OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

XENOPHON

The Expedition of Cyrus

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With an Introduction and Notes by
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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
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Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

First published as an Oxford World's Classics paperback 2005

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Data available

ISBN 0–19–282430–9 978–0–19–282430–1

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Typeset in Ehrhardt
by RefineCatch Limited, Bungay, Suffolk
Printed in Great Britain by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

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BOOK THREE

[1] After the capture of the generals and deaths of the company commanders and the soldiers who had gone with them, the Greeks reflected on their desperate predicament. They were close to the king's headquarters; they were surrounded on all sides by countless hostile tribes and cities; there was no longer anyone who would sell them provisions; they were at least 10,000 stades from Greece; there was no guide to show them the way; there were uncrossable rivers blocking their route home; even the barbarians who had made the journey up country with Cyrus had betrayed them; and they had been left all alone, without a single horseman in their army, which, they were sure, meant that even if they won a battle they would not kill any of the enemy, while if they lost, not one of them would survive. Weighed down by these depressing thoughts, few of them managed to eat anything that evening and few lit fires; a lot of them spent the night not in their quarters, close to where the weapons were stacked, but wherever they happened to find themselves. But sleep was banished by distress and by longing for homes, parents, wives, and children, whom they no longer expected ever to see again. And so they all passed a restless night.

There was in the army a man called Xenophon, from Athens. He had come along not as a general, nor as a company commander, nor as a soldier, but because Proxenus, a long-standing guest-friend, had invited him to leave home and join him, and had held out the promise of friendship with Cyrus, who was, Proxenus said, more important to him than his homeland. After reading Proxenus' letter, however, Xenophon consulted the famous Socrates of Athens* about whether or not he should go. Socrates thought that friendship with Cyrus might well be actionable in the eyes of the Athenian authorities, because Cyrus was widely believed to have wholeheartedly supported the Spartans in their military operations against the Athenians,* and he advised Xenophon to go to Delphi and consult the god about whether or not he should go.* Xenophon went and asked Apollo which of the gods should receive his sacrifices and prayers to ensure that the journey he had in mind would go honourably and well and to guarantee a safe return after a successfully completed

endeavour, and in his response Apollo named the gods to whom he should sacrifice.

Back in Athens, Xenophon reported the oracle's response to Socrates, who told him off for having failed to ask the preliminary question whether it would be better for him to go or to stay– for having already decided that he was going to go, and then asking Apollo how to ensure a successful journey. 'However,' Socrates said, 'since that was the question you put to the god, you had better carry out all his instructions.' So once Xenophon had sacrificed as instructed to the gods named by Apollo he set sail and caught up with Proxenus and Cyrus in Sardis just as they were about to set off up country. Proxenus was very insistent that Xenophon should stay with them, and Cyrus, to whom Xenophon had been introduced, backed Proxenus up with equal enthusiasm and promised to see that Xenophon got home as soon as the campaign was over. An attack on the Pisidians was mentioned as the objective of the expedition.

Xenophon joined the expedition, then, because he had been thoroughly misled as to its purpose– though not by Proxenus, because he was as unaware as the rest of the Greeks, except Clearchus,* that the purpose of the expedition was to attack the king. By the time they reached Cilicia, however, everyone was sure that they were going against the king. Despite their fears about the journey and their lack of enthusiasm, most of the Greeks carried on because they did not want to earn the contempt of one another and of Cyrus. Xenophon was one of those who chose to carry on.

At the time when their situation seemed hopeless, Xenophon was as agitated as everyone else and found sleep impossible. When at last he did fall briefly asleep, he had a dream, in which thunder rumbled and lightning struck his family home and brilliantly illuminated it all. He woke up terrified. From one point of view, he was inclined to put a positive interpretation on the dream, since a great light from Zeus had appeared in the midst of trouble and danger; but from another point of view, he found it alarming, because he assumed that the dream had been sent by Zeus the King,* and the fact that in the dream the fire had cast its light all around suggested that he might not be able to escape from the king's territory, but might be hemmed in on all sides by various difficulties.

But the true meaning of a vision such as this can be judged by the events which followed the dream. What happened was, first, that as

soon as he woke up he fell to thinking: 'Why am I lying here? The night is passing and at dawn the enemy will probably arrive. If we fall into the king's hands, we'll inevitably die inglorious deaths, after witnessing all the most ghastly scenes one could possibly imagine and suffering the full range of the most gruesome tortures. Yet no one is showing the slightest interest in defence or doing anything practical about it; we're just lying here as if we were in a position to take it easy. From what other city do I expect a general to come and organize things? Why am I waiting? How old do I have to be?* I won't get any older at all if I just surrender to the enemy today.'

Next, he got up and immediately called together Proxenus' company commanders. When they were all there, he said: 'My friends, I'm finding it as impossible to sleep as I imagine you are; I'm too aware of our situation even to stay lying down any more. After all, it goes without saying that our enemies have made open war on us only because they now think they're good and ready, and none of us has responded by giving the slightest thought to how we might resist them. And yet, if we give in and fall into the king's hands, what can we expect to happen to us? This is the man who mutilated the corpse of his full brother* by cutting off his head and his hand, and who then impaled them on a stake. We have no one to protect us, and we launched this expedition against him with the intention of toppling him from his throne and making him a slave instead, and of killing him if we could– so what can we expect to happen to us? Don't you think he'll stop at nothing in his efforts to make us suffer in agony, so as to deter everyone in the world from marching against him ever again? So we must do all we can to avoid falling into his hands.

'Speaking for myself, whilst the truce was in force, the sight of all their land and its fertility, their plentiful provisions, and all their slaves, livestock, gold, and clothing, constantly made me feel sorry for us and think how lucky the king and his men were. Then, when I considered the situation of our troops and the fact that we couldn't get any of these goods without paying for them– and I was aware that there were only a few of us who had the wherewithal to pay for these things, and I knew that our oaths restricted us from getting our provisions other than by paying for them– when I took all this into account I occasionally found the truce more alarming than the hostilities are now. But it seems to me that when they dissolved the truce they also dissolved their advantage and our helplessness. I

mean, now these goods of theirs are there to be won by whichever side proves itself braver, and the judges of the contest are the gods, who, in all likelihood, will be on our side. Why? Because although we've been able to see all these good things, we have resolutely kept our hands off them in accordance with the oaths we made before the gods, while our opponents have broken their oaths. So I think we can enter the contest with far greater confidence than they can. Also, our bodies are better than theirs at putting up with cold and heat and hard work, and our spirits are, thanks to the gods, more courageous. And finally, if the gods grant us victory as they did before, our opponents are easier to wound and kill.*

'Now, the same ideas may well have occurred to others among the Greeks, but, by the gods, let's not wait for others to come and summon us to perform glorious deeds. Let us be the ones who first arouse others to demonstrate their valour. Prove yourselves the best possible officers! Prove yourselves more worthy of command than your commanders! As for me, if you are willing to set out on this course of action, I will gladly follow, but if you make me your leader, I will not refuse on account of my age. No, I think I am at the peak of my ability to defend myself against adversity.'

After this speech by Xenophon, all the officers asked him to take command except for a man called Apollonides, who had a Boeotian accent. He said that the only way they could save themselves was to talk to the king and win him over, if they could, and that it was nonsense to suggest that they had any other options. He had just begun to talk about their helplessness when Xenophon interrupted him and said: 'I can't believe what you're saying, man! Don't you recognize what's right before your eyes? Don't you take in a word you hear? You were there with the rest of us when the king, full of confidence after Cyrus' death, ordered us by messenger to surrender our weapons. When we refused, and instead came and camped fully armed close to him, he sent his representatives, he begged us for a truce, he supplied us with provisions– he bent over backwards to obtain a truce. Then the generals and company commanders did what you're suggesting, and went unarmed to meet him, relying on the truce– and look what happened to them. Are they not at this very moment being beaten, tortured, brutalized, and denied the death their suffering surely makes them long for? Why, if you're aware of all this, do you call it nonsense to suggest that we defend

ourselves? Why do you urge us to go to the king again and try to win him over? My friends, I think we should not only banish this oaf from our company, but strip him of his commission, load him up, and use him as a baggage-handler. The fact that he's such a fool, despite being Greek, makes him an embarrassment not just to his homeland but to the whole of Greece.'

At that point Agasias of Stymphalus broke in and said: 'Actually, he doesn't belong in Boeotia or anywhere in Greece: he has both ears pierced, Lydian-style*—I've seen them.' This was true, and they evicted the man from their company. The others went around the various divisions and invited the general (if he was still alive) to a meeting, or the second-in-command (if the general was missing), or any company commanders who had survived. When they had all assembled—by which time it was almost midnight—they sat down in front of the place where the weapons were stacked. There were about a hundred generals and company commanders at the meeting.

Hieronymus of Elis, the oldest of Proxenus' company commanders, was the first to speak. 'Fellow officers,' he said, 'in view of our present circumstances, we decided to meet and to invite you along as well, to see if we can come up with a good plan. Xenophon, why don't you repeat the gist of the speech you made to us?'

So Xenophon said: 'We're all aware, of course, that the king and Tissaphernes have taken as many of us as they could, and they're obviously planning to kill the rest of us if they can. I think we should do everything possible to avoid falling into the hands of the barbarians and to gain the upper hand for ourselves instead. And I want you to understand that this is an absolutely critical moment for all of you, all of those assembled here. Your men are all watching you. If they see you disheartened, you won't have a single brave soldier left; but if you are visibly getting ready to attack the enemy, and you call on the men to do likewise, you can rest assured that they will follow you and will do as you do to the best of their ability– though in truth you should really do better than them, because *you* are generals and *you* are the commanders of divisions and companies. In peacetime you had more money and standing than them; in a time of war like this you should insist on being better than the rank and file, to plan for them, and, if the need arises, to work for them.

'But I think you should start by giving some thought to electing generals and company commanders, as quickly as possible, to replace

those who have died. I'm sure this would help the army enormously, because without leaders– if I may be permitted the generalization– nothing ever comes out right or good in any sphere, and certainly not in warfare, where, as is generally acknowledged, discipline makes for survival and lack of discipline has often in the past been responsible for loss of life.

'Once you've appointed as many leaders as you need, I think you'd be doing exactly what the situation demanded if you were to assemble the men and try to inspire them with confidence. You probably noticed as well as I did how miserable they were just now as they were standing down for the night and going off for guard duty, and while they're like this I'm not sure what use they'd be if we should need them at any hour of the day or night. But if their mood is changed, so that they're not thinking just of what's going to happen to them, but also of what they can do to others, they'll be much more confident. I mean, you are aware, of course, that wars are not won by numbers or strength; no, when one side, thanks to the gods, attacks with more confidence, their foes invariably give way before them. And there's something else that I've observed, my friends: in warfare those who seek to stay alive, no matter what it takes, are usually those who die cowardly and ignominious deaths, while those who have realized that death is the common lot of all men, and therefore strive for noble deaths, are those who, in my experience, are somehow more likely to reach old age and to enjoy the time they have while they are alive. This is what we too need to understand at the moment, in the critical situation in which we find ourselves, if we're to be brave men ourselves and if we're to instil courage in the men.'

After Xenophon had finished speaking, Chirisophus said: 'Up until now, Xenophon, I knew nothing about you, except that people had told me you were from Athens; but now I commend your words and your conduct, and I wish we had a lot more men like you, because we'd all benefit from it. But now,' he said, turning to the others, 'let's not waste time. Those of you who need to must go and choose leaders, and afterwards bring the men you've chosen into the middle of the camp. Then we'll assemble all the rest of the troops. Tolmides, the herald, had better be there too.'

With these words Chirisophus, who wanted to get straight on with what needed to be done, rose to his feet, and then commanders were chosen: Timasion of Dardanus instead of Clearchus, Xanthicles of

Achaea instead of Socrates, Cleanor of Arcadia instead of Agias, Philesius of Achaea instead of Meno, and Xenophon of Athens instead of Proxenus.

[2] By the time the election was over it was almost daybreak. At their meeting in the middle of the camp, the officers decided to post sentries and assemble the troops. Once they were all there, Chirisophus of Sparta was the first to get to his feet and address them. 'Men,' he said, 'our situation is difficult. We have lost fine generals, company commanders, and comrades in arms; in addition, Ariaeus and his men, our former allies, have betrayed us. Nevertheless, the situation demands that we prove ourselves men of valour. We must not give in, but we must endeavour to win a glorious victory and save ourselves, if we can; if we cannot, let us at least meet death with honour, and as long as we're alive, let us never fall into the hands of the enemy. For if we do, we will surely meet the kind of suffering I pray the gods may inflict on our enemies.'

Next Cleanor of Orchomenus got up and said: 'Men, the perjury and impiety of the king are plain for you all to see, as is the treachery of Tissaphernes. It was Tissaphernes who said that since he lived on the borders of Greece he would make it his primary objective to save us, and he backed up these words with solemn promises to us. It was he who shook hands to seal his oaths, and it was he who treacherously made prisoners of our generals. And so far from having respect for Zeus, the god of hospitality, he used the very fact that Clearchus had eaten at his table as a way of setting the trap by which he killed our men. And what about Ariaeus? We wanted to make him king, we exchanged assurances that we wouldn't betray one another, and now he too has shown how little he fears the gods. Even though there was no one Cyrus valued more while he was alive, Ariaeus has shown complete contempt for him, after his death, by going over to Cyrus' worst enemies and by trying to harm us, who were Cyrus' friends. These men will, I pray, be punished by the gods, but it's up to us, now that we've seen what they've done, never again to be taken in by them. No, we must fight as effectively as we can and endure whatever fate the gods decide for us.'

Xenophon was the next to stand up. He had put on his most splendid war-gear, because he thought that if the gods gave them victory, victory deserved the finest display, and that if he was to die, it was right for him, since he had demanded the best gear, to be

dressed in it when he met his death. 'Cleanor has reminded you', he began, 'of the barbarians' lies and treachery, of which you are, I'm sure, well aware. Now, if we choose to renew our friendship with the barbarians, we can only feel deep pessimism, given what happened before our very eyes to our generals when they entrusted themselves to them. However, if we intend to use our weapons to punish them for what they've done and in the future to wage all-out war against them, then, with the help of the gods, we have plenty of reasons to be optimistic about our survival.'

Just as he was saying this, someone sneezed.* Hearing the sneeze, all the soldiers simultaneously did homage to the god,* and Xenophon said: 'Men, just as we were discussing our safety we were vouchsafed a portent from Zeus the Saviour. I move that we should make a vow that as soon as we reach friendly territory we will sacrifice to Zeus the Saviour in gratitude for our salvation, and should also undertake to sacrifice to all the other gods to the best of our ability. If you agree with this motion, raise your hand.' Everyone raised their hands. They made their vows and chanted a paean, and once the gods' business had been duly settled, Xenophon resumed his speech.

'I was saying', he went on, 'that we have plenty of reasons to be optimistic about our survival. Above all, this is because we have stayed true to the oaths we swore before the gods, while our enemies have lied and have broken the truce, in violation of their oaths. Under these circumstances, the gods are likely to line up against our enemies and to fight on our side– and the gods are capable of humbling the strong in an instant and, should they choose to do so, of effortlessly delivering the weak even from terrible danger.

'Second, I'm going to remind you of the danger faced by our ancestors, because I want you to understand not only that you have to be brave, but also that, thanks to the gods, brave men survive even extreme peril. When the Persians and their allies invaded in enormous numbers with the intention of obliterating Athens, the Athenians heroically stood up to them all by themselves and beat them.* They had made a vow to Artemis that they would offer her in sacrifice a goat for every enemy soldier they killed, but they couldn't find enough goats and so they decided to sacrifice five hundred a year, and they are still carrying out this annual sacrifice.* Later, Xerxes raised an incalculably huge army and attacked Greece, but on that

occasion too, on land and sea,* our ancestors defeated the ancestors of the men we face. The trophies* still stand, as visible proof of their prowess, but the most important evidence is the freedom of the cities where you were born and raised. For you pay homage to no mortal master, but only to the gods.

'This is what your ancestors were like. I don't of course mean to imply that you are lesser men than they were: after all, not many days have passed since you took the field against the descendants of those same Persians and, with the help of the gods, defeated them despite being heavily outnumbered. You proved your courage on that occasion, when the issue was Cyrus' throne, but now you are fighting for your own survival, so it would be reasonable to expect a far higher degree of bravery and determination. You should also be more confident when facing the enemy, because before the previous battle you didn't know anything about them; nevertheless– and even though you could see that their numbers were beyond counting– you summoned up your ancestral courage and heroically attacked them. By now, however, you know what they're like, and you know that even if they vastly outnumber you they aren't prepared to stand their ground against you; so what possible reason can you still have to fear them?

'There's also no need for you to consider yourselves worse off because you've lost your former allies, Ariaeus' troops, to the other side. Ariaeus' men abandoned us and fled at the approach of troops we defeated, which proves that they are even more cowardly than troops we can defeat. It's far better to have troops who are habitually the first to flee on the side of one's opponents than on our side.

'If any of you are at all concerned about our lack and the enemy's abundance of cavalry, you should bear in mind that 10,000 horsemen are no different from 10,000 men. No one ever got bitten or kicked to death in a battle by a horse; men are responsible for everything that happens in a battle. And we are supported far more securely than their horsemen: they are precariously balanced on their horses, frightened of falling off as well as of us, while we stand on the ground, which means that we can deliver more power when we strike anyone coming at us and are far more likely to hit our targets. Men on horseback have only one advantage: they are more likely to save their lives when they flee than we are.

'You may not find the prospect of battle disheartening, but still be

worried because Tissaphernes is not going to guide you and the king is not going to sell you provisions. If so, you should consider whether it's better to have as our guide Tissaphernes, a man known to be plotting against us, or any prisoners we happen to capture, who we can order to act as our guides and who will know that any mistakes they make which affect us will also affect their lives and limbs. And as for provisions, is it better for us to buy them from the market provided by the barbarians, where only small quantities are available at a high price (when we don't have money anyway), or is it better to defeat the barbarians and then take provisions ourselves, in whatever quantity each of us wants?

'Suppose you recognize that in these respects we're better off, but you think that the rivers will prove problematic and that in crossing them you were led into a trap. If so, you should consider whether in fact this was not an act of sheer stupidity on the part of the barbarians, in the sense that all rivers– even those which are impossible to cross far from their sources– become crossable, without even wetting one's knees, as one gets close to their sources.

'Even if the rivers prove to be uncrossable and even if we never find a guide, we still don't need to lose heart. We know the Mysians, and we wouldn't count them braver men than we are, and yet they have a number of prosperous and large towns inside the king's territory. We know that the same goes for the Pisidians, and we've seen with our own eyes how the Lycaonians* have seized fortresses in the plains and cultivate land which belongs to the Persians. Personally, I'd suggest that we shouldn't yet make it obvious that we're setting off home, but should make our arrangements as if we were going to settle here. I'm sure the king would offer the Mysians plenty of guides to escort them out of the country, and plenty of hostages to guarantee his sincerity; if they wanted to leave on four-horse chariots he'd even build a road for them. And I'm sure he'd be three times as pleased to do all this for us, if he saw that we were planning to stay.

'In actual fact, though, I'm afraid that once we've become accustomed to a life of idleness and luxury, and to the company of Median and Persian women and girls, who are tall and beautiful, we'll become as oblivious of our homeward journey as the lotus-eaters were.* So I think it right and proper that our main efforts should be put towards getting back to Greece and our families, so that we can prove to the Greeks that their poverty is self-inflicted. They could

bring here those who are now living a hard life there and watch them prosper.

'Men, to the victors belong all the advantages of this land– that goes without saying. But I also need to explain how we can reduce the risks of our journey as much as possible and how, if we have to fight, we can try to make sure that we win. In the first place, I think we should set fire to all our carts, to stop the yoke-animals dictating our strategy and to ensure that we take whatever route best suits the army. In the second place, I think we should also burn our tents, since they're awkward to transport and make no contribution towards either fighting or getting hold of provisions. In the third place, we should get rid of all excess baggage, keeping only what we need for fighting, for food, or for drink. Then we will have as many men as possible under arms and as few as possible carrying baggage. And the basic point is that, as you know, everything that belongs to the losers in a war becomes someone else's property, while if we win we can regard our enemies as our baggage-handlers.

'I turn finally to the issue which I consider to be the most important. You can see that our enemies didn't dare to open hostilities against us until they had made prisoners of our generals. This is because they believed that while we had our leaders, and did what they told us to do, we were capable of getting the better of them, but that, with our leaders in their hands, lack of order and discipline would prove to be our undoing. So our present commanders must be far more vigilant than the previous ones were, and those under their command must be far less unruly and far more obedient to their superiors than they were before. We need to pass a regulation to the effect that whichever of you happens to be near by should help the relevant commander punish any cases of insubordination. This will make a mockery of the enemy's plans, because from today they will see not one but ten thousand Clearchuses, who will prevent the slightest infringement.

'But now it's time to put these ideas into practice, because the enemy may appear at any moment. Those of you who think these ideas are sound should ratify them as soon as possible, so that they can become a practical reality. But if anyone, even an ordinary soldier, can think of a better way to go about things than this, let him explain it to us without fear. For our survival is the common concern of all.'

Once Xenophon had finished, Chirisophus said: 'If there's anything we need to add to Xenophon's proposals, we can do so shortly. But I think it best if we put the measures he has just proposed to the vote as quickly as possible. So raise your hand if you are in favour of his proposals.' Everyone's hand went up.

Then Xenophon got to his feet again and said: 'Men, I'll tell you what else I think we need to do. We obviously have to go and get provisions from somewhere, and I hear there are some fine villages no more than twenty stades from here. You know how cowardly dogs chase and try to bite passers-by, but run away from anyone who chases them; I wouldn't be surprised if the enemy behaved in the same way, and pursued us as we retreated. To make our journey as safe as possible, then, I suppose we should have the hoplites form a square to protect the baggage carts and the camp followers. If we were now to appoint someone to lead the square and organize the front of it, and others to look after each of the sides and to protect the back, we wouldn't have to make these arrangements after the enemy had come, but without wasting any time we could rely on those already assigned the jobs. If anyone has a better plan in mind, let's adopt it, but otherwise I would suggest that Chirisophus takes the lead, especially since he's a Spartan,* that the two oldest generals take charge of the two sides, and that for the time being the youngest of the generals– Timasion and I– guard the rear. Later, after we've tried out this formation, we can discuss what course of action seems best in any given situation. Anyway, if anyone has a better plan in mind, let's hear it.'

No one had any counter-proposals to make and so Xenophon said: 'All those in agreement, raise your hands.' The proposals were carried. 'All right, then,' Xenophon continued, 'now is the time for us to leave and put our plans into action. If you want to see your families again, summon up your courage. There's no other way to get what you want. If you want to survive, do your best to win, because it is the winners who kill and the losers who die; and if you want to get rich, do your best to conquer, because victors not only keep their own belongings, but also take what belongs to the losers.'

[3] After these speeches, the meeting broke up, and they went back to their quarters and burnt the carts and tents. They threw all their superfluous belongings onto the flames, unless one of their comrades needed something, in which case they gave it away. Then they

turned to their midday meal, in the middle of which Mithradates arrived, along with about thirty horsemen. He asked the generals to come close enough to hear him and then he said: 'Men of Greece, I was, as you know, one of Cyrus' trusted advisers. Even now, I'm still on your side– in fact, it's extremely risky for me to be spending time here. So if I knew that you were thinking of saving yourselves, I'd come to you and bring all my retainers with me. Do please tell me your plans, then, with the assurance that I am your loyal friend and that I would like to join you for your journey.'

The Greek generals talked things over, and Chirisophus delivered the response they decided on. 'As long as we're allowed to go back home without being molested,' he said, 'our plan is to make our way through the land as peacefully as possible; but we will resist anyone who gets in our way with all the power at our command.'

Mithradates then tried to make them believe that there was no way for them to save themselves as long as the king was hostile towards them, and at this point the Greeks realized that his mission was not all it seemed. In fact, one of Tissaphernes' relatives had come with him to ensure his reliability. The generals therefore decided that it would be better to make a regulation to the effect that whilst they were in enemy territory they would receive no delegations from the enemy, since the men the enemy sent kept trying to corrupt their troops. In fact, they did succeed in corrupting one of the company commanders, Nicarchus of Arcadia, who left during the night with about twenty men.

Next, after they had finished their morning meal, they crossed the Zapatas river* and made their way in formation, with the yoke-animals and the camp followers in the middle of the square. They had gone only a short distance when Mithradates appeared again, with about 200 horsemen and almost 400 bowmen and slingers– very flexible and mobile troops. He approached the Greeks as if he had friendly intentions, but, once he was close, his archers, both mounted and on foot, suddenly fired their bows and his slingers hurled their stones. Some Greeks were wounded, and the rearguard suffered badly without being able to retaliate, because the Cretan archers did not have the range of the Persians and, being unprotected by armour, were also shut up inside the hoplite square. Moreover, the javelin-men could not throw their javelins far enough to reach the slingers. Xenophon therefore decided that they ought to

set out after the enemy, but the hoplites and peltasts under his command in the rear who set out in pursuit failed to catch up with a single enemy soldier. For the Greeks had no cavalry and their foot soldiers could not catch up with the enemy foot soldiers, who had a good head-start in their flight, within the short distance allowed them by the fact that they could not afford to chase their opponents so far that they became separated from the rest of the army. Also, even in flight the barbarian horsemen were inflicting wounds, by turning and shooting arrows from the backs of their horses, and every foot the Greeks covered in pursuit had to be fought for as they fell back again. The upshot of all this was that they took the whole day to cover no more than twenty-five stades, but they did reach the villages late in the afternoon.

Despondency was once again widespread, of course, and Chirisophus and the oldest generals reprimanded Xenophon for breaking formation and setting out in pursuit of the enemy; he had put himself in danger, they said, without increasing his ability to harm the enemy. After listening to what they had to say, Xenophon admitted that they were right to criticize him and pointed out that events supported their case. 'However,' he said, 'pursuit was forced upon me because, staying put, we were suffering badly and had no ability to retaliate at all. As a matter of fact, though,' he went on, 'when we did set out in pursuit, it was just as you said: we didn't increase our ability to injure the enemy, and it was extremely hard for us to withdraw back to our own lines. We should thank the gods that they came with only a small force, rather than a sizeable army, because they didn't hurt us too badly and they've shown us where our deficiencies lie. At the moment, you see, the enemy can fire arrows and sling stones further than our Cretans can respond with their own arrows or our hand-thrown missiles can reach. And when we chase them, we can't leave the main body of the army far behind, and in a short distance no foot soldier, however fast, can catch up with another foot soldier who's already a bow-shot away.

'So, if we're to put paid to their ability to hurt us in the course of our journey, we urgently need slingers and horsemen. Now, I hear that we have some men from Rhodes* in our army, and people say that most Rhodians know how to use a sling and that their missiles carry twice as far as those of the Persian slingers, because whereas the Persians use fist-sized stones in their slings, which can't travel very

far, the Rhodians know how to use lead shot as well as stones. So I suggest that we first discover if any of them own slings, and then buy their slings off them and also pay for more slings to be made, if anyone is prepared to do so; and if we then find some exemption that we can offer anyone who voluntarily accepts slinging duties, I expect that people with the ability to help us will turn up. And I can see that there are horses in the army, either belonging to my men or left behind by Clearchus' men,* and plenty of others which have been captured from the enemy and are being used to carry baggage. So if we round them up, replace them with pack-animals, and equip the horses for use by cavalrymen, I expect that they too will cause trouble for our opponents as they run away.'

This proposal was carried also. That night a unit of about 200 slingers was created, and on the following day about fifty horses and horsemen passed muster.* The riders were issued leather jerkins and breastplates, and Lycius of Athens, the son of Polystratus, was appointed cavalry commander.

[4] That day they stayed put, but the next day they set off. They got up earlier than usual, because they had a gully to cross and they were afraid that the enemy would attack them as they were trying to cross it. But it was only after they had crossed it that Mithradates appeared again, this time with 1,000 horsemen and about 4,000 archers and slingers. Tissaphernes had granted his request for a force of this size because Mithradates had promised that, with this many men, he would hand the Greeks over to him as his captives. By this time he had no respect for the Greeks, because despite the small size of his force in the earlier attack, he had, as he thought, injured the Greeks badly, while remaining unscathed himself.

By the time Mithradates and his men crossed the gully after them, the Greeks were about eight stades beyond it. Those peltasts and hoplites who were to pursue the enemy had received their instructions, and the horsemen had been told to press their pursuit confidently, on the grounds that a large enough force would be close behind them. Once Mithradates had caught up with the Greeks, and his sling-stones and arrows were beginning to reach them, the trumpet sounded the signal and immediately the troops who had been detailed for the job ran to engage the enemy and the horsemen rode out. The barbarians gave way and fled towards the gully. In the course of this rout a lot of barbarian infantry lost their lives and as

many as eighteen cavalrymen were captured alive in the gully. Acting on their own initiative, the Greek soldiers mutilated the corpses of the dead,* to make the sight of them as terrifying as possible for the enemy.

After this defeat the enemy withdrew, and the Greeks carried on safely for the rest of the day, until they reached the Tigris. Here they found a large, deserted city called Larisa, which in the old days had been inhabited by Medes.* Its wall (which was made from clay bricks on a stone foundation twenty feet tall) was twenty-five feet thick and a hundred feet high, and had a perimeter of two parasangs. The Persian king* had besieged this city during the Persian annexation of the Median empire, but nothing he tried enabled him to take it. But then a cloud hid the sun from sight* until the inhabitants left, and so the city fell. Near by there was a pyramid made of stone, which was one plethron wide and two plethra high, and was being used as a place of refuge by a lot of barbarians from the neighbouring villages.

The next leg was a one-day march of six parasangs that brought them to a large, deserted fortress, close to a city called Mespila, which had once been inhabited by the Medes.* The foundation of the fortress was made from polished, shell-bearing stone, and was fifty feet thick and fifty feet tall. On this foundation there was built a brick wall, fifty feet thick and a hundred feet tall and with a perimeter of six parasangs. This is supposed to be the place where Medea, the king's wife,* took refuge after the Persian conquest of the Median empire. The Persian king besieged the city, but neither attrition nor direct assault enabled him to take it– but then Zeus stupefied the inhabitants with thunder, and the king succeeded in taking it.

The next leg was a one-day march of four parasangs. In the course of this stage Tissaphernes appeared with an army consisting of the cavalry unit he had brought with him, the forces under the command of Orontas (the husband of the king's daughter), the barbarian troops Cyrus had brought on his march up country, and the troops which the king's brother had brought as reinforcements for the king– not to mention all the troops the king had given him. In other words, the army looked enormous.

When they got close to the Greeks, Tissaphernes stationed some of his units behind them and moved others into position along either side of the square, but he did not dare to launch an attack. Rather than risking a decisive battle, he ordered his men to use their slings

and bows. But then the Rhodians discharged their sling-shot from the various positions where they had been deployed, and the archers† fired their arrows. Every single shot hit a mark (in fact, it would have been hard to miss even if they had really wanted to), Tissaphernes hastily pulled his men back out of range, and all the other contingents withdrew as well.

For the rest of the day the Greeks kept moving and the barbarians followed them. The long-range tactics the barbarians had been using until then were now ineffective, because the Rhodians could hurl their sling-shot further than the Persians, and the Cretan archers could shoot further than their Persian counterparts.† Persian bows are large, and this meant that the Cretans were able to use all the arrows they could collect. In fact, they were constantly using enemy arrows, and they practised by shooting arrows far up into the sky. A number of bow-strings were also found in the villages, and some lead, which could be used as sling-shot. At the end of the day, when the Greeks found some villages and made camp, the babarians pulled back, having come off worst in the long-range skirmishing. The next day the Greeks stayed where they were and stocked up on provisions, because there was a lot of grain in the villages. The day after that they continued on their way across the plain, while Tissaphernes followed them and kept harassing them from a distance.

At this point the Greeks realized that an equal-sided square was a bad formation to adopt with the enemy on their heels. For whenever the sides of the square converged, either because the road narrowed or because mountains or a bridge left them no choice, some hoplites were inevitably squeezed out and all the jostling and confusion impaired their progress, until, of course, they became more or less useless, since they were out of formation. Moreover, when the sides diverged again, the hoplites who had previously been squeezed out were necessarily out of position, the centres of the sides were bound to be unmanned, and the men affected by these accidents inevitably felt threatened, with the enemy on their heels. Then again, when they had to cross a bridge or something, everyone speeded up because he wanted to be the first across, and this made them vulnerable to an attack from the enemy.

Once the generals had come to recognize these problems, they created six companies of 100 men each, under company commanders, and then troop commanders and section commanders

under them.* With this structure, whenever the sides of the square converged in the course of their march, the company commanders at the rear would drop back so as not to get in the way of the sides and for a while would lead their men behind the sides; and when the sides of the square diverged, they would fill up the space in the middle. If the gap they were passing through was rather narrow, they filled up the centre company by company; if it was a bit wider, they did so troop by troop; and if it was particularly wide, they did so section by section.* As a result, the centre was always filled. And if they had to cross a bridge or something, there was no confusion, because the companies took turns to make the crossing, and if any part of the main body of the army needed them for anything, they went over to help. And so they marched on for four days with this system in place.

During the fifth stage of this leg of their journey, they caught sight of a palace of some kind with a number of villages grouped around it. The road to this spot passed through high hills, which were the foothills of the mountain under which the villages were situated. It goes without saying, given that the enemy had cavalry, that the Greeks were delighted to see the hills; but after leaving the plain and marching up the first hill, they were marching down the other side before climbing the next one when the barbarians, urged on by whips,* attacked them with javelins, sling-shot, and arrows fired down the slope from the top of the hill. A number of Greeks were wounded and their light-armed troops were overpowered and boxed up within the lines of hoplites so that both the slingers and the archers were caught up among the non-combatants and were completely ineffective the whole day long. Despite being hard pressed, the Greeks tried to go after the barbarians, but since they were heavy-armed hoplites it took time for them to reach the top of the hill, while the enemy troops sprinted away, and each time the hoplites made their way back to the rest of the army they came under the same hail of fire.

The same thing happened again on the second hill, and so, before moving off the third hill, they decided to send a detachment of peltasts from the right side of the square up the side of the mountain to a position above the enemy troops who were following them. The enemy then stopped attacking the Greeks on the downhill stretches, because they were afraid of being cut off and finding themselves with

hostile forces to either side of them. So this is how the Greeks carried on for the rest of the day, with some of them taking the road over the hills and the rest on a parallel course on the mountainside. Finally they came to the villages, where they appointed eight doctors* to look after all the wounded men.

They stayed in these villages for three days, partly for the sake of the wounded, but also because they found a lot of provisions there, which had been stockpiled by the satrap responsible for the region. There was wheat flour, wine, and plenty of barley which had been stored as fodder for horses. On the fourth day they marched down to the plain, where Tissaphernes and his army caught up with them. But the Greeks had learnt the hard way that they should make camp at the first village they found, rather than marching and fighting at the same time; and in any case a lot of the men were *hors de combat*– some because they were wounded, but others because they were carrying the wounded or the arms and armour of those who were carrying the wounded. After they had made camp, the barbarians approached the village and tried to make use of their long-range missiles, but the Greeks came off much better in this engagement; there was a big difference between repelling the enemy by making a sortie from a stable position and fighting off an attack while on the march.

The afternoon drew on and the time came for the barbarians to leave. They never made their camp within sixty stades of the Greek encampment, because they were frightened of a night attack by the Greeks. And with good reason: at night a Persian army is worthless. They not only tether their horses, but usually hobble them too, to stop them running off if the tether comes undone, and in the event of an alarm a Persian horseman cannot mount until the saddlecloth and bridle have been put on his horse, and he has donned his breastplate– none of which is easy at night when an alarm has sounded. That is why they used to make their camp a long way from the Greeks.

Once it was clear that the barbarians intended to leave and that the order to do so was passing through their ranks, the Greeks received the command, shouted out within hearing of the enemy, that they were to pack up their baggage. The barbarians delayed their departure for a while, but left when it got late, because they did not relish the idea of marching and reaching their camp after dark. When the

Greeks saw that the enemy were now definitely withdrawing, they too broke camp and set out. They went about sixty stades, which meant that the two armies were so far apart that they saw no sign of the enemy the next day or the day after that. The next day, however, as a result of having pushed on through the night, the barbarians occupied a position above the Greeks' intended route, on a spur of the mountain overlooking the way down to the plain.

When Chirisophus saw that the spur was already occupied, he ordered Xenophon up from the rear and told him to bring the peltasts with him up to the front. But Xenophon could see clear indications that Tissaphernes was approaching with his whole army, so he did not take the peltasts, but rode up and asked Chirisophus why he had asked for him. 'Just use your eyes,' Chirisophus said. 'The high ground overlooking our way down has already been occupied. We can't get past unless we clear them off it. But why didn't you bring the peltasts?'

Xenophon replied that he did not want to leave the rear undefended with the enemy already coming into sight. 'Fine,' said Chirisophus, 'but now we've got to come up with a plan for driving those men off the hill.'

Just then Xenophon noticed that the peak of the mountain was right above their own army, and that there was a way to approach the enemy's position from the peak. 'Chirisophus,' he said, 'the best plan would be for us to make our way as quickly as possible to the top of the mountain. If we occupy that, it will be impossible for the men overlooking the road to stay where they are. I'd be glad to undertake the mission, if you like, while you stay with the army– or if you prefer you can go to the mountain while I stay here.'

'It's up to you,' said Chirisophus. 'You choose.'

Xenophon said that, as the youngest, he chose the mission, and he asked Chirisophus to let him have some men from the front, since it would take too long to get them from the rear. Chirisophus let him take the peltasts who had been posted in the front, and replaced them with some from the middle of the square. He also detailed the 300 elite troops whom he had under his personal command at the front of the square to go with Xenophon.

Xenophon and his men set out as rapidly as they could, but as soon as the enemy troops stationed on the hill noticed them making their way towards the top of the mountain, they set off too, in a race

to see who could reach the top first. Shouts filled the air, as the Greeks urged their men on and Tissaphernes' men did the same. Xenophon rode alongside his men and called out encouragement: 'Men, think of this as a race with Greece, with your children and wives, as the prize! A little effort now will be rewarded with no more fighting for the rest of the journey!' But Soteridas of Sicyon said: 'It's not fair, Xenophon. You're on horseback, while the weight of my shield has totally worn me out.' At this, Xenophon jumped off his horse, pushed Soteridas out of the column, took his shield from him, and marched on as quickly as he could with the shield– and since he was wearing his cavalryman's breastplate, it was hard going for him. He kept urging the men in front of him to lead the way and the men behind to overtake him, because he was struggling to keep up. But the other men punched Soteridas, threw stones at him, and called him names, until they forced him to take his shield back and march on with it. Xenophon remounted and led the way on horseback, as long as the terrain made that possible, and then he abandoned his horse and hurried forward on foot. And they did reach the top before the enemy.

[5] With the Greeks occupying the top of the mountain, the barbarians turned and fled, each man looking out for himself, while Tissaphernes' and Ariaeus' troops turned aside and left by another route. Chirisophus led his men down to the plain and camped in a village, which was just one among the many villages in this plain by the Tigris that were well stocked with provisions. In the late afternoon, the enemy suddenly appeared on the plain and slaughtered any of the Greeks they found scattered over the plain in search of plunder; in fact, several herds of cattle had already been captured while they were being driven across to the far side of the river. At this point Tissaphernes and his men tried to set fire to the villages, and the prospect of not having anywhere to get provisions from, if the villages were burnt, deeply worried some of the Greeks.

Chirisophus had taken some men to go and help the raiders on the plain and had just got back, and Xenophon, then down from the mountain, fell in with the rescue party. He rode alongside them and said: 'Men of Greece, do you see how they admit that the land is now ours? I mean, they stipulated, as one of the terms of the truce between us, that we should not set fire to the king's territory, but now they are burning it themselves, as if it belonged to someone else.

Well, if they leave any provisions behind anywhere for their own use, they'll see us making our way there, but, Chirisophus, I think we should defend the villages against the men who are trying to burn them, as if the villages really were ours.'

'I disagree,' Chirisophus replied. 'Let's set fire to them ourselves as well, and then they'll stop soon enough.'

Back in the camp, while the men were busy with their provisions, the generals and company commanders had a meeting. They were quite uncertain what to do next, given that on one side of them were towering mountains, and on the other was a river which was so deep that the spears men used to probe for the bottom vanished below the surface. While they were still in this state of uncertainty, a Rhodian came forward and said: 'My friends, I can get you across the river in blocks of 4,000 hoplites. You have only to let me have what I need and pay me a talent.' When he was asked what he needed, he said: 'Two thousand skins.* I can see all the sheep, goats, oxen, and asses we've got. Once they've been skinned, and their skins have been inflated, the crossing will be easy. I'll also need the ropes you use for your yoke-animals, which I'll use to tie the skins together, and also to stabilize the skins: I'll fix stones to every skin with these ropes and let the stones down into the water to act as anchors. Next I'll make a bridge of the skins across the river and secure them at both ends, and finally I'll lay branches on them and cover the branches with earth. You don't need to worry for a moment about drowning, because every skin will support two men and stop them from drowning, and the branches and earth will make a non-slippery surface.' The generals thought this idea was clever but unrealistic, given the presence of large numbers of horsemen on the other side of the river, who would immediately prevent even the first part of the plan from being carried out.

So the next day they burnt to the ground the villages where they had spent the night, and then retraced their route back to the villages which remained undamaged by fire. This meant that the enemy did not advance on them, but just watched, as if they were wondering where the Greeks would go and what they had in mind. While the men were busy foraging, the generals held another meeting. They had the prisoners brought before them and questioned them about what lay in every direction around them. The prisoners said that Babylon and Media lay to the south, past the land through which

they had already come; that to the east lay the route to Susa and Ecbatana, where the king was said to have his spring and summer residences;* that to the west, across the river, lay the way to Lydia and Ionia; and that the way north, through the mountains, would take them to the Carduchians.* They described the Carduchians as a belligerent, mountain-dwelling people who had never submitted to the king; in fact, they said, the mountains were so harsh that the king had once sent an invading force of 120,000 men against the Carduchians and not one of these men came back. Still, they added, there were some dealings between them and the Carduchians, because the Carduchians occasionally needed to negotiate a truce with the satrap responsible for the low country.

After listening to the prisoners' accounts, the generals had those who claimed familiarity with any of the surrounding districts sit apart from the rest, though they did not let them know which direction they were planning to take. But they were inclining towards the view that they had to cross the mountains into Carduchian territory, because the prisoners had told them that on the other side of the mountains they would come to Armenia, a large and prosperous land governed by Orontas. From there, the prisoners assured them, they could easily go wherever they wanted. At this, the generals performed sacrifices, so that they could set out exactly when it seemed right to do so,* because they were worried that the pass into the mountains might fall into enemy hands before they got there. After the evening meal they passed the word around that the men were to pack up their baggage, rest, and wait for the order to move out.

BOOK FOUR

[1] The order to move out came at about the time of the final watch,* when there was still enough of the night left for them to cross the plain under cover of darkness. They got up and set out. At daybreak, they reached the mountain, where Chirisophus took the lead, with his own men and all the light-armed troops as well, while Xenophon followed behind with the hoplites of the rearguard, but with no light-armed troops, because there seemed to be no danger of their being attacked from the rear while they were marching uphill. Chirisophus reached the top of the mountain before being noticed by any of the enemy, and then he led the way cautiously, and each successive section of the army as it crested the peak followed his lead into the villages which lay in the vales and hollows of the mountains.

The Carduchians immediately took their wives and children, abandoned their houses, and ran away to the mountains. There were plenty of provisions available, and the houses were also fitted out with large numbers of bronze utensils, but the Greeks took none of these utensils and did not go after the inhabitants—though, since they had no choice, they did take any provisions they found. They went easy on the Carduchians because they wanted to see whether, given their hostility to the king, they might be willing to let them pass through their land as if it were friendly territory, but the Carduchians did not respond when the Greeks called out to them and did not make any other friendly gesture either. But when the last of the Greeks were coming down from the peak into the villages—by which time it was dark, because the road was so narrow that the march up the mountain and then down the other side to the villages had taken all day—some of the Carduchians banded together and attacked the tail-enders. Even though the attackers were few, they killed some men and wounded others with their stones and arrows. The Greek army had come upon them unexpectedly, but if the Carduchian band had been larger, a substantial number of men would probably have been killed. So the Greeks camped for the night in the villages, while the Carduchians lit a large number of fires on the mountains all around them and kept one another in sight.

At dawn the Greek generals and company commanders met and

decided to carry on with only the essential and strongest yoke-animals, having abandoned the rest, and without all the recently captured slaves held in the army. Their thinking was, first, that their progress was slowed by all the yoke-animals and slaves; second, that a lot of men were unable to fight because they were looking after the captives and animals; and, third, that they needed to find and carry double the amount of provisions for all those people. The order was given to carry out this decision of theirs, and when they set out after their morning meal, the generals discreetly stood by a narrow stretch of the road and removed any of the proscribed things they found that had not been left behind. The men complied with the generals' wishes, apart from a few cases where someone smuggled something past them– the sort of thing that might help him if a good-looking boy or woman caught his fancy.

They marched on like this for the rest of the day, except for occasions when they were fighting or resting. The next day, there was a strong wintry storm, but they had to carry on because they were low on provisions. Chirisophus led the way, while Xenophon held the rear. The enemy launched a series of fierce assaults, and in the narrow passes they came close enough to fire their bows and slings at the Greeks from no great distance. This meant that the Greeks were forced to chase them off and then withdraw, which slowed their progress. Xenophon often called for a halt during the worst of the enemy assaults, and though Chirisophus invariably halted when he received Xenophon's request, on one occasion he did not, but kept the men pushing forward at a rapid pace and passed the word back to Xenophon that he should keep up with them. There was obviously some kind of trouble, but there was no time to go up to the front and discover the reason for Chirisophus' haste, and the upshot was that the rearguard was not so much marching as running away. This was the occasion when a brave man, a Spartan called Cleonymus, lost his life, shot in the side by an arrow that passed through his shield and his jerkin. Basias of Arcadia also died from a deep head wound.

As soon as they reached a staging area, Xenophon went straight to Chirisophus and remonstrated with him for not waiting, which left them no choice but to fight and retreat at the same time. 'As a result,' he said, 'two good, brave men have lost their lives, and we couldn't recover their bodies or bury them.'

'Just look at the mountains,' said Chirisophus in reply, 'and observe how impassable they all are. There's only the one road—a steep one, as you can see—and you'll notice that there's a horde of people on it. They've occupied the pass and are guarding it against us. I pushed on ahead and didn't wait for you because I wanted to try to seize the pass before they did. The guides we have with us say there's no other road.'

'Well, I've got two prisoners,' said Xenophon. 'The enemy were giving us a hard time, so we set an ambush for them. This gave us a chance to catch our breaths and to kill some of them, but we were also determined to take some prisoners precisely so that we would have guides who know the region.'

They lost no time in having the prisoners brought before them, and they questioned them one at a time, to see if they knew of any road other than the obvious one. However often and however fiercely they tried to intimidate the first man, he denied knowing of any other road, so since he had no useful information for them they cut his throat in front of the second man. The remaining man then said that the first man had denied knowledge of an alternative route because he had a married daughter living there, but that he would show them a route which even the yoke-animals could manage. When he was asked whether there was any part of the route that would present them with problems, he said that there was a peak they would have to take, otherwise they would be unable to get by it.

They decided, therefore, to call a meeting of the officers in command of both the peltast and the hoplite companies, to explain the situation to them, and to ask if any of them were willing to demonstrate his courage by volunteering for this mission. From among the hoplites, the volunteers were three Arcadians—Aristonymus of Methydrium, Agasias of Stymphalus, and Callimachus of Parrhasia. Callimachus tried to go one better than the others by saying that he was prepared to take volunteers from the whole army with him on the mission, 'because I'm sure that a lot of the young men will follow if I am their leader'. Then the generals asked if any of the officers in command of peltast units were prepared to join the mission, and Aristeas of Chios volunteered—and this was not the only time he proved his value to the army in this kind of situation.

[2] By then it was after noon, and the generals ordered the volunteers to set out as soon as they had eaten. They gave them the

guide, with his hands tied, and arranged that the volunteers would guard the peak that night, if they took it, and at daybreak would sound a trumpet. Those on the peak were then to attack the Carduchians who were occupying the obvious road through the mountains, while the generals would come to their assistance as quickly as they could. With these arrangements in place, the volunteer force of about two thousand set out in pouring rain, while Xenophon led the rearguard towards the obvious road, to keep the enemy's attention focused there and to make it more likely that the volunteers would go unnoticed as they went around the other way.

The rearguard had just reached a gully which had to be crossed before carrying on up the steep road when the barbarians began to roll spherical boulders of various sizes, but each big enough to make a cart-load, down the slope. The boulders crashed down onto the rocks and bounced off in all directions, making it completely impossible even to approach the entrance to the pass. Some of the company commanders gave up on that route and kept trying alternatives until nightfall, when they thought they could make their way back without being seen. Then they went back to eat, since those of them who had been in the rearguard had missed out on the midday meal too. But the whole night long the enemy kept rolling boulders down the hillside, as the Greeks could tell from the noise.

The detachment with the guide took the long way round and came upon the expected enemy guards sitting around a campfire. Those they did not kill they chased off, and then they stayed there themselves, under the impression that they were occupying the peak. In fact, though, they were not occupying the peak; there was a hill above them and the narrow road where the guards had been posted ran alongside this hill. Nevertheless, there proved to be a way for them to get from where they were to the enemy who were occupying the obvious road.

At daybreak, after a night spent there, they formed up for battle and set off silently against the enemy. It was misty, so they got close without being seen. When the two sides caught sight of each other, the trumpet sounded and the Greeks raised the battle-cry and charged the enemy. The Carduchians gave way, abandoned the road, and ran off, but their agility kept their casualties low. When Chirisophus and his men heard the trumpet, they immediately charged up the obvious road. Some of the other generals, however,

set off without taking any proper paths, but just by whatever route happened to present itself to them. They scrambled up as best they could, using their spears to haul one another up, and they were the first to link up with the Greeks who had already occupied the place.

Meanwhile, Xenophon and half the rearguard set out along the route taken by the detachment with the guide, because this was the route that best suited the yoke-animals, and he ordered the other half of the rearguard to follow the baggage train. As Xenophon and his detachment were marching along, they found that the enemy had occupied a hill overlooking the road, which would have to be cleared if they were to be able to link up with the rest of the Greeks. The men could have taken the same route as the others, but this was the only way the baggage train could go, and so with cries of encouragement to one another they advanced towards the hill with their companies formed into columns. They did not completely surround the hill, but left a way off in case the enemy chose to run away. For a while, as each man picked his own way up the hillside, the barbarians fired arrows and other missiles at them, but then they turned and fled, preferring to abandon the place rather than fight at close quarters.

So the Greeks got past this hill, but then they saw another one in front of them, which was also occupied by the enemy. They decided to advance on this second hill too, but Xenophon was worried about leaving the hill they had already taken unoccupied, in case the enemy might take it again and attack the baggage train as it came past—and the baggage train was strung out because of the narrowness of the road. So he left three companies on the hill under the command of two Athenians—Cephisodorus the son of Cephison and Amphicrates the son of Amphidemus—and an Argive exile called Archagoras, while he personally took the rest of the troops, marched against the second hill, and took it by using the same tactics as before.

There remained a third hill, by far the steepest, which overlooked the spot captured by the detachment of volunteers during the night, where the enemy guards had built a campfire. But as the Greeks were approaching, the barbarians abandoned the hill without a fight. Everyone was surprised at this and assumed that they had left from fear of being surrounded and trapped on the hill, but in fact their position on the peak allowed them to see what was happening further back along the route, and they had gone to attack the men who had

been left behind as guards. Xenophon set off up to the peak with the youngest men under his command, having ordered the rest to march slowly on along the road, so that the tail-enders could link up with them, until they reached the level ground ahead, where they were to halt with their weapons at the ready.

Just then Archagoras of Argos ran up with the news that they had been driven off the first hill, and that everyone who had not jumped off the cliff and reached the rearguard had been killed, including Cephisodorus and Amphicrates. After this success, the barbarians went and occupied a hill on the other side of the road from the third hill, and Xenophon sent over a translator to negotiate a truce with them and to ask for time to recover the bodies of the dead. The barbarians said that they would let them have the bodies back as long as they undertook not to burn their houses—a condition to which Xenophon agreed. While these negotiations were going on, however, and the rest of the Greek army was passing by, all the local inhabitants had flocked together and the enemy began to make a stand there. And when Xenophon and his men started to climb down the hill with the intention of going to where the others were waiting under arms, a hostile horde charged at them, making a terrible din. As soon as the enemy reached the peak of the hill which Xenophon was descending, they began to roll rocks down the slope. They broke one man's leg, and Xenophon's shield-bearer* deserted him, with the shield he was carrying. But a hoplite called Eurylochus, an Arcadian from Lusi, ran over to him and held his shield in front of them both while they retreated. Everyone else also managed to withdraw to the ranks of the main army.

Afterwards, with the whole Greek army reunited, they made camp there, surrounded by beautiful houses. There was no shortage of supplies, and there was plenty of wine too, which the Carduchians kept in plaster-lined cisterns. Xenophon and Chirisophus succeeded in persuading the enemy to let them have the corpses of the dead in exchange for the guide and they did everything they could under the circumstances that is usually done when burying brave men.

The next day they carried on without a guide, while the enemy tried to hinder their progress by engaging them in battle and by occupying any narrow stretches before they got there. Whenever it was the van whose progress was impeded, Xenophon would take his men up towards the mountains from the rear and set about opening

the road again for the vanguard by trying to get higher than the enemy fighters who were causing the problem; and whenever the rear was under attack, Chirisophus took his men, tried to get higher than the enemy fighters who were causing the problem, and set about clearing the road for the rearguard. In this way they constantly helped each other and assiduously looked out for each other. But sometimes, when the Greeks who had gone up into the mountains were on their way down again, the barbarians made things extremely difficult for them.

The barbarians were light enough on their feet to make good their escape even if they started running when they were quite close, because they carried nothing except bows and slings. They were also outstanding bowmen. Their bows were almost three cubits from tip to tip and when they shot they stepped on the bottom of the bows with their left feet as they drew back the string. Their arrows, which were more than two cubits long, could pass through shields and breastplates, and when the Greeks got hold of them, they fitted them with loops* and used them as javelins. The Cretan troops, led by Stratocles of Crete, were immensely useful in these regions.

[3] At the end of this day too they bivouacked among the villages overlooking the plain of the Centrites river, which is two plethra wide and forms the border between Armenia and Carduchian territory. The Greeks rested here, glad to be able to see the plain and the river, which was six or seven stades away from the Carduchians' mountains. So on this occasion they bivouacked in good spirits: they had provisions, and they could cast their minds back over all the hardship they had endured. They spent seven days* marching through Carduchian territory, there were battles every single day, and they suffered more losses than on all the occasions they had clashed with the king and Tissaphernes put together. So they slept that night in a good frame of mind, imagining that the worst was behind them. At daybreak, however, they saw armed horsemen on the far side of the river to stop them crossing, and foot soldiers lined up on the banks above the horsemen to stop them entering Armenia. These troops were Armenians, Mardians, and Chaldean* mercenaries, under the command of Orontas and Artuchas. People said that the Chaldeans were a free and courageous people; they carried large wicker shields and spears.

The banks on which these troops were arrayed were three or four

plethra beyond the river, and there was only one visible road heading inland, which seemed to be man-made. This, then, was the point where the Greeks attempted a river crossing, but the water turned out to be more than chest deep and the bed was rough, with large, slippery stones. Also, they could not wear their armour and wield their weapons and shields in the water without the river sweeping things away, and if they carried them on their heads they were vulnerable to arrows and other missiles. So they pulled back and camped where they were, by the river, but then, when they looked back to where they themselves had spent the previous night on the mountainside, they saw a horde of armed Carduchians. The Greeks' spirits sank very low at this point. Fording the river was obviously going to be tricky, in front of them they could see troops whose purpose was to stop them crossing, and behind them they could see the Carduchians who would attack them as they were crossing.

They stayed where they were for a whole day and night, without having the slightest idea what they should do next. Then Xenophon had a dream: he was bound with fetters, but the fetters fell off of their own accord, so that he was free and could take whatever length of stride he wanted.* In the morning he went to Chirisophus, told him that he felt hopeful, and described the dream to him. This cheered Chirisophus up and as the first rays of the sun began to shine all the generals who were there performed a sacrifice. The omens were good straight away, with the first victim, and after leaving the place of sacrifice the generals and company commanders told the men to prepare their morning meal.

While Xenophon was eating, two young men ran up to him. Everyone knew that, if they had a military matter to discuss, they could approach him during mealtimes and could wake him up if he was asleep. These young men told him that they had been out collecting kindling for a fire, when they had seen on the far side of the river, among some rocks that came down to the water's edge, an old man, a woman, and some young girls putting what looked like bags of clothing inside a hollowed-out rock. They took a look and decided that it was safe to cross, because at that point the terrain was unsuitable for the enemy cavalry. They undressed, they said, and took only their swords, because they supposed that they would have to swim across, but in fact they waded across without getting their genitals

wet. When they reached the other side, they took the clothes and crossed back over again.

Xenophon's first reaction was to pour a libation* himself and to tell his attendants to fill a cup for the young men and to beseech the gods who had shown the dream and the ford for good fortune in the future too. After the libation, he took them straight over to Chirisophus. They repeated their story, and on hearing the news Chirisophus, too, performed a libation. Afterwards he and Xenophon gave the troops the order to break camp and convened a meeting of the generals, to come up with the best possible plan for crossing the river, defeating the enemy force in front of them, and avoiding being hurt by those behind them. They decided that Chirisophus should take half the men across while the other half waited for a while with Xenophon, and that the yoke-animals and the camp followers should cross between Chirisophus and Xenophon.

When everything was in place, they set out with the two young men showing them the way, keeping the river on their left. It was about four stades to the ford and, as they marched along, the cavalry squadrons on the other side took a parallel course. When they reached the crossing and the river bank, they halted with their weapons at the ready. Chirisophus was the first to act: he put a wreath on his head,* took off his cloak, and was handed his weapons. He ordered everyone else to do the same, and told the company commanders to form their companies into columns to the right and left of him. The diviners let the blood from the throats of their victims pour into the river. The enemy kept shooting arrows and hurling sling-shot at them, but they were still out of range. When the omens were favourable, all the soldiers struck up the paean and raised the war-cry, while the women (there were a lot of kept women* in the army) all joined in with the ritual cry.*

Then Chirisophus and his men entered the river, while Xenophon took the fastest men from the rearguard and sprinted back to the ford opposite the road up to the Armenian mountains, in a feint designed to make the horsemen by the river think that he was going to cross there and trap them. When the enemy troops saw Chirisophus and his men easily wading through the water, and Xenophon and his men running back, they were terrified of being cut off; they galloped back towards the road which led up into the mountains from the river and once they they reached it, they raced for the mountains.

When Lycius, the cavalry commander, and Aeschines, the officer in charge of the peltasts who were attached to Chirisophus, saw that the enemy troops were in full flight, they set out after them, with their troops calling to the others in an attempt to get them to keep up and join them as they made for the mountain; but rather than chasing the horsemen, as soon as he was across Chirisophus made his way along the banks that abutted the river towards the enemy soldiers who were up there. At the sight of their own cavalry in flight, and of hoplites advancing on them, the barbarians abandoned the ridges overlooking the river.

Once Xenophon saw that everything was going well on the far side of the river, he retraced his steps as quickly as possible back to where the army was crossing, because by then the Carduchians could be seen coming down to the plain to attack the tail-enders. The high ground was in Chirisophus' hands, and the attempt of Lycius and his small cavalry squadron to hunt down the fugitives had resulted in their capturing the remnants of the baggage train, including some beautiful clothing and goblets. The Greek baggage train and camp followers were just in the process of crossing, when Xenophon wheeled his men around to face the Carduchians and halted them with their weapons at the ready. He ordered the company commanders to divide their companies into sections and to form up for battle section by section, starting on the left, until the company and the section commanders faced the Carduchians and the last man in each line stood with his back to the river.

Without the camp followers, the rearguard looked very thin and low on numbers, and the Carduchians picked up speed and struck up their martial songs. But once Chirisophus was sure that everything was secure on his side of the river, he detailed the peltasts, slingers, and archers to go to Xenophon and put themselves entirely under his command. When Xenophon saw them starting across, he sent a man with their instructions: they were to stay put by the river, without crossing, but when his men started to cross, they—the men on the other side—were then to enter the water to either side of his men, as though they were going to cross, the javelin-men with their fingers already through the loops of their javelins and the bowmen with arrows notched; but they were not to advance far into the river.

The instructions he gave his own men were that as soon as they were within range of the enemy slingers and could hear the

sling-shot hitting shields, they were to strike up the paean and then charge at the enemy; when the enemy turned, the trumpeter by the river would give the signal for battle—but that would be the signal for them to turn right and about-face, so that the last man in each line was at the front, and then everyone was to race across the river as fast as he could while maintaining his place in the formation, so that they would not obstruct one another; and whoever got to the other side first would be considered the best man among them.

By now, there were only a few men remaining, because quite a lot even of those who had been ordered to stay had already left, to look after the yoke-animals or the baggage or the women, so the Carduchians approached full of confidence and began to fire sling-shot and arrows. The Greeks struck up their paean and charged at them. The Carduchians did not stand their ground, because although their equipment was perfect for swift strikes and hasty retreats in the mountains, it was inadequate for hand-to-hand combat. At that point the trumpeter gave the signal, and while the Carduchians hugely increased the speed of their flight, the Greeks turned around and started to cross the river as fast as they could. Some of the enemy noticed what was going on, rushed back towards the river, and managed to wound a few men with their arrows, but most of them could be seen to be still running even when the Greeks were on the other side of the river. As for the reinforcements, their courage got the better of them and they advanced further into the river than they were supposed to, which meant that they crossed back again after Xenophon's men, and a few of them too were wounded.

[4] It was midday by the time they were all across. They formed up and marched through Armenia over a plain which was interrupted only by gentle hills. They marched at least five parasangs, because the frequency of warfare between the Armenians and the Carduchians meant that there were no villages close to the river. The village they eventually reached was large: it contained a residence for the satrap and most of the houses were fortified. There were plenty of provisions. The next leg was a two-day march of ten parasangs which took them past the sources of the Tigris. The next leg was a three-day march of fifteen parasangs that brought them to the Teleboas river, which made up in beauty for what it lacked in size. There were a lot of villages in the region of this river, and the area as a whole was called Western Armenia.

The governor* of Western Armenia, a man called Tiribazus (who was on such good terms with the king that, if he was available, no one else was allowed to help the king mount his horse), then rode up with a cavalry squadron. He sent a translator ahead to convey his request for a conference with the Greek leaders. The generals decided to hear what he had to say, and when they came within hearing distance they asked what he wanted. He replied that he wanted to enter into a truce with them, the terms being that he would not initiate hostilities against the Greeks and they would not burn any houses in his territory, though they could take all the provisions they needed. The generals agreed and the two sides concluded a truce on these terms.

The next leg was a three-day march of fifteen parasangs across the plain, with Tiribazus and his men following about ten stades behind them, until they came to a palace with a number of villages clustered around it, all of which were well stocked with provisions. While they were camped there for the night, there was a heavy snowfall, and the next morning they decided that the various divisions of the army, along with their generals, might as well be quartered in different villages, because there was no sign of hostile activity and the depth of the snow seemed to guarantee their safety. The provisions they found in these villages were all of a high quality—cattle, grain, aged and fragrant wines, raisins, and all kinds of legumes. However, some of the men who had drifted away from the main camp reported seeing many fires gleaming in the night, so the generals changed their minds, thinking that it might not be safe to disperse the men in different quarters, and decided to bring them together again. So they all regrouped—and in any case the weather seemed to be clearing up.

That night, however, snow fell in amazing quantities, until it buried the weapons, covered the men as they were lying on the ground, and even made movement difficult for the yoke-animals. No one really wanted to get up, because the snow that had fallen was a source of warmth for everyone on the ground, except in cases where it had slipped off. Xenophon finally braced himself and got up without his cloak to chop wood, but someone else soon got up too and took over the wood-chopping. Then everyone else got up as well and set about lighting fires and greasing their bodies;* they had found plenty of ointment there, made out of lard, sesame oil, almond oil (made from bitter almonds), and turpentine, and they used this as a substitute for

olive oil. They also found a perfumed ointment made from the same ingredients. After this they decided once again to take up separate quarters in houses throughout the various villages. The men were delighted to be back under cover and surrounded by provisions, and they cheered out loud. But those who had been irresponsible enough to have burnt houses down when they left them before paid the penalty of uncomfortable quarters.

That night they assigned some troops to Democrates of Temnus and sent him to the mountains, where the men who had drifted away from the main camp had reported seeing fires. Democrates had a reputation, based on many earlier instances, for delivering accurate information in such situations; if he said something was the case, it was the case, and if he said it was not, it was not. He returned from his mission without having seen any fires, but with a prisoner who had a Persian bow and quiver, and a battleaxe similar to the kind used by the Amazons.* When the prisoner was asked where he was from, he said he was Persian and that he had come from Tiribazus' camp to get provisions; when he was asked how big a force Tiribazus had and why it had been assembled, he said that Tiribazus had Chalybian and Taochian mercenaries in addition to his own men, and that the intention underlying all his preparations was to attack the Greeks in the mountain pass where there was a narrow ravine and no alternative route.

The generals decided to recombine the army in response to this information. As soon as this had been done, they detailed a garrison to stay behind, with Sophaenetus of Stymphalus in charge, and set out with the prisoner as their guide. As they were marching through the mountain pass, the peltasts, who had gone on ahead, caught sight of the enemy camp and, without waiting for the hoplites, they shouted out loud and charged towards the camp. The noise was enough to make the barbarians turn and flee, but some of them still lost their lives; the Greeks also captured about twenty horses and took possession of Tiribazus' tent, along with its silver-footed couches and its goblets, and some men who claimed to be the governor's bakers and cup-bearers. When the hoplite generals found out what had happened, they decided to return to camp as quickly as possible, in case the men they had left behind were attacked. They recalled the men with a blast of the trumpet, set off back, and reached the camp later that same day.

[5] The next day they decided that they had better cover as much ground as possible before Tiribazus reassembled his forces and occupied the ravine. They packed up and set off straight away through thick snow with a number of guides, and that same day they passed the peak where Tiribazus had been planning to attack them, before making camp. The next leg was a three-day march of fifteen parasangs through uninhabited countryside to the Euphrates, which they waded across with the water reaching only up to their midriffs, since they were not far, according to their informants, from the sources of the river.

The next leg was a three-day march of thirteen parasangs across a plain that was blanketed in thick snow. The third of these stages was difficult: the north wind was blowing straight into their faces, the cold was searing, and the men were freezing. One of the diviners suggested that they should sacrifice to the wind, and once they had done so everyone got the distinct impression that the wind became less bitter. But the snow was lying a fathom deep on the ground, and the cold caused the deaths not only of many of the yoke-animals and the slaves, but also of about thirty soldiers. They got through that night by keeping fires alight—there was plenty of wood at their staging area—but there was no wood left for the late-comers, and those who had been there for some time and had fires going refused to let the late arrivals near their fires unless they gave them some of their wheat or whatever else they had to eat. So each group shared with the other what they had. Wherever there were fires, the snow melted all the way down to the ground, forming huge pits. This, of course, was what made it possible to measure the depth of the snow.

The whole of the following day was spent marching through snow, and a lot of the men suffered from hunger faintness.* Xenophon, who was bringing up the rear, kept coming across men who had fallen by the wayside and did not know what was wrong with them, until someone who had met it before told him that the men were obviously suffering from hunger faintness and would be able to get to their feet if they had something to eat. So Xenophon searched through the baggage train and handed out anything edible he found or sent those who were capable of running to give the food to those who were ill—and after they had eaten something they got to their feet and carried on.

As evening was drawing in, Chirisophus came to a village where

he found women and girls from the village outside the fortifications, fetching water from the well. The women asked who they were and the translator replied in Persian that they were on their way from the king to the satrap. The women then said that the satrap was not there, but was about a parasang away. Since it was late, they accompanied the water-carriers inside the fortifications to visit the village headman. So Chirisophus camped there, along with everyone else who made it that far, but some of the other soldiers were unable to complete the stage and spent the night without food or fire, and this caused the death of several more soldiers.

Some of the enemy had formed themselves into bands and were following the Greeks; they would seize any yoke-animals which had collapsed and fight one another for them. At the same time, the soldiers who were suffering from snow-blindness were finding it hard to keep up, as were those whose toes had rotted off from the freezing cold. Wearing a protective covering of something dark-coloured over the eyes as one marched stopped a man losing his sight, and keeping one's feet constantly in motion, never still, and taking one's footwear off at night helped prevent frostbite; but whenever men slept with their shoes on, the straps sank into their flesh and their shoes froze onto their feet, especially because those whose old shoes had worn out were wearing no more than pieces of leather made from the hides of recently skinned oxen.

Emergencies such as these, then, caused some men to fall behind. In one case, a few men saw a dark patch of ground free of snow and guessed that it had melted—as indeed it had, because of a spring which was steaming in a glen close by. They turned aside there, sat down, and refused to carry on. When Xenophon came by with the rearguard and saw them, he begged and implored them, using every device and resource at his disposal, not to fall behind. He pointed out that there were large bands of hostile soldiers on their trail, and in the end he lost his temper. But they told him to cut their throats, since they could not carry on. Under these circumstances, the best course of action seemed to be to frighten the enemy off, if possible, because otherwise the exhausted men would certainly become their victims. It was already dark, and the enemy troops were making a lot of noise as they advanced, quarrelling about their booty. The men of the rearguard, who were in good health, leapt forward and charged the enemy, while the sick men shouted as loudly as they could and

clashed their shields and spears together. The terrified enemy soldiers threw themselves down through the snow into the glen, and not the slightest sound was heard from them afterwards.

Xenophon and his men told the invalids that people would come back for them the next day and carried on. But before they had gone four stades they came upon some more soldiers lying down on the road in the snow wrapped up in their cloaks, without even a single sentry on duty. They tried to get them on their feet, but the men said that those in front would not let them through. Xenophon left them there and ordered the fittest of the peltasts forward to see what the hold-up was. The report came back that the whole army was doing the same: they had all stopped for the night. So Xenophon and his men bivouacked without fire or food, and posted sentries as effectively as they could. When the night was nearly over, Xenophon sent the youngest of his troops back to the sick men with instructions to make sure that they got up and carried on.

Meanwhile, Chirisophus sent some of the men from the village to find out what the tail-enders were up to. The rearguard were glad to see them, gave them the invalids to take to the camp,* and then carried on themselves. Within twenty stades they reached the village where Chirisophus had spent the night. Now that they were all together again, it seemed safe for the divisions of the army to be quartered in separate villages; Chirisophus stayed where he was, while the other generals drew lots for the villages they had seen and then set off separately, each with his own men. At this point Polycrates, a company commander from Athens, asked to be released from the column. He took the fastest runners and dashed ahead to the village which the lottery had assigned to Xenophon, where he caught all the inhabitants, including the headman, inside the village, along with seventeen colts, which were being kept as tribute for the king,* and the headman's daughter. She had been married eight days earlier, but her husband had gone out hunting hares and so avoided falling into Polycrates' hands in the village.

The village houses were built underground. The entrance was like the mouth of a well, and then the houses opened up lower down. The entrance passages were excavated for their animals, while men went down by ladder. Their livestock—goats, sheep, cattle, and poultry—lived with their young inside the houses and were fed indoors. Large jars contained wheat, barley, lentils, and barley wine.

The jars of wine had barleycorns floating level with the lips of the jar, and unjointed reeds of various lengths had been placed on the jars; one drank by picking up a reed, putting it in one's mouth, and sucking. The wine was very strong, unless it was diluted with water,* but it made a very pleasant drink when one got used to it.

Xenophon had the headman of this village join him for the evening meal and told him not to worry: he would not lose his children, he said, and before leaving they would fill his house with provisions if he served the army well as their guide until they reached another tribe. He promised to act as their guide and, as a gesture of friendship, told him where there was a buried cache of wine. So that night all Xenophon's men lay down to sleep, surrounded by plenty of everything they needed, in this village where they were quartered, but they made the headman and his children stay together where they could keep a watchful eye on them.

The next day Xenophon took the headman with him when he went to see Chirisophus. Whenever he passed a village, he turned aside to visit the men who were quartered there and in every case he found them eating well and in good spirits—and he was never allowed to leave before he had been served a meal, which always consisted of lamb, kid, pork, veal, and poultry, served up all at once along with plenty of loaves of wheat and barley. And whenever, as a gesture of friendship, someone wanted to offer someone else the cup, he would drag him over to the jar, where he had to bend over and slurp the wine down as if he were an ox. They gave the headman permission to take anything he wanted, but he refused all offers, except that he had every one of his relatives that he met join him. When they reached Chirisophus, they found his men, too, dining in their quarters, wearing garlands of hay and attended by Armenian boys in their native clothes. The men used gestures to show the boys what to do, as if they were deaf and dumb.

Once Chirisophus and Xenophon had greeted each other, they questioned the village headman together, with the help of the Persian-speaking translator. They asked him what country they were in, and he said 'Armenia'. Next, they asked him who the horses were being kept for, and he said they were tribute for the king. He also informed them that across the border lived the Chalybians, and he told them how to get to the road that would take them there. When Xenophon left, he took the headman back for the time being to his family and,

because he had been told that the horse was the animal they sacrificed to the Sun God,* he gave him a horse he had which was rather old, so that the headman could fatten it up and sacrifice it. Xenophon had taken the horse as booty, but he was afraid that it would die from the ill effects of the journey. He took for himself some of the colts, and he gave one to each of his fellow generals and company commanders. The horses in that part of the world were smaller than the Persian breed, but much more lively. Also at this time the headman taught Xenophon to wrap the feet of the horses and the yoke-animals in small bags for any journeys through snow, because without the bags they used to sink up to their bellies.

[6] Seven days later Xenophon handed the guide over to Chirisophus, but left behind all the members of his family except his son, who was just reaching puberty. He gave the boy to Episthenes of Amphipolis to look after, on the understanding that the headman could take the boy with him when he left, if he had done a good job as their guide. They filled the headman's house to capacity with provisions, and then they broke camp and set out.

The headman, who was not restrained in any way, guided them through the snow. But in the course of the third day of this leg, Chirisophus got angry with him for not having taken them to villages (the headman said that there were no villages near by), and he hit the man. He did not tie him up, however, and during the night the headman ran off, leaving his son behind. Throughout the whole journey, this was the only occasion when Chirisophus and Xenophon fell out, over the issue of the maltreatment and careless neglect of the headman. But Episthenes fell in love with the boy, took him home, and found him a very loyal companion.

After this they marched for seven days, at the rate of five parasangs a day, until they came to the Phasis river,* which was a plethron wide. The next leg was a two-day march of ten parasangs. At the pass from the plain into the mountains, they were met by a force consisting of Chalybians, Taochians, and Phasians. With the enemy in sight at the pass, Chirisophus called a halt while there was still a gap of about thirty stades between the two armies, so that the Greeks would not get too close to them while still marching in a column. He ordered the other officers to bring up their troops by companies until the army was in battle formation. Once the rearguard had arrived, he summoned the generals and company commanders to a meeting. 'As

you can see,' he said, 'the enemy control the mountain pass. We need to come up with the best plan for engaging them. I think we should tell the men to prepare their midday meal, while we think about whether we want to try to cross the mountains today or tomorrow.'

'In my view,' Cleanor said, 'we should arm ourselves and attack them without delay, as soon as we've eaten. If we do nothing today, the enemy troops who can see us now will grow in confidence and that will probably encourage more men to join them.'

Xenophon was the next to speak. 'I'll tell you what I think,' he said. 'If we have to fight, we had better go about it so that we fight as effectively as we can. We presumably want to get across the mountains with as little trouble as possible, and that means, I suppose, that we need to consider how to make sure that we sustain as few wounds as possible and lose as few men as possible. Now, the mountain range is, as far as we can tell from here, more than sixty stades long, but we can see that the only place they are guarding against us is the actual road. So it would be much better for us to try surreptitiously to steal a part of the mountain that is unoccupied and to see if we can seize it before they do, rather than advancing on strongly held positions and fighting men who have had time to prepare. After all, it's far easier to march unmolested uphill than it is to march across level ground with hostile forces all around, and even at night a man who's not involved in a fight can see what's right before his feet better than he can in daylight if he's fighting, and a rough road is kinder to the feet of those who are marching without fighting than a level surface is to those who have missiles raining down on their heads. I don't think it would be impossible for us to steal a position anyway, since we can march at night, to avoid being seen, and we can leave enough of a gap between us and the enemy to stop them noticing us in any other way. But I do think that if we led them to believe we were going to attack here, we would find the rest of the mountain even more deserted, since the enemy would be more likely to stay bunched together where they are.

'But I'm a fine one to be suggesting that we do some stealing. After all, Chirisophus, I hear that those of you Spartans who are Similars practise stealing from a very early age,* and that it's an admirable rather than a despicable thing for you to steal anything that is not specifically prohibited. Moreover, in order to make you better thieves and to help you try to get away with it, it is your

custom to flog anyone who's caught stealing. So it would be particularly appropriate for you now to show us how well brought up you were, and to make sure that we're not caught stealing a bit of the mountain. We don't want to get beaten.'

'Well,' said Chirisophus, 'what *I*'ve heard is that you Athenians are skilled at stealing your public funds, even though the thief runs an enormous risk, and that in fact most of the stealing is done by your best men—that is, if your best men are actually the ones who are chosen for political power. So it's *you* who should show us how well *you* were brought up.'

'All right,' said Xenophon. 'In the evening, after we've eaten, I'll gladly take the rearguard and establish a position on the mountain. I've already got guides, because our light-armed troops set a trap for the thieves who were following us* and took some of them prisoner. I've also found out from them that the mountain is not impassable, but is used for grazing goats and cattle, which means that once we've taken possession of part of the mountain, we'll be able to find a path for our yoke-animals. But in fact I don't expect that the enemy will stay where they are once they see us on high ground, cancelling out their advantage. After all, they're not prepared to come down and face us on level terms even now.'

'Why should you go,' Chirisophus said, 'and abandon your role as rearguard? Detail others to go, if you don't get volunteers.' Then Aristonymus of Methydrium offered himself and his hoplites, as did Aristeas of Chios and Nicomachus of Oeta with their light-armed troops. The arrangement they made was that they would light a lot of fires to show when they were in possession of the high ground. Once they had made their plans, they ate their midday meal, and afterwards Chirisophus had the whole army advance about ten stades closer to the enemy, to make them think that the Greeks were definitely going to take that route against them.

After the evening meal, when it was dark, the men assigned to the task left and seized a ridge of the mountain, while the others spent the night at rest where they were. When the enemy saw that the mountain had been occupied, they stayed awake and kept a lot of fires alight throughout the night. The next day, after he had sacrificed, Chirisophus led the rest of the army along the road, while the men who had seized the ridge advanced over the high ground. Most of the enemy soldiers remained at the mountain pass, but some of

them came out to meet those who were advancing over the high ground, and a fight took place on the high ground before the two main armies clashed. The Greeks were victorious and set out in pursuit of their defeated opponents. Meanwhile, the peltasts from the Greek forces on the plain had set off at a run towards the enemy position and Chirisophus was following at a brisk pace with the hoplites. But when the enemy troops on the road saw the defeat of their comrades on the high ground, they turned and fled. There were only a few casualties, but the Greeks captured huge numbers of wicker shields, which they slashed with their swords until they were useless. Once they reached the top of the pass, they performed sacrifices and set up a trophy. Then they marched down the other side to the plain, where they found villages which were well stocked with everything they needed.

[7] The next leg was a five-day march of thirty parasangs that brought them into the land of the Taochians, where they began to get very low on provisions, because the Taochians had removed all their supplies to the strongholds where they lived. However, one of the Taochian strongholds they came to was not an established community with houses, but just a place where men and women had gathered, along with a lot of livestock. Chirisophus therefore launched an attack on the place as soon as he got there. The stronghold was perched on top of precipitous cliffs, so the Greeks could not surround the place and attack it all together; companies came up into the attack one by one, each replacing the one before it when the men grew tired.

No sooner had Xenophon arrived with the peltasts and hoplites of his rearguard than Chirisophus said: 'You've come in the nick of time. We've got to take this place. The men will have nothing to eat unless we capture it.' They put their heads together to come up with a plan, and when Xenophon asked what was stopping them entering the stronghold, Chirisophus said: 'There's only one way in—the one you can see—and whenever we try to go along it, they roll rocks down on us from that cliff overlooking the road. And you can see', he added, pointing to men with crushed legs and ribs, 'what happens to anyone who's caught there.'

'What about if they use up all their stones?' Xenophon asked. 'Then there'll be nothing stopping us, surely, because there are plainly only a few people over there and only two or three of them

are armed. Also, as you can see as well as I, although the distance we have to cross while under attack is almost one and a half plethra, about a plethron of the ground has pine trees growing on it, with wide spaces between the trees. If the men stood behind the trees, how could they be hurt by thrown stones or rolled rocks? Then there would be only about half a plethron left, which they'd have to cover at a run when the stones and rocks stop.'

'But the stones and rocks rain down on us as soon as we start to approach the trees,' Chirisophus said.

'That would be perfect for us,' Xenophon replied, 'because they'll use up their stones all the more quickly. But let's move up to a spot from which we'll have only a short distance to run across, if we can, and from where it will be easy to retreat, if we want to.'

So Chirisophus and Xenophon set out, along with Callimachus of Parrhasia, one of the company commanders, whose turn it was that day to hold the position of senior company commander of the rear-guard. The company commanders of other divisions of the army stayed out of danger. Then about seventy men set out for the shelter of the trees, taking the utmost care and leaving one by one, not all at once. But some men, including Agasias of Stymphalus and Aristonymus of Methydrium (who were also commanders of rear-guard companies), took up positions before the shelter of the trees, because there was room for only one company of men to stand among the trees.

Callimachus suddenly had a clever idea: he repeatedly ran two or three paces forward from the shelter of his tree, and ran back again when the stones started to fly. Each time he ran forward, more than ten cart-loads of stones and rocks were used up. But when Agasias saw what Callimachus was up to, and realized that the whole army was watching, he became anxious in case someone else beat him into the stronghold, and so he set off by himself, without calling on anyone at all to join him, not even Aristonymus or Eurylochus of Lusi,* though they were near by and were his friends. He overtook everyone else, but when Callimachus saw him going past, he grabbed hold of the rim of his shield—but just then Aristonymus of Methydrium ran past them both, with Eurylochus of Lusi right behind him. All four of these men were constantly involved in a keenly contested rivalry to see which of them was the bravest, and on this occasion their rivalry enabled them to take the stronghold,

because once they had made it inside, the stones altogether stopped flying from above.

What followed was terrible to behold. Women threw their children off the cliff and then hurled themselves off afterwards, and the men did the same. At one point Aeneas of Stymphalus, one of the company commanders, saw a well-dressed man running as if to throw himself over the edge, and he grabbed hold of him to stop him, but the Taochian dragged Aeneas with him, and they both fell to their deaths on the rocks below. So very few prisoners were taken, but they got plenty of oxen, asses, sheep, and goats.

The next leg was a seven-day march of fifty parasangs through Chalybian territory.* Of all the peoples through whose lands they travelled, the Chalybians were the most valiant, and the Greeks were constantly involved in hand-to-hand fighting with them. The Chalybians wore linen cuirasses which reached down to their lower abdomen and had a thick fringe of twisted cords instead of flaps.* They also wore greaves and helmets, and tucked into their belts they carried a dagger about the size of a Laconian dirk,* which they used to slit the throats of anyone they managed to overpower. Then they would cut off their victim's head and take it with them, and whenever their adversaries were going to see them, they would break into song and dance. They also carried a spear which was about fifteen cubits long* and had a point at only one end. They stayed inside their towns until the Greeks had passed, and then followed them and harassed them all the way. They lived in strongholds, inside which they also stored all their provisions, which meant that there was nothing for the Greeks to take from their territory and they survived on the animals they had taken from the Taochians.

The Greeks then came to the Harpasus river, which was four plethra wide. The next leg was a four-day march of twenty parasangs through Scythenian territory, across a plain to some villages where they stayed for three days and replenished their provisions. The next leg was a four-day journey of twenty parasangs that brought them to a large and prosperous inhabited city called Gymnias. The local ruler sent the Greeks a guide from this city to take them through the land of his enemies. The guide came and told them that within five days, under his guidance, they would reach a place from where they could see the sea, and that if he failed they had his permission to kill him. When he took them into the land of his people's enemies, he kept

insisting that they burn and devastate the countryside, until it was clear that he had come not out of any goodwill towards the Greeks, but to make sure that this happened.

On the fifth day they did in fact reach the mountain, which was called Theches. When the first men got there,†* a huge cry went up. This made Xenophon and the rearguard think that the van too was under attack from another enemy force, as in the rear they were being followed by men from the land they were burning. The rearguard had killed some of them and, as a result of a successful ambush, had taken some prisoners and gained about twenty wicker shields which were covered in untreated oxhide with the hair still on it. But the cry kept getting louder and nearer, as each successive rank that came up began to sprint towards the ever-increasing numbers of those who were shouting out. The more men who reached the front, the louder the cry became, until it was apparent to Xenophon that something of special significance was happening. He mounted a horse, took Lycius and the cavalry, and rode up to lend assistance; and before long they could make out that the soldiers were shouting 'The sea! The sea!' and passing the word along. Then all the men in the rear began running too, and the yoke-animals and the horses broke into a gallop. When everyone reached the top of the mountain, they immediately fell into one another's arms, even the generals and the company commanders, with tears in their eyes.

Suddenly, at someone's suggestion, the soldiers began to bring stones and to make a great cairn, on which they placed, as dedications, a number of untreated oxhides, some sticks they had used for walking, and the shields they had captured. The guide not only slashed the shields himself, but encouraged the others to do so. Then the Greeks sent the guide back home with gifts from the common pool—a horse, a silver cup, Persian clothing, and ten darics. But he asked above all for some of their rings, and he was given a lot of them by the men. He showed them a village where they could set up camp, pointed out the road that would take them to the Macronians, and late in the day set off home through the darkness.

[8] The Greeks then marched for three days through the land of the Macronians, and covered ten parasangs. On the first day they reached the river which divided the land of the Macronians from that of the Scythenians, and found themselves between extremely forbidding ground on their right and on their left another river, into

which flowed the river-border which they were going to have to cross. The river to their left was thickly wooded with trees of no great girth, and when they got there the Greeks began to cut the trees down, because they were eager to leave the place as quickly as they could. But the Macronians, with their wicker shields, spears, and hair tunics, were lined up on the other side of the crossing-place, cheering one another on and hurling stones which failed to reach the Greeks and only fell harmlessly into the river.

At that point, one of the peltasts, who said he had been a slave in Athens, approached Xenophon and said that he recognized the language the men were speaking. 'I think', he said, 'that this is my native land. If you have no objection, I'd like to speak to them.'

'No, I've got no problem with that,' said Xenophon. 'Do talk to them and try to find out first of all who they are.' And 'Macronians' was the answer they gave to the question.

'Now,' Xenophon went on, 'ask them why they have taken the field against us—why they want to be our enemies.'

'Because you are attacking our land,' they said.

The Greek generals then told the man to say that they meant no harm, but were on their way back to Greece after having fought the king, and wanted only to get to the sea. The Macronians asked whether the Greeks would confirm the truth of what they were saying with the usual pledges, and the generals replied that they would be happy to give and receive pledges of good faith. So the Macronians gave one of their native spears to the Greeks, the Greeks gave the Macronians a Greek one (since the Macronians said that spears were pledges), and both sides called on the gods to witness their agreement.

With this assurance in place, teams of mingled Macronians and Greeks worked together to cut down the trees and build a causeway on which the Greeks could cross the river. The Macronians also supplied them with as many goods for sale as they could, acted as their guides, and two days later left them at the border between their land and that of the Colchians. On the mountain range they found there (which was massive, but not impassable), the Colchians were lined up in battle order. At first the Greeks formed up themselves into an opposing phalanx, with the intention of advancing in that formation towards the mountain, but then the generals decided to meet and confer about how best to conduct the battle.

Xenophon's view was that they should break up the phalanx and form the companies into columns, and he said as much. 'It will take hardly any time', he explained, 'for the phalanx to fall apart, because in some parts of the mountain we'll find rough terrain, even if in other places the going is easy, and as soon as the men see this phalanx fall apart, their confidence will be sapped. Also, if we advance on the enemy in lines that are short but deep,† they'll outflank us and the men who outflank us will have a free hand; and if we advance in lines that are long but shallow, it's highly likely that our lines will be broken open by the solid hail of men and missiles that will fall upon us—and that has to happen only in one place for the whole phalanx to be in trouble. No, I think we should form the companies into columns and space them out so that we cover enough ground for the outermost companies to extend beyond the wings of the enemy lines. If we adopt this formation, not only will we be beyond the enemy phalanx,† but the column formation will ensure that our best men take the lead, so that each company commander will pick the easiest route for his men. It's true that the companies will be spaced out, but it won't be easy for our adversaries to penetrate these gaps with companies to either side of them, and breaking through a company which is advancing as a column will be no easy matter either. Anyway, if one of the companies does get into trouble, the company next to it will come to its assistance; and as soon as just one of our companies has made it up to the crest, the enemy troops will all flee.'

This plan was approved and they formed the companies into columns. As Xenophon made his way over to the left wing from the right wing,* he repeatedly addressed the troops. 'Men,' he said, 'the enemy troops you can see are all that stand between us and the place we have for so long been determined to reach. We must find a way to eat them alive.'

So the companies took their places and formed up as columns; there were about eighty hoplite companies, with each company containing almost 100 men. The peltasts and the bowmen were formed into three units—one beyond the left wing, one beyond the right, and one in the centre—with each unit containing almost 600 men. The generals then gave the order to make a vow, and once the men had done so and had chanted a paean they began to advance. Chirisophus and Xenophon, along with the peltasts assigned to them, were beyond the enemy lines as they advanced, and when the

enemy noticed this they ran to face them, some to the right and some to the left; but this manoeuvre pulled their phalanx apart and left a large gap in their centre. Seeing them splitting off to either side, the peltasts of the Arcadian unit, under the command of Aeschines of Acarnania, thought they were running away, and with a shout they broke into a run. They were the first to get to the top of the mountain, with the Arcadian hoplites, under Cleanor of Orchomenus, close behind them. As soon as the Greeks broke into a run, the enemy lines crumbled and men scattered here and there in flight.

Having scaled the mountain, the Greeks encamped in a number of villages, which were well stocked with provisions. Generally speaking, there was nothing out of the ordinary there, but there were a lot of swarms of bees, and all the men who ate honeycomb became deranged, suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea, and were too weak to stand up. Those who had eaten a little behaved as though they were drunk, while those who had eaten a lot behaved like madmen, or even like people on the point of death.* The ground was so thickly covered with supine men that it looked like the aftermath of a defeat, and morale plummeted. On the next day, however, no one died, and they began to recover their senses at about the same time of day that they had eaten the honeycomb. Two or three days later, they were back on their feet, as if they had been treated with medicine.

The next leg, a two-day march of seven parasangs, brought them to the sea at Trapezus, an inhabited Greek city on the Euxine Sea which was originally founded in Colchian territory by emigrants from Sinope. They stayed there for about thirty days in Colchian villages, which they used as a base for raids on Colchis. The Trapezuntians sold the Greeks their supplies, made them welcome, and gave them oxen, barley, and wine as tokens of friendship. They also helped the nearby Colchians, most of whom lived on the plain, in their negotiations with the Greeks, and the Greeks were given oxen as tokens of friendship by these Colchians too.

Next they made all the arrangements necessary for the sacrifice they had vowed to make,* and by then they had gained enough oxen to offer in gratitude for their guidance to Zeus the Saviour and to Heracles, and to fulfil their vows to the other gods as well. They also held an athletic competition on the mountain where they were encamped, and they chose Dracontius the Spartiate* (who had been banished from his home while still a boy for having accidentally

stabbed another boy with his dagger and killed him) to be responsible for the racetrack and to supervise the contest. After the sacrifice, the generals gave the animal skins* to Dracontius and told him to show them where he had laid out the track. He pointed to the place where they happened to be standing and said: 'This hill is perfect for running in any direction.' 'But how', they asked, 'will they be able to wrestle on hard, shrub-covered ground like this?' And Dracontius replied: 'It'll be a bit more painful for the one who is thrown.'*

The events were a stade race for boys (most of their captives were boys), a long-distance race* in which more than sixty Cretans took part, and wrestling, boxing, and pancratium.* It was a wonderful spectacle. There were a great many entrants for each event and, with their friends watching,* there was enormous rivalry. There were also horse races, in which the riders had to ride downhill, turn their horses on the seashore, and make their way back up the hill again towards the altar. On the way down, most of the horses lurched around, and on the way back up they could hardly walk on the steepest stretches, and so the air was filled with shouts, laughter, and cheers.

APPENDIX

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Values varied somewhat from place to place within the Greek world; what follows is just one system.

Measuring Distance

16 fingers (breadth) = 4 palms = 1 foot
12 fingers = ½ cubit = 1 span (the distance between the tips of the thumb and the little finger when the hand is fully spread)
1¼ feet = 1 pygon (the distance from the elbow to the bottom joint of the little finger)
1½ feet = 1 cubit (the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger)
6 feet = 1 fathom (the distance from the fingertips of the left hand to those of the right hand when the arms are stretched out horizontally)
100 feet = 1 plethron
600 feet = 1 stade
30 stades = 1 parasang (see the note to p. 5)

1 foot on the Attic scale has been estimated to be 29.6 centimetres (11.65 inches). Therefore:

1 finger = 1.85 centimetres (0.73 inches)
1 palm = 7.4 centimetres (2.91 inches)
1 span = 22.2 centimetres (8.74 inches)
1 pygon = 37 centimetres (14.57 inches)
1 cubit = 44.4 centimetres (17.5 inches)
1 fathom = 1.776 metres (1.94 yards)
1 plethron = 29.6 metres (32.38 yards)
1 stade = 177.6 metres (194.29 yards)
1 parasang = 5.328 kilometres (3.33 miles)

Money, or Measuring Weight

Greek coinage was not on the whole fiduciary, but was worth its weight. Hence measures of weight are at the same time monetary measures.

1 talent = 60 mnas = 6,000 drachmas = 36,000 obols
1 obol = 722 milligrams (0.025 ounces)

1 drachma = 4.332 grams (0.15 ounces)
1 mna = 433.2 grams (15.16 ounces)
1 talent = 25.992 kilograms (57.31 pounds)

Measuring Capacity

Liquid measures: 1 amphora ('jar') = 12 choes ('pitchers') = 144 cotylae ('cups') = 864 cyathi ('spoons'). Since 1 amphora = about 39 litres (68.64 pints, 8.58 gallons), then 1 chous = 3.25 litres (5.72 pints), 1 cotyle = 270 millilitres (0.48 pints), and 1 cyathus = 45 millilitres (0.079 pints, 1.58 fluid ounces).

Dry measures: 1 medimnus = 48 choenixes = 192 cotylae. Since 1 cotyle = 270 millilitres (0.48 pints), then 1 choenix = 1.08 litres (1.90 pints), and 1 medimnus = 51.84 litres (91.24 pints, 11.40 gallons).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

References to modern works included in the Select Bibliography are given in shortened form. *FGH* stands for F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (15 vols.; Berlin and Leiden, 1923–58). For more detailed guidance on topography, see O. Lendle, *Kommentar zu Xenophons Anabasis* (Darmstadt, 1995), V. M. Manfredi, *La Strada dei Diecimila: Topografia e geografia dell'Oriente di Senofonte* (Milan, 1986), and R. J. A. Talbert (ed.), *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (Princeton, 2000).

BOOK ONE

3 *two sons*: according to Plutarch, Darius II and Parysatis (who was Darius' half-sister) also had two other sons, both younger than Cyrus, Ostanes and Oxathres (*Artaxerxes* 1.2); Xenophon himself later mentions a half-brother leading a contingent of Artaxerxes' army (2.4.25). Plutarch also alleges that Cyrus' claim to the throne was that he was the first son born after Darius II had become king (*Artaxerxes* 2.4), but his account may have been inspired by Herodotus' account of how Darius I chose Xerxes as his heir after being advised by the exiled Spartan king Damaratus that it was Spartan practice for the eldest son born in the purple to accede to the throne (7.2–3). Herodotus' account is suspicious: Xerxes was the eldest son born to Darius I by Atossa (the daughter of Cyrus II), and there were political reasons why Darius should have favoured a son born to her. Xenophon's claim that Parysatis supported Cyrus recalls Herodotus' account of Atossa's support for Xerxes: the Greeks liked to imagine that the Persian royal women were powerful at court. See P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, trans. P. T. Daniels (Winona Lake, Ind., 2002; Fr. orig. 1996), 518–22.

satrap: governor of one of the regions (twenty, according to Herodotus 3.89.1) into which the Persian empire was divided; Cyrus' area of command was greater than that of a regular satrap, though the details are controversial (see C. J. Tuplin, 'The Persian Empire', in R. Lane Fox (ed.), *The Long March* (New Haven, 2004), 162).

the Plain of Castolus: east of Sardis, a regular place of assembly (see also 1.9.7, and *Hellenica* 1.4.3). Xenophon also mentions Persian annual military reviews at *Oeconomicus* 4.6.

up country: the Greek word *anabainei* is cognate with the title of the work, *Anabasis*; the force of the *ana-* prefix is 'away from the sea'.

hoplites: heavily armed foot soldiers: see Introduction, pp. xxvii ff.

barbarians: Greek *barbaroi*, the regular word for non-Greeks; not necessarily a hostile term.

beheaded: Ctesias (*FGH* 688 FF 27–8) reports that the generals were taken to Babylon and that he was able to help Clearchus there as a service to Parysatis. If this is true, they were not executed at once (Xenophon does say later that Meno was kept alive for a year). Ctesias also reports that while the other generals' bodies were torn apart by dogs and birds, a sudden wind caused a mound to rise up over Clearchus' corpse and a grove of trees later grew on the mound (F 28, reported sceptically by Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 18.7). This story (with its hint of the Persian king's association with fertility) perhaps stems from pro-Cyrus propaganda put out by Parysatis (Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 238–9).

51 *at war with the Athenians*: the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC).

ephors: the five leading officials at Sparta, who served for one year.

Hellespont: Clearchus' governorship of Byzantium is also attested by Diodorus 14.12.2–7 and Polyaenus 2.2.7.

recorded elsewhere: an unexplained cross-reference: no such account is found in this work. Perhaps Xenophon forgot that he had not been more explicit earlier. Another hypothesis is that Xenophon wrote the obituary notices before the rest of the narrative.

52 *Gorgias of Leontini*: famous philosopher and teacher of rhetoric (*c.*480–380 BC), whose extant works include *The Encomium of Helen* and *The Defence of Palamedes*.

53 *Meno of Thessaly*: the hostility of Xenophon's obituary of Meno was explained in antiquity (Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides* 27) as due to rivalry over their links with Plato (this Meno is the eponymous character in Plato's *Meno*).

in the bloom of youth: the Greek adjective *hōraios* denotes 'the age at which one is most attractive and desirable' (K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (London, 1978), 69)—for the Greeks, the age just before the beard started to appear. For Aristippus, see 1.1.10, 1.2.1.

54 *mature enough to have a beard*: normally it was the older man who had the younger as his 'boyfriend' (*paidika*). Meno's reversal of the norm was meant to seem shocking (cf. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 87)—and it did shock: it was the one item in Xenophon's abuse of Meno recalled by Diogenes Laertius in his life of Xenophon (*Lives of the Philosophers* 2.50).

BOOK THREE

55 *the famous Socrates of Athens*: Xenophon was a pupil of Socrates, and he also wrote Socratic dialogues (Introduction, p. viii).

against the Athenians: Cyrus helped to finance the Spartan fleet after he had been appointed by his father to a special command in western Asia Minor in 407 BC. In the event, Xenophon was exiled by the Athenians, but his exile may have been because he later accompanied Agesilaus rather than because of his support for Cyrus (see Introduction, p. xv).

55 *whether or not he should go*: the oracle at Delphi was commonly consulted not just by cities planning to found a colony, for instance, or fight a war, but also by individuals seeking advice on their own problems; questions about journeys were especially common (R. C. T. Parker, 'One Man's Piety: The Religious Dimension of the *Anabasis*', in Lane Fox (ed.), *Long March*, 131–53, at 147 with n. 45). Xenophon manipulated the question because he wanted to go anyway.

56 *except Clearchus*: Diodorus, by contrast, states that all the generals knew that Cyrus was marching against the king (14.9.19).

Zeus the King: for the comparison between Zeus and the Persian king, compare Gorgias' description of Xerxes as 'Zeus of the Persians' (H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 82 B5a). In the *Interpretation of Dreams* by Artemidorus (second century AD), a dream of lightning striking a house is thought to foretell exile (2.9 p. 110.20–2 Pack).

57 *How old do I have to be?*: Xenophon was probably still under 30 at this time. His question perhaps reflects the fact that in Athens 30 was the age-limit for holding some offices and for jury service (Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 30.2, 63.3).

full brother: translating the Greek adjective *homomētrios*, literally 'sharing the same mother'—a word commonly used to distinguish full brothers from half-brothers.

58 *easier to wound and kill*: because the Persians were not as heavily armed as Greek hoplites.

59 *ears pierced, Lydian-style*: the Greeks thought it a sign of softness for a man to have his ears pierced, and the Lydians were commonly regarded as a luxurious and soft people (Herodotus 1.155.4). Apollonides was perhaps an ex-slave, like the Macronian peltast at 4.8.4.

62 *someone sneezed*: sneezing was regarded as an omen, and here it is a good omen because Xenophon had just uttered the word 'survival'. Cf. Telemachus' sneeze at Homer, *Odyssey* 17.541, after Penelope has just talked of the possibility of Odysseus' return home.

did homage to the god: the Greek term is *proskunēsis*; see note to p. 25.

beat them: at Marathon (490 BC). The Athenians did in fact receive help from Plataea, but they later prided themselves on having fought alone.

annual sacrifice: Herodotus puts the number of Persian dead at 6,400 (6.117.1): Xenophon's allusion implies a much higher figure (compare Plutarch, *On the Malice of Herodotus* 862 BC, who cites this sacrifice in a criticism of Herodotus' figure). The sacrifice was held on the sixth day of the Athenian month Boedromion; one later source puts the number of victims at only 300 a year (Aelian, *Various History* 2.25). Another version was that the Athenians vowed to sacrifice oxen, but changed to goats after the battle (scholia on Aristophanes, *Knights* 660).

63 *on land and sea*: on land at Plataea (479 BC), on sea at Salamis (480 BC).

trophies: at the spot where a battle had turned, victorious Greek armies dedicated trophies (*tropaia*)—wooden frames on which they hung weapons and armour captured from the enemy.

64 *Lycaonians*: see 1.2.19 for the Lycaonians; for other autonomous peoples within the Persian empire, see 2.5.13, and *Memorabilia* 3.5.26 (Mysians and Pisidians).

as the lotus-eaters were: an allusion to Homer, *Odyssey* 9.83–104: the lotus-eaters were one of the tribes encountered by Odysseus on his return to Ithaca; those of his companions who ate the lotus plant forgot about their journey home. In the classical era geographers located a tribe of lotus-eaters on the north coast of Africa (Herodotus 4.177).

66 *a Spartan*: because the Spartans were the supreme power in Greece at this moment. Chirisophus was also leader of the 700 hoplites sent out by the Spartans (1.4.3). It has been claimed that Xenophon obscures the fact that Chirisophus was elected overall leader (Diodorus 14.27.1). It is more likely that Diodorus is oversimplifying, just as later he contradicts Xenophon by saying that Xenophon was chosen general in Thrace (14.37.1).

67 *Zapatas river*: Xenophon does not say how the army crossed this river, some 400 feet in breadth.

68 *men from Rhodes*: Rhodians were renowned as slingers. The creation of a unit of slingers has been taken to show the versatility of the hoplite, but the unit may in fact have been formed from the camp followers; this would explain why Xenophon offers a special inducement (Whitby, 'Xenophon's Ten Thousand', 217–18).

69 *Clearchus' men*: the forty horsemen with Miltocythes who deserted to the king (2.2.7).

passed muster: Xenophon uses a verb cognate with *dokimasia*, the term used at Athens for the examination of magistrates before they entered office.

70 *mutilated the corpses of the dead*: in battles between Greeks, by contrast, it was customary to return corpses under treaty.

inhabited by Medes: Larisa is Nimrud, the Calah/Kalhu of Genesis 10: 11. Probably the best explanation for the name Xenophon gives is that it is derived from 'āl šarrūti', 'royal city', and that Xenophon assimilated what he heard to Larisa, which is also the name of several Greek cities. The physical description matches the site well (C. J. Tuplin, 'Xenophon in Media', in G. B. Lanfranchi, M. Roaf, and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Continuity of Empire (?): Assyria, Media, Persia* (Padua, 2003), 351–89, at 374–6).

The Persian king: Cyrus the Great, who conquered the Median empire in 550 BC. Xenophon obscures the fact that Larisa/Nimrud, like Mespila/Nineveh, mentioned immediately afterwards, was an Assyrian city. Both cities had been conquered and partly destroyed by the Medes in 614–612 BC. The only other evidence for a specific Persian attack on these cities is Amyntas *FGH* 122 F 2, an account of the conquest of Nineveh by Cyrus.

It is likely that the cities were still inhabited after the Median conquest and possible that the Persian conquest of these cities is historical. There is no reason to suppose that Xenophon himself has transferred stories from the Median conquest of Babylon to the Persian defeat of the Medes: he was presumably using local sources who were either ignorant of, or had political reasons for wanting to suppress, the Assyrian past. For a full discussion, see Tuplin, 'Xenophon in Media', 379–85.

70 *hid the sun from sight*: Xenophon is not referring to an eclipse, but to a meteorological event (like the thunder at Mespila, see below): at some times of the year clouds would be rare. Tuplin, 'Xenophon in Media', 381, compares the prophecy against Egypt at Ezekiel 32: 7: 'I will cover the sun with a cloud.'

the Medes: Mespila is Nineveh: see above on Xenophon's failure to mention the Assyrians. The name has been connected with Mosul (the city across the river from Nineveh) or with 'mušpalu' ('lower city'). The physical description is slightly less satisfactory than the description of Nimrud (Tuplin, 'Xenophon in Media', 376–9).

Medea, the king's wife: the last Median king was Astyages. The name Medea means 'Median woman'.

72 *section commanders under them*: the Greek terms are *lochagoi* (leading 100 men), *pentēkontēres* (leading 50), and *enōmotarchoi* (leading 25). Both the terms and the principle of subdivision are specifically Spartan (cf. *Constitution of the Spartans* 11.4; Thucydides 5.68.3), but the exact relation to the organization of the Spartan army is unclear (there is nothing to correspond to the Spartan *mora*, and in any case the evidence for the Spartan army is hard to interpret). On one view, the arrangement corresponds to Spartan practice ('Presumably Chirisophus knew how the various technical terms were actually used at Sparta, and this is not therefore a case of professional soldiers wanting to sound like Spartans but not really understanding the Spartan military vocabulary', J. K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon* (Berkeley, 1970), 234); others hold that the Spartan *pentēkontēr* was not a group of fifty soldiers (like the units set up in the Ten Thousand), but a fiftieth part of the army (e.g. J. F. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army* (Warminster, 1985), 5–10).

section by section: the solution to the disruption caused by narrowing of the path was to identify 'six companies of a hundred men each who would drop behind the square whenever the flanks were compressed and then fill up any size of gap which might appear as the formation spread out' (Whitby, 'Xenophon's Ten Thousand', 233).

urged on by whips: the Greeks liked to contrast the enforced obedience in the Persian army with their own willing obedience to authority (cf. Herodotus 7.223.2, whips at Thermopylae).

73 *eight doctors*: 'Presumably only orderlies, who did what they could in the way of bandaging' (Anderson, *Military Theory*, 70). They were probably slaves.

76 *Two thousand skins*: the Rhodian seems to have learnt from the native inhabitants whom the Greeks had seen crossing rivers in this way: cf. 1.5.10, 2.4.28. In asking for a talent he was asking for a very large sum.

77 *spring and summer residences*: Greek sources present the Persian king migrating between his residences at Persepolis, Babylon, Susa, and Ecbatana according to the season (*Cyropaedia* 8.6.22; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* 12.513 F; Dio Chrysostom 6.1; Plutarch, *Moral Essays* 78 D, 499 AB, 604 C; Aelian, *On the Nature of Animals* 3.13, 10.6; scholia on Aristophanes, *Knights* 1089); they differ as to the details, but one constant is that Ecbatana (in mountainous Media) was the king's summer residence. See C. J. Tuplin, 'The Seasonal Migration of Achaemenid Kings: A Report on Old and New Evidence', in M. Brosius and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *Studies in Persian History: Essays in Memory of David M. Lewis* (Leiden, 1998), 63–114.

Carduchians: often thought to be the Kurds, who live in the same area—but who also now inhabit a much wider area than Xenophon's Carduchians.

when it seemed right to do so: normally the sacrifice would be performed immediately before departure.

BOOK FOUR

78 *the final watch*: it is not certain how many watches the night was divided into. Divisions between three and five watches are attested; the length of watch may have varied by season or else different cities at different times may have had their own conventions. Stars were used to determine the time at night (cf. *Memorabilia* 4.7.4). See Russell, *Information Gathering in Classical Greece*, 28–9.

83 *shield-bearer*: Greek *hupaspistēs*, probably a slave; hoplites were regularly accompanied by such attendants.

84 *loops*: the Greeks were improvising javelins for throwing: the loop would be wound around the index and middle fingers (as shown on some Greek vase-paintings) to give the javelin more force when thrown and also to stabilize the flight of the javelin by causing it to rotate around its own axis.

seven days: the narrative has explicitly covered only five days so far: Xenophon seems to have included the two days to come.

Chaldean: a name normally used of the priestly caste of the Babylonians, but also used of a tribe in the Black Sea region. Strabo (12.3.19) says that the Chaldeans were previously known as the Chalybians, but both tribe-names are found in Xenophon.

85 *whatever length of stride he wanted*: the verb for 'stride', *diabainein*, also means 'cross', and so the dream is a good omen.

86 *pour a libation*: of wine. Some wine would be poured from a hand-held jug before a prayer was made.

86 *a wreath on his head*: sacrifices were offered before armies crossed rivers, seas, and boundaries, and garlands were regularly worn by the officiator at a sacrifice. Here, the Greeks follow a Spartan custom of putting on wreaths before going into battle (*Constitution of the Spartans* 13.8; Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 22.4–5).

kept women: Greek *hetairai*. *Hetairai* were more respectable than *pornai*, 'prostitutes': their dealings were conceived in terms of gift-giving, not in terms of cash payment for sex, and some of them lived in monogamous relationships (like Aspasia, the *hetaira* of the Athenian politician Pericles).

ritual cry: Greek *ololugē*, a shrill cry uttered by women at the climax of animal sacrifices and some other religious occasions.

89 *governor*: Greek *huparchos*, a more general term regularly used by Herodotus for 'satrap'. Xenophon has already referred to Orontas as satrap of Armenia (3.5.17). His phrasing here could mean either that there was a separate satrapy of Western Armenia or that Tiribazus was governor of a sub-district within a single satrapy of Armenia. Tiribazus is mentioned mounting the king on his horse in Dinon's account of the battle of Cunaxa (*FGH* 690 F 17).

greasing their bodies: for warmth and suppleness. Greeks also greased themselves before athletic exercise.

90 *Amazons*: a legendary tribe of women, localized to the north of the Black Sea, who were often depicted wielding a type of axe (*sagaris*).

91 *hunger faintness*: Greek *boulimia* ('ox-hunger'), used of an extreme hunger that caused faintness, not (as now) of an eating disorder. It was particularly thought to occur in cold weather (Aristotle, *Problems* $887^{b}37$–$888^{a}22$).

93 *to take to the camp*: Xenophon subsequently beat a man who tried to bury one of the invalids while he was still alive—an incident he mentions only when he has to defend himself against the charge of violence (5.8.1–11).

tribute for the king: Strabo (11.14.9) reports that during the Achaemenid period the satrap had to send 20,000 colts each year at the time of the festival of Mithras.

94 *diluted with water*: the Greeks generally diluted their wine with water; drinking unmixed wine was regarded as a mark of savageness.

95 *Sun God*: the Greeks tended to regard Mithras as the Sun God (Strabo 15.3.13); there was certainly a close relation between Mithras and the Sun, but they were probably not assimilated (Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 250–3). For horse sacrifices to the Sun, cf. *Cyropaedia* 8.3.12, 24; also Herodotus 1.216.4 (among the Scythians). Horse sacrifice was uncommon in Greece itself, as was cult of the Sun: the Sun received cult only in Rhodes, and Aristophanes could joke that the Sun would favour the barbarians rather than the Greeks (*Peace* 406–13).

Phasis river: probably the Araxes (which flows into the Caspian Sea). It has sometimes been thought that the Ten Thousand mistook this river for the Phasis that flows into the Black Sea.

96 *from a very early age*: the Similars are the *Homoioi*, the elite at Sparta who were put through a famously demanding system of education, the *agōgē*, that included thieving and flogging for those who were caught (*Constitution of the Spartans* 2.6–9; Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 17.5–6). The thieving metaphor is also applied to war in a speech by the Spartan general Brasidas at Thucydides 5.9.5; in general, the use of ruses and deception in warfare was much more common than many ideologically slanted representations of hoplite fighting suggest (P. Krentz, 'Deception in Archaic and Classical Greek Warfare', in van Wees, *War and Violence*, 167–200).

97 *the thieves who were following us*: that is, the native inhabitants: Xenophon alludes occasionally to their attacks on the rearguard.

99 *Eurylochus of Lusi*: for an earlier act of heroism by this soldier, see 4.2.21. Here, as later (7.1.32, 7.6.40), he is mentioned together with captains: he may have been promoted in the meantime.

100 *Chalybian territory*: Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 714–15, places the Chalybians to the north-east of the Scythians, that is, north of the Black Sea, but the ethnographic tradition places them, as Xenophon does, on the south coast (Hecataeus *FGH* 1 F 203; Herodotus 1.28; Strabo 11.14.5). They were famous among the Greeks as iron-workers, a reputation supported by modern archaeological finds.

twisted cords instead of flaps: Xenophon contrasts the Chalybians' armour with the Greek corslet, which at its lower edge was cut into a sort of skirt formed of narrow vertical flaps (*pteryges*, literally 'wings') which provided protection without impeding movement. Asiatic troops were often described or portrayed wearing stiffened and padded linen corslets (compare the Mossynoecian dress at 5.4.13); they were also used by Greek troops. In other respects the Chalybians' armour is strikingly similar to Greek hoplite armour.

a Laconian dirk: Greek *xyēlē*, a sickle-shaped tool used by the Spartans (inhabitants of Laconia). A sickle is mentioned by Plutarch in an anecdote about a fight between boys (*Spartan Sayings* 233 F), but the *xyēlē* is not shown in representations of Spartan adults fighting.

fifteen cubits long: about twenty feet long—probably an exaggeration.

101 *first men got there*: after these words some manuscripts have the phrase 'and saw the sea', but the addition of this clause destroys the suspense in the famous description that follows. The modern reception of this scene is discussed by T. C. B. Rood, *The Sea! The Sea! The Shout of the Ten Thousand in the Modern Imagination* (London, 2004).

103 *from the right wing*: the rear of the army formed the left wing during battle while the vanguard formed the right wing. So Xenophon is crossing from Chirisophus' position on the (more honoured) right wing to his own position on the left.

104 *on the point of death*: taking *apothneiskousi* as dative participle rather than present indicative (which would imply that some men actually died). The

poisonous honey in the area around Trebizond became famous (Pliny, *Natural History* 21.77), and it affected other armies too: Strabo reports that a local tribe, the Heptacometae, which he equates with a tribe Xenophon mentions, the Mossynoecians, used the poisonous honey to trap three of Pompey's squadrons (12.3.18). A toxic compound, andromedotoxin, was identified in the honey by a German scientist in 1889; the toxin occurs in the local yellow-flowered *Rhododendron luteum*, and is particularly a problem when the honey is very fresh. The time of the incident is fixed by the fact that the rhododendron flowers in the Pontic mountains in late May and early June; the high route along which the Ten Thousand were marching would also have been impossible much earlier in the year because of snow. A date in late May for this episode suggests that there may be a gap of up to three months in Xenophon's account. See A. Mayor, 'Mad Honey!', *Archaeology*, 48 (1995), 32–40, on the honey, and R. Lane Fox, 'Introduction', in id. (ed.), *Long March*, 1–46, at 36–46, on the 'snow lacuna' (developing the hypothesis of Manfredi, *Strada*, 211–15).

104 *the sacrifice they had vowed to make*: see 3.2.9, where Xenophon proposed to sacrifice to Zeus the Saviour when they reached a friendly land, and the vow just mentioned (4.8.16). The Greeks must have made other vows as well.

Dracontius the Spartiate: the Spartiates were the highest rank within the regimented Spartan society (see the note to p. 96 about Similars). The circumstances of Dracontius' exile recall Homer, *Iliad* 23.85–8 (Patroclus exiled for accidentally killing another child in a quarrel over a game). The implement used by Dracontius was the sickle-shaped *xyēlē*.

105 *the animal skins*: skins from the victims, presumably to be given as prizes (cf. Homer, *Iliad* 22.159–60).

more painful for the one who is thrown: a suitably laconic remark. Wrestling bouts were won by inflicting three falls on the opponent.

a long-distance race: Greek *dolichos*—known examples ranged from seven to twenty-four stades (between one and a half and four kilometres). The Cretans were renowned runners.

pancratium: a combat event involving boxing, wrestling, and kicking. See M. Poliakoff, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World* (New Haven, 1987), 54–63.

with their friends watching: the Greek could also mean with their 'kept women' (*hetairai*) watching—in which case the Ten Thousand were 'the first known beneficiaries of female cheer-leaders in the history of athletic sport' (R. Lane Fox, 'Sex, Gender and the Other in Xenophon's *Anabasis*', in id. (ed.), *Long March*, 184–214, at 203).