AND LEO *TACTICA*

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Abstract: Proper understanding of Iphicrates' stratagem at Polyaenus 3.9.38, marred by a lacuna, can be derived from Leo *Tact.* 20.196, where anchoring a fleet off a harborless coastline is described. Emending Polyaenus' text from the reading of a later MS also clarifies the anecdote's meaning. Leo knew the full text of Polyaenus, since Polyaenus 3.9.38 does not occur in the abbreviated *Excepta Polyaeni*, which some recently suggest replaced the *Strategica* in Byzantine use of Polyaenus.

Keywords: Iphicrates, Polyaenus, Leo, *Strategica*.

Artaxerxes II's attempt to recover Egypt in 374–373 B.C. with a combined force of Greek mercenaries and Persians fell victim to the bickering of its commanders, Iphicrates and Pharnabazus. A major joint military and naval expedition it was. From 377 or 376 B.C. there assembled at Ace (Acco, Acre, Ptolemais) in Phoenicia (allegedly) 200,000 Persians, 20,000 Greek mercenaries, 300 triremes and 200 triaconters.[1] Diodorus (15.41–45) provides the fullest narrative (from Ephorus?), to be supplemented by tidbits of Trogus (*Prol.* 10), Nepos (*Iphic.* 2.4), Plutarch (*Aratax.* 24.1), and Polyaenus' *Strategica*.[2] Iphicrates, the most rusé of all generals in Polyaenus with 63 stratagems to his credit, distinguished himself in four *exempla* from this campaign in the stratagem collector's compendium (3.9.38, 56, 59, 63).[3] Polyaenus 3.9.38, marred by a lacuna and misinterpreted in two recent translations, demands re-examination.[4] Although a complete history of the campaign cannot be recovered on present evidence, filling the lacuna at Polyaenus 3.9.38 can offer a proper understanding of the anecdote and contribute to an aspect of the *Nachleben* of Polyaenus' text.

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[1] Diod. 15.41.3; Nepos (*Iphic.* 2.4) reduces the Greeks to 12,000.

[2] On Diodorus' use of Ephorus for fourth-century events, see most recently Bianco 2010 with references to earlier bibliography; Parke (1933: 105–106) and Bianco (1997a: 189–191) provide modern overviews of the campaign.

[3] For studies of Iphicrates' career see Pritchett 1971–1991, II: 59–72; Bianco 1997a; on Iphicrates' ranking as no. 1 in use of stratagems in Polyaenus, see Wheeler 2010: 37–38.

[4] Melber's discussion of Iphicrates in Polyaenus (1885: 565–573) omits treatment of 3.9.38.

I

Polyaenus 3.9.38 reads:

Ἰφικράτης βασιλεῖ στρατηγῶν μετὰ Φαρναβάζου, πλέων ἐπ᾽ Αἰγύπτου, τῆς χώρας οὔσης ἀλιμένου, παρήγγειλε τοῖς τριηράρχοις ᾽τεσαράκοντα σάκκους ἕκαστος ἐχέτω᾽. Προσορμιζομένων δὲ τοὺς σάκκους ἄμμου πλήσας ἑκάστης κεφαλίδος ἐξῆπτεν ἑκάστης νεὼς καὶ οὕτως ἀνείλκυσεν αὐτὰς τεταρσωμένας.

Krentz translates the passage as:

When Iphicrates was serving the King as a general with Pharnabazus, he sailed to Egypt. Since the land had no harbors, he ordered the captains, "Let each have forty sacks." After they came to anchor, he filled the sacks with sand * * * fastened them to the bow of each ship, and in this way he dragged the ships up complete with oars.

For Bianco the passage reads:

Ificrate, mentre svolgeva funzioni di stratego per conto del re di Persia insieme a Farnabazo, salpò alla volta del᾽Egitto; poiché la regione era priva di porti, ordinò ai trierarchi che ciascuno avesse con sé quaranta sacchi. Ormeggiatisi, fece riempire i sacchi di sabbia +++ e li fece attaccare alle sartie di prua di ciascuna nave: così riuscì a tirare a terra le navi, fornite di remi.[5]

Both interpretations of the text are essentially identical: forty sacks of sand attached to the prow of each ship (or "shrouds of the prow" pace Bianco) are somehow used as a means of dragging the ships (onto the shore?) at a harborless coastline. How forty sacks of sand on a ship's prow can aid in dragging (ἀνείλκυσεν) the vessel is unclear, although such is the usual nautical meaning of ἀνέλκω (LSJ[9] *s.v.*). Paradoxically, the additional weight of forty bags of sand would seem to add weight and thus to increase the difficulty of hauling the ships ashore.

Clarification of the lacuna and the stratagem's meaning comes from Leo VI's *Tactica* (c. 900 A.D.), where a version of Polyaenus' *exemplum* appears. Leo *Tact.* 20.196 reads:

Ἱστορήσω σοι καὶ ναυτικοῦ στόλου στρατήγημα. ὅταν γὰρ εἰς ἀλιμένους καὶ ψαμμώδεις τόπους τὴν ἀπόβασιν μέλλῃς ἐν καιρῷ ναυτικῆς στρατηγίας, εἰ οὕτω τύχοι, ποιήσασθαι σάκκους πολλοὺς πληρώσας ἄμμου, καὶ τοῖς σχοινίοις προσδήσας ἀπὸ ἑκάστου δρόμωνος ἐκκρεμάσεις τοὺς ἀρκοῦντας οἱονεὶ σιδηρᾶς ἀγκύρας, καὶ οὕτως τὸν λεγόμενον πελαγολιμένα ποιήσας, εὐκόλως κατὰ τὸν τόπον νυκτὸς ἐξελθὼν τὴν βεβουλευμένην σοι καταδρομὴν ποιήσεις.

I will tell you of a stratagem for the naval fleet. When, in the course of a naval expedition, it happens that you wish to disembark in a sandy place without a harbor, fill a large number of sacks with sand, tie them with ropes, and hang a sufficient number of them from each dromon like iron anchors. Thus, having made what is called a harbor at sea, you will easily disembark at that place at night and make the raid you had planned.[6]

At first glance the two passages seem to resemble each other only in the reference to a harborless coast and the practice of hanging bags of sand from a ship's prow, as the function of the sandbags differs: in Polyaenus for somehow dragging the ships (onto

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[5] Krentz, in Krentz/Wheeler 1994, I: 259, 261; Bianco 1997b: 94–95.

[6] Tr. Dennis 2010: 607; the text with English translation is also to be found at Pryor/Jeffreys 2006: 516–517.

shore?); in Leo for anchoring the ships off shore. Polyaenus' κεφαλίδας ἐξῆπτεν would correspond to Leo's τοῖς σχοινίοις προσδήσας ... ἐκκρεμάσεις. κεφαλίδας, a *hapax* in Polyaenus (LSJ[9] *s.v.* IV), are ropes suspended from a ship's prow and, contrary to Krentz's interpretation, not the prow itself; hence the equation of Polyaenus' κεφαλίδας with Leo's τοῖς σχοινίοις. The difference in the sandbags' function can be removed, if the reading εἵλκυσεν, found in *Monacensis gr.* 401 (dated to 1581–1596), be accepted.[7] The sense of ἕλκω here is not "to drag" but "to weigh down," as in weighing items on a scale (LSJ[9] *s.v.* A.9). Although Woefflin's favorable view of the great authority of *Monacensis gr.* 401 as a witness is now disputed by Schindler, who finds this tradition contaminated, in this case the reading of *Monacensis gr.* 401 seems preferable.[8] Schindler failed to note the significance of **M**'s reading (his **M**1) at 3.9.38, as argued here, for the real meaning of the *exemplum* and even the alternative reading. Iphicrates substituted sandbags for anchors or supplemented anchors with sandbags to stabilize a fleet's position offshore from a harborless coastline, to create what Leo calls a "harbor at sea" (πελαγολιμένα).

Identification of the relevance of Leo *Tact.* 20.196 to Polyaenus 3.9.38 derives from Karl Ludwig Roth (1790–1868), who apparently communicated the suggestion to Woefflin privately, as Melber did not cite Roth's own publication of the idea. Melber retained it in the *apparatus criticus* of his 1887 edition and wisely did not attempt to reconstruct the lost portions of Polyaenus' text.[9] Leo clarifies the meaning of Polyaenus' anecdote without permitting such a reconstruction. The vocabulary of Leo's text differs significantly from that of Polyaenus and more than just a few words may be missing. Indeed Leo may have known a longer version of the text, unless Leo has considerably reworked Polyaenus' *exemplum* for his own purposes – an unlikely view for the section of a book like his Constitutio XX, which offers an *exempla* collection even repeating material from earlier parts of the *Tactica*, just as Frontinus reproduced *exempla* from his first three books in his *Strat.* 4.[10] In any case, the significance of Polyaenus' concluding words, αὐτὰς τεταρσωμένας, referring to ships having their complete row(s) of oars, is not clear and seems irrelevant to Leo's version. The obscurity may derive from Polyaenus' own abbreviation of his source or offer further proof that a longer version of the *exemplum* has not survived.[11]

Placement of the stratagem of 3.9.38 within its specific context during the 374–373 B.C. campaign could also enlighten, but such must remain problematic. Tempting is a connection with Iphicrates' amphibious assault described at Polyaenus 3.9.63, where Iphicrates commanded 100 triaconters, a type of vessel used in the 374–373 B.C. expedition (Diod. 15.41.3). But these ships are explicitly stated to have anchors at their sterns (ἄγκυραν ἀφιέναι κατὰ πρύμναν), whereas in 3.9.38 Iphicrates is concerned with

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[7]   *Monacensis gr.* 401 is the **M** of the Teubner editions of Woefflin (1860) and Melber's revision (1887) of Woefflin's text, but **M**1 in Schindler's study of the manuscript tradition: 1973: 129–137.

[8]   Melber 1887: xv; Schindler 1973: 265–267.

[9]   Melber 1887, reprinted in Krentz/Wheeler 1994, I: 260; the connection is also noted in the translation and commentary of Nefedkin 2002: 397 n.122.

[10]   E.g., *Tact.* 20.21 = 11.21; 20.45 cf. 19.40; 20.80 cf. 6.5, 11.41; 20.87 = 17.91; 20.110 cf. 12.57, 14.101; 20.139 cf. 18.132; on the authenticity of Frontin. *Strat.* 4, see Wheeler 2010: 33 with n.102, 39 n.122.

[11]   Polyaenus' abbreviation and modification of *exempla* in his sources is discussed at Schettino 1998: 97–107.

weighing down the ships from the prow. More troubling, however, in 3.9.63 Iphicrates is attacking Phoenicians in Phoenicia, but the hostilities of 3.9.38 concern joint Persian-Greek operations against Egypt and the expedition had its base at Ace (Ptolemais) in Phoenicia. Bianco attractively suggests that 3.9.38 describes a training exercise – a view that can be neither refuted nor confirmed.[12] A third possibility is the expedition's landing at the Mendesian mouth of the Nile – a surprise attack from the open sea after Egyptian fortifications and preparations blocked a landing at the Pelusiac mouth (Diod. 15.42.4). Diodorus mentions an extensive beach but not a harbor. The versions of both Polyaenus and Leo imply the need for a "harbor at sea," a situation in which the beaching of the ships was impossible or unadvisable.[13] Little more can be done with Polyenus 3.9.38 on present evidence.

II

Surprisingly, Leo's version of Polyaenus 3.9.38 at 20.196 substantiates a significance aspect of the *Strategica*'s *Nachleben*. Constantine VII Porphyrogentius (r. 912–959), son of Leo VI (r. 886–912), recommended to his own son Romanus II (r. 959–963) what books to take with him when campaigning: these should include the historical works of Polyaenus and Syrianus Magister.[14] Constantine's encyclopedic efforts had included the collection of ancient and earlier Byzantine military treatises – manifest in the famous manuscript of the Greek tacticians, *Laurentianus* LV-4 of c. 985.[15] This collection in-cluded the *Excerpta Polyaeni* (*Hypotheseis*), the earliest Byzantine abbreviation of the *Strategica*, in which Polyaenus' c. 900 stratagems were reduced to 356 and reorganized from the original prosopographical-ethnographic order into a topical arrangement by military categories as in Frontinus' *Strategemata*.[16] Dates of composition for the *Ex-cerpta* range from 500 to 850, but all are conjectural. Thus the earliest witness of the *Excerpta*, *Laur. gr.* LV-4, antedates the earliest manuscript of the complete text of the *Strategica*, *Laurentianus gr.* LVI-1 (c. 1295) by three centuries.[17]

The prominence accorded to the *Excerpta* by its inclusion in the *Laur. gr.* LV-4 and the relatively late date of the earliest manuscript of the *Strategica* have often led to an assumption that the *Strategica*'s text was not available or not used, but rather in the time

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[12]   Bianco 1997a: 189 n. 34.

[13]   Pryor/Jeffreys (2006: 516 n. 65) disparage Leo's *exemplum* at 20.196, since a Byzantine *dromon* (like a trireme) could be beached and thus a "harbor at sea" was unnecessary. They do not consider the situation of an assault on an occupied coast in the face of an enemy and are unaware of the connection of Leo 20.196 with Polyaenus 3.9.38. On amphibious operations in Antiquity see Tucci 2004: a selection of case-studies and in no way a comprehensive discussion. Polyaenus 3.9.38, 63 and Leo 20.196 are not treated.

[14]   Haldon 1990: 106–107 (C198–99); on Syrianus see Rance 2007 with references to bibliography be-sides the recent edition (with translation) of his relatively inaccessible *Rhetorica militaris*: Eramo 2010.

[15]   On this MS see Dain/Foucault 1967: 382–385; Schindler 1973: 216–218. The impulse to compile this military encyclopedia certainly antedates Constantine's death in 959, but the hand(s) of the *Laur.* LV-4 point(s) to a date over twenty years later.

[16]   See Wheeler, in Krentz/Wheeler 1994: xx–xxi; Dain/Foucault 1967: 337.

[17]   On the *Laur.* LVI-1 see Schindler 1973: 15–18.

of Leo VI and Constantine VII the *Excerpta* had replaced the *Strategica*.[18] Exclusion of the *Strategica* from the *Laur. gr.* LV-4 – and thus the codicological tradition of the Greek military theorists – has also produced skepticism about Polyaenus' prominence as an inspiration of Byzantine military thought, although the concept of stratagem as a *Schwerpunkt* of Byzantine doctrine is indisputable.[19] Such pessimism about Polyaenus' Byzantine fate, however, excessively, if not mechanically, emphasizes the chance survival of manuscripts – one but not the only source of intellectual history. Constantine VII, if he had in mind the collection of the *Laur. gr.* LV-4 in his advice to this son, could not have meant the *Excerpta* when he mentioned Polyaenus, because Polyaenus' name is missing from the superscript of the *Excerpta* in that manuscript. Polyaenus name was only added to the *Excerpta* in the sixteenth century, when the *Parisinus gr.* 2522 was copied from the *Laur. gr.* LV-4.[20]

Further, and more significantly, Leo knew the complete text of Polyaenus' *Strategica* directly and Polyaenus' collection seems to have been a major source for Leo *Tact.* 20. A scribe of the late tenth-century (?) *Vindobonensis phil. gr.* 225, one of the earliest witnesses to the *Tactica*, included Polyaenus in a marginal note to Prolog. 6.55–59 on earlier writers.[21] But better evidence comes from Leo's use of Polyaenus 3.9.38. Leo must have drawn this *exemplum* directly from the *Strategica*, as this anecdote is found neither in the *Excerpta* nor in the so-called *Stratagems of the Emperor Leo*, 118 *exempla* from the *Excerpta* further abbreviated, stylistically revised, and inserted in the mid-tenth century *Sylloge Tacticorum*.[22] Indeed Leo apparently drew on Polyaenus frequently in composition of *Tact.* 20: of the 221 *exempla* included, Polyaenus is a potential source for twenty-seven and many, like 3.9.38, are not found in the *Excerpta* or possibly used through [Maurice]'s *Strategicon*. Leo's reliance on [Maurice] noticeably decreases as *Tact.* 20 progresses (see Appendix). Clusters of Polyaenian material appear at *Tact.* 20.78–87, 144–68, 193–98, and 216–220.[23] Leo's failure to mention Polyaneus explicitly comes from his desire to rework material from "the ancients" as a collectivity rather than from ignorance of Polyaenus' complete text. As in 3.9.38 he updated the vocabulary and eschewed verbal reminiscences. Polyaenus' direct influence on Byzantine military thought was still flourishing in the tenth century.[24]

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[18]   Trombley 1997: 267, 272; Schettino 1998: 21 n. 2; Rance 2007: 736 n. 99.

[19]   Rance 2011; but cf. Wheeler 2010: 48–54.

[20]   Wheeler 2010: 335 n. 110; on the *Paris. gr.* 2522, see Dain 1941.

[21]   Dennis 2010: 7, n. 4. The list includes Arrian, Aelian, Pelops, Onasander, Menas, Polyaenus, Syrianus, and Plutarch. Pelops and Menas, otherwise unknown, may be inventions or pseudonyms.

[22]   On the *Stratagems of the Emperor Leo* see Wheeler, in Krentz/Wheeler 1994: xxi–xxiii, 850–1075 (text and translation); the text of the *Sylloge*: Dain 1938; see Dain/Foucault 1967: 357–358 for commentary.

[23]   Cf. the meager list at Rance 2011: n. 3.

[24]   John Haldon reaches (independently) the same conclusion as this paper on Leo's use of the full text of Polyaenus. See his *The Taktika of Leo IV 'the Wise': Critical Commentary*, forthcoming.

Appendix

The following table lists *exempla* in Leo *Tact.* 20, which derive directly or indirectly from Polyaenus, or for which Polyaneus was one of the possible sources. Comprehensive citations of the anecdotes from all possible sources are not given.

L = Leo, P = Polyaenus *Strategica*, *Exc.P.* = *Excerpta Polyaeni*, M = [Maurice] *Strategicon*

L	P	M	L	P	M
20.27, 97[25]	3.9.17	8.1.26, 2.36	20.158	2.3.11	x
20.46	3.9.35	8.2.15	20.162	2.10.5	x
20.76	cf. 3.9.10	x	20.163	2.20	x
20.78	4.3.4; 4.20	x	20.168	3.9.18 (*Exc.P.* 46.4)	x
20.80	8.16.1–2	x	20.193 (cf. 20.159)	3.9.22	x
20.87 (cf. 17.91)	8.16.8	x	20.196	3.9.38	x
20.108	6.38.4 (*Exc.P.* 23)	x	20.197	cf. 3.9.47	x
20.136	1 *praef.* 3	x	20.198	3.10.2	x
20.144	5.40 (*Exc.P.* 58.3) 5.41, 44.5 (*Exc.P.* 28.3)	x	20.216 (= 17.89)	3.13.1	x
20.146	cf. 1.39.3[26]	x	20.217	3.11.1	x
20.154	2.1.17 (*Exc.P.* 15.2), 4.4.3	x	20.218	2.3.2 (*Exc.P.* 14.4)	x
20.156	2.3.4	x	20.220	4.7.2 (*Exc.P.* 57.14)	x
20.157	2.3.6	x			

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[25]　See also Plb. 10.32.11–12 and Wheeler 1988: 164–65 with n. 37–38.

[26]　On the prominence of battles of desperation in Polyaenus, see Wheeler 2010: 39–42, where Puuap. fr. 44 Blockley should be added at n. 128.

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