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Arrian's *Ektaxis* in the Roman Empire

Local Identity, Diversity and the Geography of the Army

Daniel Chiritoiu

University of Cambridge

Cambridge, UK

daniel.chiritoiu@cantab.net

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Abstract

This paper proposes to discuss one of Arrian's so-called 'minor texts'—the *Acies contra Alanos* which I prefer to call *Ektaxis kata Alanōn*—and show how it is not only a military manual, but also allows Arrian to discuss identity, fitting into broader patterns and discourses of the Second Sophistic. In the *Ektaxis* Arrian, much like a sophist, creates different personas and layers of identity not just for himself but also for his troops, and takes the opportunity to present the Roman army in a diverse way, which differs from portrayals in other authors.

Keywords

military manuals – Arrian – cultural history – identity – Second Sophistic

Arrian is best known for his work on Alexander's expedition in Persia and his commentary on Alexander himself and the empire that he was creating. But Arrian was not only writing in, but equally an integral part of another empire, and it is his engagement with this which is the subject of this paper. While such engagement is surely present in the *Anabasis*, I address here one of Arrian's so-called 'minor works', the *Ektaxis kata Alanōn*. This text has generally been dismissed as a simple 'case study', a practical application of the principles found in Arrian's *Taktika*, which is (at least in appearance) a description of Greek and

Roman cavalry and infantry.¹ However, in what follows I will argue that Arrian also uses the setting of a face-off with the Alans as a pretext to discuss his own identity and heritage and that of the Roman empire, to make his readers both think about what it means to be Greek and Roman in the Roman empire, and also to deconstruct and challenge the very categories 'Greek' and 'Roman'.

1 The Text

In terms of its form, the *Ektaxis* is essentially a series of orders expressed in the third person imperative and infinitive meant to explain Arrian's battle array against the Alans, who attacked the borders of Cappadocia after they had plundered Albania and Media Atropatene at the behest of king Phrasmanes of Iberia (in the southern Caucasus).² Because the text breaks off in mid-sentence, the question has been raised as to whether this was an individual piece or part of the *Alanike*—another monograph of Arrian, which Stadter assumed would have been “a geographical and ethnographical work similar to the *Indike*”.³ Stadter argues that the *Ektaxis* was an independent text in close relation to the *Taktika*, stating that he could not imagine a work of history which would have contained this piece, because of the strange style in which it is written.⁴ Bosworth, however, compares it with Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, where Xenophon gives the Persian king a long homily on the occasion when Cyrus marches to deliver Gadates from Assyrian attack. This homily too consists mainly of third person imperatives, with particular attention given to the names of the commanders.⁵ Despite suggesting that the *Cyropaedia* could have been Arrian's model, Bosworth, unlike Wheeler, also thinks that the *Ektaxis* “is hardly likely to be an extract from a formal history”. This is because, just like the passage in Xenophon, it would have to be part of a harangue, but it is already longer than any direct speech in Arrian's only extant historical work, the *Anabasis*, and so would make for a distinct lack of balance in any historical work.⁶ Furthermore, Bosworth considers the very existence of an *Alanike* questionable, since it is based only on a reference in Photius and a “suspect attestation in John the Lydian”.⁷

1 Stadter 1980, 46.

2 For the highly literary aspect of the text see Stadter 1980, 46; Bosworth 1993, 247; for the Alan invasion see Bosworth 1977, 219; for “a more holistic approach” to the text see Brillowski 2017.

3 Stadter 1980, 163, see also 45; Wheeler 1978.

4 Stadter 1980, 45–46.

5 X. Cyr. 5.3.34–45; Bosworth 1993, 265; Wheeler 1978.

6 Bosworth 1993, 266.

7 Bosworth 1993, 266 n. 206.

Stadter's observation as to the position of the work in the Laurentianus manuscript (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 55.4) also makes it more likely that it is a stand-alone piece. He suggests that, since pages were removed from the manuscript for their blank parchment, and the work which followed the text in the manuscript—Onasander's treatise on generalship—began at the top of the verso of the same missing folio, it is likely that the recto containing the end of the *Ektaxis* had a blank space, which is why the folio was torn out.⁸ This would mean that, since a folio of the manuscript contained about forty Teubner lines, no more than twenty lines would be missing.⁹

If this is a stand-alone work, the reasons for its publication become even more interesting. We are presented with a whole piece where Arrian is advertising his own achievements in the Roman army and his position within the empire. The question of why Arrian might want to 'publish' the *Ektaxis* is fundamental to understanding the text and the bigger issues behind it. It is clearly not meant to be only a 'manual' or 'handbook', in part because the situation described is too specific to allow enough generalisation.

The text could be read as a case-study, following Stadter's line, but the idea that it demonstrates how the principles described in the *Taktika* can be applied cannot be dissociated from Arrian (as the man responsible for the applying) and the context in which that happens. If we then start thinking about 'publication' as a form of advertising, we might wonder what is being advertised or what questions are being raised. I believe the answer to this question is identity—both personal, local, and 'global'.

2 Arrian and Xenophon or Arrian as Xenophon?

One of the most striking and debated features of the treatise is the name that Arrian uses to refer to himself, Xenophon:

ὁ δὲ ἡγεμὼν τῆς πάσης στρατιᾶς Ξενοφῶν τὸ πολὺ μὲν πρὸ τῶν σημείων τῶν πεζικῶν ἡγείσθω.¹⁰

8 In fact, as far as I can tell, Wheeler is alone in arguing for the work being part of the *Alanike*.

9 Stadter 1980, 207 n. 38. The beginning of Onasander is preserved in the other manuscripts, so a cross-reference can be made; see Oldfather and Oldfather 1923, 371 and 363-365.

10 Arr. *Ektax.* 10; all Greek passages of the *Ektaxis* are quoted from the Teubner edition by Roos and Wirth.

And let the leader of the entire army, Xenophon, mostly command in front of the infantry standards.¹¹

There has been some discussion as to whether Xenophon was an actual part of Arrian's given name. This is what Stadter argues, thinking it must be a given name simply because Arrian says it is. He believes that it does not appear in any of the inscriptions of Arrian because there he uses his official Roman name.¹² But, as Bosworth notes, in the case of other individuals named Xenophon, such as Claudius' physician, C. Stertinus Xenophon, the Greek name *does* appear in official epigraphic contexts, which weakens Stadter's argument.¹³ Furthermore Stadter's parallel with Plutarch's Roman name (Maestrius), which we know only from an inscription at Delphi, does not convince, because in that inscription his Greek and Roman names *do* appear together, just as in the case of Stertinus.¹⁴

The question of identity is slightly more complicated if one considers the desire of certain Greeks to avoid being associated with Asia Minor and emphasize their ties to continental Greece and Athens in particular (see below).¹⁵ Arrian does indeed claim to be from Athens, although we know he was originally from Nicomedia. He became a citizen of Athens only when he retired there after his imperial career, because, as Spawforth argues, he wanted to be associated with 'true' Greece.¹⁶ A similar identity play can be seen in Polyaeus' case. He is also from Nicomedia but chose to highlight his Macedonian descent (whence his family might have come originally) to give authority to his text, as Macedonian blood increased the alleged expertise in warfare (or so he believed).¹⁷ Therefore, Bosworth must be right in stating that Arrian's reference to himself as Xenophon in the *Ektaxis* "is a part of the literary affectation whereby Arrian represented himself as the New Xenophon, and it is hardly likely that he would have kept up the affectation in an official document".¹⁸

By introducing himself as Xenophon, rather than as Flavius Arrianus, the author immediately raises the idea of multiple identities with multiple traditions: suddenly the Roman commander of several legions is at the same time a Greek from Athens. The figure of Xenophon is also not chosen arbitrarily.

11 All translations of the *Ektaxis* are my own.

12 Stadter 1967.

13 Bosworth 1977, 248 and n. 128.

14 *SIG* 3.829a.

15 Spawforth 2012, 261; 265-267; Whitmarsh 2005, 47-49.

16 Spawforth 2012, 262.

17 See Polyaeus. 1.1 and Krentz and Wheeler 1994, ix-xvi, but *contra* Morton 2010, 112.

18 Bosworth 1977, 248.

In the *Hellenica* (3.1.2), Xenophon refers to the writer of the *Anabasis* as Themistogenes of Syracuse, but scholars unanimously agree that this is a pseudonym for the writer himself.¹⁹ An admirer of Xenophon such as Arrian would appropriately have taken the opportunity to use a similar device in his own work, by referring to the protagonist of the work by a different name. The consequence in this case is to make the reader think about his different personas as author and protagonist, as citizen of Athens, but also of Nicomedia and Rome, all of which depend on the circumstances and context. Arrian, however goes beyond likening himself to Xenophon and *becomes* Xenophon in the context of the work, thus emphasising the fluidity and contextuality of identity.²⁰

In all other texts by Arrian, Xenophon is identified as a distinct figure, either implicitly or explicitly. For example, in the beginning of the *Periplus*, Arrian calls him 'that Xenophon' (ὁ Ξενοφῶν ἐκεῖνος) and, later, 'Xenophon the elder' (Ξενοφῶντι τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ; Ξενοφῶν ὁ πρεσβύτερος).²¹ In the *Taktika* he is not named 'the other' but it is clear that he is a different person from Arrian in a passage about other authors ('some ... others'), while in a different passage he is called Xenophon son of Gryllos, as in the preface to the *Kynegetikos*.²² There, Arrian also explains that he and Xenophon have the same name, but makes it very clear that they are two different people.²³

In the *Ektaxis*, however, the 'old Xenophon' does not appear; perhaps the reader is left purposely wondering which Xenophon this is—the old or the new one? Or are they the same person? Arrian not only encourages the thought that in some sense he *is* Xenophon, he also adopts Xenophon's language. This is not merely a matter of using Attic vocabulary but of adopting a vocabulary of battle which was out of date and archaising. One of this has been pointed out by Bosworth and Stadter—the use of phalanx for legion—but there is more.²⁴

First, there is the indication as to how the legionaries should raise the war cry: πελαζόντων δὲ ἤδη ὡς μέγιστον καὶ φοβερῶτατον ἀλαλάζειν σύμπαντας τῷ Ἐνυαλίῳ ('and let all approach and raise a cry to Enyalios as loudly and terrifyingly as possible').²⁵ By its mention of Ares' epithet Enyalios, the passage reminds one of hoplite battle, as described by Xenophon himself: καὶ ἅμα ἐφθέγγαντο πάντες

19 Millender 2012, 377 esp. n. 1.

20 For Alexander alone see Bosworth 1977; for both see Bosworth 1993, 266–267.

21 Arr. *Peripl.M.Eux.* 1; 12; 25.

22 Arr. *Tact.* 6, 29.

23 For the clear differentiation between the two see Stadter 1967, 157, who points out that Arrian uses specific words to distinguish himself from the fourth century author.

24 Bosworth 1977, 249; for the common ways to refer to legions in Greek, see n. 135; Stadter 1980, 46.

25 Arr. *Ektax.* 25.

οἶον τῷ Ἐνυαλίῳ ἐλελίζουσι ('at the same moment they all set up the sort of war-cry which they raise to Enyalios, and all alike began running').²⁶

Second, we have the description of Arrian's entourage: οἱ δὲ ἐπιλεκτοὶ ἱππῆς ἀμφ' αὐτὸν Ξενοφῶντα ἔστων, καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς φάλαγγος πεζῶν ('and let chosen men from the cavalry surround Xenophon and from the infantry of the phalanx'). This closely resembles Xenophon's use of picked troops and his own entourage, as seen twice in the *Anabasis*: συνέπεσθαι δ' ἐκέλευσεν αὐτῷ καὶ τοὺς τριακοσίους οὓς αὐτὸς εἶχε τῶν ἐπιλέκτων ἐπὶ τῷ στόματι τοῦ πλαισίου ('he also ordered the three hundred picked men under his own command at the front of the square to join Xenophon's force') and ὁ δὲ Ξενοφὼν ἔχων τοὺς ἐπιλέκτους ἐν τῇ ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος ἀνωτάτῳ κώμῃ ('while Xenophon with his picked men took quarters in the uppermost village below the summit').²⁷

This is not to say that Arrian's ἐπιλεκτοὶ were not real troops (which goes for all the troops in the text, as we shall see below)—Bosworth must surely be right in seeing the Roman *equites singulares* in the οἱ δὲ ἐπιλεκτοὶ ἱππῆς; already Polybius had used the term to refer to the Roman *extraordinarii*.²⁸ However, by very subtly describing himself as operating in a way similar to Xenophon, surrounded by picked men who can be seen as both the Roman *equites singulares* and Xenophon's ἐπιλεκτοὶ, he brings together Greek and Roman elements of his identity. Furthermore, by choosing to describe the entire army, and himself, in an archaising way, he reminds the audience of the fourth-century Xenophon and his troops without giving the impression that what he is describing is anything but a Roman provincial army: Arrian is both explaining his actions in the present and re-creating a Classical past. In the *Ektaxis*, then, Arrian is simultaneously Flavius Arrianus, the Roman governor leading his provincial army, and Xenophon son of Gryllos, the general from Athens, and by making the connection between his and Xenophon's army, he emphasizes the importance of continuity and tradition in one's identity.

Arrian is not unique in his approach to identity, but follows a very popular trend, namely that of sophistic declamation. As Berry and Heath point out, the composition of hypothetical or imitation speeches was a Greek invention, which "probably provided the earliest vehicle for the transmission of rhetorical theory".²⁹ Antiphon's *Tetralogies* and the *Helen* and *Palamedes* of Gorgias are notable instances from the classical period. However, the real history of declamation is usually reckoned to have originated in the late fourth or early

26 X. *An.* 1.18.18.

27 Arr. *Ektax.* 22; X. *An.* 3.4.43 and 7.4.11, translations by C.L. Brownson.

28 E.g. Plb. 6.26.

29 Berry and Heath 1997, 406.

third century BC, and to have reached Rome by the first century BC. We see that many of the hypothetical cases in Cicero's *De inventione* and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* become standard themes later on.³⁰ Declamation became particularly popular in the second and third centuries AD, as we can see from Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*. Schmitz makes the point that historical declamations were "by far the most important class of *meletai*". He emphasises that "the speaker impersonated a well-known figure of classical Greek history".³¹ This too is illustrated by Philostratus with plenty of examples, such as Hippodromus of Thessaly (holder of the chair of rhetoric at Athens in 209–213 AD and Philostratus' master) declaiming as Demades against revolting from Alexander, Apollonius of Athens speaking as Callias against the burning of the Athenian dead, and Alexander of Seleucia (born c. AD 115) impersonating Pericles and urging the Athenians to keep up the war.³²

The case of Lollianus of Ephesus is particularly relevant here, as through his self-presentation he—like Arrian—is trying to achieve two goals: first, to become part of what might be called a view of Greekness that was sanctioned by Romans (a typical feature for the Hadrianic era), and second, to use this 'Roman' Greek past to augment his own prestige. Most of the information we have about Lollianus comes from Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*, but several inscriptions confirm his historicity. Philostratus tells us that he was not only appointed to the chair of rhetoric at Athens but 'also governed the Athenian people, since he held the office of hoplite general in that city' (προϋστη δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἀθηναίων δήμου στρατηγῆσας αὐτοῖς τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν ὅπλων), and we know from an inscription that by 142/143 AD he was also a priest there.³³ Philostratus continues to explain how the responsibilities of the hoplite general 'were formerly to levy troops and lead them to war, but now he has charge of the food supplies and the grain market' (ἡ δὲ ἀρχὴ αὕτη πάλαι μὲν κατέλεγέ τε καὶ ἐξήγγεν ἐς τὰ πολέμια, νυνὶ δὲ τροφῶν ἐπιμελεῖται καὶ σίτου ἀγορᾶς, Philostr. VS 1.23.526). He also tells us that when a cargo of grain came from Thessaly and there was no money in the public treasury to pay for it, he bade his pupils to contribute and paid for it himself.³⁴ This is interesting, because in one of the declamatory speeches, Lollianus, speaking as Demosthenes, denounced Leptines on

30 Berry and Heath 1997, 406–407.

31 Schmitz 1999, 72. For Philostratus see Jones 1974; Anderson 1986; Bowie and Elsner 2009; Kemezis 2014; König 2014.

32 Philostr. VS 2.27.620 and 2.20.602; nothing more is known of Apollonius of Athens.

33 Philostr. VS 1.23.526; Bowie 2006; one of the inscriptions on the statues which Philostratus tells us were dedicated to him has survived: IG II² 4211, praising his declamation and forensic speeches.

34 Philostr. VS 1.23.526.

account of his law, because the supply of grain had failed to reach the Athenians from the Pontus.³⁵ Lollianus, as Schmitz argues, is not merely saying what Demosthenes would have said, but, for all intents and purposes, at the moment of the speech, *is* Demosthenes.³⁶ So we have someone in charge of the city grain supply who had actively provided for it and saved it on one occasion, speaking as Demosthenes, a major political figure of the fourth century BC, who also spoke for Athens and tried to ensure its grain supply.³⁷ Furthermore, an inscription from the base of one of the two statues dedicated to Lollianus which Philostratus mentions has survived, and we see how it praises the 'sophist' for both his *meletai* and his actions in the law-courts.³⁸ Lollianus is certainly not the only one of Philostratus' 'sophists' to have dabbled in the actual judicial process, but if this is taken together with his political role at Athens and his speech 'as' Demosthenes, one could infer that he actively associated himself with the fourth-century orator.

The reasons for this have to do mainly with an attitude towards Greece in general and Athens in particular, which, as Spawforth has shown, started with Augustus and continued with Hadrian.³⁹ Spawforth argues that in building the Agrippaeum at Athens, whose only recorded purpose was to stage declamatory performances, and by setting it up in the Agora, Augustus wanted to indicate both that the rhetorical tradition of Athens was being recognised and also that there was a correct, non-subversive way of using it. Spawforth points out that in the late Republic Greek politicians had used 'Asian'-style (as opposed to Attic) oratory "to inflame opinion at civic assemblies against the Roman interest".⁴⁰ This had most notably happened when the philosopher Athenion persuaded the Athenians to join Mithridates of Pontus in an alliance against the Romans.⁴¹ The setting of the Agrippaeum and encouragement of oratory in the Attic style signalled the imperial regime's "low esteem for crowd-pleasing political oratory in the prevailing 'Asian' manner" and its "preference for ...

35 Philostr. *VS* 1.23.527.

36 Schmitz 1999, 78: "in their declamations they actually embodied the great figures of the past; at least for the duration of their speeches, they turned into these classical authorities. ... It is important to note that in these speeches, the personality of the sophist would completely disappear behind the figure he was embodying; when he said 'I' this pronoun referred to, say, Demosthenes not to himself."

37 As Wright 1952, 100 points out, this fictitious speech is based on D. 20.30 (but also see 31-34), delivered by the orator in 355, where Demosthenes emphasizes that, if Leptines' law was in force then Athens would be left without grain from the Bosphorus.

38 *EpGr* 877.

39 Spawforth 2012, 60-80.

40 *Ibid.*, 78.

41 *Ibid.*, 78.

the fictional themes delivered in the decorous speech-register of Classical Athens".⁴²

Hadrian too gave special place to Athens when it came to Greekness, as can be seen in his attention both to the physical shape of the city and to Athens' place in relation to the Greek world in general.⁴³ This view favoured Greekness by birth and descent to 'cultural Greekness', meaning that some cities and communities—particularly in Asia Minor and the Roman near east—which did not have a strong connection to mainland Greece and had adopted the Greek 'way of life' and *paideia*, were considered less 'Greek'.⁴⁴ Spawforth points out that there was a rush of Greeks from Asia to mainland Greece stemming from a desire to be considered 'true Greeks'. A few examples are the Roman senators A. Claudius Charax of Pergamum and C. Claudius Titianus Demonstratus of Ephesus, who were both *patronomoi* at Sparta, M. Iulius Apellas of Carian Mylasa, who was *archon* of the Eumolpidae, an anonymous citizen of Smyrna who held priestly office at Plataea, and Arrian himself who moved to Athens.⁴⁵ But a willingness to be associated with the 'true Greece' can also be seen in entire cities struggling to demonstrate a 'true' Greek descent, such as Aezani in Phrygia, accepted into the Panhellenion only because they proved that they were founded by Arcadians.⁴⁶

It is against this background that we should examine Lollianus' and Arrian's techniques of presentation. Since Lollianus was from Ephesus, his interest in declamation, his political activity in Athens and his intention of being associated with Demosthenes will all have served to align him to this selfsame *vera Graecia*, to use Spawforth's terms. But, as I suggested before, I believe Lollianus is also using the prestige of Demosthenes to augment his own prestige, as the words and actions of the two blend together in a blur of past and present—which at the moment of the declamation were both in the mind of audiences, as Webb argued.⁴⁷ I would dare to push her argument even further and suggest that the audience judged not only the sophistic performance but also the sophist himself. Thus, by his choice of theme and comparison to Demosthenes, Lollianus is encouraging them to think of him also in the context of current Athenian civic life, suggesting that his actions rivalled those of the great orator and deserved similar credit.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴³ Geagan 1979, 392–393; 398; Shear 1981, 374–377; Thompson 1987, 9–15; Boatwright 2000, 148–150; Jones 1996; Spawforth and Walker 1985; Spawforth 1999.

⁴⁴ Spawforth 2012; Romeo 2002.

⁴⁵ Spawforth 2012, 262.

⁴⁶ Spawforth 2012, 262.

⁴⁷ Webb 2006, 45.

As in the case of Lollianus, the reasons for Arrian's impersonation of Xenophon are twofold. The first simply takes up Spawforth's point about him trying to adapt himself to the Roman idea of 'true' Greece. Not only, as Spawforth argues, does he move to Athens in his old age and becomes *archon* there, but before this, when still serving as a Roman official, he tries to construct an identity which is—from a Roman imperial point of view—incontestably Greek, using techniques similar to declamation, which is in itself a well-known practice for Romans, as well.

But second, we can see in this wish to be integrated in the empire also an issue of competition, this time between himself and the Greek past represented by Xenophon. We could also see—like with Lollianus—an attempt to use this competition both to augment his own achievements and to put them into perspective. So, can we think that, as in Lollianus' case, Arrian would have wanted to boost his reputation? If so, for what reasons? Cassius Dio's account of the war with the Alani makes it clear that it was not a particularly dangerous affair (as Arrian's preparations would have us believe), and it appears that there was no actual battle. Dio tells us that the Alani were simply frightened and turned away when seeing the governor's forces (τὰ δὲ καὶ Φλάουιον Ἀρριανὸν τὸν τῆς Καππαδοκίας ἄρχοντα φοβηθέντων, 'but they were also frightened by Flavius Arrianus, the governor of Cappadocia').⁴⁸ Bosworth is perhaps right in believing that there was only a skirmish, and states that "it is questionable whether the Alani ever posed a serious frontier problem for the Romans. Their previous history, in so far as it is known, suggests that their depredations in general served the interests of Rome".⁴⁹

No doubt repelling the Alani was essential, but given the fact that they had been on a booty expedition, it cannot have been hard; the threat to Cappadocia was minimal. In view of this, it is plausible that Arrian wanted to augment his success by blending past and present. Presenting himself in the *persona* of a successful general such as Xenophon and associating his prestige with Xenophon's would create a stronger impact. However, in terms of overall competition with Xenophon it could not have escaped Arrian that the fourth-century general fought as a mercenary for a Persian (and not even legitimate) ruler, Cyrus the Younger, and (even worse) with the Spartans at the battle of Coronea in 394 BC against his own city of Athens, as a punishment for which he was exiled. In comparison, Arrian not only served Athens in his old age as *archon* but defended the borders of the Roman Empire from (however little) danger. Therefore, the comparison between him and Xenophon does not

48 D.C. 69.15.

49 Bosworth 1977, 220.

automatically place him in a positive light by virtue of Xenophon's prestige. In other words, it shows how Arrian had the heritage and skills of a Xenophon but also was more successful than him, both in a Roman moral framework and in a Greek one, by serving both his *patriae*—the Roman Empire and Athens—successfully, unlike Xenophon.

But, by writing about Xenophon and himself, Arrian also opens the discussion about identity, Greeks and Romans and ideas of empire. He expands this from his own identity to that of the troops and of the people in the empire, with multiple identities functioning at once for all of them.

3 Identity: 'Local' and 'Global'

There is no reason to doubt that the troops mentioned in the *Ektaxis* are real. They have long been identified by Grotefend and more definitively by Ritterling, and if Arrian's agenda was to make a greater point about the Roman Empire, it would have made sense to use existing units, even if the description of his battle array was highly literary.⁵⁰ Having said this, the very fact that scholars had to go through so much trouble to figure out the exact units to which Arrian is referring makes it quite clear that he is not primarily interested in identifying real-life troops. Unlike in the *Taktika*, where, as Busetto has shown, he goes to great pains to translate into Greek the exact terms used by the Roman army (sometimes having to resort to periphrases), in the *Ektaxis* Arrian refers to the units in various ways apart from the most straight-forward option, namely giving the name and number of the troop in question.⁵¹ Arrian uses this latter technique only twice: in paragraph one, to differentiate between the two Rhaetian cohorts, οἱ τῆς σπείρας τῆς τετάρτης τῶν Ῥαιτῶν, identified by Ritterling as the riders of the *cohors IIII Rhaetorum equitata*, stationed in Analiba in the *Notitia dignitatum*, and οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης Ῥαιτικῆς, that Ritterling assumes are the horsemen of a *cohors I Rhaetorum equitata*, but which is not in the *Notitia* and cannot be identified with certainty.⁵² Unit numbers—without their full designation—appear concerning only two more legions: ἡ πεζικὴ φάλαγξ ἡ πεντεκαίδεκάτη, identified as the XV *Apollinaris*, and τὸ σημεῖον τῆς δωδεκάτης φάλαγγος, 'standard of the twelfth phalanx', which

⁵⁰ Grotefend 1867; Ritterling 1902; also Brillowski 2017, 203–209 for a somewhat more generic discussion of the troops used by Arrian. For the history of scholarship see Bosworth 1977, 232–233.

⁵¹ Busetto 2013, 237.

⁵² Ritterling 1902, 369.

according to Ritterling is the *XII fulminata*.⁵³ Arrian's preferred way of referring to troops is by their 'ethnic' names (but also names which relate to their status, such as οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰλῆς ἢ ὄνομα Κολώνες, 'those from the *ala* whose name is *Coloni*') sometimes in conjunction with the type of unit, e.g. ἡ Ἰλη τῶν Γετῶν, but most of the time just simply as the 'Celtic horsemen', οἱ Κελτοὶ ἱππῆς or simply 'the Italians and Cyrenians', οἷ τε Ἴταλοι καὶ Κυρηναίων οἱ παρόντες.⁵⁴ Regarding the cavalry Ritterling makes the point that when Arrian uses just the 'ethnic' names he is referring to the horsemen of a *cohors*, rather than an *ala*, which he always names.⁵⁵ While this may be true, the terminology used throughout the treatise is much too inconsistent to be regarded as a well thought-out system—at least in the sense of precise identification.

The insistence on 'ethnic' epithets emphasises the diversity of peoples (and their different identities) present in the Roman army. Thus, we see the Aurianoι and Rhaetians being led by a Corinthian named Daphnes (ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις ἐπιτετάχθων οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰλῆς ἦτινι Αὐριανοὶ ὄνομα. συντετάχθων δὲ αὐτοῖς οἱ τῆς σπεύρας τῆς τετάρτης τῶν Παιτῶν, ἧς ἄρχων Δάφνης Κορίνθιος).⁵⁶ Following them are the Iturians and Cyrenians (συντετάχθων δὲ αὐτοῖς Ἰτουραῖοι καὶ Κυρηναῖοι),⁵⁷ also led by someone with a Greek name—Demetrius—and after these are deployed the Celts (ἐπὶ τούτοις δὲ οἱ Κελτοὶ ἱππῆς), who are preceded by the infantry, which is made up of Italians and Cyrenians under the leadership of an Italian, Pulcher (οἷ τε Ἴταλοι καὶ Κυρηναίων οἱ παρόντες. πάντων δὲ ἡγείσθω Πούλχερ, ὅσπερ ἄρχει τοῖς Ἰταλοῖς).⁵⁸ All of these are real troops, but the way in which Arrian presents them, first and foremost by using their 'ethnic' names, but also in the case of Daphnes emphasising their commander's origin, gives a very strong sense of the unique geographical diversity of the empire. A reader who understands that all these different peoples, although so diverse, had

53 Ritterling 1902, 361.

54 Arr. *Ektax.* 8; 2; 3. See Ritterling 1902, 362; 364-366 for ἡ Ἰλη τῶν Γετῶν as the *ala I Ulpia Dacorum*, οἱ Κελτοὶ ἱππῆς as the riders of the *cohors I Germanorum* and for the Italians and Cyrenians as the *cohors I Italica voluntariorum civium Romanorum* and respectively as a *vexillatio* of the *cohors III Augusta Cyrenaica sagittariorum equitata*. See also Bosworth 1993, 265 for Arrian's insistence on national names as a parallel to Xenophon's text. The purpose is similar in both, namely to emphasize the many peoples in the service of the emperor in the former and Persian king in the latter.

55 Ritterling 1902, 362.

56 Arr. *Ektax.* 1; Ritterling 1902, 361 and 369 identifies them as the *ala II Ulpia Auriana* and, respectively, the *cohors III Rhaetorum equitata*.

57 Arr. *Ektax.* 2.

58 Arr. *Ektax.* 3; see Ritterling 1902, 367 for the more problematic *cohors* of Ituraioi, which is not identifiable in any inscription; and also Grotefend 1867, 24 for the difficulty in identifying the two.

come together to fight for the empire under Arrian's command, realizes that Arrian's army is a representative of the Roman Empire as a whole, with Arrian himself acting as a surrogate for the emperor/commander.

This recognition of the diversity but also the unity within the empire is further augmented by the way Arrian uses not only the dry name and number designation—of which he is clearly aware—but emphasises that these are real people in the empire: Celts, Italians, Cyrenians, Corinthians. By presenting different ways in which one can describe troops, Arrian is also revealing the way in which the empire recognises their uniqueness and individual existence outside of the units; so the Rhaetians are part of the fourth *speira* but they are still Rhaetians, and a legitimate way of referring to them would be just 'the Rhaetian infantry' or the 'Rhaetian cavalry', just as Arrian refers to the πεζοὶ ... Ἰταλοί, the Βοσπορανοὶ ... πεζοί or the Κελτοὶ ἱππῆς. Along the same lines, in using periphrases such as οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰλῆς ἢ ὄνομα Κολῶνες, 'those from the *ala* whose name is *Coloni*', Arrian is perhaps also emphasising that not all of the members of the *ala* are *coloni*, since new members may have been recruited from different areas due to casualties; thus the make-up of the unit may have been more diverse than its name implies, and one needs to recognise that.⁵⁹

By presenting a list of all these people fighting in and for the empire, Arrian also encourages his readers to delve deeper into the dichotomy between Greek and Roman that he had established in the *Taktika*. It is not just Greeks and Romans who need to be acknowledged when discussing military contributions, but all these other, 'local', identities that make up the categories of 'Greek' and 'Roman' as well.⁶⁰ While Corinthians and Cyrenians are all Greeks, they are different peoples, suggesting that they contribute to Arrian's army in different ways. In talking about Bosphoreans, Cyrenians, Rhizians, Apulians, Trapezuntians, and Armenians, Arrian is celebrating the local identity of his troops, of himself and of his commanders, but also the individual identity of the latter; naming them suggests that they are not merely representatives of a tribe, but Daphnes, Vasakes, Pulcher, Arbellos and Secundus.⁶¹ Commanders

59 Gilliver 2007, 193: "Auxiliary units were initially raised from Rome's provinces and were identified by their tribal or geographic origin, but gradually local recruitment where the units were stationed diluted much of their ethnic identity and in the second century AD citizens were serving in the auxiliary units as well as legions." However, I do not want to push this point too far, as the difference in name here might only be due to stylistic reasons and the desire to avoid repetition; or alternatively it might be the only way in which one could refer to these troops, as the *Koloni* were not a people nor were the *Auriano*i in line 6 of chapter 1, whose unit is presented in the same way.

60 Much work has been done on Greekness and local identity in recent years. See for example Whitmarsh 2010, Goldhill 2010 and Ando 2010.

61 Arr. *Ektax.* 1-15 gives a good idea of the range of names and peoples discussed.

then are individuals whose skills need to be recognized irrespective of whether they are Greek, Roman, Armenian or Celtic, as we see in the case of Pulcher who, though Italian himself, is entrusted with the responsibility of leading both the Italians and the Cyrenians.⁶²

This emphasis on unity in diversity of the Roman Empire can be paralleled with the treatment of the army in Hadrian's coinage. In the EXERCITUS series we see the provincial armies being honoured locally, with the name of the province (Britannia, Cappadocia, Dacia, Dalmatia, Germania, Hispania, Mauretania, Moesia, Noricum, Rhaetia, Syria, and Thracia) but without any iconographic particularities. So, "although honoured under local names, the armies remain Roman throughout".⁶³

Such allowing for diversity was part of a more general Roman 'imperial programme'. As has been pointed out many times, Roman identity—down to its core in Rome's foundation myth—was inclusive.⁶⁴ Roman rulers were interested only in upholding a certain set of morals and practices and did not try radically to alter the identity of those being ruled. In Woolf's words: "Greeks remained Greeks, at least in part, because Romans allowed them to. By valuing the Greek past and permitting the Greek language to operate as an official one throughout the early empire, Romans made no assault on the central defining characteristics of Hellenism".⁶⁵ The same argument could be made about Arrian's presentation of Hadrian's 'reforms', which he discusses in the *Taktika*: the Romans organised their troops to fight in specific units (such as *alae*, cohorts, *numeri*), each commanded by a Roman (citizen), but they were perfectly happy to allow them to preserve the particularities of their fighting styles which made them very efficient and useful to the empire in the first place.⁶⁶

In keeping with the theme of past and present, the geography of the empire in the *Ektaxis* also embraces the past, further augmenting the feeling of diversity in the Roman empire and stressing its permanence, because it spans so many peoples and so much time. This is evident in the self-same archaising which Bosworth talked about, namely in the incorporation of the tactics of the Greek phalanx in the Roman legion:

62 Arr. *Ektax.* 3.

63 Mattingly 1936, clxxiii.

64 Cf., e.g., Sall. *Cat.* 6: *hi postquam in una moenia convenere, dispari genere, dissimili lingua, alii alio more viventes, incredibile memoratu est, quam facile coaluerint: ita brevi multitudo dispersa atque vaga concordia civitas facta erat.*

65 Woolf 1994, 131.

66 For Hadrian's reforms see Arr. *Takt.* 44; for auxiliary units being commanded by Roman officers see Goldsworthy 2003, 64; for *numeri* Gilliver 2007, 195.

τετάχθων δὲ ἐπὶ ὀκτώ, καὶ πυκνὴ αὐτοῖς ἔστω ἡ σύγκλεισις. καὶ αἱ μὲν πρῶται τέσσαρες τάξεις ἔστων κοντοφόρων, ὧν δὴ τοῖς κοντοῖς μακρὰ καὶ ἐπίλεπτα τὰ σιδήρια προήκται. καὶ τούτους οἱ μὲν πρωτοστάται ἐς προβολὴν ἔχόντων, ὥς εἰ πελάζοιεν αὐτοῖς οἱ πολέμιοι, κατὰ τὰ στήθη μάλιστα τῶν ἵππων τίθεσθαι τῶν κοντῶν τὸν σίδηρον.⁶⁷

Let the ranks form eight deep and in close order; let the first four ranks be made up of those who have *kontoi* (long pikes), and whose *kontoi* have long and light iron tips attached. And these the men in their first ranks should have projecting forward, so that if the enemies approach them, the iron of the spears will be driven into the horses' chests.⁶⁸

This is more than just a way in which the formations described in the *Taktika* can work in real life, it is recognition of the importance of the traditions of the Greeks and a demonstration of how the Empire still acknowledges and keeps them alive, just as in the case of the Celts, Getae and Rhaetians. But the Greek phalanx also becomes a tool, showing how Greek knowledge can still help order the Roman Empire more generally, and the Roman army more specifically, with Arrian both as possessor of said knowledge and the one who orders it. The phalanx is therefore placed at the centre of all the different identities as a binding factor of them all.

Would this way of looking at the empire, and particularly its armies, have been surprising to a Roman audience? It comes as no surprise that the Roman army was diverse, especially considering the makeup of auxiliaries and *numeri*.⁶⁹ But its depiction did not always reflect that, with Plutarch and Suetonius—near contemporaries of Arrian—being the most significant

67 Arr. *Ektax.* 15-16.

68 Wheeler 1979 has argued that, on several occasions before Arrian's *Ektaxis*, the Roman army had actually incorporated the tactics of the phalanx, therefore Arrian's use is not a one-off; see also Brillowski 2017, 210-211, who follows Wheeler. While this is certainly possible (and would not—I believe—diminish the thesis of this paper, much like Arrian's use of real troops to make finer points about identity), I believe the evidence for Wheeler's case (esp. 310-314) is weak and perhaps relies too much on the tradition that the Romans had fought as a phalanx "in the Etruscan period" (304-305). In Chiritoiu 2020 I argue that the story of the adoption of the phalanx does not need to be taken at face value since it is part of a much bigger narrative of cultural interaction between Etruscans, Greeks, and Romans and fits into a picture of Roman cultural borrowing. It is perhaps also worth thinking a bit closer about what the term 'phalanx' means, as at times for Wheeler it simply seems to be a close infantry reserve force (310-311).

69 Much has been written about both. Gilliver 2007, 194-195 provides a good overview.

counterexamples. Relevant here is the work of Ash on differentiation between different groups within an army and whether soldiers are motivated by the same emotions in Tacitus' prose. Ash provides examples of collective (or rather stereotyped) action in her analysis of the relationships between Otho, Galba and their respective soldiers.⁷⁰ She notes how, in Tacitus' text, there are markedly different attitudes towards the emperor when it comes to common soldiers and their officers, which contrast with the treatment in Suetonius and Plutarch "who tend to talk more in terms of large, unstratified military groups".⁷¹ She goes on to argue that Plutarch suggests that the soldiers all support Otho for the same reason (citing Plu. *Oth.* 3.3), while Suetonius "assumes that all the troops are motivated by genuine concern for the emperor".⁷² The treatment of the soldiers in these passages of Suetonius and Plutarch might lead a reader to imagine that the army as a whole was unitary in its motivation, desires and patterns of action. Even if Tacitus takes a more nuanced approach, emphasizing differences between officers and men, and even between the men themselves, stereotypes such as 'the rabble', the 'good' and the 'bad men' are still preserved.⁷³

Although Arrian's text is not as complex as those of these other authors, in his simple exposition he presents a more nuanced image of the troops and their background, also highlighting the roles of individuals and the mixture of ethnicities and origins. Moreover, if we assume that commanders of auxiliary cohorts and *alae* would normally be Roman equestrians, Arrian's choice to emphasise their ethnic origins also makes a point both about the inclusiveness of Roman citizenship and the breadth of meaning that the term carries.⁷⁴ For example, the aforementioned Daphnes is a Corinthian, a Greek but presumably also a Roman citizen so that, like for Arrian himself, his motivations, interests and actions are determined by all those identities. After reading Arrian one might exercise caution when thinking that 'Roman citizen' means the same thing for everyone. Moreover, Daphnes is in charge of a cohort of Rhaetians: the way in which his troops behave is an aggregate of all the complex intersections of ethnic, societal and cultural factors that are implied in such a pairing.

In conclusion, Arrian uses the *Ektaxis* to explore issues of identity—both his own and that of his troops, emphasizing difficulties of definition and

⁷⁰ Ash 1999, 23–30.

⁷¹ Ash 1999, 26.

⁷² Suet. *Otho* 8.2; Ash 1999, 29.

⁷³ Ash 1999, 29.

⁷⁴ For commanders of auxiliaries and exceptions see also Rankov 2008, 50–51 esp. 53.

categorization. Both in his own case and in that of the troops he challenges assumptions about what it means to be Roman and about the blanket application of such a term. He emphasizes that *Romanitas* has become an amalgam of cultures and identities. Greek culture and history are shown to have a special place in this *Romanitas*, one that can still be used to shape and organize the empire, but Arrian encourages cherishing the empire's diversity and individuality and shows how a successful leader—such as himself—should take all those things into account.

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