, he would have us believe) that Xenophon was consulting him about settling them far from home. Xenophon, called to task by his men, defended himself on the grounds that the omens had been favorable for putting the matter before an assembly and that Silanus was not able to misrepresent them because Xenophon witnessed the sacrifice (as was his custom) and was recognized by all as well versed in the skills of divination.¹³⁶

133. Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 13.7. When Lysander was killed at Haliartus, a *mantis* perished at his side (Plut. *Lys.* 28.5); cf. Megistias at Thermopylae (Hdt. 7.219, 21, 28).

134. Cf. Pritchett 3:56–57, 62ff. See also Hdt. 9.37 of Hegesistratus of Elis, who had escaped from a Spartan prison and hired himself out to Mardonius; thus he might have had some knowledge of affairs in Sparta.

135. Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.2: “For I [= Cyrus’ father] have taught you this, so that you would not learn of the counsels of the gods through other interpreters, but rather, by both seeing what is to be seen and hearing what is to be heard, you would yourself understand, and not be dependant on *manteis*, if they should wish to deceive you by speaking otherwise than revealed by the gods. Further, if you should ever be without a *mantis*, you would not be at a loss how to discern what the gods reveal.” Cf. Arrian *Anab.* 7.16.5–17.5; Onas. 10.25ff.

136. At least this is Xenophon’s version (Xen. *Anab.* 5.6.16, 27–30). In any event, the problem did not begin with Xenophon; such situations existed from the days of Homer.

Mantis of evils, never have you told me good news;
Always evils are a delight to your heart to divine,
But never have you spoken or accomplished anything good.

(Homer *Iliad* 1.106–8, Agamemnon to Calchas)

Given the potential instability latent in the *mantis*' influence, it is no surprise that a commander might retain the same individual over a long period of time on those occasions when a stable and compatible relationship existed. Elemental to such a relationship was confidentiality. In the story of the taking of Ithome, the *mantis* Theocles is portrayed communicating the significance of a baleful omen privately to Aristomenes, enabling the commander to reach a decision while he was yet undisturbed by a general panic.¹³⁷ Quintus Curtius noted that Alexander rebuked Aristander for giving Erigyus, a subordinate officer, news of omens before him.¹³⁸

Conversely, *manteis* sometimes had the problem of upholding their interpretations despite the will of some rather forceful individuals. Alexander, wanting to attack Scythians jeering at him from across a river, was angered with Aristomenes, who, insisting that the omens were unfavorable, would not alter his reading to please his king.¹³⁹ Some commanders rigged or misrepresented omens to accomplish their will or proffered their own interpretations.¹⁴⁰ Even when there was mutual trust between commander and *mantis*, the dictates of military expediency and divine authority were not always reconcilable. At these times, a commander had to make rather difficult decisions and was obliged to face the consequences in any outcome.

Captives (*Aikhmalotoi*)

When a soldier surrendered his spear and shield to a Greek, he was taking a bit of a risk. There was no convention for the treatment of prisoners, just a rather indefinite set of customs.¹⁴¹ True, the suppliant was supposed to be sacred; but sometimes the gods were distant and wrath was all too near. Prisoners therefore had every motive to try to please their captors—who might otherwise abuse, enslave, brand, maim, torture, or

137. Paus. 4.20.3.

138. Q. Curtius 7.7.24.

139. Arrian *Anab.* 4.4.2–3.

140. E.g., Front. *Strat.* 1.11.14; Arrian *Anab.* 1.18.6–9; Polyaeus 2.3.3, 4.3.14, 4.20.1; Paus. 9.13.8. The problem was further complicated by the fact that different *manteis* might give different interpretations to an omen (see, e.g., Plut. *Alex.* 2.5). Cf. Pritchett 3:48–49 for further details on the relationship between *manteis* and *strategoí*.

141. Τινὰς ἰδίους καθοπερεὶ νόμους, which Pritchett aptly translated as “quasi laws” (Pritchett 5:203), in reference to Diod. Sic. 30.18.2; cf. Diodorus’ speeches on the Athenian prisoners at 13.20.1–27.6 (for clemency) and 28.2–32.6 (for execution).

kill them—in hope that they would survive to be ransomed.¹⁴² Providing information was one of the few means of doing this that was at their disposal.

Even today, when many belligerent nations are bound by the Geneva convention, prisoners often provide—even volunteer—a good deal more information than the proverbial name, rank, and serial number. Fear and insecurity are effective motivating forces, especially in the hours immediately after capture, when dislocation is still strong. These conditions are exacerbated in wounded prisoners, who have been found “more responsive to interrogation” than their unwounded counterparts.¹⁴³ There is every reason to believe that their ancient counterparts were subject to the same pressures.

Positive motivations or rewards seem hardly to have been necessary, although Xenophon did depict Cyrus promising captives that they would gain the status of benefactor and friend, rather than slave, if they provided information.¹⁴⁴ Torture or death threats were ready alternatives for obtaining information from reticent prisoners. The latter are found in the *Iliad* and Xenophon’s *Anabasis*, and they were not idle. Homer portrayed Dolon being slaughtered even after trying to buy his life with information; the usually rather righteous Xenophon did not shudder to mention that he had his men cut the throat of a prisoner who denied knowing alternate routes through mountainous terrain.¹⁴⁵ This murder was performed in front of a second captive, who quickly became most eager to tell of another track. The first man’s resistance, it might be noted, was due to the fact that his daughter lived by that track; he preferred death to endangering her. One can only hope she somehow escaped, for Xenophon did not subsequently mention her.

Evidence for torture of *aikhmalotoi* is circumstantial, but the case is strong. Thucydides maintained that Nicias’ secret correspondents in Syracuse wanted him dead lest he reveal them under torture.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, Cooper argued that Thucydides’ choice of the word ἀναζητήσαντες sug-

142. As Lonis (46) so nicely put it, “Le principe de la clémence envers les prisonniers nous semble donc encore mal assuré.” He treats the killing (41–47) and maltreatment (47–50) of prisoners by Greeks and Barbarians, noting that clemency was a still rarer quality between Carthaginians and Sicilian Greeks. See also, in more detail, Pritchett 5:203–309.

143. U.S. Marine Corps art. 502e3, 601a3.

144. Xen. *Cyr.* 4.4.12.

145. *Iliad* 10.454–56; Xen. *Anab.* 4.1.23.

146. Thuc. 7.86.4.

gests the use of torture by Astyochus and Pedaritus when interrogating captured Erythraeans.¹⁴⁷ Further, prisoners of war were often sold as slaves, and slaves could be tortured for evidence in legal proceedings—at least in Athens, where the practice was a required element in obtaining a slave’s testimony.¹⁴⁸

Cooperation was further encouraged by keeping prisoners in bonds, so that they could not hope to escape retribution for false information. When possible, their reports were checked against other sources, but more often than not *aikhmalotoi* themselves served to confirm earlier reports brought in by *skopoi* or deserters, for they were not available as sources until after contact with the enemy was made.¹⁴⁹ Corroboration was necessary, for prisoners could be misinformed (due either to their own ignorance or to disinformation on the part of their leaders) or deceitful. When some of Darius’ scouts were captured by Alexander’s men, they reported that Darius was near the Tigris, that he was determined to prevent Alexander from crossing, and that he had a greater force with him than he had possessed in Cilicia.¹⁵⁰ Alexander hastened to confront him but did not find him there. We cannot be certain whether the Persian *kataskopoi* were ordered to mislead Alexander if they were captured, as Engels suggested; had contrived to mislead him on their own; or had inaccurate or outdated infor-

147. Cooper 223–29. These men were, however, suspected of being a fifth column. For released prisoners as a fifth column (or released with the intention of causing mistrust), see Thuc. 1.55.1–2, 3.70.1 (of the Corinthians); Polyaeus 2.29.1 (of Cleonymus); Aen. Tact. 24.3f. and Polyaeus 3.14.1 (of Charidemus). Xenophon used the word βασιλιζων when speaking of the interrogation of captives by Gadatas; as these were Cyrus’ men captured by secret arrangement, I am not sure that the word should be taken to indicate torture in this context.

148. Pritchett (2:38–39) noted that the public slaves accompanying *tamiai* at Athens were chosen from captives and were liable to torture in investigation of *strategoï* and *tamiai*. He cited a scholiast to Demosthenes (2 *Olynth.* 19, my translation): “The Athenians had public slaves whom they had chosen from the captives, and taught them letters, and sent them out to war with the *tamiai* and *strategoï* in order to record the booty. They did not do this without reason, but so that they could beat them, as slaves, and be able to learn the truth; for among the Athenians it was thought shameful to beat free men. If a *strategos* or *tamias* were proven by these beatings to have lied, they themselves thereafter suffered even as the slaves.” Note also Demosth. VIII (*On the Cherson.*) 47; X (*4 Phil.*) 22.

149. E.g., at Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.13 the reports of prisoners after the battle were in harmony with those of deserters who had abandoned the king earlier. Cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 6.1.25: captives corroborated (ταῦτά ἐλεγον Bothe; ταῦτά MSS) earlier reports of deserters and those of the Indian ambassadors/spies.

150. Arrian *Anab.* 3.7.4–5.

mation.¹⁵¹ In any event, Xenophon wrote of prefabricated stories being circulated among troops who, unbeknownst to themselves, were intended by their general to be captured.¹⁵²

But disinformation was generally the product of fake deserters, rather than captives. The real problem with the latter, as Napoleon noted, was the limited perspective of the run-of-the-mill prisoner—a problem exacerbated in antiquity by the lack of an effective collating process that might have afforded a clearer view of the operational and strategic picture by piecing together the collected data.¹⁵³ There were, however, two mitigating factors. First, Greek soldiers were often members of the deliberative bodies of their states, especially in the democratic poleis, rather than subjects distant from active participation in the rule of large states. As such, they would at least have some ideas of larger issues and perhaps even operational policy. Even men serving in less egalitarian societies could furnish significant information. A Persian captured by Democrates' reconnaissance team was able to reveal that the force shadowing the Greeks was commanded by Tiribazus, that it consisted of Tiribazus' own forces supplemented by Chalybian and Taochian mercenaries, and that he had prepared so as to take the pass through which ran the only road offering escape to the Ten Thousand.¹⁵⁴ For all we know, these statements represent only a fraction of the captive's news, since Xenophon would only include detail necessary to explain the subsequent Greek reaction. Second, interrogation of the prisoners was undertaken by generals themselves (as in the example just mentioned) or was delegated to an officer specially appointed to the task (such as Laomedon, a bilingual Macedonian serving Alexander).¹⁵⁵ Such men would know which questions to ask, and their minds would serve as collating mechanisms.

151. Engels 337; he raised an interesting possibility: did generals give their men consistent stories to feed the enemy if captured? It seems that they deliberately misled their troops at times, which would accomplish the same end. It is probable, however, that commanders withheld information from their troops lest they be captured, just as they did fearing lest they desert (cf. Semmett 127).

In contrast, when German soldiers were captured and interrogated by American personnel during World War II, those who were disinclined to cooperate usually showed their resistance by refusing to provide answers, rather than giving false ones.

152. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.1–2, 15.

153. Napoleon *Maxims* 63 (Philips 1:426).

154. Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.16–18. Cf. the opportune information from a prisoner at Polyb. 5.71.9.

155. Arrian *Anab.* 3.6.6: “. . . since he was bilingual [speaking the barbaric language]

In the hapless Persian captured by Democrates, we see the result of one of a significant number of concerted efforts to procure prisoners for the sole purpose of obtaining information.¹⁵⁶ This captive claimed to be a forager, and certainly foragers frequently came into the hands of their enemies, since they were at some remove from the security of their camp. *Skopoi* also operated in small groups, traveling or posted in advance of a more secure base, and hence we find them also captured and interrogated.¹⁵⁷ Indeed they were probably specifically sought for interrogation, since such men would have a broader base of understanding than most, because they had to know what to look for and could therefore reveal what their commanders were seeking to know. Captured officers would be of still greater value, although they were rarely taken until after battle had been joined and won. Although there are few examples of them being interrogated against their will, it is significant that Thucydides felt it necessary to explain the failure of the Syracusans to question Nicias.¹⁵⁸ If World War II is any guide, officers were less likely than other ranks to disclose information to their captors.

Deliberate efforts to capture prisoners for the purpose of questioning seem to have arisen from a need for more detailed information than that provided by other sources, particularly scouts.¹⁵⁹ Xenophon and Alexander in particular made plans to take prisoners who might be questioned or employed as guides.¹⁶⁰

Although one would expect to gain information from captives only

. . .” Laomedon’s (Berve no. 464) appointment is found among the offices of bodyguard, treasurer, commander of allied cavalry, and satrap of Lydia, implying a position of some importance. He is also mentioned at Arrian *Anab.* 3.6.5 as having been banished by Philip on account of his partisanship for Alexander. For men appointed to the task of overseeing prisoners, see also Onas. 14.3. Cf. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 3.4; Demosth. XXIV (*Against Timocrates*) 20.9.

156. Examples begin with a literary precedent, in which Odysseus and Diomedes set out by night to capture “an enemy straggler or perhaps even learn some report among the Trojans” (*Iliad* 10.206–7).

157. *Iliad* 10.340ff.; Arrian *Anab.* 3.8.2.

158. Thuc. 7.86.4. Cf. *Iliad* 10.208–10, 409–11; Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.17; Plut. *Phocion* 14.1; Arrian *Anab.* 1.25.5.

159. Xenophon’s model general, Cyrus, always looked to take captives so that he might learn something from those he had captured (Xen. *Cyr.* 6.2.9). In one instance, he sent cavalry ahead to capture men when scouts reported possible enemy activity (Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.6). Cf. [Nicephorus] *Campaign Organization* 18.

160. Xen. *Anab.* 4.6.17; Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.6; Arrian *Anab.* 4.30.6–7. Cf. Engels 332 and n. 31.

during open war, there are examples of kidnapping for the sake of information in time of ostensible peace. We learn from Demosthenes that Hermeias of Artarneus, a man deeply involved in Philip II's policies, was seized by the Rhodian Mentor and carried captive to the king of Persia. The context assumes that this kidnapping was carried out for the sake of learning of Philip's machinations, with the implication that such a source was of particular value.¹⁶¹ Philip again fell victim to a similar misfortune when Nicias, his herald, was taken while yet in his own territory. The herald was brought to Athens and incarcerated, and the letters of Philip that he carried were taken and read before the *boulé*.¹⁶²

The capture of enemy couriers and their accompanying documents was not uncommon in the ancient world, the Athenians being particularly adept in this endeavor during the Peloponnesian War.¹⁶³ Scouts or cavalry, appearing swiftly in unexpected quarters, were often able to capture couriers and pass on the information for immediate use, as in the cases of the Thebans at Haliartus and Gelon at Selinus.¹⁶⁴ Captured documents that were not of immediate tactical value might nevertheless be useful for planning a campaign: the Athenians were gifted by fortune with the lists of the Syracusan muster role when their scout ships captured a vessel in the Syracusan harbor.¹⁶⁵

Reconstructions of the processing of prisoners can be sketchy at best. Obviously there was a preliminary stage, during which a soldier decided first whether or not to take a prisoner, then whether or not he wished to reveal the capture to his commander. Captives could be sold as slaves,

161. Demosth. X (4 *Phil.*) 32. Hermeias was described as “ὁ πράττων καὶ συνειδῶς ἄπανθ' ὃ Φίλιππος κατὰ βασιλέως παρασκευάζεται.” Demosthenes (expediently) portrays him as a source more valuable than the charges of the Athenian embassies, which were expected to be biased. Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 4.2.3.

162. *Epist. Phil.* (purportedly a letter from Philip II to the Athenians) 2. This charge appeared first in a list of grievances Philip leveled against Athens.

163. In two cases the *strategoi* sent to collect tribute were credited with the capture. Was this coincidence or a function of their office? It is likely that these *strategoi* afforded an ad hoc but official and secure channel to route captives back to Athens and that the garrisons, at the behest of informers or *proxenoi*, did the actual seizure.

164. Plut. *Lys.* 28.2; Diod. Sic. 11.21.4–5. Cf. a similar story at Polyaeus 6.27.2. Polyaeus attributed to generals the imagination to plant false information among the letters carried by messengers: 3.9.57 (Iphicrates), 4.2.8 (Philip II), 4.11.3 (Cassander), 5.2.19 (Dionysius I). His examples are not to be found in extant works from earlier authors (although a parallel exists in Polyb. 5.28.4).

165. Plut. *Nicias* 14.5. Another example can be found in Arrian *Anab.* 3.11.3: Arrian attributed to Aristobulus a document giving Darius' order of battle, which was later captured.

and a soldier benefited financially if he could hide one away and sell him on the sly, as did the Syracusans who took Athenians into private custody after the disastrous retreat in 413.¹⁶⁶ If the capture was a product of a raid or ambush to capture a potential informant, the victim would likely be immediately turned over to officers or a general. More commonly, after battles some of the better generals made inquiries of captives to better understand the consequences of the outcome. No mention is made, however, of why or how a particular individual would be selected for the general's attention. There was some rudimentary categorization of prisoners as early as Cimon's recapture of Sestus and Byzantium in the 470s, when men of higher birth or position were separated from the common herd; this was done regularly by Alexander.¹⁶⁷ In the first case, the ascribed motive was monetary (ransoms); in the second, chivalry (for want of a better word). Such a division has consequences for intelligence—one separates men from their commanders to achieve better chances of extracting information from both.¹⁶⁸ Onasander, a much later source, alluded to categorizing types of prisoners according to their potential impact on morale.¹⁶⁹ Those arrested on suspicion of espionage or participation in plots were treated differently from those captured in battle—the formers' torture and death were inevitable, barring exceptional intervention.

In the twentieth century, prisoners are typically questioned separately, their stories cross-checked, and their admissions (or alleged admissions) used to manipulate other captives. We find this method also in antiquity, in the aforementioned story of the two men questioned about routes by Xenophon. But on another occasion, we find him and the other *strategoí* of the Ten Thousand conducting interviews with a number of captives at once.¹⁷⁰ Prisoners were dismissed before options based on their informa-

166. Thuc. 7.85.2.

167. Plut. *Cimon* 9.2–4; Q. Curtius 6.2.9.

168. Information on categorization can be found in some detail in U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 30–96c Interrogator*, 2.35–42.

169. Onas. 14.3: “the general, if he is able, should take prisoners [en route] either by ambush or skirmishing or should capture those deserting their own camp. If he should find them admirable in mind and body, he should kill them at once or bind them and hand them over to those appointed to these duties, ordering them to guard the men lest many see them; but if he find them weak and despicable and fainthearted, he should first threaten them in the privacy of his own tent and enslave their spirits to fear, then lead them, bound and weeping, before his troops.”

170. Xen. *Anab.* 3.5.14–15: “And the generals came together again, and when they had gathered the captives, they interrogated them about the nature of the entire surrounding territory.” The prisoners were sent away without the generals revealing which way they intended to march. Cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.6ff.

tion were discussed—the Greeks were hardly stupid and realized that escaped or released prisoners could supply information about their captors. Agesilaus and his men, for example, learned of the doings of the people of Lampsacus from prisoners escaped from nearby mines.¹⁷¹ Curiously, prisoners were sometimes used as messengers to the hostile force from which they were captured.¹⁷²

Deserters (*Automoloi*)

The list of deserters and traitors in Greek history is a long one,¹⁷³ in which the great and noble are found beside the anonymous and obscure.¹⁷⁴ The types of information they provided were rich and varied, depending on their former rank and degree of access to information. While it has been observed that the information conveyed by a common soldier would normally extend only to what he had seen and heard in camp or what he could deduce from his army's preparations, generals and leaders could give a broader range of information. But common to all was a considerable degree of knowledge about their own city or army,

171. Polyaeus 2.1.26. Cf. Front. *Strat.* 1.4.2. Some samples of escapes include Thuc. 7.85.4 and perhaps 3.3.5; Xen. *Hell.* 1.2.12–14, 1.1.9–10, 1.3.22; Polyaeus 6.49.1. For exchanges of prisoners, see Thuc. 2.102.1, 5.18.7. Clauses pertaining to the return of captives were sometimes included in peace treaties, and there are a number of inscriptions praising men for their efforts to bring home citizens taken prisoners in war.

In general, the extent of information possessed by escaped prisoners might have been limited if, as one might expect, they avoided contact with the enemy on fleeing internment (cf. U.S. Marine Corps art. 502e: “They may, nonetheless, be able to furnish information on natural conditions in the area and limited information on enemy forces”).

172. Xen. *Anab.* 7.4.5; Xen. *Cyr.* 3.2.13, 5.4.24.

173. As treated in this book, deserters are distinguished from traitors by vocabulary rather than deed. They are those who abandon their ranks for the enemy's while serving in their armed forces. For a wider treatment of betrayal, see Losada passim, esp. chap. 2.

174. Among the more infamous and illustrious deserters was Alcibiades, *strategos* of Athens, who first deserted to the Lacedaemonians, whom he abandoned for the Persians before finally returning to the Athenian side. For some other examples of deserting nobles and officers, see Diod. Sic. 18.23.3ff.; Arrian *Anab.* 1.25.3, 3.21.1, 3.27.2–3; Q. Curtius 3.11.18, 5.13.9. Cf. Polyb. 5.70.10ff. with respect to officers deserting Ptolemy IV to Antiochus III—these men ought to have been able to tell Antiochus of the large force being gathered by Sosibius, but Polybius made no indication that this possibility was realized.

Many references to deserters are to unspecified individuals, implying, but not necessitating, that these were not of particular note. Some examples: Hdt. 7.219; Thuc. 2.57.1, 5.2.3, 8.40.2; Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.2; Xen. *Ages.* 1.19; Arrian *Anab.* 1.23.4, 5.23.6; Polyaeus 1.48.5, 2.3.10, 2.10.1. It is not impossible that the attribution of information to anonymous deserters at times reflects an uncertainty on the part of the historian rather than actual evidence: in Polyaeus, for example, (false) information from *automoloi* is so common as to be suspect.

absorbed through long exposure and experience. An excerpt from a speech ascribed to Lysias reads: “who is so unfamiliar with his own city that he could not, should he want to be a scoundrel, explain to the enemy which ground they ought to seize, and reveal which forts are poorly guarded, and instruct them on which public policies and efforts were vulnerable, and inform them which allies wish to revolt?”¹⁷⁵ What usually accounts for their presence in the histories is the topographical and tactical information—details of military activity, intentions, fortunes, forces, and capabilities—that deserters so often bore and that so often influenced the course and outcome of battles.¹⁷⁶ For instance, had Agesilaus not been warned by an anonymous and obscure deserter that Epaminondas was marching on Sparta, his city might well have fallen to the Thebans in his absence.¹⁷⁷

Motivations for desertion were many and varied. Onasander mentions the desire for honor and gain.¹⁷⁸ To this must be added jealousy, hatred, and fear.¹⁷⁹ Some soldiers, such as Mantitheus and Asephio in the fifth century and Amyntas son of Antiochus in the fourth, abandoned their own side when they were in danger of persecution or death.¹⁸⁰ Famine could also lead men to abandon ranks.¹⁸¹ Unwilling allies pressed into service might desert, if an opportunity presented, and bring timely information: the crew of a Tenian trireme deserted the Persians for the Greeks before the battle of Salamis and told of Persian movements.¹⁸² Plutarch even mentions troops forsaking their leader because they despised him

175. [Lysias] XIV (*Against Alcibiades I*) 35.

176. Some examples: Hdt. 3.4, 6.79, 7.82, 7.219, 8.8, 8.26; Thuc. 5.2.3, 8.40.2; Xen. *Ages.* 1.19; Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.2, 1.7.13; Polyb. 4.57.3ff., 4.66.6, 29.15.1–3 (Plut. *Aem.* 16); Diod. Sic. 19.26.1, 19.50.5, 19.68.6, 20.94.1; Q. Curtius 4.13.36–37, 5.13.2, 5.13.7; Livy 24.2.9; Arrian *Anab.* 1.23.4, 1.25.3, 2.6.3, 3.21.1, 5.23.6; Polyaeus 1.48.5, 2.3.10, 2.10.1.

177. Polyaeus 2.3.10; Front. *Strat.* 3.11.5. Xenophon (*Hell.* 7.5.10), who ought to have known, called the deserter a Cretan; Plutarch (*Ages.* 34.4, following Callisthenes *FGrHist* 124F26) names him Euthynus, a Thespian. Fougères (581 n. 3, 582 n. 1) proposed the existence of two deserters, one to Agesilaus, another to the Lacedaemonians' allies at Mantinea. Polybius would contradict him, saying that Agesilaus was still at Mantinea (9.8.6), but in this instance at least, Xenophon is to be preferred to his less maligned successor.

178. Onas. 10.24.

179. Hdt. 3.4; Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.7–8 (in the latter case, Xenias and Pasion did not desert to the enemy but merely abandoned Cyrus).

180. Andocides *On the Mysteries* 44; Arrian *Anab.* 1.17.9, 25.3. Cf. Polyb. 4.86.3; Diod. Sic. 18.22.3–4, 18.25.3, 19.56.1.

181. Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.15; Diod. Sic. 19.50.1. Cf. Polyb. 1.19.7.

182. Hdt. 7.82; Polyaeus (2.1.18) attributed to Agesilaus a stratagem to prevent such a move on the part of his allies.

and admired the reputation of his opponent.¹⁸³ Although in that passage the biographer's ascription of motive must be treated with caution, it does point to a well-attested broader phenomenon of low morale fostering desertion.

Deserters and traitors could be solicited, although advertising hospitality had its problems. Themistocles left messages by water sources for the Ionians serving in Xerxes' expedition; Leotychidas coasted off Mycale shouting appeals to their brethren.¹⁸⁴ In both instances the invitation was obvious to the Persians, who could take measures to prevent desertion. Ptolemy I, camped across the Nile from the invading army of Antigonos the One-Eyed, sent men in boats to announce extravagant rewards (two minae to each common soldier, a talent to each officer) for those who would desert to him. Bribery proved an effective motivation, and Antigonos was compelled to station archers, slingers, and catapults on the banks to check the announcements and the desertions. He also made unpleasant examples of men caught trying to desert.¹⁸⁵ But these anecdotes illustrate that the intent of such solicitations was to sow distrust or gain military advantage rather than information.¹⁸⁶

The example of Ptolemy and Antigonos also serves to demonstrate the risks faced by would-be deserters, and similar precautions and punishments are well attested as far back as the fifth century. Danger was especially present in three stages: first on leaving camp, then when entering an enemy camp, and finally on the conclusion of conflict. Flight was facilitated by darkness, but countermeasures—such as dogs and a close watch—were heeded more diligently at night.¹⁸⁷ Topography and distance also imposed constraints.¹⁸⁸ But despite all obstacles, natural and man-made, it was universally acknowledged that desertion was

183. Plut. *Demet.* 44.5, 48.3, 49.1.

184. Hdt. 8.19, 9.98; Diod. Sic. 18.39.5.

185. Diod. Sic. 20.75.1–3.

186. Cf. Antigonos the One-Eyed having had his heralds announce immunity (*asphalia*) for Rhodian deserters while his son Demetrius was besieging Rhodes (Polyaenus 4.6.16). Thucydides noted that Alcibiades, after deserting the Athenians and fleeing to Elis, came to Sparta in response to an invitation, having first obtained a promise of safe passage from the Spartans (Thuc. 6.88.9).

187. For desertion by night, see Diod. Sic. 19.26.1, 20.66–67; Plut. *Demetrius* 49.1. Cf. also Frederick the Great (121), who advocated special measures at night to prevent and catch deserters.

188. But cf. Hdt. 8.8f.: Scyllies of Scione, a diver, intended to desert but lacked opportunity. Finally he left the Persian base at Aphetae and went, by boat or by swimming, to Artemisium, where he told the *strategoí* of the shipwreck and movements of the Persian fleet. A statue at Delphi honoring Scyllies was noted by Pausanias (10.19.1). Cf. deserters swimming from Molon's army to Xenoiatas' at Polyb. 5.46.8.

inevitable.¹⁸⁹ Further, strongholds in enemy territory (such as Pylos and Deceleia in the Peloponnesian War) served to provide relatively accessible havens for deserters and bases for measures taken in response to the guidance and information they afforded.¹⁹⁰

The first reception of deserters would have been the province of watchers on guard at the camp or stronghold to which they were fleeing.¹⁹¹ These guards would have had to establish by some means the nature and intent of an enemy soldier approaching their camp—a problem of no little consequence, given the Greek propensity to ambush and kill enemy guards. No more definitive statement can be made than this: it *seems* that individuals were not turned away.¹⁹² Yet would a historian bother to record the unhappy fate of an anonymous and faceless soldier fleeing his own camp, or would a picket be so bold as to slay unheard an individual of apparent importance? Large-scale defections (more characteristic of the Hellenistic era than the classical) were more complex. These were typically negotiated in advance, as was the case prior to the battle of Lade in the early fifth century. Although this practice entails risk of detection, it is entirely sensible. For what would be the natural reaction to a substantial force of approaching enemy soldiers? If one believes Herodotus, some of the Thebans who deserted en masse at Thermopylae were killed before they made it clear that they were not hostile.¹⁹³ Five

189. In many instances generals, realizing that deserters were inevitable, withheld information from their troops until the last minute. See, e.g., Onas. 10.22–24; Gomme 2:164 on Thuc. 2.57.1.

190. Thuc. 1.142.4, 7.26.2, 7.27.5, 8.40.2; Paus. 4.9.1. Cf. Anon. Byz. *Peri Strategikes* 9.

191. See, e.g., Xen. *Cyr.* 6.1.46; Polyaeus 4.9.2. Cf. Polyb. 8.24.4ff.: Philemelus and Nicon, Tarentines seeking Hannibal's aid against their Roman garrison, were taken into custody by Hannibal's *phulakes* on approaching the Carthaginian camp. They did not say who they were or whence they came, but they maintained that they wished to meet with the general. When Hannibal admitted them, they insisted on a private conversation, which was readily granted. A password (*sunthema*) was agreed on for future visits, so that they would gain easy admission from the guards.

Whether or not the details of this story are true (how would Polybius have discovered them?), they are indicative of what a (later) Greek general would expect to have happened.

192. An Athenian decree mandated that deserters not be received (*IG I³ 58b*, line 24, ca. 430 B.C.), but there are no instances of adherence to this rule. A historian might not think it worth mentioning an incident when deserters were turned away, except perhaps in unusual circumstances. Such circumstances existed in the case of Mnasippus' siege of Corcyra: oppressed by famine, so many deserted the besieged city that Mnasippus determined that no more would be received. He ordered a proclamation to be made that deserters would be sold as slaves, yet they continued to come. Finally he ordered his men to drive them back into the town with scourges; since the townspeople would not readmit them, many died underneath the walls (Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.15).

193. Hdt. 7.233.

thousand Libyans one night abandoned Agathocles for the Carthaginians; they were spotted by pickets, who thought they were marching to attack. A confused battle resulted, and the Libyans fled back to the Greek camp, only to meet a similar reception there.¹⁹⁴ Even though an understanding existed, Antigonos the One-Eyed viewed with some skepticism a mob of Eumenes' men approaching to join his side, and he sent ten elephants and a large body of men to check and control their advent.¹⁹⁵

Deserters were almost certainly disarmed on reception. For example, the Greeks of Cyrus' army compelled those deserting from the king's army to throw away their arrows.¹⁹⁶ Historians depict deserters being brought before a commander to impart their information; this may in part be a product of narrative style, but it probably reflects practice as well, for Xenophon noted that Cyrus questioned deserters, "as is fit," regarding the affairs of the enemy.¹⁹⁷ Imparted information was preceded by an expression of motives—an attempt to establish credibility. Not surprisingly, given the widespread use of fake deserters in stratagems, their veracity was suspect. Thus deserters were kept under guard, or even bound, until their information was borne out by events or validated by other sources, at which time they were liberally rewarded.¹⁹⁸

Deserters of higher rank and social class might be retained in honor as advisors, because of their valuable ability to interpret information unintelligible to their new patrons. At times even minor figures held positions of considerable responsibility: Alexander employed one of the Indians who had deserted to him, a man particularly trustworthy and familiar with the area, to carry a message instructing Ptolemy to attack when signaled.¹⁹⁹ More generally, deserters might be recruited into the ranks, dismissed to their homes, or held under some sort of supervision. The first option does not seem to be frequently exercised with common soldiers,

194. Diod. Sic. 20.66–67.

195. Plut. *Eum.* 18.2.

196. Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.6. The allusion is in reference to the use of arrows as firewood and does not suggest an exceptional demand on the deserters. U.S. Marine Corps intelligence policy is to handle deserters just as prisoners of war, except insofar as they are separated from the prisoners (art. 502e3).

197. Xen. *Cyr.* 3.3.48ff. (ὡςπερ εἰκός). Other instances of information apparently given directly to a commander include Hdt. 3.4, 6.79, 8.8, 8.26; Thuc. 5.2.3; Xen. *Ages.* 1.19; Arrian *Anab.* 1.23.4; Polyaeus 1.48.5, 2.3.10.

198. Q. Curtius 4.13.36–37; cf. Onas. 10.15. Although no doubt generally effective, this advice might avail little when practiced on one willing to die.

199. Arrian *Anab.* 4.29.4; Siscottus (Quintus Curtius recorded his name as "Sisicostus" at 8.11.25), who had joined Alexander some time after deserting the Indians, was appointed commander of a garrison (Arrian *Anab.* 4.30.4).

perhaps for good reason, since interest as well as fidelity was at issue. While Livy's depiction of the Romans carrying arms for Syracuse is no doubt colored by rhetoric, it nevertheless suggests a real possibility that a large contingent of deserters was potentially disruptive. The second option was granted by Cassander to those deserting Olympias due to famine (with her consent, according to Diodorus); Diodorus was somewhat skeptical of his generosity and stated that his altruism was a guise for a desire that news of the hopelessness of Olympias' plight might be circulated.²⁰⁰ The third possibility is suggested by the Old Oligarch's description of the duties of trierarchs, which included making decisions regarding deserters.²⁰¹ This passage occurs immediately following mention that the trierarchs appointed keepers for the prisons; perhaps some sort of detainment or restrictions were involved.

When the war ended, a deserter had better have chosen the winning side. Deserters to the Hellenistic kings faced the prospect of being returned to the gentle admonitions of their former masters, and later to Rome, under the terms of an imposed peace treaty.²⁰² Most treaties between Greek city-states lack clauses pertaining to deserters,²⁰³ but there was still the danger of recapture by the army they had abandoned: Artaxerxes, when he took Cyrus' camp, seized those who had deserted to the Greek side; Amyntas brought back his brother Polemon who had fled in fear of Alexander.²⁰⁴ In neither instance are the fates of the deserters recorded but it is not likely that they were pleasant.

Locals (Epikhorioi, Enkhorioi), Especially Guides (Hegemones, or denoted by an article and [καθ-] ἄγω participle [often + ὁδοῦ (rarely ὁδόν) or πλοῦ])

Any commander worth his office sent out *kataskopoi* and questioned merchants, captives, prisoners, deserters, and the like, but crucial information was often available only from the inhabitants of a region—those who, as Polybius says, “not only know best the directions of the winds, as the say-

200. Diod. Sic. 19.50.2.

201. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 3.5; cf. 3.4.

202. Polyb. 18.44.6, 21.30.3, 25.2.8.

203. See, e.g., Thuc. 5.18.1–19.2, 23.1–24.1, 47.1–12.

204. Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.6; Arrian *Anab.* 3.27.3. Although they might have been rewarded by the side to which they had defected, deserters and traitors were, in most cases, understandably despised by the peoples they had betrayed (Xen. *Hell.* 7.3.10; Lycurgus *Against Leocr.* passim).

ing goes, but also the nature of their compatriots.”²⁰⁵ In less eloquent but more specific terms, we are here speaking of geographic information: most importantly routes, but also natural and agricultural resources, military activity and dispositions, and local relationships, customs, and lore.²⁰⁶

This was valuable information, to be sure, but there were complications inherent in the relationship between informant and informed. In most instances, we find the people of a region being approached by members of a hostile or potentially hostile army for information about their homeland. Animosity would therefore impede cooperation, as would fear of retribution from peers or authorities. Further, there were frequently cultural, ethnic, or even language differences, since locals and guides often appear in accounts of military expeditions into areas beyond the familiar hinterlands of the Mediterranean.²⁰⁷ It should come as no surprise that few volunteered and that none did so out of selfless motives.²⁰⁸ Consequently commanders used persuasion or (more often)

205. Polyb. 9.25.3.

206. Of a sample of sixty citations pertaining to information provided by guides, thirty-three specifically contain geographical information (twenty-two of which concern routes), and an additional twelve presume similar content. The remaining fifteen involve military matters, booty, local myth, elephants, and (apparently) whales. Of seventeen citations concerning locals exclusive of guides, eight concern geography (four of which tell of routes); eight, the situation or activity of the enemy; and one, local myth. Cf. Simonyan and Grishin 184; U.S. Marine Corps art. 502h.

207. Given the prevalence of geographic information, it should not be surprising that the recorded uses of guides and local inhabitants occur most frequently in passages treating the great expeditions of Xerxes, the Ten Thousand, and Alexander. There are fewer incidents of their being employed by Greeks in Greek-speaking territories, and most of these are situated in areas more or less on the borders of the civilized world (at least in the Attic conception of it).

An interpreter (see chap. 4) would be needed to understand those who did not speak Greek, and Alexander might have had to employ more than one interpreter at once when he was campaigning far in the east (see Engels 332, 339). Engels (332) spoke of Alexander’s Iranian “experts” Pharnuces and Mithrenes, who probably served as advisors or supervisors in the handling of information brought by people of that ethnic group. See Berve nos. 768 and 524.

Frederick the Great (126) wrote: “We had need of guides in 1760, while crossing Lusatia to march on Silesia. We sought them in the Wendish villages and when they were brought before us they let on that they could not speak German, which greatly distressed us. But on being informed that they would be beaten they spoke German like parrots. You must therefore always be on guard with respect to guides taken in enemy country.”

208. Quintus Curtius maintained that the Persians were particularly reticent, noting that Alexander was unable to learn the whereabouts of Darius in the prelude to Arbela, since the Persians had the custom of keeping the secrets of their king with wondrous fidelity, in the face of threats or promises (4.5.5–6). He adds that the penalty for not living up to such a standard was death.

Mazenes, “hyparch” of an island, embarked with Nearchus to serve as his guide. Arrian (*Indica* 37.2) emphasized that he did so willingly, which implies that this might not have been common during Alexander’s campaign.

coercion to obtain information from people living along their path, or they looked to allies bordering the region or sympathizers within it; also, they sought to find particularly well-informed individuals and join them to their army to have sources available who could continually provide information and who could be held responsible for what they said.²⁰⁹

Persuasion was effected by rewards, which were at times extravagant.²¹⁰ These seem to have been in the nature of reciprocal gifts, but in one case at least, there is a suggestion that a more or less professional guide might be hired: Xenophon relates that when the Phliasians were left behind by the Lacedaemonian army in the crises of 370, they hired a guide from Prasiae to reach Sparta and provide assistance.²¹¹ The participle used (μικθωκάμενοι, from μικθόω) implies the payment of a wage, such as that of a carpenter, rather than a reward or gift. This passage also illustrates that it was necessary to solicit geographical information even within the Peloponnese and mainland poleis, as does a memorial honor-

209. There were, additionally, a fair number of individuals whose motives are not specified. A sampling: Hdt. 8.34, 7.128, 130, 197; Thuc. 7.80.7; Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.10, 4.6.1; Diod. Sic. 17.49.5; Arrian *Anab.* 3.17.2, 6.26.4–5; Arrian *Indica* 27.1, 30.3, 31.3, 40.11.

Although valuable information was often obtained from anonymous locals, one rarely finds a high opinion of the value of the chance-met informant (see, e.g., [Eur.] *Rhesus* 266–70 and cf. Frederick the Great 127; Simonyan and Grishin 184); so notes Semmett (esp. 28–29). This may in part be due to suspicion of a lack of social standing, in part to suspicion of a lack of expertise. Cf. Vegetius 3.6: one must look to *prudenteribus et honoratis ac locarum gnaris* for information about topography; guides must be *sapientes exercitatie*. The Greeks attached a particular value to the knowledge of old men; perhaps for this reason we find them being questioned by Xenophon's cavalry and pressed into service as guides (Xen. *Anab.* 6.3.11).

Information from locals continues to be important and sometimes surprisingly accurate. Hans von Luck, commander of the Third Panzer Reconnaissance Battalion serving in Libya in 1943, was cut off from his base and fell in with Bedouins, who gave him exact directions on how to avoid a British camp and return to his own. Wrote von Luck (107): "I have never understood how the man knew our position and that of the British so accurately."

The U.S. Marine Corps (art. 502h) advised: "Enemy civilians in recently captured areas often give information readily. Many disclose information in consideration of their own self interests. Generally, the longer the delay in questioning civilians, the less valid is the information obtained." There is no similar theoretical statement available from antiquity, but it appears that those questioning locals did so soon after contact.

210. Some examples follow. (1) Xen. *Anab.* 4.7.27: After five days guidance to the sea, the Greeks dismissed their guide with generous gifts—a horse, a silver cup, Persian dress, and ten darics. He also asked for rings and received many from the soldiers. (2) Diod. Sic. 17.68.4–6: μεγάλας δωρέας. (3) Q. Curtius 8.11.3. Cf. Diod. Sic. 17.85.4–5; Arrian *Anab.* 4.28.7–30.4; Plut. *Alex.* 58.3; Justin 12.7, 12–13: eighty talents. (4) Q. Curtius 5.7.12: thirty talents.

211. Xen. *Hell.* 7.2.3.

ing Python of Megara, who safely led a large, endangered force of Athenians from Pagae (in Megara) through Boeotia to Athens.²¹²

If persuasion failed, there was always force. The capture and questioning of locals is found in the mythical tradition,²¹³ and Xenophon's (and later Alexander's) pragmatic solution to a lack of willing guides was to compel the unwilling. These would be recruited from prisoners in hand, or ambushes would be laid to capture soldiers or brigands when local talent was otherwise unavailable.²¹⁴ The captives would be motivated by fear: "Consider," said Xenophon, "whether you have a better guide in Tissaphernes, who is shown to be plotting against us, or in those men whom we might take and order to lead us, who will know that should they fail in anything in our cause, they will fail in their own breath and body."²¹⁵ Nevertheless, captives were not trusted and were subjected to safeguards.²¹⁶

The aforementioned Python leads us to another motivation: sympathetic factions within a state could volunteer or be persuaded to help foreign armies in need of guidance. This phenomenon occurred most frequently in states having subject populations, such as the *perioikoi* and helots in Laconia who helped the Athenians and later the Thebans. Likewise the guidance of slaves in Chios proved particularly advantageous to Athenians attempting to subdue the Chian citizenry.²¹⁷ Similar service was rendered by political factions within a state, as was the case with Brasidas' march through Thessaly in 424.²¹⁸ At that time the ruling families were leaning toward Sparta, while the majority of the state apparently

212. Meiggs and Lewis no. 51 (Tod no. 41; Fornara no. 101; dated ca. 446/5). Meiggs and Lewis (137) suggested that the need for his services was occasioned by Pleistoanax's march north, which precluded passage on familiar routes.

213. Lycurgus *Against Leocr.* 86. Oddly, there are no explicit references to this practice in earlier sources. It may have been a development born of desperation in the long march of the Ten Thousand.

214. Xen. *Anab.* 4.1.22–23, 4.6.17, 6.3.11; Diod. Sic. 17.68.4ff.; Arrian *Anab.* 4.30.6–7; Q. Curtius 3.13.1–5.

215. Xen. *Anab.* 3.2.20.

216. The reliability of captives forced to act as guides was, of course, suspect, as Curtius noted so colorfully when describing the risk Alexander took when he put his life into the hands of a Lycian prisoner serving as his guide. See Q. Curtius 5.4.4, 5.4.10, 5.4.19; Diod. Sic. 17.68.4ff. Cf. Polyaeus 4.3.27; Plut. *Alex.* 37.1–2 (in which the man was not defined as a captive); Arrian *Anab.* 3.18.4 (and Bosworth, *Commentary* ad loc.).

217. Caryaeans (*perioikoi*): Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.25. Chian slaves: Thuc. 8.40.2; cf. Hdt. 6.135; Xen. *Cyr.* 7.2.3. Exiles: Diod. Sic. 18.19.3 and perhaps Hdt. 6.102—Hippias guided (κατηγγέετο) the Persians to Marathon so they could employ their cavalry to advantage.

218. Thuc. 4.78.1–2; cf. Gomme 3:540ff. ad loc.

favored maintenance of the alliance with Athens. Brasidas sent an *angelos* to his friends in Thessaly, asking them to meet him at the Thessalian border. They did as he bid, along with Strophacus, *proxenos* of the Chalcidians, and several Thessalians. Their service was invaluable in arguing with their fellow countrymen and dissuading them from resisting Brasidas. At this point, Thucydides steps back from his narrative to note that it was suspicious to travel through a country without consent, hence the provision of guides by allies might have another aspect: when a foreign army passed through one's own territory, guides were the physical manifestation of one's assent to the passage.²¹⁹

More frequently, an army was guided through its area of operations by contingents from allied states bordering it. In all such cases, the guides' *poleis* were following the banners of larger, more powerful states and were often exploiting an opportunity to settle old scores with a hated neighbor—so the Thebans and the Thessalians served as guides for the Persians in Phocis, the Messenians and Locrians for the Athenians in the Peloponnese and Aetolia, the people of Gymnias for the Ten Thousand, and so on.²²⁰ Thus even the most faithful allies had their own motives in providing guides, and since alliances were not always so warm, there was often cause for suspicion: who could trust guides provided by Tissaphernes, or by Cyrus himself if the Ten Thousand had chosen to abandon him, or by Uxians recently forced into Alexander's fold, or by Milesians itching to escape from Persian dominance?²²¹ The integrity of deserters

219. Cf. Q. Curtius 5.2.8: Abulites, satrap of Susa, sent his son to Alexander with overtures and to guide the king to him. See also Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.9; Q. Curtius 8.10.2.

220. Thebans: Hdt. 9.40. Thessalians: Hdt. 8.32. Ozolian Locrians: Thuc. 3.95.3. Cf. Hdt. 5.100: the Ephesians guided the other Ionians during their march on Sardis. Gymnias: Xen. *Anab.* 4.7.19ff. (the guide urged the Greeks to lay waste the lands they passed through, making clear his enmity to the local population, and begged them not to leave captured shields as dedications without making them unfit for use). See also Hdt. 5.12, 15; Xen. *Anab.* 5.2.1–2; *Hell. Oxy.* 21.3 (and Bruce 138–39 ad loc.; cf. Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.10; Xen. *Ages.* 3.3; Plut. *Ages.* 11.2; Plut. *Lys.* 24.1); Arrian *Anab.* 4.15.4.

221. Clearchus argues the impossibility of abandoning Cyrus (Xen. *Anab.* 1.3.14–17); Xenophon disparages further faith in Tissaphernes' guides (Xen. *Anab.* 2.3.14, 2.4.10, 3.2.20); Alexander, advancing through a pass held by Uxians in their native land, prudently took Susians as guides, even though the Uxians who dwelt on the plains recognized his authority (Arrian *Anab.* 3.17.2). At Mycale the Persians, suspecting the loyalty of the Milesians, stationed them in the passes so that they could not work harm in the ranks yet might serve the Persians as guides and bring them safely to the heights if they were defeated. In the event, the Milesians misguided and killed the Persians (Hdt. 9.104). Cf. Xen. *Anab.* 5.4.10: the Mossynoecians made a pact with the Greeks and sent men to fight alongside them and to guide them. At one point, when the combined forces were defeated (5.4.20), Xenophon tried to encourage his men by pointing out that at least they now knew their guides were in fact enemies of the hostile locals.

serving as guides was also suspect, not only since they had demonstrated a lack of constancy in abandoning their former allegiance, but also because fake deserters were by no means unknown.²²²

Thus even newfound allies and guides provided by allies were subjected to general precautionary measures—that is, binding, death threats, and occasionally hostages—and, curiously, these measures were apparently accepted as reasonable. Those proffering their services for one reason or another might emphasize their willingness to be subjected to such terms, thereby enhancing their credibility. Witness those Caryaeans who came to the Theban army in Arcadia, telling them of the dearth of men at Sparta, promising to act as guides, and bidding the Thebans to kill them if they were shown to be deceitful.²²³ Captives, of course, had no pretense of choice in the matter. They were usually bound, which both made escape improbable and served as a reminder that their fates were contingent on faithful service.²²⁴ The binding and threats were not gratuitous cruelty, for it seems guides were otherwise decently treated as long as they performed well. Xenophon criticized Cheirisophus for both ill-treating and not binding a village chief who was acting as a guide for the Ten Thousand. The man resented Cheirisophus' harshness and had the means to escape. This he did successfully, leaving behind his son, whom the Greeks held as a hostage.²²⁵ In this vignette we find that while hostages and threats foster cooperation, they cannot guarantee it—this was true in the case of the aforementioned captive who suffered death rather than reveal a path leading by his daughter's house. In light of this, the Greeks employed more than one guide simultaneously whenever possible, and they probably checked their reports against each others'—it cannot be accidental that two-thirds of the references are in the plural. By the fourth century some guides were supervised, either by a subordinate officer (perhaps in the vanguard, as Xenophon described in the *Cyropaedia*), or by one party of a joint command.²²⁶

222. Diodorus (19.16.4) tells of some of Eumenes' men who in 317 were captured by Antigonos, escaped, and then were besieged. Two of these deserted by arrangement with Stratonice, Antigonos' wife, to Antigonos' forces. One (Docimus) was not trusted, but his unnamed companion was and served as a guide. Polyaeus (7.25.1) offers an anecdote of a fake deserter as a guide; for more general information on fake deserters, see chap. 5.

223. Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.25; see also Xen. *Anab.* 4.7.19ff.

224. Cf. Hdt. 8.23; Xen. *Anab.* 4.2.1.

225. Xen. *Anab.* 4.6.1. A similar mishap befell Alexander (Q. Curtius 9.9.1). Alexander also employed hostages (Q. Curtius 7.2.18); it is possible that Agesilaus did likewise (cf. *Hell. Oxy.* 24.3). Cf. Niceph. *Camp. Org.* 18.

226. Xen. *Cyr.* 5.3.53. Among the Ten Thousand, Cheirisophus seems to have had specific responsibility for the guides (Xen. *Anab.* 4.1.21, 4.6.1).

The preceding precautions, combined with a habitual practice of sending scouts to confirm information furnished by guides and locals, afforded respectable results: voluntary deception was rare, as were mistakes.²²⁷ The Greeks could afford no less, for often geographic knowledge was a question not just of military advantage but of survival. Ignorance of the terrain could prove disastrous in defeat and on campaign abroad, when logistics were particularly tenuous.²²⁸ The vulnerability of an army without guides was a recurring problem for the Ten Thousand: it bound the Greeks to Cyrus, it strongly influenced Clearchus to try to come to terms with Tissaphernes, and it made an impact on the theoretical writing of Xenophon.²²⁹

Mercenaries (*Epikouroi, Misthophoroi, Xenoi*)

Charidemus, who at times rendered Athens service as a military commander, was censured by Demosthenes for serving Cotys when Cotys was hostile to Athens and for serving the Olynthians under similar circumstances.²³⁰ Leaving aside the question of Demosthenes' bias, it can be fairly said that Charidemus was by no means the only individual to find

227. Voluntary deception: Hdt. 9.104; Polyaeus 7.25.1. Errors: Arrian *Anab.* 6.26.4–5; Q. Curtius 9.9.6. Refusal to reveal information: Xen. *Anab.* 4.1.22–23; Diod. Sic. 17.68.4; cf. Polyaeus 4.3.27. Desertion: Xen. *Anab.* 2.2.8, 2.5.35–39; 4.6.1. Sample size: eighty-three citations.

228. See, e.g., Thuc. 3.98.1: when Athenians campaigning in Aetolia were defeated, their knowledge of the terrain perished with Chromon, their Messenian guide, and their flight was blind. Many were slain, trapped in dried-up watercourses from which there was no way out, or lost in a forest when the Aetolians set the wood ablaze.

229. Xen. *Cyr.* 2.4.27. Cf. Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.5: Clearchus was reluctant to set out on the long route back after Cyrus' defeat at Cunaxa, since he had no guide. The eventual outcome of his decision to remain near King Artaxerxes was his death by treachery, but nevertheless his policy must have seemed prudent at the time. Alexander was also uncomfortable at the prospect of proceeding without guides (Q. Curtius 9.9.1–2). For other examples of the consequences of operating without guides, see Xen. *Anab.* 3.1.2; Arrian *Anab.* 6.18.4–5, 7.22.1. Cf. Aen. *Tact.* 16.20.

230. Demosth. XXIII (*Against Aristocr.*) 149, 150; cf. 130–32 of Iphicrates. For details of some colorful careers of mercenaries and condottieri, see Parke, Griffith, and Pritchett. See Parke 20–21 for a discussion of the terminology referring to mercenaries and its change over time. Mercenaries in the Greek world were fairly active in the sixth century, less so in the fifth, and very active in the fourth.

Mercenaries are treated herein exclusive of incidental functions. E.g., since many mercenaries served as light-armed troops, it is possible that they were employed as scouts. Menidas (Berve no. 508), e.g., is mentioned commanding mercenaries at Arbela (Arrian *Anab.* 3.12) and scouts on another occasion (Q. Curtius 4.12.4–5). Mercenaries were also particularly susceptible to overtures regarding desertion (see, e.g., Plut. *Pelop.* 27; cf. the importance of Phanes of Halicarnassus, who deserted from the Egyptians to the Persians [Hdt. 3.4 ff.]).

himself in the pay of the enemy of a former employer, especially in the fourth century.²³¹ Similar circumstances arose when Alexander enrolled Greeks who had been in Persian service; and when Leosthenes recruited mercenaries in Taenarum in 323, he no doubt engaged some who had earlier served the Macedonians.²³² Some of these men, like Charidemus, had attained considerable stature in another's service, and in such cases it would be strange if their employers did not seek to learn such information as they could provide. Even if they did not, such men could use their experience to good effect in their own decisions. There is little evidence for mercenaries from the rank and file informing or advising employers, but there is ample testimony for commanders doing so.²³³ It is possible that there was an information flow between Hicetas' mercenaries and Timoleon (under whom they had served at the Crimisis), since some sort of arrangement was implicit in their betrayal of Hicetas to Timoleon when the Corinthian advanced on Leontini.²³⁴

231. However, Parke has observed that it was rare to find mercenaries fighting against their countrymen, at least during the Peloponnesian War. He cites as exceptional the example of the Arcadians serving in both the Syracusan and Athenian armies during the campaign of 415–413 (Thuc. 7.19.4, 7.62).

232. For mercenaries in Persian service subsequently recruited by Alexander, see, e.g., Arrian *Anab.* 1.19.6, 3.23–24. The Persians and Egyptians both made use of Greek mercenaries; I know of no all-embracing legislation forbidding Greeks to fight for barbarians for pay against Greeks until the Corinthian League apparently so decreed in the late fourth century (cf. Arrian *Anab.* 1.16.6; Parke 178). See Parke 199ff. for a discussion of Alexander's policies toward his satraps and their revolts, which would have occasioned the availability of mercenaries for recruitment by Leosthenes in preparation for the Lamian War. The Sicilian tyrants would not have benefited from Greeks who had served the Carthaginians until sometime after 340 (if Plutarch [*Tim.* 30.3] is correct, the Carthaginians did not engage Greeks before the battle of the River Crimisis; cf. Diod. Sic. 16.81.4). Both sides did, however, engage Iberians.

Similar capabilities might be possessed by (nonmercenary) troops of the same nationality as the enemy serving a foreign ally. Most of our examples are of Greeks in Persian service; the information they provided was on the nature of other Greeks and on the tactics and devices most suited to taking advantage of them. See, e.g., Hdt. 9.2–3, 31, 39, 58 (the last is almost certainly fiction, as one can assume Mardonius had been present at Thermopylae); Diod. Sic. 14.81.4–6, 14.82.2, 14.83.1, 14.86.6, 17.18.2–3, 17.30.2–3; Q. Curtius 3.2.10–19; Arrian *Anab.* 1.12.9; Polyaeus 1.48.3. Due to the pro-Athenian bias of our sources, such service was portrayed as base when they hindered Athenian interests (e.g., the enrollment of Thebans in the Persian army in the early fifth century), noble when advancing them (e.g., Memnon's command of the Persian fleet in campaigns against the Spartans in the early fourth century).

233. Cf. Hdt. 8.26, in which the Arcadian *automoloi* seeking employment might be mercenaries.

234. The men are called *stratiotai* (Plut. *Tim.* 32.1), but Parke (176) maintained that they were mercenaries, since the context suits this interpretation, and since the distinction between the two was not hard and fast by the late fourth century. He further added: "it is likely that he [Timoleon] had many agents in their ranks."

Mercenaries also must have served as informal sources of information in the manner of travelers and merchants. Mercenaries had an interest in keeping abreast of political and military developments and can be found getting wind of existing and potential employment opportunities.²³⁵ Thus in antiquity, as today, there were centers, such as Taenarum, that attracted both mercenaries looking for work and potential employers.²³⁶ These places would no doubt have been rich in news and rumor from around the Mediterranean, and it is possible that an inquirer might have learned something of the problems and strengths of commanders and territories over a casual cup of wine, if he could sift fact from fiction.

On a final note, mercenaries were frequently engaged by tyrants and, according to Xenophon, were of use to a tyrant in achieving both external and internal security. Not only were they necessary to protect his person and state, “but also,” argued Xenophon, “who would be better prepared to uncover and check the secret and sudden inroads of enemies than those always armed and organized?”²³⁷ Here the enemies are quite specifically external, and it is likely that watchers or scout patrols are meant.

The agents and sources described in this chapter were fielded by military commanders. Their information was normally exploited soon after it was received. It served to position a force advantageously to win or avoid a battle, to prevent a surprise or ambush by the enemy, and to revise plans for the conduct of a campaign. Some information provided by these people was of enduring value, especially when it pertained to geography and personalities. But the utility of the bulk of their information was ephemeral since it often consisted of enemy dispositions that were rarely static. Strategic information, which was of lasting relevance, was the province of a different set of agents, who are described in the following chapter.

235. See, e.g., Polyaeus 3.10.10. Cf. McKechnie 87; Parke 108.

236. For Taenarum (in Laconia) as a gathering point, see Diod. Sic. 18.9.1, 21.1; cf. 17.111.1–3.

237. Xen. *Hiero* 10.6.