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Mercenaries in the Army of Hellenistic Athens

Igor V. Vostrikov¹

Abstract

This article interests in history of armed forces of the antiquity states, their structure, deployment order, the organization of command, evolution of arms, policy strokes, action of armies in the military conflicts, and to their use in internal political fight, as well as to involvement of mercenaries. During the Classical Period of Greek history big fame was gained by armed forces of Athens and Sparta. Athens in the 5th century BC was at the peak of power and pursued active foreign policy which was in many respects supported by powerful army and fleet. The reason of traditionally high interest in history of Athens of the Classical Period including the armed forces history of the polis also lies in it. However Athens and their armed forces suffered a serious loss and got beaten in the Peloponnese war and the final decline of political and military power of Athens occurred after defeat in Lamian war therefore military activity of the polis sharply decreases. Therefore the history of Hellenistic period Athens gets much less attention. Proceeding from it, the purpose of article consists in a research of the role of mercenaries in armed forces of Athens in the period of Hellenism. The leading method of this research is the comparative-historical method allowing tracking mercenaries hire by Athens during the specified period on the basis of a complex sources use. The main research results consist in identification of an order and features of the hired contingents use, their places in armed forces of the polis. Materials of article can be useful to the further scientific research regarding the history of Athens and military ancient history as well as to creating educational and handbooks on this perspective.

Keywords: History, Athens, Armed forces, Mercenaries, Tarentians.

¹ Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies. E-mail: vostrikov@bk.ru

Introduction

In military history of the Ancient Greek states and their armed forces, the important place is taken by mercenarism. To mercenarism in general and to various aspects connected with this phenomenon in the Hellenistic era a number of the generalizing works is devoted (Parke, 1933; Trundle, 2004; Engels, 2012; Bettalli, 2013). When studying a phenomenon of mercenarism in the Greek world it is necessary to consider both military and social aspect because it is in many respects caused by various processes taking place in various Greek states. Blossoming of mercenarism takes place in the 4th century BC and is connected to the crisis of the polis (Marinovich, 1975; Frolov, 2001). Further mercenaries play a noticeable role in armies of the Hellenistic states (Griffith, 1935).

Many states used services of mercenaries including Athens where the military service was a duty of each citizen. Group of mercenaries Peisistratides made bodyguard of tyrants (Trundle, 2004 ; Bing, 1977).

In the 5th century BC, despite military and economic power of Athens, the polis reserves to the services of mercenaries. During the Peloponnesian war mercenaries on the Athenian service participated in various military operations. In particular, mercenaries were involved in some operation of Athenians during the first period of war (Thuc. IV. 129. 2; V. 6. 2).

The Sicilian expedition demanded engaging significant forces therefore Athenians try to hire mercenaries. Nicias, speaking about the forthcoming expedition, reminds of need to use, besides the hoplite and allies, those from Peloponnese, "whom it will be possible to engage in a campaign with an admonition or a salary" (Thuc. VI. 21-22). Thucydides lists the people which participated in the Sicilian expedition on the party of Athenians, their status and the reasons which induced them to war (Thuc. VII. 57. 1-11). Among them Mantineians and other Arcadians as hoplite, as well as Cretans, Aetolians and Acarnanians, and from non-Greeks - Iapyges were at war on hiring (Thuc. VII. 57. 9-11). Giving the number of forwarding forces, the author speaks about 250 mercenaries, Mantineians and Arcadians, and in addition, about 80 Cretan bowmen (Thuc. VI. 43). Reporting about mercenaries barbarians, Thucydides reports Iapyges, but it seems probable that the number of barbarians was more than that (Marinovich, 1968). In Alkiviadesus's speech it is offered to throw after a gain of Sicily and Carthage forces against Peloponnese, including, numerous hired barbarians, Iberians and others (Thuc. VI. 90. 3). Diodorus specifies that after defeat of Athenians of 800 Campaigne were left without work (Diod. XIII. 44. 1-2). In addition mercenaries were attracted also for service in the fleet. Further, used services of mercenaries also during a civil distemper in Athens at the end of the 5th century BC which was connected with series of the oligarchical revolutions which came to the end with establishment of tyranny of the Thirty (Diod. XIV. 32. 4; 33. 5; Xen. Hell. II. 4. 28, 30, 43; Lys. XII. 59).

Methodological Framework

The source base of a research is made by a number of antique authors works and epigraphic documents. In research of history of the Hellenistic period Athens, as well as its military organization and mercenaries in particular, the epigraphics containing time unique data is important. The analysis of the massif of inscriptions allows revealing features of mercenaries service in Athens. The main method of this research is the comparative-historical method allowing on the basis of the data base analysis (works of antique authors and epigraphic material) to consider functioning of mercenarism institute in the military organization of Athens, feature of mercenaries engagement and their role in protection of the polis.

Results and discussion

However big fame was gained by the Athenian mercenaries in the 4th century BC, that is in many respects connected with their progress in military operations. During the Corinthian war light armed peltasta under

Iphicrates's command managed to cause, by continuous firing by darts of heavy armed group of Spartans, the last a serious loss (Xen. Hell. IV. 5. 11-13 Dem. XXIII. 198; XIII. 22). Besides, Iphicrates with the peltasta was engaged in ruin of the territory of the opponent (Xen. Hell. IV. 4. 15-16).

Thus, light-armed peltasta often worked as separate force. Cornelius Nepos emphasizes Iphicrates's qualities as commander, as well as change in arms and equipment of soldiers (Nep. XI. 1; Diod. XV. 44). Mercenaries were actively used by Athenians and in the subsequent military collisions. In 374 BC Athens sent for the help to the besieged Corfu six hundred peltasta with the strategist Ctesicles (Xen. Hell. VI. 2. 10, 37; Diod. XV. 47. 4). And in 369 BC in Epidaurus Habria's mercenaries, Athenians and Corinthians acted against Argevi (Xen. Hell. VII. 1. 25). Athenians had to give help to Philusians: mercenaries under Hareth's command (366 BC) who, together with Philusian riders and hoplite, accompanied a convoy with food were sent. They managed to push aside the enemy and to take the strengthened point to Phiomy (Xen. Hell. VII. 2. 18-23). In other case (363 BC), the Athenian convoy consisted of citizens and mercenaries under Alkiviades J.'s command (Aesh. II. 168).

After the end of the Boeotia war, Athens face the new opponent - Philip of Macedon. BC Athens sent three thousand mercenaries-hoplite to the aid the Argey in 358 (Diod. XVI. 2. 6; 3. 5). It is remarkable that in this case not peltasta, but hoplite were employed (Parke, 1933).

Further, large forces of mercenaries were used during aid to Olinfus in 349 BC: two thousand peltasta under Hareth's command and four thousand under Haridemes's command. However for the third time Athens sent civil army: two thousand hoplite and three hundred riders (Philochor. FGrHist. 328. F. 51). Demosthenes estimates the Athenian help at ten thousand mercenaries and four thousand citizens (Dem. XIX. 266). But, most likely, Demosthenes overestimated the number of forces and therefore total number of mercenaries should be estimated approximately at six thousand people (Marinovich, 1975).

Remarkable case is use of mercenaries the Athenian klerukha led by Diopiphes in Chersonese Thracian in 343 BC for fight against Cardia. Apparently, Diopiphes took mercenaries on his own initiative, without the knowledge of Athens as he had to care for keeping of the army (Dem. VIII. 9-10, 21).

Apart from citizens, the anti-Macedonian coalition of the Greek states managed to collect significant forces of mercenaries in fifteen thousand of infantry and two thousands of cavalry (Dem. XVIII. 237; Plut. Dem. 17). Aeschines, in turn speaks about one thousand riders and ten thousand infantry (Aesch. III. 97, 146). Besides, from allies contributions, apparently, for payment of mercenaries at a rate of five hundred talents gathered ([Plut.] X. Orat. 851 B; Aesch. III. 94). Mercenaries acted separately from civil army. As appears from Aeschines's certificate, Philip battled against them in Amphissa, and then against civil army at Heroney (Aesch. III. 146-147).

It should be noted that mercenaries were engaged in garrison service outside Attica. The Athenian mercenaries settled down at different times: in Perinthus in 368 BC (Dem. XXIII. 142), Andros in 356 BC (Syll³. I. 192), to Amorgosa (Syll³. I. 193), Eritrea in 348 (Aesch. I. 113), Thrace (Dem. VII. 37; IX. 15; Aesch. II. 90). Summing up the result, one may say, that mercenaries could be used by Athenians as separate force or in interaction with civil army, as well as for garrison service abroad.

After defeat at Heroney and up to Alexander Athena's death did not participate in any military conflicts and therefore need for mercenaries was absent. Due to a number of actions under the auspices of Lycurgus, Athens managed to strengthen military power and to save up considerable financial means. Despite it, Athens resorted to services of mercenaries during Lamian war. In many respects it is connected with Alexander ordering satraps to dismiss the mercenaries in 325/4 BC. Thus, significant forces of mercenaries appeared out of work and gathered on Thenar (Diod. XVII. 111. 1-2). The main role in recruitment of mercenaries was played by the Athenian Leosthenes who employed eight thousand

mercenaries and to whom Athenians allocated money and weapon (Diod. XVIII. 9). Leosthenes, most likely, dealt with mercenaries even earlier. Pausanias reports that Leosthenes transported to Europe the Greek mercenaries who were in the service of the Persian tsar and satraps whom Alexander wanted to lodge in Persia (Paus. I. 25. 4). From the beginning of war Athenians sent to Leosthenes a reinforcement of five thousand infantrymen and five hundred riders from citizens, as well as two thousand mercenaries (Diod. XVIII. 9. 1-4). Thus, it is possible to assume ten thousand mercenaries (Landucci, 1995). Diodorus at the subsequent narration about allied Greek army does not allocate separately mercenaries, it is possible because they were Greeks (Marinovich, 1990). In fight with Leonnatus, the Greek army made twenty two thousands infantry and three and a half thousand riders, and at Crannona twenty five thousand infantry and three and a half thousand riders. Though the number of mercenaries is given for the beginning of war, it is possible to assume that in general the ratio of mercenaries and citizens remained in the Greek army in the mentioned battles. Of course, at the same time it is impossible to forget about losses during fighting and Lamia's siege. But, undoubtedly, losses were sustained by both citizens, and mercenaries.

In the document relating to 321/0 or to 318/7 BC, there is a mentioning of the strategist of mercenaries whose name did not reach us (IG for the first time meets. II². 379). As appears from the document, he cared for mercenaries that they fulfilled duties better. In the document it is also said he won from all participants of an antippasia (a competition of cavalrymen), overcame Phil Erekhteid, and for it members of fila and riders praised him. All this occurred before he became a strategist. Proceeding from dating of the document, it turns out that mercenaries remained at the disposal of Athenians even after the end of Lamian war as hardly there would be this specialized strategy without mercenaries. In addition, the position of the strategist of mercenaries appears later: the famous Athenian Phaedrus, the son Timokhares and brother Kallia, among other strategy, for the career three times was elected the strategist of mercenaries (IG. II². 682. 25-26) (Leslie-Shear, 1978).

Mercenaries served the polis and at the end of the 4th century BC. Events of invasion into Attica Cassandra, apparently, are reflected in the document 303/2 of BC. Apollonides mentioned in the document, obtained the Athenian citizenship (IG. II². 492. 16-17). Integrity of the document does not allow to define specifically, this person and his status before obtaining nationality, however, the remained separate words of the document how exactly proved (line. 8-9) can assume that Apollonides ordered mercenaries in Athens and participated in protection of the city against the enemies besieging it, and just for these merits he obtained the Athenian citizenship. Better the remained lines of an inscription represent communication of this person with Demetrios and Antigonos and his subsequent career in a diplomatic field (IG. II². 492. 17-23).

In a research of a mercenaries role it is necessary to mention the period of tyranny of Lahar in Athens, taking place at the beginning of the 3rd century BC. It is difficult to determine the exact time of Lahar's tyrannies (Habicht, 1999; Ferguson, 1929, 1912). Complexity of studying this episode of history of Athens is that the information about Lahar and those events is extremely sketchy. The sketchiness of the papyrus raises questions concerning reading and interpretation of the text. In the Oxirin papyrus (Pap. Oxy. 2082 = FGrHist. 257a), very fragmented, it is reported about a quarrel between two influential military leaders (F. 1. 2-3). The strategist of hoplite Haries was the first (line. 3-4), and the second - the leader of mercenaries Lahar (line. 5-6). It is possible that the situation aggravation in Athens occurred because that Haries did not provide the people with food. However, according to P. Toneman, food crisis was not the cause of falling of Haries and establishment of Lahar's tyranny (Thonemann, 2003). According to Pausanias, Kássandros, having subordinated to the influence Lahar, convinced him to seize power (Paus. I. 25. 5). Haries with army occupied the acropolis, but later he was driven out by Lahar. The soldiers who were with Haries were released, and Haries and three more persons were executed according to the decision of people's assembly (Dreyer, 1999). If the events stated in the papyrus are right, it turns out that the

soldiers who were with Haries on an acropolis were hoplite-citizens. And Lahar combated the help of mercenaries because he was their commander (F. 1. 11-12). It is possible that dissatisfied gained a foothold by Lahar in Piraeus. The second fragment of the same papyrus mentions the "Piraeus soldiers" who are under the command of Haries (F. 2. 3-4; 15).

L. Post makes the assumption that Haries, arranged soldiers in different places of the city including in Piraeus which after Haries's falling, remained (Post, 1930) under control of his supporters. The same Pausanias mentions Athenians, apparently, the dead in fight against Lahar: "one of them attempted upon the tyrant Lahar" (Paus. I. 29. 10). We were reached by an inscription, perhaps, belonging to this period which represents the list of names of foreigners (IG. II². 1957). Possibly, it could be the mercenaries who were under Lahar's command, and, respectively, gave him help in establishment of his power (Bayliss, 2004). If this is true, then this list of mercenaries had to belong to the decree in honor of them. It is not excluded that also other inscription of this time can submit the list of mercenaries (IG. II². 1956). It turns out that mercenaries were involved in internal political fight in Athens. And these mercenaries were on service of Athens. Besides, it is impossible to forget that on keeping of mercenaries means were necessary. For this purpose Lahar as Pausanias reports (Paus. I. 25. 7; 29. 16), stole gold boards from acropolis and removed ornament from a statue of Athena (Stevens, 1961). Such step can demonstrate the aspiration of the tyrant Lahar to keep the power by financial support of mercenaries on whom he directly relied.

One more fact of participation of mercenaries (this time foreign, being not on the Athenian service) in internal political life is noted by the Athenian decrees in honor of Strombikh and Kallius Sphettian who treat revolt events in Athens against Demetrios Poliorket in 286.

In the first document Strombikh probably describes the commander of Demetrios Poliorket mercenaries (Griffith, 1935; Gabbert, 1997; Rhodes, 2010) left to them in Athens which, as appears from inscriptions, came over to the side of Athenians and "Museion together with the people besieged" (IG. II². 666.14-15; 667. 2-3). These events are mentioned briefly by Pausanias (I. 26. 1, 2) according to whom, in 287 BC Athenians under the leadership of Olimpiodores took Museion (Dreyer, 1999). Apparently, in this case Strombikh who opposed Spinphares who as it is considered, was a commander of the Macedonian garrison on the hill Museion also provided assistance (Leslie-Shear, 1978).

In the second document, in honor of Kallius Sphettian, his role in liberation of Athens with involvement of mercenaries of the tsar Ptolemaeus of I is noted (SEG. XXVIII. 60). In this vast document (about a revolt in Athens in connection with historical interpretation of this document see: (Leslie-Shear, 1978; Dreyer, 1999), it is reported that when in Athens there was a revolt, Kallius, having brought together one thousand soldiers serving with him on Andros hurried to the aid of the city, having among other things rendered special assistance in harvesting (line. 12-32). And these mercenaries under Kallius's command are called the term (line. 19-20, 24).

T. Leslie-Shear, the published inscription with extensive historical comments, notices: "Our text enters here completely new measurement as we have surprising information now that the group of Ptolemaen mercenaries, working by order of Ptolemaeus, battled in Attica on the party of the Athenian nationalists. What is more important, is that the Ptolemaen military base under command Kallius was already established on the island of Andros prior to a revolt in Athens" (Leslie-Shear, 1978). Leslie-Shear comes to a conclusion that "this first instruction that such garrison was also established on Andros and its existence there prior to a revolt in Athens gives the earliest evidence of political and military expansion Ptolemaeus' in the Aegean waters" (Leslie-Shear, 1978). H. Habicht according to whom, Kallius by the time of adoption of the decree was an Athenian on Ptolemaeus's service on the island of Andros and passed into Athens with one thousand imperial soldiers (Habicht, 1992) agrees with such interpretation of events. Thus, in a

case with Kallius we have an example of the hired commander on foreign service which, having obviously coordinated the actions with the command, at the head of the mercenaries headed by it on Andros came to the rescue of the homeland.

The expenditure of funds for mercenaries demanded control which was exercised by special officials - exetasta. The Athenian Kephisodotes, for example, was elected by exetasta in 298/7 BC and for the activity was marked out in the decree (IG. II². 1270). The defendant Aeschines Timarkh was exetasta, sent on Eretray (Aesch. I. 113). Kephisodotes is marked out for his words and affairs in relation to the Athenian people, citizens serving and zena in Sunia, and soldiers citizens and mercenaries at the end of the document are designated just as "στρατιῶται" (IG. II². 1270. 2-9)

Thus, it is visible that mercenaries carried out garrison service together with citizens. The joint service of citizens and mercenaries is shown also in other document of the 30th of the 3rd century BC where there are on one hand soldiers citizens, and on the other - mercenaries (IG. II². 1299), who served in Eleusis, Panaktes and Phil (line. 40-42). Also the commander of mercenaries - a certain Gnoseus of Fokaia is mentioned (IG. II². 1299. 41-42, col. I. 93-94). In addition, the list of mercenaries is provided: remained the 23rd name from gentilic. From them five, including Gnoseus from Fokaia, three from Macedonia, four from Crete, two of Thessaly, two of Argos and on one of Achaia, Platy, Aetolia, Opūs, Megar, Lycia and Megalopol (col. I. 95-117). In two documents of the end of the 3rd century BC from Ramnunt (DR. of II. 56, 57) commanders of mercenaries Sopolis and Sarapiones, and in the second case the commander together with soldiers are praised. However, if above-mentioned Gnoseus is called ἡγεμών, then in these documents the commander of mercenaries is designated ξένναγος.

As A. Haniotis fairly notices, for many cities overseas garrisons were a part of everyday life (Chaniotis, 2005). As well the mercenaries who were in the service of Athens became the ordinary phenomenon for citizens. And moreover, some integration of mercenaries into policy life which bright manifestation was a participation of mercenaries in the competitions organized on Theseus took place. Mercenaries participated only in a review of weapon and a review of physical training. Both of these competitions were collective and were held separately for epilect, riders, mercenaries. And there were no competitions between citizens- epilects and mercenaries. In each of these groups the best division came to light. The won divisions were specified in an inscription together with names of the commanders. In particular, on Theseus 161/0 a review of physical training were won BC by Omil's group, and a weapon review - Demeus's group (IG. II². 956. col. I. 53-55). In 158/7 BC again a review of physical training won against Omil's group, and a weapon review Demeus's group (IG. II². 957. frg. d-p col. I. 29-31). In 155/4 BC Isidor's groups and Pierre were winners (IG. II². 958. col. I. 50-52). In one document of the 40th of the 2nd century BC it is reported that the group under Isidor's command won a review of physical training (IG. II². 961. col. I. 15-18). Apparently, foreigners were commanders of these groups. However, apparently from inscriptions, for mercenaries individual competitions of military character were not organized. Undoubtedly, the victory in competitions was prestigious for mercenaries and could be a certain incentive to the best execution of military service by them along with citizens.

During the considered period of Athens engaged not only mercenary infantrymen, but also cavalrymen on service. First of all, it should be noted that, apparently, after Lamian war there is a serious reduction of the cavalry case of Athens which, most likely, was caused by decrease in military activity of the polis and, therefore, lack of need for the former number of riders. The number of the cavalry case of Athens at different times was various. Originally, in the 6th century BC, there was a group from ninety six riders (Spence, 1993), approximately in the 50th of the 5th century BC the number of riders increased to three hundred (Bugh, 1982, 1988), and at the time of Pericles increased to one thousand (Spence, 1993). This main thousand case completed from citizens existed, at least, up to the end of the 320th BC.

About the Athenian cavalry of the end of the 4-2nd centuries BC there is not a lot of data. According to the text of the decree in honor of hipparch and filarch of 282/1 BC (SEG. XXI. 525. 2-21) there was an increase in number of riders with 200 to 300 in 282/1 BC. It turns out that by this time the number of riders made only 200 people and it was increased. Such measure was as it is impossible by the way as soon Athenians had to take part in fight against Celts in 279 BC Athens directed to the help to Greeks of epilect and riders, as appears from the document 275/4 of BC (IG. II². 680). However, in this inscription it is not told about the number of the involved riders. Therefore, in this case, we can be guided by the certificate of Pausanias according to which with Celts of Athena sent 1000 infantrymen and 500 riders for war (Paus. X. 20. 3). Here again there is a question of cavalry number in this campaign. In 282/1 BC the number of riders is increased with 200 to 300, and Pausanias speaks about 500 riders. If to trust Pausanias it turns out that in 279 BC the number of the Athenian cavalry was increased to 500 riders. This increase in number of riders could happen in two ways: additional set in a cavalry of citizens on a case of war or involvement of mercenaries (Nefedkin, 2005). And not the fact that after a campaign, the number of a cavalry remained at this level (Bugh, 1988). Both versions about replenishment of a cavalry in 279 BC have the right for existence. In particular, in favor of the version the decree of 281/0 in honor of hipparch and filarch which are celebrated for good fulfillment of duties and providing with food (Agora can confirm BC involvement of mercenaries indirectly. I. 7587). And in this decree the same hipparch and filarch are celebrated (Agora I. 7587. 16-29), as in the considered decree of 282/1 BC (SEG. XXI. 525. 25-33). The text of the document says (Agora. I. 7587. 3-14): "... as hipparch and filarch at Nicias the archon carrying out the power according to laws, cared for delivery of provisions, both riders and Tarentians regularly carried out all the rest, and privately and together were accepting of riders and Tarentians". In total both decrees give fuller picture of functioning of the Athenian cavalry at this time.

Important is the fact that in this decree, besides the Athenian riders, riders-Tarentians who were mercenaries are mentioned. At the same time in the document Athenians and Tarentians are differentiated. It turns out that besides own cavalry contingent, Athens at the end of the 280th BC used services of a hired cavalry. Perhaps, Tarentians were involved in a campaign against Celts in 279 BC as a part of the Athenian contingent (Camp, 1996). Tarentine riders were special type of a light cavalry and received the name from the southern Italic city of Taras, from where, apparently, they originated. Tarentine riders gained the fame at the end of the 4th century BC due to participation in a number of the military conflicts. However it is impossible to claim that all Tarentians who are found in sources of the Hellenistic period were from Taras. Originally the term "Tarentians" really could indicate an ethnic origin of riders, but over time this term became technical, designating the cavalymen who adopted arms and tactics of the real Tarentians (Nefedkin, 2006; Fields, 2008; Bugh, 2011). Though it is not excluded that among mercenaries- Tarentians there were natives of Taras. Similar influence of foreign military practice is traced also in Athens where, for example, Tarentians are mentioned BC in the document 155/4 of (but not filarch) won Phil (IG. II². 958. 53-59), being the Athenian citizens. Proceeding from it, it is possible to assume that in Athens there were "Tarentine riders". But the concept "Tarentians" in this case should be understood as the technical term because these riders were citizens, but not mercenaries, as in IIIV. BC.

Conclusion

Summing up the results it is possible to say that Athens, as well as many other states, used mercenaries who could act independently or with civil army. Athens also used mercenaries for garrison service, but if in the middle of IVV. BC mercenaries served in foreign fortresses, in the 3rd century BC mercenaries were engaged in garrison service in attic fortresses together with soldier citizens that is connected with reduction of military activity of the polis and need to protect own territory. Besides, in the 3rd century use

of mercenaries by Athens in a cavalry - Tarentians who, apparently, had to support strongly reduced cavalry case of the polis gathered from citizens is noted BC.

Recommendations

This article is of interest to the researchers who are going in for history of Athens and armed forces of the polis.

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