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Some Remarks on the Battle of Cunaxa (401 BC)

Kilka uwag na temat bitwy pod Kunaksą (401 r. przed Chr.)

ABSTRACT

The present article deals with the Battle of Cunaxa fought in 401 BC between the forces of the Achaemenid Great King Artaxerxes II (404–359) and his younger brother Cyrus. The battle is chiefly shown from the perspective of Greek soldiers, fighting on Cyrus' side, and the majority of studies devoted to it is focused on them. The perspective is determined by sources we have, especially *Anabasis* of Xenophon, our primarily informer. The aim of the article is to investigate the King's forces in the Battle of Cunaxa, and to focus on some aspects of this engagement that have not been addressed or satisfactorily analyzed in the studies to date. Particular attention is given to the composition and armament of the King's army. The results will allow us to see a fuller picture of the Battle of Cunaxa and comprehend it better.

Key words: Battle of Cunaxa, Artaxerxes' forces, πελοπόροο, Mithridates

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STRESZCZENIE

Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy bitwy pod Kunaksą stoczonej w 401 r. przed Chr., w której starły się wojska achemenijskiego Wielkiego Króla Artakserksesa II (404–359) i jego młodszego brata Cyrusa. Bitwa ta jest przeważnie ukazywana z perspektywy żołnierzy greckich, walczących po stronie Cyrusa, i to na nich skupia się większość prac poświęconych temu starciu. Spojrzenie na tę konfrontację jest zdeterminowane przez źródła którymi dysponujemy, w szczególności *Anabasis* Ksenofonta, naszego głównego informatora. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest skupienie się na wojskach królewskich uczestniczących w bitwie pod Kunaksą, i analiza kilku jej aspektów, które w dotychczasowych pracach nie zostały podjęte lub w zadowalający sposób przebadane. Szczególna uwaga zwrócona jest na skład i uzbrojenie królewskiej armii. Przeprowadzona analiza pozwoli spojrzeć na bitwę pod Kunaksą w pełniejszym świetle i na lepsze jej zrozumienie.

Słowa kluczowe: bitwa pod Kunaksą, wojska Artakserksesa, πελοπόροι, Mithridates

In the Battle of Cunaxa in 401 BC near Babylon, the army of the Achaemenid Great King Artaxerxes II (404–359) faced the forces of his younger brother Cyrus, holding power in Anatolia in the rank of *karanos* (Old Persian **kārana-*, Greek κάρανος)¹. At stake in the battle was the King's throne, as Cyrus' aim was to defeat Artaxerxes and rule in his place. This confrontation is often presented from the perspective of Greek soldiers, fighting on Cyrus' side, and the majority of studies devoted to it is focused on them². The perspective is determined by sources we have, especially

¹ On Cyrus as *karanos* during the reign of Artaxerxes, with references to further literature, see M. Podrazik, *Rebellions against the Great King in the Achaemenid Empire: Some Remarks*, „*Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia*” 2017, 8, s. 280–281; idem, *Cyrus Młodszy, Tissafarnes i miasta jońskie, 403–402 r. przed Chr.*, „*Studia Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi Inchoantis*” 2019, 4, s. 7–11.

² See e.g., J.W. Hewitt, *The Disobedience of Clearchus at Cunaxa*, „*The Classical Journal*” 1919, 14, 4; idem, *The Second Phase of the Battle of Cunaxa*, „*The Classical Journal*” 1919, 15, 2; O. Lendle, *Der Bericht Xenophon über die Schlacht von Kunaxa*, „*Gymnasium*” 1966, 74; H. Gugel, *Die Aufstellung von Kyros' Herr in der Schlacht von Kunaxa* (zu *Xen. An. 1, 8, 5*), „*Gymnasium*” 1971, 78; K. Głombiowski, *Wyprawa Cyrusa Młodszego w ocenie Ktezjasza i Ksenofonta*, „*Eos*” 1973, 61, s. 10–11, 15–21; J.M. Bigwood, *The Ancient Accounts of the Battle of Cunaxa*, „*The American Journal of Philology*” 198, 104, 4; to a lesser extent H.D. Westlake, *Diodorus and the Expedition of Cyrus*, „*Phoenix*” 1987, 41, 3, s. 244–246, 250; G. Wylie, *Cunaxa and Xenophon*, „*L'Antiquité Classique*” 1992, 61; see also C.T.H.R. Ehrhardt, *Two notes on Xenophon, Anabasis*, „*The Ancient History Bulletin*” 1994, 8, 1, s. 1–2. The Achaemenid perspective is offered by e.g.: P.A. Rahe, *The Military Situation in Western Asia on the Eve of Cunaxa*, „*American Journal of Philology*” 1980, 101, 1; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Cunaxa*, „*Encyclopædia Iranica*” [dalej: „*Enclr*”] 1993, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/cunaxa [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]; J. Shannahan, *Two Notes on the Battle of Cunaxa*, „*The Ancient History Bulletin*” 2014, 28, 1–2. B. Tripodi (*Paphlagonian Horsemen in Cunaxa* (*Xenophon Anabasis 1. 8. 5*)), w: *The Black Sea, Paphlagonia, Pontus and Phrygia in Antiquity. Aspects of archaeology and ancient history*, red. G.R. Tsatskheladze et al. (BAR International Series 2432) Oxford 2012)

Xenophon, our primarily informer. The Greek soldiers at Cunaxa, however, represented only a part of all the troops assembled, and the main events of the engagement, including the death of Cyrus, took place at the front line where they were not present. The aim of this article is to pay attention to the King's forces in the Battle of Cunaxa, and to focus on some aspects of this engagement that have not been addressed or satisfactorily analyzed in the studies to date. Particular attention will be given to the composition and armament of the King's forces. The results will allow us to see a fuller picture of this confrontation and comprehend it better.

The battle we are concerned with was fought in late summer/early autumn of 401 BC³, and it resulted from Cyrus' rebellion against Artaxerxes. At the head of a large army composed of Asiatic troops and Greek mercenaries, Cyrus set out from western Anatolia towards Babylon to wrest the throne from his brother's hands. Having heard of the approaching enemy, Artaxerxes ordered his army to mobilize.

The place of gathering of the King's forces, before they arrived at Babylon, is referred to by Diodorus and Plutarch. Diodorus, following Ephorus, informs that when Artaxerxes „[...] learned that he [Cyrus] was on the march, summoned his armaments from every place to Ecbatana in

focuses on Paphlagonian horsemen fighting at Cunaxa in the army of Cyrus, presenting the Achaemenid perspective as well. Similarly S.R. Bassett, *The Death of Cyrus the Younger*, „The Classical Quarterly” 1999, 49, 2, writing about the death of Cyrus; Ch. Tuplin, *Ctesias as Military Historian*, w: *Ktesias' Welt/Ctesias' World*, red. J. Wiesehöfer et al., Wiesbaden 2011, s. 467–480, analyzing Ctesias' data on the battle; or J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus the Younger and Artaxerxes II, 401 BC. An Achaemenid Civil War Reconsidered*, w: *Revolt and Resistance in the Ancient Classical World and the Near East. In the Crucible of Empire*, red. J.J. Collins, J.G. Manning, Leiden–Boston 2016, focusing on various aspects of Cyrus' rebellion and the resulting war between the two brothers.

³ Opinions concerning more a precise date of the Battle of Cunaxa differ. Thus, the exact date of 3 September is referred to by e.g., G. Cousin, *Kyros le Jeune en Asie Mineure (Printemps 408–Juillet 401 avant Jésus–Christ)*, Paris–Nancy 1905, s. 124, 147, 213 przyp. 1, 273 przyp. 3; A.T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago 1948, s. 374; M.A. Dandamaev, *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire*, tłum. W.J. Vogelsang, Leiden 1989, s. 281; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Cunaxa*. R. Schmitt (*Cyrus vi. Cyrus the Younger*, „EnClr” 1993, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/cyrus-vi-younger [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]) dates the battle to autumn, indicating that „[...] the often-repeated exact date of 3 September is absolutely unfounded [...]”; C. Binder (*Plutarchs Vita des Artaxerxes. Ein historischer Kommentar*, Berlin 2008, s. 91) also writes about autumn. G. Wylie (*op. cit.*, s. 122) refers to early autumn. About the day of 3 August writes K. Głombiowski, *Chronologia wyprawy Cyrusa Młodszego i odwrotu „Dziesięciu tysięcy”, „Meander”* 1993, 48, 11–12, s. 517–519; about early August J.W.I. Lee, *A Greek Army on the March. Soldiers and Survival in Xenophon's Anabasis*, Cambridge 2007, s. 3, 26; about August L. Llewellyn–Jones, J. Robson, *Ctesias' History of Persia: Tales of the Orient*, London–New York 2010, s. 11; about summer J. Hyland, *Pharnabazos, Cyrus' Rebellion, and the Spartan War of 399*, „Arta” 2008, 003, s. 5; about „[...] late summer or early fall 401 BC [...]” J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus*, s. 104.

Media"⁴. According to Plutarch: „as Cyrus proceeded on his march, rumours and reports kept coming to his ears that the King had decided not to give battle at once, and was not desirous of coming to close quarters with him, but rather of waiting in Persis until his forces should assemble there from all parts”⁵. Diodorus, then, writes about Ecbatana in Media, and Plutarch about Persis, as the place of gathering of Artaxerxes’ army. Plutarch’s account indicates that news about the King’s forces assembling in Persis was coming to Cyrus’ camp. It therefore could have been false news sent to the enemy to mislead him. It seems, then, that the account of Diodorus, according to which Artaxerxes called his troops to Ecbatana, is more reliable. The King himself was probably not in the capital of Media at that time, but in Babylon⁶, from where he and his assembled army set out to face his brother.

As commanders of Artaxerxes’ forces at Cunaxa, Xenophon mentions Abrocomas⁷, Tissaphernes⁸, Gobryas⁹ and Arbaces¹⁰. Abrocomas, howev-

⁴ Diodorus, *Bibliothēkē historikē* [dalej: Diod.] 14.22.1: „[...] πυθόμενος αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀνάβασιν μετεπέμπετο τὰς πανταχόθεν δυνάμεις εἰς Ἐκβάτανα τῆς Μηδίας” (tłum. C.H. Oldfather, *Diodorus of Sicily in twelve volumes, volume VI (Books XIV–XV.19)*, The Loeb Classical Library, London–Cambridge, Massachusetts 1954) (= Ephorus F 208, w: V. Parker, *Ephoros (70)*, Brill’s New Jacoby, Brill Online 2015 [dalej: BNJ 70 F 208]). See also P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander. A History of the Persian Empire*, tłum. P.T. Daniels, Winona Lake, Indiana 2002, s. 629; M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran starożytny*, w: *Historia Iranu*, red. A. Krasnowolska, Wrocław 2010, s. 93.

⁵ Plutarch, *Artokserksēs* [dalej: Plut. *Art.*] 7.1: „Κύρω δὲ προσιώντι φῆμαι καὶ λόγοι προσέπιπτον, ὡς οὐ μάχεσθαι βασιλέως εὐθὺς ἐγνωκότος οὐδὲ συνδραμεῖν εἰς χεῖρας αὐτῷ σπεύδοντος, ἀλλ’ ἐν Πέρσiais ὑπομένειν ἄχρι ἂν αἱ δυνάμεις ἐκεῖ πανταχόθεν συνέλθωσι” (tłum. B. Perrin, *Plutarch’s Artaxerxes*, w: *Plutarch’s Lives in eleven volumes, volume XI*, The Loeb Classical Library, London–Cambridge, Massachusetts 1954, slightly modified).

⁶ P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629.

⁷ Xenophon, *Anabasis* [dalej: Xen. *Anab.*] 1.7.12.

⁸ *Ibidem*. On Tissaphernes in general, with references to further literature, see M. Podrazik, *Rebellions*, s. 285–286; idem, *Cyrus Młodszy i Hellenowie. Irańsko-greckie relacje polityczno-militarne w latach 408–404 przed Chr.*, Oświęcim 2018, s. 43–46 et passim; idem, *Cyrus Młodszy, Tissafernes*, s. 11–17.

⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.12. Probably the satrap of Babylonia (see M.A. Dandamaev, *A Political History*, s. 280 with n. 3; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Cunaxa*; O. Lendle, *Kommentar zur Xenophons Anabasis (Bücher 1–7)*, Darmstadt 1995, s. 58; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 627, 988; J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus*, s. 111).

¹⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.12. Probably the satrap of Media (see G. Cousin, *op. cit.*, s. 96; M.A. Dandamayev, *Arbaces*, „EnCIR” 1986, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/arbaces-greek-form-of-an-old-iranian-proper-name [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Cunaxa*; O. Lendle, *Kommentar*, s. 58–59).

er, did not participate in the battle as he did not arrive on time¹¹. Diodorus informs us that „[...] the wings he [Artaxerxes] put under command of Persians, while he himself took his position in the centre with no less than fifty thousand elite troops”¹². The left wing of the King’s forces was certainly under the command of Tissaphernes¹³.

The core of Artaxerxes army at Cunaxa was made up of Iranians. They included the Persians¹⁴, the Medes¹⁵ and the Cadusians¹⁶. There were also the Carians¹⁷, the Egyptians¹⁸ and, as we may suppose, the Babylonians¹⁹. The King did not manage to gather all the forces available to him. According to Diodorus, following Ephorus, „[...] the contingents from the Indians and certain other peoples were delayed because of the remoteness of those regions [...]”²⁰. This must have been the case in particular with troops from the eastern parts of the empire²¹. The abovementioned Abrocomas, with numerous forces from Syria, was missing as well. Anatolian troops, in turn, were fighting on the side of Cyrus.

Reporting the events after the Battle of Cunaxa, Xenophon informs us about Orontas with an army on the side of the King²². He describes this

¹¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.12–13. On Abrocomas in general, including his attitude in the face of war between Artaxerxes and Cyrus, see J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus*, s. 112–116; M. Podrazik, *Rebelsions*, s. 283, 284.

¹² Diod. 14.22.7: „[...] τῶν μὲν κεράτων Πέρσας ἡγεμόνας κατέστησε, κατὰ δὲ τὸ μέσον αὐτὸς ἐτάχθη τῶν ἐπιλέκτων ἔχων οὐκ ἐλάττους πεντακισμυρίων” (thum. C.H. Oldfather, *op. cit.*). See also Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.12–13, 1.8.21–23.

¹³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9.

¹⁴ Plut. *Art.* 11.3 (= Ctesias, *Persika* F. 20, w: J.P. Stronk, *Ctesias’ Persian History*, Part I: introduction, text, and translation by J.P. Stronk, Düsseldorf 2010 [dalej: Ctes. *Pers.*]); Diod. 14.22.7, 14.23.6–7; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629; M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran*, s. 93; see also the present article below.

¹⁵ Plut. *Art.* 14.2 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 26), with J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus*, s. 111–112; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629; M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran*, s. 93.

¹⁶ Plut. *Art.* 9.1; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629; M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran*, s. 93.

¹⁷ Plut. *Art.* 10.3 (= Deinon F 17, w: E. Almagor, *Deinon of Kolophon (690)*, Brill’s New Jacoby, Brill Online 2018 [dalej: BNJ 690 F 17]); Ctes. *Pers.* F. 16 §67; Plut. *Art.* 14.3–5; cf. Plut. *Art.* 11.5–6 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 20), 12.3, 14.1.

¹⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9, 2.1.6; cf. J. Shannahan, *op. cit.*, s. 61–68, who is not convinced about their Egyptian origin.

¹⁹ P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629; M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran*, s. 93.

²⁰ Diod. 14.22.2: „[...] Ἰνδῶν καὶ τιῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν καθυστεροῦν διὰ τὸ μακρὰν ἀφειστάναι τοὺς τόπους [...]” (thum. C.H. Oldfather, *op. cit.*) (= BNJ 70 F 208); see also Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.25; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 629; cf. J.W.I. Lee, *Cyrus*, s. 116–117.

²¹ M.J. Olbrycht, *Iran*, s. 93.

²² Xen. *Anab.* 2.4.8–9. On Orontas in general, see M.J. Osborne, *Orontes*, „Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte” 1973, 22, 4; H.A. Troxell, *Orontes, Satrap of Mysia*, „Schweizerische numismatische Rundschau” 1981, 60; M. Weiskopf, *The so-called “Great Satraps’ Revolt”, 366–360 B.C. Concerning Local Instability in the Achaemenid Far West*, Stuttgart

dignitary as holding power in Armenia (Ἀρμενίαν [...] ἤς Ὀρόντας ἦρχε), which means that he was satrap of this country²³. This information refers to events taking place about three months after the Battle of Cunaxa. There is no reason to think that Orontas was not holding the office shortly before the battle as well, at the time when Artaxerxes was mobilizing his forces. It can be inferred, then, that he took part in the battle as satrap of Armenia. According to Plutarch, following Deinon, Tiribazus appeared at the center of the King's army at Cunaxa²⁴. Xenophon mentions this dignitary as ruling in western Armenia, describing him with the term ὑπαρχος²⁵. He was, therefore, subordinate to the satrap of this country²⁶, the abovementioned Orontas. Xenophon's information on Tiribazus' office refers to events taking place about three months after the Battle of Cunaxa. We may suppose, however, that Tiribazus was ὑπαρχος in western Armenia shortly before the battle as well, when the King was gathering his army. The presence of Orontas and Tiribazus on Artaxerxes' side at Cunaxa also suggests the presence of soldiers brought in from Armenia. When the message of the mobilization of the King's forces arrived, they went from Armenia, as may be supposed to Ecbatana, indicated by Artaxerxes as the gathering point for his forces, and then toward Babylon. Among the abovementioned peoples composing the King's army at Cunaxa, we should therefore include the Armenians as well.

As regards the battle units forming the King's forces at the Battle of Cunaxa, they included horsemen²⁷, archers²⁸, foot soldiers with wicker shields (Greek γερροφόροι)²⁹, foot soldiers with wooden shields reaching

1989, s. 69–91, 94, 96–97; P. Debord, *L'Asie Mineure au IVe siècle (412–323 a.C.). Pouvoirs et jeux politiques*, Bordeaux 1999, s. 149–152, 280–281, 342–346, 348–352, 366 et passim; P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 662–666 et passim; R. Schmitt, *Die iranischen und Iranier-Namen in den Schriften Xenophons*, Wien 2002, s. 66–68; idem, *Orontes*, „EnClr“ 2002, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/orontes [dostęp: 8 IV 2022].

²³ Xen. *Anab.* 3.5.17. See also idem 4.3.3–4; cf. Diod. 14.27.7, with Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.4.

²⁴ Plut. *Art.* 10.1 (= BNJ 690 F 17). On Tiribazus in general, see R. Schmitt, *Die iranischen*, s. 115, 118–119; C. Binder, *Plutarchs*, s. 153–154 et passim; B. Proc, *Komentarz*, w: Plutarch z Cheronei, *Żywoot Artakserksesa*, wstęp, tekst grecki, przekład, komentarz B. Proc, Lublin 2019, s. 212–214 et passim.

²⁵ Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.4; cf. Diod. 14.27.7.

²⁶ Concerning the term ὑπαρχος in the context of the Achaemenid Empire, see Ch. Tuplin, *The Administration of the Achaemenid Empire, in Coinage and Administration in the Athenian and Persian Empires. The Ninth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History*, red. I. Carradice, Oxford 1987, s. 120–121; D. Head, *The Achaemenid Persian Army*, Stockport 1992, s. 12; J.M. Balcer, *The Ancient Persian Satrapies and Satraps in Western Anatolia*, „Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran“ 1993, 26, s. 83–84; P. Debord, *op. cit.*, s. 169–176.

²⁷ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.11, 1.8.9, 1.10.12–13; Diod. 14.22.2; see also the present article below.

²⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9; Diod. 14.23.1; see also the present article below.

²⁹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9; see also the present article below.

to their feet (described by Xenophon as ὀπλίται and identified by him as Egyptians)³⁰, and scythed chariots³¹.

While describing the situation in the Greek camp the next morning after the Battle of Cunaxa, Xenophon refers to how the Greeks were providing themselves with food and fuel: „as for fuel, they went forward a short distance from their line to the place where the battle was fought and used for that purpose not only the arrows, many in number, which the Greeks had compelled all who deserted from the King to throw away, but also the wicker shields and the wooden Egyptian shields; there were likewise many light shields [πέλται] and wagons that they could carry off, all of them abandoned”³². The shields mentioned here refer to those used at the Battle of Cunaxa by Artaxerxes’ soldiers, stationed on the left wing of his army, opposite the Greek troops placed on Cyrus’ right. While in his earlier description of the King’s forces at Cunaxa, Xenophon informs about soldiers equipped with wicker shields as well as those with wooden shields³³, he makes no mention of soldiers with light shields. This is the type of shield known in Greek terminology as πέλτη, lighter and smaller than the one used by Greek hoplites, chiefly crescent in shape (with a cutout at the top or on the side)³⁴, made presumably of leather and wood³⁵. Mentioning the shields of this type abandoned by Artaxerxes’ soldiers stationed on the left wing of his army, Xenophon does not state which battle unit of the King’s forces was equipped with them. We may single out the following possibilities: 1 – the shields belonged to foot soldiers known in Greek terminology as πελτοφόροι, and in Old Persian presumably as *takabara*³⁶,

³⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9; cf. J. Shannahan, *op. cit.*, s. 61–68.

³¹ Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.11–12, 1.8.10, 1.8.20; Diod. 14.22.7; Plut. *Art.* 7.4.

³² Xen. *Anab.* 2.1.6–7: „ξύλοις δὲ ἐχρῶντο μικρὸν προϊόντες ἀπὸ τῆς φάλαγγος οὗ ἡ μάχη ἐγένετο τοῖς τε οἰστοῖς πολλοῖς οὔσιν, οὓς ἠνάγκαζον οἱ Ἕλληνες ἐκβάλλειν τοὺς αὐτομολοῦντας παρὰ βασιλείως, καὶ τοῖς γέροισι καὶ ταῖς ξυλίνοις ἀσπίσι ταῖς Αἰγυπτίαις· πολλὰ δὲ καὶ πέλται καὶ ἄμαξαι ἦσαν φέρεσθαι ἔρημοι” (Hüm. C.L. Brownson, *Xenophon’s Anabasis*, The Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts–London 2001).

³³ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9.

³⁴ See the present article below – Figs 1–2.

³⁵ More on πέλτη type shield in the context of the Achaemenid Empire, see S. Bittner, *Tracht und Bewaffnung des persischen Heeres zur Zeit der Achaimeniden*, München 1987, s. 159–164, 219–220, 324, Figs 6, 8.1, 8.3, 28.1, 45.1; N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid Military Terminology*, „Archaeologisches Mitteilungen aus Iran” 1988, 21, s. 75–76; idem, *The Persian Army 560–330 BC*, London 1992, s. 18; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40–41, 70 with Figs 27, 26, 23b, 29b; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander Wielki i świat irański*, Rzeszów 2004, s. 84 with Fig. 2.7.B; also the present article below.

³⁶ N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 75–76; idem, *The Persian*, s. 24; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 89.

that is, „wearing shield of πέλιτη/*taka* type”; 2 – they were used by archers; 3 – they were used by horsemen.

Soldiers fighting as πελτοφόροι are mentioned by Xenophon in his *Kyroupaideia*. They appear as one of the battle units – along with horsemen, infantrymen (ὀπλίται), archers and chariots – in the army of the Lydian king Croesus, waging war against the title Cyrus³⁷. N. Sekunda writes: „the term [πελτοφόροι] is extremely rare in Greek. [...] Xenophon himself regularly uses the term *peltastēs*, so we may presume that his use of *peltophoroi* in the *Cyropaedia* (7.1.24) is deliberate and reflects Achaemenid usage”³⁸. In his *Agēsilaos*, in turn, the Athenian historian mentions 2 000 πελτοφόροι of the Paphlagonian ruler Cotys (395 BC)³⁹. Sekunda continues, „here again it would be reasonable to assume that the term [πελτοφόροι] is used under Achaemenid influence”⁴⁰. Foot soldiers wearing Iranian dress and equipped with πέλιτη type shields, probably corresponding to Achaemenid πελτοφόροι, are known from iconographic representations on Greek vases and the so-called Alexander Sarcophagus, dated from the 5th and 4th centuries BC⁴¹. Undoubtedly, they were part of Achaemenid armed forces and, therefore, could have been present in Artaxerxes’ army at Cunaxa.

Among representations on Greek vases dated from the 5th century BC, showing foot soldiers in Iranian dress and equipped with πέλιτη type shields, archers also appear. This suggests that this element of armament was used by Achaemenid archers, at least since about 460 BC⁴². The fighting technique of Achaemenid archers was chiefly based on cooperation between them and their accompanying soldiers, equipped with large (reaching from the feet to the neck), rectangular, wicker shields, known in

³⁷ Xenophon, *Kyroupaideia* [dalej: Xen. Kyr.] 7.1.24.

³⁸ N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 75.

³⁹ Xenophon, *Agēsilaos* 3.4; cf. idem, *Hellēnika* [dalej: Xen. Hell.] 4.1.3 (mentioning about 2 000 πελτασται).

⁴⁰ N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 75.

⁴¹ See the present article below – Figs 1–2; N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 26, 55; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 84 with Fig. 2.7.B and n. 73; H.M. Franks, *Hunting the Eschata: An Imagined Persian Empire on the Lekythos of Xenophantos*, „Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens” 2009, 78, 4, s. 457 Fig. 2 (the illustration at the top, the character shown on the lower left part of the vessel), 458 Fig. 3 (the character shown on the right-hand side in the middle); also D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40–41 with Figs 27, 29b; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, s. 161, 219 with Figs 6, 8.1, 45.1, 28.1. Cf. W. Messerschmidt, *Historische und ikonographische Untersuchungen zum Alexandersarkophag*, „Boreas” 1989, 12, s. 70.

⁴² Concerning Achaemenid archers equipped with the shield, see N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 18; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 84 with Fig. 2.7.B (the visible quiver indicates it is an archer); D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 39–41; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, Fig. 8.3.

Greek terminology as γερροφόροι, and in Old Persian as *sparabara*⁴³, that is, „wearing shield of γέρον/para type”⁴⁴. Their shields could have been placed on the ground to form a kind of wall, providing a cover from behind which the archers could fire their arrows⁴⁵. Arming the archers with πέλτη type shields meant they could stand to fight without the cover made of γέρον. Thus, supporting them by γερροφόροι became unnecessary. This is indicated by representations on Greek vases – where Achaemenid archers equipped with πέλτη type shields are depicted and γερροφόροι do not appear⁴⁶. This means we should reject the possibility no. 2, according to which πέλται were used by archers stationed at Cunaxa on the left wing of Artaxerxes’ army. For, as it has been said above, there were also γερροφόροι situated there, and it was their shields that were intended to provide protection for the archers.

According to N. Sekunda, from the middle of the 5th century BC shields began to be used by Achaemenid horsemen, which was reflected in Greek iconography showing riders wearing Iranian dress and equipped with shields⁴⁷. As confirmation of the use of shields by Achaemenid horsemen, the so-called Gadala document, dated from 422/421 BC and containing information about the equipment of horseman serving in the army of

⁴³ N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 69; idem, *The Persian*, s. 16–17; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 22; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 80; S. Manning, *Armed Force in the Teispid–Achaemenid Empire*, Ph.D. Diss., Leopold–Franzens–Universität, Innsbruck 2018, s. 225.

⁴⁴ Soldiers equipped with this type of shield are shown, among others, on reliefs in Persepolis – see E.F. Schmidt, *Persepolis I*, Chicago 1953, Plates 94–95 (the Throne Hall), 136–137 (the Palace of Darius I), 176B and 177B–C (the Palace of Xerxes I). More on Achaemenid γερροφόροι and the type of shield they used, see Plato, *Lachēs* 191C, with Herodotus, *Historiai* [dalej: Hdt.] 9.61–62; Xenophon, *Oikonomikos* 4.5; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, s. 158–160, Figs 5a, 30.4; N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 69; idem, *The Persian*, s. 16–19; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 22–24, 26–27; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 80 with Fig. 2.7.A; S. Manning, *op. cit.*, s. 225, 228–229.

⁴⁵ See Hdt. 9.61; P.A. Rahe, *op. cit.*, s. 80–81; J.M. Cook, *The Persian Empire*, London 1983, s. 103; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Army i. Pre-Islamic Iran*, „Enclr” 1986, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/army-i [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]; N. Sekunda, *Achaemenid*, s. 69; idem, *The Persian*, s. 16–18, 19; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 22–24, 26–27.

⁴⁶ See D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 39–40, also s. 41 with Fig. 27a.

⁴⁷ N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 21–22; cf. D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 37–39, who is not convinced about the use of shields by Achaemenid horsemen. See also discussion in A.K. Nefedkin, *The Tactical Development of Achaemenid Cavalry*, „Gladius” 2006, 26, s. 10–11; Ch. Tuplin, *All the King’s Horse: in Search of Achaemenid Persian Cavalry*, w: *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare*, red. G.G. Fagan, M. Trundle, Leiden–Boston 2010, s. 169–171; R.S. Wójcikowski, *Kawaleria perska w okresie wczesnosasanidzkim. Aspekty społeczne i militarne*, t. 1, *Konnica w Iranie przed Sasanidami, Kampanie sasanidzkie*, Oświęcim 2014, s. 113.

Darius II (424/423–404), used to be referenced⁴⁸. However, the Babylonian term *šalṭu* occurring in the document should not be translated as „shield” but as „bow-case” (Greek γωρυτός) or „quiver”⁴⁹. Despite this amendment in the Gadala-Iama document, the use of shields by Achaemenid horsemen from about 450 BC, as indicated by N. Sekunda, is not excluded, given contemporary Greek vase paintings.

Taking the above into consideration, it is therefore possible that on the left wing of the King’s forces at Cunaxa there were foot soldiers equipped with *πέλτη* type shields, called *πελτοφόροι*; or, that the shields of this type belonged to the horsemen stationed on this wing. It has been pointed out above that Xenophon does not mention *πελτοφόροι* while writing about the King’s battle units at Cunaxa. In turn, while describing the horsemen stationed on the left wing of Artaxerxes’ forces, he does not mention they were equipped with shields⁵⁰. From his account about the Greeks providing themselves with fuel after the battle, including *πέλτη* type shields⁵¹, it appears that he is referring to the equipment of Artaxerxes’ soldiers, who had been situated on the left wing of the King’s army and who fled or died after the Greeks had attacked them. It is rather hard to assume that retreating horsemen, being faster than the Greeks, would be forced to abandon their shields. It would be more justified in the case of withdrawing foot soldiers. Moreover, according to Xenophon’s account, Artaxerxes’ horsemen stationed on the left wing of his army under the command of Tissaphernes did not retreat after the Greeks had attacked but charged and broke through between Greek peltasts and the Euphrates River⁵². Those circumstances lead to the conclusion that the *πέλτη* type shields mentioned by the Athenian historian had belonged to Achaemenid *πελτοφόροι*.

The above conclusion can be confirmed by an account of Diodorus. Writing about Artaxerxes’ soldiers situated on the left wing of his army at the Battle of Cunaxa, the Sicilian historian relates that they „[...] were protected by small shields [ὄπλοις τε μικροῖς] and their divisions were

⁴⁸ N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 21; R.S. Wójcikowski, *Kawaleria*, s. 112–113; see also P.A. Rahe, *op. cit.*, s. 91–92 with n. 30; J.M. Cook, *op. cit.*, s. 102; A.Sh. Shahbazi, *Army*; A.K. Nefedkin, *op. cit.*, s. 10–11.

⁴⁹ See S. Manning, *op. cit.*, s. 120–121, 142; also P. Briant, *op. cit.*, s. 598; A. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire. A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period*, vols. 1–2, London–New York 2007, s. 722–723; Ch. Tuplin, *All the King’s*, s. 125–126.

⁵⁰ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9.

⁵¹ See the present article above.

⁵² Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.7–8, also 2.3.19.

for the most part equipped with light arms [...]”⁵³. The small shields mentioned in the quoted passage do not correspond to wicker shields used by Achaemenid γερροφόροι or to wooden ones reaching to the feet referred to by Xenophon in his description of the left wing of the King’s army⁵⁴. They may, however, correspond to πέλτη type shields. Among the light armed divisions (ψιλικά) mentioned by Diodorus regarding the left wing of Artaxerxes’ forces, we may therefore expect to see πελτοφόροι units.

Foot soldiers armed with πέλτη type shields, known from iconographic evidence from the 5th and 4th centuries BC, are also equipped with offensive weaponry. They are depicted wielding a pair of javelins⁵⁵, a spear⁵⁶, a slashing sword⁵⁷, or a one-handed battle axe in the type of σάγαρις⁵⁸. We may infer, therefore, they were able to fight at a distance by a javelin, or at close quarters by using a spear, a sword, or a σάγαρις.

Iconographic evidence showing foot soldiers equipped with πέλτη type shields allow us to think they were light armed troops⁵⁹. It is consistent with the conclusion formulated above on the basis of Diodorus’ account, that there were πελτοφόροι among the light armed divisions stationed on the left wing of Artaxerxes’ army at Cunaxa.

Taking into account the presence of πελτοφόροι among the King’s forces at the Battle of Cunaxa, it is also worth noting the events surrounding the death of Cyrus taking place at the center of the battle line. A concentric strike of Cyrus and his horsemen in the King’s center, where Artaxerxes was stationed, led to a fierce fight at this section of the front between the troops of the two brothers. After the initial successes of Cyrus, including

⁵³ Diod. 14.23.4: „[...] ὄπλοις τε μικροῖς ἐσκεπασμένοι καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ταγμάτων ἔχοντες ψιλικά [...]” (tum. C.H. Oldfather, *op. cit.*).

⁵⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.9.

⁵⁵ See H.M. Franks, *op. cit.*, s. 457 Fig. 2 (the illustration at the top, the character shown on the lower left part of the vessel); D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40, 41 Fig. 27b; also the present article below.

⁵⁶ See H.M. Franks, *op. cit.*, s. 458 Fig. 3 (the character shown on the right-hand side in the middle); N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 26; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40, 41 Fig. 27a; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, Figs 6, 8.1.

⁵⁷ See the present article below – Fig. 1.

⁵⁸ See the present article below – Fig. 2; cf. D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 41 Fig. 27c. Concerning σάγαρις in general, see Hdt. 1.215, 4.5, 7.64; Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.16–17, 5.4.13; Xen. *Kyr.* 1.2.9, 2.1.9, 4.2.22; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, s. 175–177, 326, Fig. 39.2, et passim; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 25 Fig. 12h, 27 Fig. 14, 29 Fig. 16e–g, 40 Fig. 26c, 41 Fig. 27c, 42 Fig. 28, 46 Fig. 32f,h, 49; O. Lendle, *Kommentar*, s. 229; B.A. Litvinsky, *Battle-Axes in Eastern Iran*, „Enclr” 2000, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/battle-axes [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]; R. Schmitt, *Greece xii. Persian Loanwords and Names in Greek*, „Enclr” 2002, online edition: iranicaonline.org/articles/greece-xii [dostęp: 8 IV 2022]; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 83–84 with Figs 2.7.B, 2.4, 2.9; R.S. Wójcikowski, *Kawaleria*, s. 107–108.

⁵⁹ See also D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40, 41 (Fig. 27).

his wounding of Artaxerxes, under the pressure of the King's troops he was pushed out of the place where he had wounded the King. It gave time for Artaxerxes' forces to secure his position⁶⁰. Meanwhile, in the fervor of the ongoing battle Cyrus was struck by a blow from a distance, suffering a serious wound. According to Plutarch, following Ctesias, „[...] a young Persian, Mithridates by name, running to his [Cyrus'] side, smote him with his javelin in the temple, near the eye [...]”⁶¹. The verb παρατρύχω used in the quoted passage, which generally refers to the verb „to run”⁶², indicates that Mithridates was moving on foot, not on horseback. It means that he was a foot soldier, light armed, as may be supposed, fighting with a javelin. Plutarch does not mention Mithridates being equipped with a shield, but it was not a shield that was essential for the events described, but the javelin with which the young Persian hit and seriously wounded Cyrus. And it was on this aspect of the event that the account of Plutarch was focused. It should not be ruled out, therefore, that Mithridates had a shield, presumably a πέλιτη type shield. As shields of this type were used by light armed foot soldiers on the left wing of the King's forces, one could also have been used by Mithridates. This leads us to the conclusion that the latter was fighting as a πελτοφόρος.

The presence of Mithridates at Cunaxa was noted by the sources because of the blow he had inflicted on Cyrus. It is rather hard to assume, however, that the young Persian was the only soldier present in the center of the King's army fighting as a πελτοφόρος. There must have been more soldiers of this type in the King's center not mentioned by the sources. Thus, as in the case of the left wing of Artaxerxes' army at Cunaxa, in the center of his forces we may expect to see πελτοφόροι units as well.

Writing about Mithridates' wounding of Cyrus, Plutarch uses the term ἀκόντιον, which generally means „javelin”⁶³. The serious wound inflicted on Cyrus near his eye is mentioned by Xenophon as well, although he

⁶⁰ Concerning those events, see Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.21–26; Plut. *Art.* 9.1–4 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 19), 11.1–2 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 20); Diod. 14.23.2,5–6; Ctes. *Pers.* F. 16 §64; cf. Plut. *Art.* 10.1–2 (= BNJ 690 F 17).

⁶¹ Plut. *Art.* 11.3: „[...] παρατρύχων νεανίας Πέρσης ὄνομα Μιθριδάτης ἀκοντίω βάλλει τὸν κρόταφον αὐτοῦ παρὰ τὸν ὀφθαλμόν [...]” (thum. B. Perrin, *op. cit.*, slightly modified) (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 20). See also Plut. *Art.* 14.3 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 26), 15.1–4 (= Ctes. *Pers.* F. 26); Ctes. *Pers.* F. 16 §67; Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.27; Diod. 14.23.7. Cf. Plut. *Art.* 10.2–3 (= BNJ 690 F 17).

⁶² See H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, compiled by H.G. Liddell and R. Scott revised and augmented throughout by Sir H.S. Jones with the assistance of R. McKenzie and with the cooperation of many scholars, with a revised supplement, Oxford 1996, s. 1328 s.v. παρατρύχω.

⁶³ See *ibidem*, s. 52–53 s.v. ἀκόντιον.

does not specify who had delivered the blow⁶⁴. There is no doubt, however, that we are dealing with the same event which Plutarch writes about, as indicated by the place of Cyrus' wound, similar in both accounts⁶⁵. Xenophon uses the term *παλτόν* to describe the weapon which struck Cyrus. It was a type of javelin, with a hard cornel wood shaft, which could be used both for throwing and as a spear for hand-to-hand fighting⁶⁶. The use of this type of weapon in the Battle of Cunaxa is also mentioned by Diodorus, writing about the fight between the forces of Artaxerxes and Cyrus at the central front of the battle⁶⁷. We can therefore specify the above passage of Plutarch and assume that the weapon Mithridates had struck Cyrus with was a *παλτόν* type javelin. This type of weapon was probably also used by other *πελτοφόροι* of Artaxerxes' army at Cunaxa. In the case of Cyrus, he fought as a horseman and used two *παλτόν* type javelins⁶⁸. It is likely that said *πελτοφόροι* were also equipped with two *παλτόν* type javelins each. As mentioned above, a pair of javelins is known from the iconographic evidence to be among the offensive weapons wielded by foot soldiers armed with *πέλτη* type shields. Those javelins can be identified as *παλτα*. The weapon was suitable both for horsemen and for foot soldiers. Arming *πελτοφόροι* with two *παλτόν* type javelins meant that they could fight both at a distance and at close quarters, with one *παλτόν* used to throw at the enemy and the second for hand-to-hand fighting. If a *παλτόν* broke, they could continue fighting with a sword or *σάγαρις* as their alternative weapon. Both sword and *σάγαρις*, as indicated above, can be seen as the weapon of foot soldiers armed with *πέλτη* type shields, as depicted in the iconographic representations.

It is known that Cyrus and his accompanying Achaemenid horsemen at Cunaxa were equipped with a sword known in Greek terminology as *μάχαιρα*⁶⁹. Swords of this type could measure about 35 to 80 centimeters long including the hilt, had a single-edged, slightly convex blade, and were expected to inflict slashing blows. It was suitable both for fighting on horse-

⁶⁴ Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.27.

⁶⁵ Regarding the place of Cyrus' wound, and its consequences, see S.R. Bassett, *op. cit.*, s. 476–477, 482–483.

⁶⁶ Concerning *παλτόν* in general, see Xenophon, *Peri hippikēs* [dalej: Xen. *Peri hipp.*] 12.12; idem *Hell.* 3.4.14; idem *Kyr.* 1.2.9, 1.2.13, 4.3.9, 6.2.16, 7.1.2; S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, s. 221–225, 324, Fig. 7.1, et passim; N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 25; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 33–34; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 87–88 with Fig. 2.4; A.K. Nefedkin, *op. cit.*, s. 7–8, 10, 14; R.S. Wójcikowski, *Kawaleria*, s. 102.

⁶⁷ Diod. 14.23.2.

⁶⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.15, 1.8.3.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem* 1.8.6–7; Diod. 14.22.6.

back and on foot⁷⁰. Longer versions of μάχαιρα were most likely used by horsemen, while shorter versions, under 50 centimeters long, were wielded by foot soldiers⁷¹. We may expect the shorter μάχαιρα were included in the equipment of the πελοπόροιοι of Artaxerxes' army at Cunaxa.

As regards σάγαρις, we know of a Persian soldier⁷² and of some Mossynoecians⁷³ equipped with this weapon at the end of 401 BC. It can be inferred, then, that the σάγαρις was in use within the Achaemenid Empire at that time and could thus be included among the equipment of πελοπόροιοι of the King's army at Cunaxa.

Xenophon informs that Artaxerxes' forces at the Battle of Cunaxa were situated according to their ethnicity (κατὰ ἔθνη)⁷⁴. The scarcity of source data makes it difficult to determine the ethnicity of πελοπόροιοι of the King's army at this battle. It is not excluded that they were mercenary soldiers⁷⁵. On the other hand, however, the example of Mithridates, who was of Persian origin⁷⁶, indicates that they could have been Persians, at least regarding those who were in the center of the King's army, where Artaxerxes himself was stationed.

Summarizing the above reflections, the following conclusions can be made. Among the King's forces at the Battle of Cunaxa fought light armed foot soldiers known in Greek terminology as πελοπόροιοι. They were equipped with πέλινη type shields, and most likely with two παλτών type javelins as their primarily offensive weapon. As their secondary offensive weapon, they could have used a μάχαιρα type sword or a σάγαρις. By using two παλτών type javelins they were able to fight both at a distance and at close quarters, with one παλτών serving to throw at the enemy and the second for hand-to-hand fighting. If a παλτών was broken, they could handle a μάχαιρα or σάγαρις. Πελοπόροιοι were present both on the left

⁷⁰ Concerning μάχαιρα in general, see Xen. *Kyr.* 1.2.13, 7.1.2; idem *Peri hipp.* 12.11; J.K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1970, s. 37–38; idem, *Hoplite Weapons and Offensive Arms, w: Hoplites. The Classical Greek Battle Experience*, red. V.D. Hanson, London–New York 1993, s. 26; N. Sekunda, *Greek Hoplite 480–323 BC*, Oxford 2000, s. 16–17; T. Everson, *Warfare in Ancient Greece: Arms and Armour from the Heroes of Homer to Alexander the Great*, Stroud 2004, s. 177; R.S. Wójcikowski, *Konnica irańska w okresie późnoachemidzkim*, w: *Hortus Historiae. Księga pamiątkowa ku czci profesora Józefa Wolskiego w setną rocznicę urodzin*, red. E. Dąbrowa et al., Kraków 2010, s. 127; idem, *Kawaleria*, s. 104–105, 114; cf. S. Bittner, *op. cit.*, s. 44, 171–174, 323, Figs 12.2, 42.4.

⁷¹ T. Everson, *op. cit.*, s. 177; see also the present article below – Fig. 1.

⁷² Xen. *Anab.* 4.4.16–17.

⁷³ *Ibidem* 5.4.13.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem* 1.8.9.

⁷⁵ Concerning πελοπόροιοι as mercenary soldiers, see N. Sekunda, *The Persian*, s. 24; D. Head, *op. cit.*, s. 40; M.J. Olbrycht, *Aleksander*, s. 89.

⁷⁶ Plut. *Art.* 11.3.

wing and in the center of the King's army. Especially in regard to those in the center, where Artaxerxes himself was situated, they could have been of Persian origin. Unfortunately, we know nearly nothing about Artaxerxes' right wing, so it is hard to refer to this part of his army.

Among the πελτοφόροι in the center of the King's forces at Cunaxa, we should include the Persian soldier Mithridates, who gravely wounded Cyrus by throwing his παλτόν into his temple near his eye. The blow was very serious, causing Cyrus to fall off his horse and, unable to move on his own, die shortly afterwards in the fervor of the ongoing battle. There is no doubt that the blow inflicted on him by Mithridates was crucial, and it determined the further fate of the battle.

It should not be forgotten that on the King's side at the Battle of Cunaxa dignitaries such as Orontas and Tiribazus were present. The first was satrap of Armenia, and the other was ὑπαρχος in western Armenia, subordinate to the first. Their presence on Artaxerxes' side indicates that there must have also been Armenian troops among the King's forces at Cunaxa. They most likely arrived at Babylon traveling from their homeland via Ecbatana in Media, where Artaxerxes had ordered his army to gather in the face of the upcoming confrontation with Cyrus.

The above analysis and conclusions surely do not exhaust discussion on the Battle of Cunaxa. However, by taking into account the presence among the King's forces such troops as πελτοφόροι or those from Armenia (though their function in the battle is still not known), we obtain a fuller picture of this engagement and can comprehend it better.

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FIGURES



Fig. 1. Detail from a Greek red-figured vase (about 440 BC), slightly damaged, showing Amazon foot soldier in Iranian dress. In her left hand she wields a πέλιτη type shield, with a cutout at the top, while in her right a slashing sword, which can be identified with μάχαιρα of the shorter version. The British Museum, GR 1978.4–11.7 (E 220). Photo by the author.

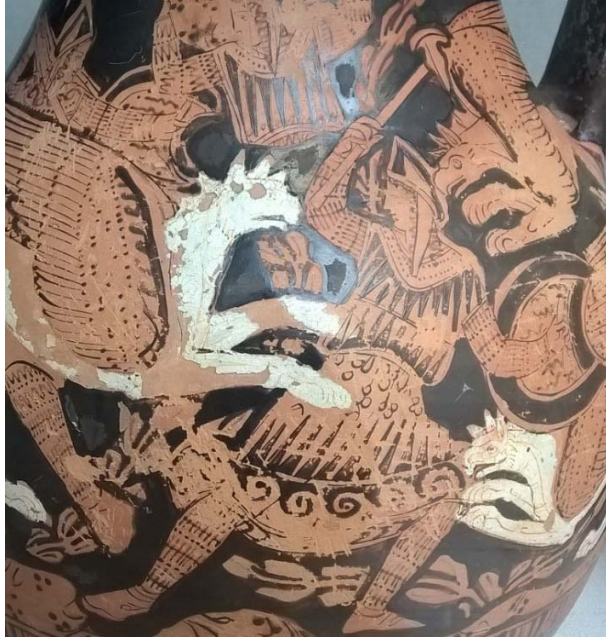


Fig. 2. Detail from a Greek red-figured vase (about 400–360 BC), showing most likely Arimaspi (a mythical one-eyed people, fighting with Gryphons) in Iranian dress. Two of them (the character in the center and on the left) are equipped with πέλτη type shields with a cutout on the side. The character in the center is also armed with a σάγαρις type battle axe. The British Museum, GR 1865.10–01.19 (E 434). Photo by the author.

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