

# The Units of Alexander's Army and the District Divisions of Late Argead Macedonia

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THE ORGANISATION of the Macedonian army under Alexander the Great, names and functions of units, effective numbers of warriors included, are fiercely debated.<sup>1</sup> That Alexander's war against Persia occupies the central place in ancient military accounts has not helped scholars reach a degree of consensus. This study likewise departs from the existing reconstructions. It shares with its predecessors a belief that the Companion and Foot Companion units of the Macedonian army were arranged by geographical or tribal origin. I am unable, however, to accept discrepancies between the numbers of cavalry and infantry units suggested by previous studies, and I prefer to look for the regular and logically explicable division of this army, similar to mathematical regularity, with which known armies of Greek *poleis*, and especially those of federal states, were organised.

This study represents, therefore, an attempt to view Macedonia of the last Argead kings from the perspective of a historian interested in the growth of federalism in the Greek world in the fourth century B.C. This approach should not be surprising. Recently, scholars dealing with Hellenistic Macedonia have tended to stress extensive similarities between the kingdom and the Greek federal states of the period. Of course, various scholars underscore different arguments—the existence

<sup>1</sup> All dates are B.C. unless otherwise indicated. Translations of Greek and Latin authors are usually LCL. However, there was, as often, a need to standardize *termini technici* which were rendered by the original translators in different ways.

of well-organised *poleis* in fourth-century Macedonia (which strengthens the resemblance between the Macedonian monarchy and Greek confederacies),<sup>2</sup> or the fact that ancient authors list Macedonia together with Greek federal states as members of symmachies. It has been suggested that at least in the Hellenistic age Macedonia's rulers believed that "Macedonia should not look old-fashioned in a new period of federative boom."<sup>3</sup>

Admittedly, there is widespread agreement that the army of Alexander was, at least in the earlier phase of his *anabasis*, recruited from districts, into which Philip II had divided the kingdom. The division into districts was recently suggested as the main feature that had differentiated Greek federal states from earlier, undeveloped tribal states.<sup>4</sup> This is not the place to discuss whether this could be the comprehensive definition of a Greek federal state, but one should agree that most successful of Greek *ethne* experienced such a reform with primarily military objectives.

<sup>2</sup> M. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings I* (Athens 1996) 478–496; "Polis, Ethnos and Kingship in Northern Greece," in K. Buraselis and K. Zoumboulakis (eds.), *The Idea of European Community in History: Conference Proceedings II* (Athens 2003) 51–64; "Décrets d'asylie, de Macédoine et d'Épire," in D. Berranger-Auserve (ed.), *Épire, Illyrie, Macédoine, Mélanges ... Pierre Cabanes* (Clermont-Ferrand 2007) 271–274.

<sup>3</sup> K. Buraselis, "Considerations on Symmachia and Sympoliteia in the Hellenistic Period," in Buraselis and Zoumboulakis, *The Idea of European Community* 45. The date of the transformation that gave Macedonia a federal outlook remains a problem. F. Papazoglou, "Sur l'organisation de la Macédoine des Antigonides," *Ancient Macedonia III* (1983) 195–210, investigating the appearance of the phrase *to koinon ton Makedonon* in inscriptions, suggested the transformation was initiated by the Antigonids. Already Hieronymus of Cardia understood Macedonia as a quasi-federal organism and applied to the Macedonian assemblies the phrase *koine ekklesia* which he used also for assemblies of Greek federal states: J. Rzepka, "Koine Ekklesia in Diodorus of Sicily and the General Assemblies of the Macedonians," *Tyche* 20 (2005) 119–142.

<sup>4</sup> T. Corsten, *Vom Stamm zum Bund. Gründung und territoriale Organisation griechischer Bundestaaten* (Würzburg 1999) 241. Of course, in a monarchy like Macedonia there was no place for any activity of districts on the interstate level. What approximates Macedonia to the Greek leagues is the size of territory.

In the case of Argead Macedonia, each *ile* of Companion Cavalry and each *taxis* of Companion Infantry is believed to have been enrolled in one district. However, the generally accepted numbers of *ilai* and *taxeis* in Alexander's army do not match each other. Handbooks of Greek history, biographies of Alexander the Great, and specialised studies repeat the general opinion that there were six *taxeis* of Companion Infantry and seven *ilai* of Companion Cavalry (Horse Guard and Foot Guard not included, of course). As a consequence, neither of these two figures is believed to be the exact number of recruitment districts, and modern reconstructions vary not only in details but also in general matters. I hope that a new solution to this problem can be put forward, if we once again examine the ancient testimonies on Alexander's army units.

This study, in contrast to many reconstructions, will not open with the Royal Guards, because, according to the same studies, they were not enrolled according to the purely territorial principle.<sup>5</sup> Instead, it focuses on the regular units of the Companion Cavalry and the Companion Infantry. The latter are unanimously understood to have been enlisted on the geographical basis, whereas scholars assume that the kings had much more freedom in the composition of their *hetairike hippos*. There is again general consensus that Alexander invaded Asia in 334 with six *taxeis* (or *phalanges*) of Companion Infantry, most likely each 1500 strong.<sup>6</sup> Of these six, half are known to have borne the noble name *asthetairoi* and to have been recruited in Upper Macedonia (we have names of commanders of *taxeis* from Elimaea, Tymphaea, and "Lyncestis with Orestis": Diod.

<sup>5</sup> N. G. L. Hammond, *The Macedonian State* (Oxford 1989) 24–25; A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire. The Reign of Alexander the Great* (Cambridge 1988) 261.

<sup>6</sup> H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* I (Munich 1926) 114–116; W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* II (Cambridge 1948) 136, 142; P. A. Brunt, *Arrian: Anabasis Alexandri Bks. I–IV* (London 1976) lxxvi–lxxvii; R. D. Milns, "The Army of Alexander the Great," in E. Badian (ed.), *Alexandre le Grand: Image et réalité* (Geneva 1976) 101–102; N. G. L. Hammond, *Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman*<sup>2</sup> (Bristol 1989) 27; A. B. Bosworth, "ΑΣΘΕΤΑΙΡΟΙ," *CQ* 23 (1973) 245–253, and *Conquest* 259.

17.57.2, Curt. 4.13.28).<sup>7</sup> The ethnic basis of enrollment is implied also by Arrian's account of the distributing of reinforcements that reached the expedition army after Gaugamela (*Anab.* 3.16.10–11):

ἐνταῦθα καὶ Ἀμύντας ὁ Ἀνδρομένους ξὺν τῇ δυνάμει ἀφίκετο, ἣν ἐκ Μακεδονίας ἤγε. καὶ τούτων τοὺς μὲν ἰππέας ἐς τὴν ἵππον τὴν ἑταιρικὴν κατέταξεν Ἀλέξανδρος, τοὺς πεζοὺς δὲ προσέθηκεν ταῖς τάξεσι ταῖς ἄλλαις, κατὰ ἔθνη ἐκάστους ξυντάξας.

There too Amyntas son of Andromenes arrived with the troops he brought from Macedon. Of these Alexander assigned the horsemen to the Companion Cavalry, and attached the foot to the other battalions assigning them in accordance with their national origin (*kata ethne*).

Brunt's rendering of κατὰ ἔθνη as "in accordance with their national origin" (LCL) is slightly misleading; "tribal origin" seems more appropriate. In the *Anabasis* Arrian uses this set phrase thrice: the two other attestations are in the *ordre de bataille* of Darius' troops (2.8.8) and the Aetolian embassy to Alexander in 335 (1.10.2: Αἰτωλοὶ δὲ πρεσβείας σφῶν κατὰ ἔθνη πέμπαντες, "the Aetolians sent embassies, tribe by tribe"). Against the view expressed by one of the most distinguished commentators on Arrian, this need not imply a disbanding of the Aetolian state at Macedonia's request.<sup>8</sup>

The account of Amyntas' reinforcements in *Anabasis* shows that the division into districts was one of the stable rules in

<sup>7</sup> Bosworth, *CQ* 23 (1973) 245–253. Cf. P. Goukowsky, "Makedonika," *REG* 100 (1987) 240–255, at 243–248, who argues that *asthetairoi* were a subclass of *pezhetairoi*, an elite subdivision of each infantry *taxis*. Although the latter solution hardly convinces one inclined to more conservative explanations, I must admit that it would fit perfectly into a reconstruction of the tripartite division of Macedonian units and districts that I suggest below. In this case, *asthetairoi* would have been the *elite* formation within each *taxis*, and at the same time the third part of the *taxis* recruited in Upper Macedonia.

<sup>8</sup> A. B. Bosworth, "Early Relations between Aetolia and Macedon," *AJAH* 1 (1976) 164–181, argues for embassies sent from a number of independent states in Aetolia; see however J. Rzepka, "Philip II of Macedon and 'The Garrison in Naupactus': A Re-Interpretation of Theopompus *FGrHist* 115 F 235," *Tyche* 19 (2004) 157–166, at 157–159.

Alexander's army. The equal number of warriors in each unit indicates that districts, despite their historical names, need not be identical with older kingdoms incorporated into Macedonia through the genius of Philip II. Although they had names of some tradition (Elimaea, Orestis with Lyncestis, Tymphaea), the constituencies of Macedonia were rational creations with similar resources and manpower. Apparently, after Philip's resettling people within his greater Macedonia, Orestis with Lyncestis were too poor in population to form a separate *taxis* of infantry. A possible amalgamation of Orestis and Lyncestis points up the problem of how many districts were in Macedonia under the last Argeads.

To discover this number, scholars scrutinise the general number of soldiers and units that departed to Asia with Alexander or stayed home with Antipater. We hear of a total of 24,000 Infantry Companions, the expedition army and the home army amounting to 12,000 foot each. Since the Foot *agema* (of the hypaspists) and the hypaspists numbered 3000,<sup>9</sup> 9000 remaining infantry divided by six means that there were about 1500 warriors in a *taxis*. To establish the number of Macedonia's districts, scholars divide the body of Antipater's Home Army by the standard force of one *taxis* in Asia (1500)

<sup>9</sup> The two lesser units of hypaspists were commanded by *chiliarchs* (Arr. 4.30.6), implying that each of three *taxeis* was 1000 strong. Cf. R. D. Milns, "The Hypaspists of Alexander III – Some Problems," *Historia* 20 (1971) 186–195, at 186–188; Bosworth, *Conquest* 259–260; Hammond, *Alexander the Great* 28. Clearly the general size of the hypaspists corps, being the Guard *sensu pleno*, was double the size of the regular territorial phalanx—the Argyraspids, the renamed Hypaspists, who are represented as a uniform body numbering 3000 (Diod. 18.58.1). A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* (Oxford 1980–95) II 196, suggests that the number of hypaspists decreased after "the mass discharge at Opis and the losses of the first coalition war" and that "at the height of the campaign in Asia their numbers must have been significantly greater." Thus he implies that the original total of hypaspists' chiliarchies was larger. However, I would expect that lost or dismissed warriors were quickly replaced by others; certainly all Macedonian foot soldiers welcomed elevation to the elite unit.

and postulate eight further *taxeis* (and fourteen in total).<sup>10</sup> It would be strange, however, if Alexander decided to load heavy burdens on some provinces, and give complete relief to others.<sup>11</sup> Rather, the equal proportion of infantry in the expeditionary force and the home army suggests that an ideal half of the Macedonian manpower remained with Antipater.

It is tempting to state that Antipater's army was also divided into six units. An obstacle to this assumption is the size of the infantry units: if *taxeis* of the Home Army were equal to Alexander's *taxeis*, six units in Antipater's army would have meant 9000 soldiers. I think this difficulty is not decisive. We should realize that Alexander's expedition did not mean a transposition of the Macedonian state to Asia—the royal palaces, the Argead women, and the Macedonian people stayed home.<sup>12</sup> The standing sacred band of infantry guard was with Alexander, but it is still thinkable that Antipater was left in Macedonia with a part of the Royal hypaspists<sup>13</sup> (or with units

<sup>10</sup> Thus Milns, in *Alexandre le Grand* 105, and Hammond, *Alexander the Great* 27, who assumes also that Alexander took with him half of the Companion Cavalry (seven squadrons out of fourteen).

<sup>11</sup> Most scholars believe that Upper Macedonia with three *taxeis* of *asthetairoi* was overrepresented in the expeditionary army, mainly because Alexander could not have confidence in the ever-separatist Upper Macedonian cantons; thus *asthetairoi* would have been hostages of Alexander: e.g. N. V. Sekunda, *The Army of Alexander the Great* (London/Melbourne 1984) 29. This is not impossible on the one hand. On the other hand one can reverse this argument and ask if it would have been safe to start an expedition against a powerful enemy with forces that were at best neutral to their commander and at worst ready to desert to a hostile camp. Alexander, ever preoccupied with conspiracy and opposition, cannot be expected to have relied solely on the most separatist among his subjects.

<sup>12</sup> As N. G. L. Hammond, "Some Passages in Arrian concerning Alexander," *CQ* 30 (1980) 455–476, at 470–476, notes rightly, Olympias and Cleopatra enjoyed some official status in Macedonia; certainly while replacing the king in sacrifices and some religious rites for the community they needed the assistance of the elite troops.

<sup>13</sup> Hammond, *Macedonian State* 86–88, suggests that the forces left with Antipater were a kind of militia. A. Noguera Borel, "Le recrutement de l'armée macédonienne sous la royauté," in A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets, M. B. Hatzopoulos, and Y. Morizot (eds.), *Rois, cités, nécropoles: institutions, rites et monuments en Macédoine* (Athens 2006) 227–236, at 231, rightly stresses that

of similar destination and organisation, but bearing a different name): given equal numbers of Macedonian troops in Asia and Europe, it is tempting to suggest that Antipater's (and Olympias') standing army consisted of 3000 foot.<sup>14</sup> If so, we would have the Royal elite infantry 6000 strong; of course, they were not drawn on a territorial basis, but the number of the corps's subdivisions was modeled after the number of districts.<sup>15</sup> A figure of 1000 *hypaspists* for one district could therefore be comparable to the standing elite citizen troops of Greek states like the Arcadian *eparittoi* or Aetolian *epilektoi* who were recruited according to district divisions, whereas one district usually sent 1000 elite infantry (and much more "regular infantry"). Whereas the *hypaspists* (or their colleagues in the Home Army) were really "Macedonia's professional citizen-soldiers,"<sup>16</sup> the rest of the Home Army infantry also resembled the expeditionary forces. In fact, each district unit was divided into halves (*taxeis*), and the theoretical strength of a district army was 3000.<sup>17</sup> To add positive (and firm) evidence for the division of Macedonia into six units, recall the Alexander historians' figures for the reinforcement led by Amyntas son of Andromenes, which was distributed among units *kata ethne* (Arr. 3.16.10–1). And Diodorus as well as Curtius present almost identical catalogues with 6000 Macedonian foot (Diod. 17.65.1; Curt. 5.1.40–42). Thus, six districts become more and more plausible.<sup>18</sup>

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for reasons of security Alexander must have left "troupes d'une certaine qualité en Macédoine."

<sup>14</sup> Milns, in *Alexandre le Grand* 105, excludes such a possibility.

<sup>15</sup> Noguera Borel, in *Rois, cités, necropoles* 233 n.22, admits that the normal *pentakosiarchiai* of hypaspists were drawn from districts, whereas the Royal Guard were not.

<sup>16</sup> E. M. Anson, "The Hypaspists: Macedonia's Professional Citizen-Soldiers," *Historia* 34 (1985) 246–248.

<sup>17</sup> Noguera Borel, in *Rois, cités, necropoles* 235, shows that the army of Philip V like that of Alexander was made up of district units numbering 3000 soldiers each.

<sup>18</sup> It may be accidental, but there were 6000 Macedonian warriors attending the so-called trial of Philotas (Curt. 6.8.23): *postero die rex edixit, omnes armati coirent. VI milia fere militum venerant, praeterea turba lixarum calorumque impleverant regiam*: "On the following day the king made proclamation that all

So far so good: the numbers for infantry units and the general size of foot in the Macedonian army can be neatly explained by this six-partite scheme; but can the Macedonian cavalry really be included in this reconstruction? There is widespread agreement that the Macedonian horse also was recruited on the basis of district divisions. In such a system, identical numbers of cavalry and infantry units should be expected. Yet the generally accepted numbers of cavalry and infantry units in Alexander's army are unequal, and even in the forces led by Amyntas the number of Macedonian cavalry does not correspond perfectly to the phalanx (see below).

Scholars are unanimous that during the first years of the Persian expedition there were seven territorial cavalry *ilai* (squadrons) in the army of Alexander. Positive evidence is provided by Arrian and Diodorus on the Macedonian *ordre de bataille* before the battle of Gaugamela, the fullest description of this kind we have for the whole expedition:

Arr. 3.11.8: Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δὲ ἡ στρατιὰ ἐκοσμήθη ὧδε. τὸ μὲν δεξιὸν αὐτῷ εἶχον τῶν ἱππέων οἱ ἐταῖροι, ὧν προετέτακτο ἡ ἴλη ἢ βασιλική, ἣς Κλεῖτος ὁ Δρωπίδου ἰάραρχος ἦν, ἐπὶ δὲ ταύτῃ ἢ Γλαυκίου ἴλη, ἐχομένη δ' αὐτῆς ἢ Ἀρίστωνος, ἐπὶ δὲ ἢ Σωπόλιδος τοῦ Ἑρμοδώρου, ἐπὶ δὲ ἢ Ἡρακλείδου τοῦ Ἀντιόχου, ἐπὶ ταύτῃ δὲ ἢ Δημητρίου τοῦ Ἀλθαιμένους, ταύτης δὲ ἐχομένη ἢ Μελεάγρου, τελευταία δὲ τῶν βασιλικῶν ἰλῶν ἢς Ἡγέλοχος ὁ Ἴπποστράτου ἰάραρχος ἦν. Ξυμπάσης δὲ τῆς ἵππου τῶν ἐταίρων Φιλώτας ἤρχεν ὁ Παρμενίωνος.

Alexander's army was marshalled as follows. His right wing was held by the Companion cavalry, the royal squadron in the front; it was commanded by Cleitus son of Dropides; in successive order came those of (1) Glaucias, (2) Aristo, (3) Sopolis son of Hermodorus, (4) Heraclides son of Antiochus, (5) Demetrius son

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should assemble under arms. About 6000 soldiers had come, besides these a crowd of camp-servants and batmen had filled the royal quarters." Curtius' mention of the 6000 warriors seems to mirror the quorum needed to judge capital cases. There are two possible explanations for the quorum of 6000 in the Macedonian assembly: it can be modeled after the Athenian quorum in ostracism trials (and, certainly not by chance, the full size of the *heliaia*), or it resulted from a simple multiplication (six districts each represented by at least 1000 men). Of course, both reasons could work together.



of Althaemenes, (6) Meleager, and lastly that commanded by (7) Hegelochus son of Hippostratus. The Companion cavalry as a whole was commanded by Philotas son of Parmenio.

In the Greek for this translation, or rather paraphrase, Brunt (LCL) bracketed βασιλικῶν, certainly because he knew that there was only one *ile basilike*, the one commanded by Cleitus. Admittedly, this passage of Arrian is, so far as I know, the only occurrence in Classical literature of *ilai basilikai* in the plural. Of course, one could try to explain that all units of Companion Cavalry and Companion Infantry must have been Royal (and were non-technically called Royal),<sup>19</sup> and only a few were King's Guards *sensu stricto* with their role stressed by official names.<sup>20</sup>

Diodorus is not so detailed, but he states that there were seven *hipparchiai* (not *ilai*!) of Friends (not Companions!) led by Philotas:

Diod. 17.57.1: ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τὸ δεξιὸν κέρασ ἔταξε τὴν βασιλικὴν εἴλην, ἧς εἶχε τὴν ἡγεμονίαν Κλεῖτος ὁ μέλας ὀνομαζόμενος, ἐχομένους δὲ ταύτης τοὺς ἄλλους φίλους, ὧν ἡγεῖτο Φιλώτας ὁ Παρμενίωνος, ἐξῆς δὲ τὰς ἄλλας ἱππαρχίας ἑπτὰ τεταγμένας ὑπὸ τὸν αὐτὸν ἡγεμόνα.

On the right wing Alexander stationed the royal squadron under the command of Kleitos the Black (as he was called), and next to this the other Friends under the command of Philotas son of Parmenion, then in succession the other seven squadrons (*hipparchiai*) under the same commander.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> A. B. Bosworth, "A Cut too many? Occam's Razor and Alexander's Footguard," *AHB* 11 (1997) 47–56, at 53 n.20, comments: "Here 'royal' is clearly used by Arrian as a variant for Companions, and it is unlikely that the usage was anticipated by his sources."

<sup>20</sup> See the very instructive discussion of this problem between Hammond arguing that there were two infantry guards of Alexander (the guard of hypaspists and the suggested old Infantry Guard: "Arrian's Mentions of Infantry Guards," *AHB* 11 [1997] 20–24) and Bosworth arguing for one Guard named casually in Arrian (preceding note).

<sup>21</sup> N. G. L. Hammond, "The Various Guards of Philip II and Alexander III," *Historia* 40 (1991) 396–418, argues for two distinct groups of cavalry under Philotas: the Friends (*i.e.* the alternative royal squadron) and seven *hipparchies* of regular cavalry. This is unlikely; rather, Diodorus' variant is the

Diodorus' account is problematic as well: in Book 17 he systematically confuses *philoï* and *hetairoi*. No doubt he followed his source (or sources) in doing so.<sup>22</sup> He apparently used two sources, which agreed in the details, but had different names for the same units. That is most likely why he places the same horse formation twice under the same Philotas.

Curtius on the same event is far more concise (4.13.26–27):

*in dextro cornu locati sunt equites, quos agema appellabant; praeerat his Clitus, cui iunxit Philotae turmas, ceterosque praefectos equitum lateri eius adplicuit. ultima Meleagri ala stabat, quam phalanx sequebatur.*

On the right wing were placed the horsemen whom they call the body-guard; Clitus commanded these, and with them he joined squadrons of Philotas, and on its flank the rest of the commanders of the cavalry. Last stood the troop of Meleager, followed by the phalanx.

Note that Curtius omits the *ile* of Hegelochus: this is unanimously believed to be a mistake on his part. In my view Curtius here is not precise, but his inaccuracy is not without a reason. It will be especially interesting if we believe with Bosworth that Curtius and Arrian made use of the same source for their presentation of the Gaugamela campaign.<sup>23</sup> Since it is not easy to imagine circumstances under which βασιλικῶν was interpolated, it was probably Arrian who more or less conscientiously used this term. Note that Arrian's description of Alexander's infantry array before Gaugamela also raises some doubts about the organisation of the corpus of hypaspists.<sup>24</sup> It is the *inter-*

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most confused of all descriptions of the Macedonian array before Gaugamela.

<sup>22</sup> The word *hetairos/hetairoi* is largely absent from Diodorus 17 (whereas he uses the term in the Hieronymus-based 18–20). In 17, the King's collaborators are invariably called *philoï*; cf. J. Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (Oxford 1981) 34. The Companion cavalry is only a few times referred to as *hetairoi* (17.77 and 100; cf. 17.37.2 *hetairike hippos*): most likely the alternative (proper, in fact) name of the Macedonian Cavalry was taken from Diodorus' auxiliary source.

<sup>23</sup> Bosworth, *Historical Commentary* I 300.

<sup>24</sup> Works cited in n.9 are also principal voices in the discussion concerning the mention of distinct hypaspist units in Arrian. Although I generally agree with Bosworth's conclusion that Arrian's "History of Alexander is not

*pretatio difficilior*, but (with Curtius' variant in mind) I suspect that Arrian's τελευταία δὲ τῶν βασιλικῶν ἰλῶν reflects a one-time dividing of the *ile basilike* into two units, a dividing that did not establish a new structure, but was determined by tactical considerations. I would not like to rehabilitate Curtius at length (at least in this short study). I think only that he was aware of the actual number of the squadrons of the Companion Cavalry, and knew that there was one horse *agema* of the Macedonians. Knowing that, he was confused when he met in his source a mention of two *ilai basilikai*. His solution was to erase the whole unit from his description of the battle, whereas Arrian, working more closely with his source material, has left modern students with a difficult passage to interpret.

Therefore, I suspect that there were six units of the "territorial" Companions and an *ile basilike* of double the strength of a normal *ile*. At the beginning of the *anabasis* these seven (or eight) units together with *prodromoi* numbered 1800 men (Diod. 17.17.4).<sup>25</sup> Again, the question is how to distribute these 1800 among the formations. Berve suggests that both *prodromoi* and *hetairoi* were included in Diodorus' total for the Macedonian Cavalry and divides them into twelve squadrons, eight of *hetairoi*, four of *prodromoi*, each 150 strong.<sup>26</sup> Others, such as Milns and Sekunda, separate the *prodromoi* from the Macedonian Cavalry, and argue for territorial squadrons 215 strong (so Milns accepting an *agema* of 300) or 200 (Sekunda).<sup>27</sup> Bosworth fol-

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a technical manual, and it should not be interpreted as though it were" (*AHB* 11 [1997] 56), I think also that Arrian sometimes works as modern historians do, and tries to achieve consistency as we try (and he is equally likely to be often mistaken). A question is where, if not in the fullest presentation of Alexander's forces in the entire *Anabasis*, Arrian would attempt systematization.

<sup>25</sup> P. A. Brunt, "Alexander's Macedonian Cavalry," *JHS* 83 (1963) 27–46, at 42.

<sup>26</sup> *Das Alexanderreich* I 106

<sup>27</sup> R. D. Milns, "Alexander's Macedonian Cavalry and Diodorus xvii 17.4," *JHS* 86 (1966) 167–168; Sekunda, *Army* 14. On the one hand, Sekunda's numbers form a serious obstacle to the reconstruction I propose, since he, uniquely, starts from tactical reality (or rather the reality of tactical handbooks). On the other hand, all these handbooks are significantly later, and even if they invoke the innovations of the age of Alexander they are no

lows this scheme, but avoids definite numbers.<sup>28</sup> However, if my assumption is correct that Alexander before Gaugamela divided his *ile basilike* into two parts, we would have one more basis for seeing 150 horsemen per *ile*.<sup>29</sup> The double size of the Cavalry *agema* is suggested by the structure and number of later *hipparchiai* (if the barbarian unit really was the “Fifth Hipparchy,” Arr. 7.6.3). Each of the four Macedonian *hipparchiai* included two *lochoi* (almost certainly based on previous regular *ilai*), and thus the *agema* would readily become the “First Hipparchy.”

This size for territorial cavalry squadrons would fit ideally into reconstructions by scholars who prefer only four *ilai* of *prodromoi*. Yet Arrian, when writing of scout forces consisting of four *ilai* of *prodromoi* and one squadron of Companions under

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more reliable than Athenian orators who claim to adduce the Solonian laws.

<sup>28</sup> *Conquest* 262.

<sup>29</sup> Diodorus shows that the *agemata* of the Successors numbered 300 horse: 19.28.3, 29.5. That the *diadochi* copied the army of Alexander has been assumed already by Tarn, *Alexander II* 162–163. One might recall that also the Spartan elite band of foot *hippeis* numbered 300 men (Hdt. 8.124), but it is worth stressing that there is another 300-strong royal horse guard in the Alexander historians, viz. the guard of Thalestris, queen of the Amazons. The story is consistent in all the historians, but the only two who give the number of Thalestris' female guard are Diodorus (17.77.1, καὶ τὸ μὲν πλῆθος τῆς στρατιάς ἐπὶ τῶν ὄρων τῆς Ὑρκανίας ἀπολελοιπία, μετὰ δὲ τριακοσίων Ἀμαζονίδων κεκοσμημένων πολεμικοῖς ὅπλοις παραγενομένη: “She had left the bulk of her army on the frontier of Hyrcania and had arrived with an escort of three hundred Amazons in full armour”) and Curtius (6.5.26, *protinus facta potestate veniendi, ceteris iussis subsistere, trecentis feminarum comitata processit atque, ut primum rex in conspectu fuit, equo ipsa desiluit duas lanceas dextera praeferens*: “She was at once given permission to come. Having ordered the rest of her escort to halt, she came forward attended by three hundred women, and as soon as the king was in sight, she herself leaped down from her horse, carrying two lances in her right hand”). The whole story, needless to say, is invented (a good review of earlier scholarship and sound treatment of this episode is E. Baynham, “Alexander and the Amazons,” *CQ* 51 [2001] 115–126). Its author is likely, however, to have modeled details of his tale after a real prototype, and Alexander's entourage seems the most natural source of inspiration.

Amyntas (1.12.7, 4.4.6),<sup>30</sup> in no way suggests that there were exactly four squadrons of *prodromoi*. Bosworth is right in his doubts, and he stresses that Arrian shows only that there were at least four units of *prodromoi*.<sup>31</sup> I think that the decisive aid comes from the figure for the cavalry squadron at Granicus according to Plutarch (*Alex.* 16.3): Alexander sent thirteen squadrons into the fight. To explain this irregular number scholars try to include non-Macedonians among the Macedonians (e.g. Paiones).<sup>32</sup> One should ask, however, why of all the non-Macedonians in the army only Paionians were treated with such veneration and grouped with the full-blood Macedonians. I suspect that Plutarch's total for cavalry units is also the total of Alexander's Macedonian cavalry which included the double-sized *agema*, then six *ilai* of the Companions, and finally six *ilai* of *prodromoi*. If so, a squadron of *prodromoi* could not be stronger than 100 horse.

The alternative solution is to exclude *prodromoi* from Alexander's 1800 mounted Macedonians. This last number we owe to Diodorus' "catalogue of ships" at 17.17. In Alexander's cavalry

<sup>30</sup> Here they are already named *sarissophoroi*. In both cases four squadrons of scout cavalry were to form a team with one unit of heavier horse.

<sup>31</sup> *Conquest* 263.

<sup>32</sup> Brunt, *JHS* 83 (1963) 27, and *Arrian: Anabasis* lxxi; and J. R. Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander – A Commentary* (Oxford 1969) 39–40 (eight *ilai* of *hetairoi*, four of *prodromoi*, one of Paiones). There is, admittedly, reason to include a squadron of Paiones among the thirteen, namely Arrian's version of the Macedonian array at Granicus (1.14.1, 6) listing them in the cavalry group of Amyntas son of Arrybaios (together with *sarissophoroi/prodromoi* and the *ile* of Socrates commanded by Ptolemaeus son of Philip). Note that the *ile* of Socrates (son of Sathon), which was the first of the Macedonian cavalry at Granicus (under Ptolemaeus) had already acted as a team with the light horse (Arr. 1.12.7 under their nominal commander). Thus, in the first year of the expedition, the body of Companion Cavalry was reduced by one *ile* attached to the lighter forces. Elsewhere in Arrian Paionians are called *barbaroi* (2.7.5), and were as often ordered to fight in a group with other barbarians. Of course, Plutarch's account of the battle of Granicus is hardly a technical one. There is good reason to think that Plutarch's version refers to the Macedonian battle effort only. Note also that Amyntas' forces crossed the river before Alexander (who attacked the Persians at the head of thirteen cavalry squadrons), so one can hardly claim that Alexander led his forces as well.

he enumerates 1800 Macedonian horsemen, 1800 Thessalians, 600 other Greek allies, and finally 900 Θράκες δὲ πρόδρομοι καὶ Παίονες ἐννακόσιοι (“Thracians, scouts, and Paeonians”).<sup>33</sup> The sum of all these cavalry numbers is 5100, whereas Diodorus insists on the cavalry of 4500 men. Modern commentators insist that he has forgotten a contingent of 600 horse that arrived in Asia later.<sup>34</sup> Rather, Diodorus compiled at least two slightly differing lists, which included the *prodromoi* under two different headings, but at the same time he found in both texts the same total for the cavalry (4500). He repeated the total of his sources, but since he aimed at presenting the fullest possible picture of the Macedonian forces he listed *prodromoi* twice (unspecified among the Macedonian cavalry and mentioned together with the Thracian and Paionian light cavalry). Thus, I join the widespread consensus of historians that the *prodromoi* were 600 strong. However, I would reckon six *ilai* of *prodromoi*, 100 strong each. The rest of the Macedonian cavalry was the *agema* of 300, and 900 *hetairoi* in six territorial *ilai* (thus Plutarch’s thirteen squadrons at Granicus are consistent with Diodorus’ 1800 Macedonian cavalry and Arrian’s and Curtius’ variants of the Macedonian cavalry array before Gaugamela).

We see that there is a perfect proportion (1:10) between heavy cavalry (1200) and the Macedonian line infantry (12,000). Moreover, this ratio, known very well from the arrangement of Greek armies, is valid also for elite troops: the Cavalry *agema* of 300 is in this scheme one tenth the size of the Infantry *agema* (of the hypaspists) and the remaining 2000 hypaspists.<sup>35</sup> Although this same ratio was not sustained in Amyntas’ reinforcements (6000 foot and only 500 Macedonian

<sup>33</sup> The restoration <καί> was put forward by Milns, *JHS* 86 (1966) 168, and later accepted by Brunt, *Arrian: Anabasis* lxx.

<sup>34</sup> Brunt, *Arrian: Anabasis* lxxi.

<sup>35</sup> Although the Macedonians were intended to achieve this ideal proportion between heavy cavalry and infantry, they fulfilled it only in the expeditionary force. Antipater was left with 12,000 foot, but his horse was 1500 strong, and certainly there were also *prodromoi* among them (Diod. 17.17.5). Thus there was only one cavalry *agema* that followed the king. Also the later reinforcements hardly mirror the ratio 1:10 (thus the largest new force to join Alexander’s army, that of Amyntas).

horse),<sup>36</sup> we can be certain that the decreasing proportion of cavalry to infantry in the army of Alexander did not become a rule. The son of Andromenes himself, in a far more rhetorical passage of Curtius (7.1.40 from Amyntas' plea before the Macedonian assembly), states that he led from Macedonia 6000 infantry and 600 cavalry. These numbers certainly refer to the postulated ideal, which had not actually been reached because of the reduced availability of new cavalry in Macedonia (heretical this may be, but it is the only explanation that comes to mind).<sup>37</sup> This shortfall was reduced by the high participation of mercenary horse in Amyntas' reinforcements.

The recruitment system of the Macedonian army was therefore the highly rational product of a one-time creation. The only conceivable creator of this system is Philip II, a sometime hostage in federal Boeotia and familiar with the success of Greek federal states, and also with the military efficiency of those organisms. His Theban years and/or rule over Thessaly were not insignificant here. Moreover, he pursued conscious "federalist" policies, and as the first *hegemon* of Greece he did not tend to support *poleis* against the tribal leagues that encompassed them. In the treaty of the Hellenic Symmarchy he had dictated, *ethne* are virtually equal to *poleis*.<sup>38</sup> I believe that to

<sup>36</sup> Diod. 17.65.1: τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως ἀναζεύξαντος ἐκ τῆς Βαβυλώνης καὶ κατὰ τὴν πορείαν ὄντος ἦγον πρὸς αὐτὸν παρὰ μὲν Ἀντιπάτρου πεμφθέντες ἵππεις μὲν Μακεδόνες πεντακόσιοι, πεζοὶ δὲ ἑξακισχίλιοι, ἐκ δὲ Θρᾷκης ἵππεις μὲν ἑξακόσιοι, Τραλλεῖς δὲ τρισχίλιοι καὶ πεντακόσιοι, ἐκ δὲ Πελοποννήσου πεζοὶ μὲν τετρακισχίλιοι, ἵππεις δὲ βραχὺ λείποντες τῶν χιλίων: "After the king had marched out of Babylon and while he was still on the road, there came to him, sent by Antipater, five hundred Macedonian cavalry and six thousand infantry, six hundred Thracian cavalry and three thousand five hundred Trallians, and from the Peloponnese four thousand infantry and little less than a thousand cavalry."

<sup>37</sup> J. E. Atkinson, *Curzio Rufo. Storie di Alessandro Magno II* (Milan 2000) 457, has noticed the discrepancy between Curtius' two figures for Amyntas' cavalry (500 at 5.1.40) and suggests that 7.1.40 is corrupt: "È possibile che la C si sia introdotta nella notazione del numerale per influenza della lettera 'e' che segue."

<sup>38</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup> 236* [Schmitt, *Staatsvertr.* III 403; Rhodes/Osborne, *GHI* 76]. In reality, the vast majority of states that signed the treaty (identifiable thanks to *IG II<sup>2</sup> 236*) are *ethne* of northwestern Greece. As C. Roebuck, "The

become Greeks and to gain acceptance of their Greekness was one of the collective dreams of the Macedonians,<sup>39</sup> and that Philip knew that his nation never could enter the family of Greek peoples *via* the *polis* Greeks but he could hope that the Macedonians could effectively gain a place among the Greek *ethne*. Another apparent step in this direction would be the presidency of the Delphic amphictyony, which consisted of *ethne* and not of cities.

It is not easy to determine precisely when the system of districts was introduced.<sup>40</sup> Despite later adjustments of command structure, the system must have continued into the later years of Alexander's reign. Introduction of hipparchies, creation of universal task forces consisting of Companion Cavalry, Companion Infantry, light horse, and light foot most likely did not revolutionize the system of districts.<sup>41</sup> Argead Macedonia was for military reasons divided into six parts. The assemblies of the armed Macedonians must have been quite naturally divided into units which certainly were filled by the spirit of regional or warriors' solidarity. That could make these assemblies similar to the federal assemblies in the eyes of a competent witness (Hieronymus of Cardia, n.3 above).

A serious problem in this reconstruction remains the size and borders of districts. Most scholars tacitly assume that they were

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Settlements of Philip II with the Greek States in 338 B.C.," *CP* 43 (1948) 73–92, has remarked, Philip's settlements with Greek states in 338 "show a disposition to favor federal organizations" (90). The Hellenic Symmachy itself was organized after the federal models, and the allied states sent delegates to the *synhedrion* in proportion to their size (the quotas are inscribed under the oath of alliance: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 236.b.2–12).

<sup>39</sup> The alternative genealogy of Makedon as a descendant of Hellen in Hellanicus (*FGrHist* 4 F 74) may reflect the Macedonian efforts to become Greeks as a community (the royal dynasty, owing to its Argive ancestry, did not need to promote this version). For the problems seen from the Greek side (we have no Macedonian sources) see now J. M. Hall, "Contested Ethnicities: Perceptions of Macedonia within Evolving Definitions of Greek Identity," in I. Malkin (ed.), *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2001) 159–185.

<sup>40</sup> Milns, in *Alexandre le Grand* 105 (following the unpublished dissertation by Robert Lock, p.41 [non vidi], dating the event in the 340s).

<sup>41</sup> Milns, in *Alexandre le Grand* 126 (again after Lock's dissertation).



organized according to the earlier tribal boundaries. However, this is unlikely. Usually, one aim of such reforms is to suppress older regional affiliations and to replace them by new links of loyalty. Even if older names were to be retained (why destroy traditions which could be useful, e.g. in war?), borders were new. Philip, the first Macedonian ruler known to have re-located systematically whole population groups, certainly had enough courage to draw borders of new districts against older tribal frontiers. That Philip was innovative enough to have grouped more than one historical region in his new districts is clearly shown by the joint *taxis* for Orestis and Lyncestis. How older landscapes were adapted to the new district division is not wholly clear. One can only guess that in order to give his country a high degree of consistency Philip was a revolutionary reformer again.

Of course, there are some lesser obstacles to this reconstruction. The list of Macedonian trierarchs in the Indian Fleet (Arr. *Ind.* 18.3–6) covers virtually all of Macedonia. A glance at the origins of commanders (and of their units) in the army of Alexander can suggest that the Foot Companions were rather linked with the West of the country while the Macedonian horse were connected with the East. I do not think it means that Alexander took with him cavalry from the *marches orientales* of the kingdom and infantry representing the West. Rather, we should imagine a more complex system of recruitment in which Macedonia was divided into three zones (perhaps they corresponded with Upper Macedonia, Lower Macedonia, and the East), and each district (and *taxis* or *ile* as well) consisted of subdivisions representing these zones. If we agree that a *taxis* of 1500 foot consisted of three *lochoi*, we can also suspect that each *lochos* was recruited in a different area of a district (a response to those who ask why there were “anomalous” *taxeis* of 1500 in Alexander’s army). Of course, parts of these regions did not necessarily border each other (at Athens Cleisthenes deliberately tried to avoid this),<sup>42</sup> but there was also a natural ten-

<sup>42</sup> Peter Siewert has convincingly argued that Cleisthenic trittyes could have been modeled on the Boeotian military districts: “Die Drittelgliederung der elf boiotischen Militärdistrikte im Vergleich mit der klei-

dency to entrust the commands of units to the specialists. Thus, highlanders of Upper Macedonia were overrepresented in the command of the infantry, and inhabitants of the East (and the Center) were chiefly responsible for cavalry. Unsurprisingly, units were classified geographically in terms of the names and origins of their commanders or after the origin of the leading (i.e. the commander's) *lochos*. Such a hypothetical reconstruction fits well into Pompeius Trogus'/Justin's picture of Philip's measures leading to the creation of the unitary state (Justin. 8.6.1). If the system was earlier than the 340s, we can expect that later adjustments disturbed its rationality—so the *taxis* dominated by the Orestians with Lyncestians, but this may have been a relic of earlier times.

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sthenischen Trittyenordnung Attikas,” in *La Béotie antique* (Paris 1985) 297–300. We can guess that also the reformer of the Macedonian army could draw the main lines of his organisation from the same pattern.