The Classical Quarterly (2025) 75.2 884–896
doi:10.1017/S0009838826101116

THE ATHENIAN ARCHON DATES IN ARRIAN*

ABSTRACT

This article examines Arrian's decision to date events in the Anabasis *and* Indica *by eponymous archon of Athens and Athenian month. In the past, scholars have only been concerned with whether the dates are correct rather than with why Arrian is using them in the first place. His sources Ptolemy and Aristoboulus did not use this dating system, so Arrian must have converted the dates he found in his sources to this format, and he must have done so for a purpose. It is argued that the key to the schema is Arrian's use of an archon date to mark Alexander's crossing of the Euphrates at Thapsacus: this is an unimportant event in Alexander's* anabasis*, but a crucial turning point in Xenophon's. The archon dates thus structure a comparison between the two* anabaseis*, emphasizing how much greater Alexander's was by comparison with Xenophon's in line with his comments on the subject in the Second Preface. Arrian used Athenian archon dates for this purpose to indicate his own familiarity with Athens without having to explicitly state it. This is indicative of how, again in line with his statement in the Second Preface, he preferred to intimate details of his biography to his readers rather than state them openly.*

Keywords: Arrian; Xenophon; *Anabasis*; Athens; archon; Alexander the Great

1. INTRODUCTION

In the *Anabasis of Alexander* and its companion work the *Indica*, Arrian's preferred method of dating events is by eponymous archon of Athens and month of the Athenian calendar. At the beginning and end of Alexander's reign in the *Anabasis* and at the start of Nearchus' expedition in the *Indica* he synchronizes these archon dates with other dating methods, for example Alexander's age, regnal years, Olympiads and the Macedonian calendar.[1] However, on the other six occasions the reader is simply presented with the phrase 'when X was archon at Athens in the month Y' without further context. In so far as these dates have occasioned any discussion at all, it has focused on whether they are correct or not. By contrast, the decision to date events in the reign of a Macedonian king according to the civic calendar of a Greek city, and the underlying logic behind dating some events and not others in this way, has prompted very little comment.[2] Yet we know that Arrian must have introduced these dates himself, since his principal sources Ptolemy and Aristoboulus would have used Alexander's regnal years and the Macedonian calendar, and we know from the rest of his *œuvre* that Arrian was a highly intentional and

* I thank Peter Thonemann, Luke Pitcher and George Woudhuysen for commenting on the draft, and *CQ*'s reader for helpful suggestions.

[1] Arr. *Anab.* 1.1.1 (age), 7.28.1 (Olympiad, age, regnal year), *Ind.* 21.1 (Macedonian calendar, regnal year).

[2] The one discussion I am aware of is T. Hidber, 'Arrian', in I.J.F. de Jong and R. Nünlist (edd.), *Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative. 2: Time in Ancient Greek Literature* (Leiden, 2007), 183–95, at 186.

© The Author(s), 2026. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Classical Association. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

self-aware author. Arrian's preferred style of dating in the *Anabasis* and *Indica* therefore requires explanation.

2. THE ARCHON DATES

Arrian dates by eponymous archon of Athens and Athenian month on the following eight occasions in the *Anabasis* and on one occasion in the *Indica* (these passages will hereafter be referred to as §§1–9):

§1 *Anab.* 1.1.1 (October 336)
λέγεται δὴ Φίλιππος μὲν τελευτῆσαι ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Πυθοδήλου Ἀθήνησι· παραλαβόντα δὲ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀλέξανδρον, παῖδα ὄντα Φιλίππου, ἐς Πελοπόννησον παρελθεῖν.

It is said that Philip died when Pythodelus was archon at Athens; and Alexander, having succeeded to the kingship, being Philip's son, arrived in the Peloponnesus.

§2 *Anab.* 2.11.10 (November 333)
τοῦτο τὸ τέλος τῇ μάχῃ ἐκείνῃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀθηναίοις Νικοκράτους μηνὸς Μαιμακτηριῶνος.

This was the end to that battle [that is, Issus], when Nicocrates was archon at Athens in the month Maimacterion.

§3 *Anab.* 2.24.6 (July/August 332)
Τύρος μὲν δὴ οὕτως ἑάλω ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Νικήτου Ἀθήνησι μηνὸς Ἑκατομβαιῶνος.

Tyre was captured in this way when Nicetus was archon at Athens in the month Hecatombaeon.

§4 *Anab.* 3.7.1 (July/August 331)
καὶ ἀφίκετο ἐς Θάψακον Ἀλέξανδρος μηνὸς Ἑκατομβαιῶνος ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀθήνησιν Ἀριστοφάνους.

Alexander arrived at Thapsacus in the month Hecatombaeon when Aristophanes was archon at Athens.

§5 *Anab.* 3.15.7 (October 331)
τοῦτο <τὸ> τέλος τῇ μάχῃ ταύτῃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀθηναίοις Ἀριστοφάνους μηνὸς Πυανεψιῶνος· καὶ Ἀριστάνδρῳ ξυνέβη ἡ μαντεία ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ μηνί, ἐν ὅτῳ ἡ σελήνη ἐκλιπὴς ἐφάνη, τήν τε μάχην Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ τὴν νίκην γενέσθαι.

This was the end to this battle [that is, Gaugamela], when Aristophanes was archon at Athens in the month Pyanepsion. And Aristander's prophecy came true, that Alexander's battle and victory would occur in the same month in which the moon was partially eclipsed.

§6 *Anab.* 3.22.2 (July 330)
τοῦτο τὸ τέλος Δαρείῳ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀθηναίοις Ἀριστοφῶντος μηνὸς Ἑκατομβαιῶνος.

This was the end of Darius, when Aristophon was archon at Athens in the month Hecatombaeon.

§7 *Anab.* 5.19.3 (April 326)
τοῦτο τὸ τέλος τῇ μάχῃ τῇ πρὸς Πῶρόν τε καὶ τοὺς ἐπέκεινα τοῦ Ὑδάσπου ποταμοῦ Ἰνδοὺς Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἐγένετο ἐπ᾽ ἄρχοντος Ἀθηναίοις Ἡγήμονος μηνὸς Μουνυχιῶνος.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

This was the end of the battle of Alexander against both Porus and the Indians on the far side of the Hydaspes, when Hegemon was archon at Athens in the month Munychion.

§8 *Anab.* 7.28.1 (June 323)
ἐτελεύτα μὲν δὴ Ἀλέξανδρος τῇ τετάρτῃ καὶ δεκάτῃ καὶ ἑκατοστῇ Ὀλυμπιάδι ἐπὶ Ἡγησίου ἄρχοντος Ἀθήνησιν· ἐβίω δὲ δύο καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη καὶ τοῦ τρίτου μῆνας ἐπέλαβεν ὀκτώ, ὡς λέγει Ἀριστόβουλος.

Alexander died in the 140th Olympiad when Hegesias was archon at Athens. According to Aristoboulus, he lived thirty-two years and eight months; his reign lasted twelve years and the same eight months.

§9 *Ind.* 21.1 (Sep. 325)
ὡς δὲ τὰ ἐτήσια πνεύματα ἐκοιμήθη, ἃ δὴ τοῦ θέρεος τὴν ὥρην πᾶσαν κατέχει ἐκ τοῦ πελάγεος ἐπιπνέοντα ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ταύτῃ ἄπορον τὸν πλοῦν ποιέοντα, τότε δὴ ὡρμῶντο ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἀθήνησι Κηφισοδώρου, εἰκάδι τοῦ Βοηδρομιῶνος μηνός, καθότι Ἀθηναῖοι ἄγουσιν, ὡς δὲ Μακεδόνες τε καὶ Ἀσιανοὶ ἦγον <μηνὸς Ὑπερβερεταίου, ἔτος> τὸ ἑνδέκατον βασιλεύοντος Ἀλεξάνδρου.

When the seasonal winds had sunk to rest, which continue blowing from the Ocean on to the land all the summer season, thus making it impossible to sail, they at last set out, when Cephisodorus was archon at Athens on the twentieth day of the month Boedromion as the Athenians reckon it; but as the Macedonians and Asians reckon, it was in the month of Hyperberetaeus and the eleventh year of Alexander's reign.

It seems unlikely that Arrian is simply reproducing the dates he found in what he read. His principal sources for the *Anabasis* were Ptolemy and Aristoboulus, and for this particular section of the *Indica* Nearchus.[3] Ptolemy was a Macedonian noble and companion of Alexander, and Aristoboulus and Nearchus were Greeks in Macedonian service with no known connection to Athens.[4] We would therefore expect all three authors to have dated by regnal years and the Macedonian calendar, and sure enough in passage §8 from the *Anabasis* it is explicitly stated that Aristoboulus used regnal years and in passage §9 from the *Indica* the inclusion of regnal years and Macedonian months implies that Nearchus was likewise reckoning dates in this way. Thus, unlike his procedure with distances, where Arrian almost always uses the measurements in stades or *stathmoi* he had read in his sources, here he has gone to the trouble of converting the Macedonian dates he found in his sources into Athenian dates.[5]

In the process of converting these dates, Arrian has got the archon wrong in one case and may have miscalculated the month in several others.[6] These mistakes underline the

[3] *Anabasis*: A.B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1980–95), 1.16–22. *Indica*: P. Chantraine, *Arrien: l'Inde* (Paris, 1927), 9–11.

[4] W. Heckel, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great: Prosopography of Alexander's Empire* (Malden, MA, 2006), 45 (Aristoboulus), 171–3 (Nearchus).

[5] Arrian's procedure with distances: Bosworth (n. 3), 1.63, discussing the one exception (a measurement in parasangs) at Arr. *Anab.* 1.4.4. Arrian's conversion of dates: P.A. Brunt, *Arrian*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1976–83), 2.457, Bosworth (n. 3), 2.311, D. Gaillard-Goukowsky and P. Goukowsky, *Arrien: Anabase d'Alexandre*, 3 vols. (Paris, 2022–4), 2.403 n. 205. It is also possible that Arrian found these archon dates in a now lost work separate from his main sources rather than calculating them himself. There are no examples of this in what survives of Alexander historiography, however, so it is more likely that the practice is particular to Arrian.

[6] Wrong archon (§9): The start date of Nearchus' expedition is independently known to be autumn 325, but Arrian gives the archon for 323/2 (Cephisodorus) instead of 325/4 (Anticles). As Brunt remarks, this can hardly be a copyist's error: Brunt (n. 5), 2.457. Wrong month: This is less straightforward. The possibilities are §2, §4, §5, §6, §7. Bosworth and Brunt agree that §5 is wrong, but Brunt thinks the other wrong dates are §2 and §7, whereas Bosworth thinks they are §4 and §6. See

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

impracticality of what Arrian was doing. Converting regnal dates and Macedonian months to the Athenian calendar was a fiddly procedure which required access to rather technical works. Even if, as in Arrian's case, one had access to such works, it was still easy to make mistakes. Without these books to hand, one wonders how helpful it really was to tell a Greek readership of the second century A.D. that event X happened when Athenian Y was archon when the Athenian in question had not been alive for over four centuries.

Although Athenian archons were frequently used in Greek historiography for dating purposes, the way that Arrian uses them is deeply unusual. When works with a scope broader than the history of Athens used archon dates, they always synchronized them with one or several other dating systems.[7] Arrian's work has such a scope, yet he only synchronizes his archon dates on three of nine occasions. When archon dates appear on their own, it is typically in works which are focused on Athens, for example in the *Lives of the Ten Orators*, or Dionysius of Halicarnassus' various essays on the Athenian orators, or in a local history with an annalistic structure such as Philochoros' *Atthis*. However, even in these cases the authors regularly relate these dates to other chronological frames of reference to orientate the reader.[8] The synchronized archon dates in the *Anabasis* at the beginning and end of Alexander's life tell us how long his reign was. Because Arrian does not mark every year with an archon date, however, there is no way to establish the relative chronology of the six contextless archon dates which lie between these points short of consulting a list of Athenian archons or laboriously noting the changes of season in the text. One may therefore reasonably doubt that Arrian's purpose with any of these dates was actually to convey chronological information to his readers.

The logic behind why these dates appear where they do is also not immediately clear. They do not mark the beginning of each year as they would in an annalistic account. The dates come from throughout the calendar year (hence the inclusion of the month in seven of nine cases), almost half the years of Alexander's reign are missing (335, 334, 329, 328, 327, 325, 324), and one year features twice (331).[9] Hidber has instead suggested that 'these dates mark the main stages and achievements of Alexander's great expedition'.[10] It is indeed the case that most of the dates appear to mark important events: the accession and death of Alexander (§1, §8), major military victories (§2, §3, §5, §7), the death of Darius (§6) and the beginning of Nearchus' voyage (§9). The choice of 'important' events, however, appears somewhat arbitrary. For example, the battle of Granicus does not receive this treatment, whereas the battles of Issus and Gaugamela do. Likewise, the destruction of Persepolis is omitted even though elsewhere in the Alexander tradition this was viewed as an epochal event and Arrian himself bills it as revenge for what Xerxes had done to Athens in 480, thus making it a highly appropriate moment to mark with an

Brunt (n. 5), 1.165 n. 10 (§2), 490–1 (§4), 273 n. 4, 491–2 (§5), 492–7 (§6), 2.457 (§7) and Bosworth (n. 3), 1.219 (§2), 286–7 (§4), 312–13 (§5), 346 (§6), 2.270–2, 310–11 (§7). Gaillard-Goukowsky and Goukowsky (n. 5) either does not acknowledge the issue or, when he does, does not consider it a problem, e.g. 1.238 n. 167 (§2), 2.17 (§5), 2.343 n. 330 (§6).

[7] For the role of archon dates in chronographies and universal histories see K. Clarke, *Making Time for the Past: Local History and the Polis* (Oxford, 2008), 66–8, 77–80, 127–32.

[8] See for example Clarke (n. 7), 210–12 on Philochoros, the best attested of the Atthidographers. For patterns of archon dating in the *Lives of the Ten Orators* and, in the case of the life of Lysias, their likely origins in the chronographical work of Apollodorus, see L. Pitcher, 'Narrative technique in *The Lives of the Ten Orators*', *CQ* 55 (2005), 217–34, at 223–4.

[9] The month is not mentioned in Arr. *Anab.* 1.1.1 and 7.28.1. Given that these are also the only synchronized dates in the *Anabasis* and come first and last, this may be a deliberate choice by Arrian rather than an error in the manuscripts as Brunt (n. 5), 296 n. 1, 457 suggested.

[10] Hidber (n. 2), 185–6 (quotation at 186).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Athenian archon date.[11] Conversely, one date relates to Alexander's wholly unremarkable crossing of the Euphrates at Thapsacus (§4). It is this reference to Thapsacus which is the key to the whole schema.

3. THAPSACUS IN ARRIAN

The city of Thapsacus was strategically important in antiquity because it controlled a major crossing on the Euphrates on a route connecting Syria and Mesopotamia, and it was located at the point from which the river became navigable.[12] In Arrian's *Anabasis*, Thapsacus appears first as the place where Darius flees across the Euphrates in late 333 after his defeat at Issus (2.13.1), then as the point at which Alexander himself crosses the Euphrates in 331 (3.6.4, 3.7.1), and finally as the location where the disassembled fleet from Phoenicia is reassembled and sailed down to the sea in 323 (7.19.3).

Alexander's crossing of the Euphrates at Thapsacus in 331 (Arr. *Anab.* 3.7.1–2), which Arrian chose to mark with an archon date, is an unremarkable episode. Darius had left Mazaeus, the satrap of Babylon, to defend the river crossing with several thousand cavalry and infantry. Alexander had sent Macedonian forces ahead to secure the crossing and build a bridge across the river in advance of his arrival with the main army. So long as Mazaeus held the opposite bank, the Macedonians were unable to complete the bridge. However, when Mazaeus learned that Alexander was marching towards the crossing, Mazaeus fled with his forces. As a result, by the time Alexander arrived he found two bridges complete and was able to cross the river unopposed. Immediately after this, Alexander heard that Darius was planning to oppose any crossing of the Tigris, but when he got there he again encountered no opposition (Arr. *Anab.* 3.7.4–5). On this occasion, however, Arrian does not mark the non-event of an unopposed river crossing with an archon date.

Aware that the crossing at Thapsacus does not fit his explanation of the archon dates as marking 'the main stages and achievements' of Alexander's expedition, Hidber suggests that, 'Alexander's arrival at Thapsacus … is also noted, since it marks the beginning of the opening phase of the battle of Gaugamela'.[13] This is unpersuasive on several grounds. First, Thapsacus was over 600km west of Gaugamela, and around three months separate the two events: crossing the Euphrates at Thapsacus was in no sense a prelude to the battle. Second, if we instead think in narrative terms about when the section of the *Anabasis* dealing with the battle of Gaugamela begins, the two rather more obvious start points would be either the beginning of the campaigning season at 3.6.1 when Alexander set out from Memphis in Egypt (marked with the same phrase Thucydides used for these moments, ἅμα τῷ ἦρι) or the point at which Alexander's scouts discovered Darius' army and when Arrian pauses to enumerate the Persian forces at 3.8.2–3.[14] The unopposed crossing of the Euphrates, just like the unopposed crossing of the Tigris, is not especially meaningful for the narrative preceding the battle.

[11] Epochal event: Curt. 5.7.8–9. Revenge for Athens: Arr. *Anab.* 3.18.11–12 with Bosworth (n. 3), 1.330–2. My thanks to *CQ*'s reader for suggesting the latter point.

[12] While the general area in which Thapsacus was located is clear, its precise location remains uncertain. For recent discussion see M. Gawlikowski, 'Thapsacus and Zeugma: the crossing of the Euphrates in antiquity', *Iraq* 58 (1996), 123–33; D. Kennedy, 'Thapsacus and Zeugma', in P. Wheatley and E. Baynham (edd.), *East and West in the World Empire of Alexander* (Oxford, 2015), 277–98.

[13] Hidber (n. 2), 185 n. 8.

[14] For Arrian's use of the 'advent of spring' phrase see Hidber (n. 2), 185.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Finally, Arrian's archon dates primarily mark ends not beginnings. Only two mark the beginning of a phase in the narrative: passages §1 (beginning of Alexander's reign) and §9 (beginning of Nearchus' voyage), and strictly speaking §1 in fact marks the death of Philip, with Alexander's accession being additional information which is provided in a separate clause. Excepting the case of Thapsacus (§4), all the other archon dates either mark the achievement of a victory (§2, §3, §5, §7) or the death of a key protagonist (§6, §8) at the end of a section of narrative. Arrian underscores the closural function of these archon dates by repeatedly introducing them with the same phrase: τοῦτο τὸ τέλος [event or person in the dative] ἐγένετο (§2, §5, §6, §7). Therefore it is not just that the crossing of the Euphrates at Thapsacus does not obviously mark the beginning of the Gaugamela narrative, but also that, even if it did, we would not expect Arrian to mark something like this with an archon date. By the same token, however, crossing the Euphrates at Thapsacus can hardly be construed as an important event closing a narrative section in the way that most of the other archon dates do. The explanation for what Arrian is doing here must lie elsewhere.

4. THAPSACUS IN XENOPHON

The significance of Thapsacus to Arrian is to be found not in Arrian's *Anabasis* but in Xenophon's. At around the mid-point of Book 1, Cyrus the Younger and his Greek army reach Thapsacus. Only at this point does Cyrus finally reveal that the true purpose of the expedition is to march on Babylon and seize the Persian throne from his brother (*Anab.* 1.4.11). The army is angry when they learn that they have been deceived, but they are persuaded to continue following Cyrus by the promise of more pay (1.4.12–17). After fording the river, the inhabitants of Thapsacus inform the troops that they have never known the river to be so low that it could be crossed by foot. Since the satrap of Syria, Abrocomas, had burned all the boats after crossing the river himself, Cyrus would not have been able to cross the Euphrates so quickly had the river's level not been exceptionally low: 'It seemed, accordingly, that here was a divine intervention, and that the river had plainly retired before Cyrus because he was destined to be king' (ἐδόκει δὴ θεῖον εἶναι καὶ σαφῶς ὑποχωρῆσαι τὸν ποταμὸν Κύρῳ ὡς βασιλεύσοντι, 1.4.17–18, at 18).

This episode is a key turning point in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Cyrus knew that the Greek soldiers would not have agreed to join his expedition had they known that its ultimate purpose was to overthrow the Persian king, since when they had begun to suspect this while in Cilicia they had mutinied against their commanders (1.3.1–2). As one of several strategies Cyrus used to bring the soldiers back to his side, he claimed that the purpose of the expedition was to punish his enemy Abrocomas who he said would be waiting for them by the Euphrates (1.3.20–1). Thus when the army reaches Thapsacus only to find Abrocomas long gone, the ruse can no longer be maintained and Cyrus must come clean. Fatefully, the Greeks are persuaded to continue following Cyrus against their better judgement by the prospect of higher pay. The atmosphere of self-delusion which pervades the Greek army at this juncture is perfectly captured by the apparent acceptance of the claim that the low level of the river is a sure sign that Cyrus has divine favour and will succeed in his purpose. In reality, by the end of Book 1

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Cyrus will be dead. While the Greeks believe themselves to be marching to victory and riches, in fact they are marching to disaster. Thapsacus is thus the point of no return after which the fate of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand is sealed.

Arrian's fascination with Xenophon is well known. He adopts the name of Xenophon in his writings, and when using it is careful to do so in ways which implicitly invite the reader to compare him to his Classical forebear.[15] This is indicative of how he relates himself to Xenophon more generally: Arrian's emulation of Xenophon in his literary career is both an expression of admiration and a form of competition.[16] This is especially clear with the *Cynegeticus* and the *Anabasis* where Arrian takes on the task of 're-writing' a book of Xenophon in order to show that anything Xenophon has done he can do better. In the *Cynegeticus* he claims that the advent of horseback hunting with fast dogs has made much of Xenophon's *Cynegeticus* obsolete because it describes the very different methods used for hunting on foot which previously had to be used. This provides the rationale for 're-writing' the work and gives Arrian an opportunity to critique Xenophon's approach to hunting more generally.[17]

Arrian's rationale for 're-writing' the *Anabasis* is similar: a superior *anabasis* took place after Xenophon had written his account of his own one in 401, and therefore the work needs to be 're-written' so that the Ten Thousand's inferior *anabasis* does not remain more famous than Alexander's superior *anabasis* just because the great Xenophon happened to write an account of it. This rationale is explicitly set out in the so-called Second Preface (Arr. *Anab.* 1.12.3–4):

[3] ὁπότε καὶ ἡ τῶν μυρίων ξὺν Κύρῳ ἄνοδος ἐπὶ βασιλέα Ἀρτοξέρξην καὶ τὰ Κλεάρχου τε καὶ τῶν ἅμα αὐτῷ ἁλόντων παθήματα καὶ ἡ κατάβασις αὐτῶν ἐκείνων, ἣν Ξενοφῶν αὐτοὺς κατήγαγε, πολύ τι ἐπιφανέστερα ἐς ἀνθρώπους Ξενοφῶντος ἕνεκά ἐστιν ἢ Ἀλέξανδρός τε καὶ τὰ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔργα. [4] καίτοι Ἀλέξανδρος οὔτε ξὺν ἄλλῳ ἐστράτευσεν, οὔτε φεύγων μέγαν βασιλέα τοὺς τῇ καθόδῳ τῇ ἐπὶ θάλασσαν ἐμποδὼν γιγνομένους ἐκράτησεν.

[3] Why, the march up into Asia of the Ten Thousand with Cyrus against King Artaxerxes, the sufferings of Clearchus and those captured with him, and the descent to the sea of those Ten Thousand under the leadership of Xenophon, are, thanks to Xenophon, far better known to the world than Alexander and Alexander's exploits. [4] Yet Alexander did not take the field in another's army; he did not flee from the Great King, defeating only those who tried to stop the march down to the sea.

[15] See P.A. Stadter, 'Flavius Arrianus: the new Xenophon', *GRBS* 8 (1967), 155–61, at 157–8 for Arrian referring to himself as Xenophon and distinguishing himself from the Classical Athenian with terms such as ἐκεῖνος, ὁ πάλαι and ὁ πρεσβύτερος. Against Stadter's argument that Arrian's full name was L. Flavius Arrianus Xenophon see W. Ameling, 'L. Flavius Arrianus Neos Xenophon', *EA* 4 (1984), 119–22. D.W. Leon and K.A. Rask, 'New light on Arrian's *praenomen* from digital epigraphy', *Histos* 13 (2019), 34–52, at 38 note that on the inscribed dedication bearing Arrian's full name (*SEG* XXX 1059) the text did not continue significantly past the broken right edge and there is thus not space for 'Xenophon'. The conceit of Arrian being a 'new Xenophon' (Phot. *Bibl.* 58.17b, *Suda* α 3868 Adler) is an instance of the broader Imperial-era practice of honouring individuals by calling them the 'new X' in reference to a historical personage. On this phenomenon see A. Heller, 'D'un Polybe à l'autre: statuaire honorifique et mémoire des ancêtres dans le monde grec d'époque impériale', *Chiron* 41 (2011), 287–312.

[16] For this argument see in particular P.A. Stadter, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1980).

[17] P.A. Stadter, 'Xenophon in Arrian's *Cynegeticus*', *GRBS* 17 (1976), 157–67; Stadter (n. 16), 50–9. For the theme of revision in Arrian's *œuvre* see D.W. Leon, *Arrian the Historian. Writing the Greek Past in the Roman Empire* (Austin, 2021), 32–61.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

These sentiments appear again in Alexander's speech to his troops before the Battle of Issus (Arr. *Anab.* 2.7.8–9):

[8] λέγεται δὲ καὶ Ξενοφῶντος καὶ τῶν ἅμα Ξενοφῶντι μυρίων ἐς μνήμην ἐλθεῖν, ὡς οὐδέν τι οὔτε κατὰ πλῆθος οὔτε κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην ἀξίωσιν σφίσιν ἐπεοικότες, οὐδὲ ἱππέων αὐτοῖς παρόντων Θεσσαλῶν, οὐδὲ Βοιωτῶν ἢ Πελοποννησίων, οὐδὲ Μακεδόνων ἢ Θρᾳκῶν, οὐδὲ ὅση ἄλλη σφίσιν ἵππος ξυντέτακται, οὐδὲ τοξοτῶν ἢ σφενδονητῶν, ὅτι μὴ Κρητῶν ἢ Ῥοδίων ὀλίγων, καὶ τούτων ἐν τῷ κινδύνῳ ὑπὸ Ξενοφῶντος αὐτοσχεδιασθέντων, [9] οἱ δὲ βασιλέα τε ξὺν πάσῃ τῇ δυνάμει πρὸς Βαβυλῶνι αὐτῇ ἐτρέψαντο καὶ ἔθνη ὅσα κατιόντων ἐς τὸν Εὔξεινον πόντον καθ᾽ ὁδόν σφισιν ἐπεγένετο νικῶντες ἐπῆλθον.

[8] He is also said to have recalled that Xenophon and his Ten Thousand, though they were not to be compared to themselves in number and other qualities, with no cavalry, Thessalian, Boeotian, Peloponnesian, Macedonian or Thracian, nor such other horse as they now had in their own ranks, no archers or slingers, save a few Cretans and Rhodians, and those hastily scraped together by Xenophon in the crisis. [9] Yet the Ten Thousand routed the Great King with his whole power near Babylon itself, and victoriously attacked the various other tribes which barred their way as they descended to the Black Sea.

Here the inferiority of Xenophon's army relative to Alexander's becomes an *a fortiori* argument for why Alexander's outnumbered forces will prevail over the Persians. For obvious rhetorical reasons, Alexander focuses on the Greek wing winning its part of the battle at Cunaxa and presents the fighting against tribes in northern Asia Minor as a credit to the Ten Thousand rather than unimpressive relative to their showing against the Persians.[18] Nevertheless, Alexander is very clearly hitting the same points about Xenophon and the Ten Thousand as Arrian did in the Second Preface. Arrian introduces this section of the speech with λέγεται, his standard way of indicating that a passage comes from a source other than Ptolemy and Aristoboulus whom he had been using for the rest of the speech.[19] Given the absence of this material in the parallel Vulgate passages and the correspondences between this passage and the Second Preface, it seems likely that the alternative source is Arrian himself.

The divergent fates of the two *anabaseis* are central to Arrian's understanding of why a new *Anabasis* needed to be written. The point in space and narrative time where those fates began to diverge was Thapsacus. After Thapsacus, both armies headed into Babylonia hoping to defeat the Persians in battle and overthrow the king. For Xenophon the result was defeat and a tortuous return home, for Alexander it is victory and a triumphant march beyond the furthest limits of the Persian Empire.

The Xenophontic significance of Thapsacus would not have been lost on Arrian's readers. Xenophon, and in particular the *Anabasis*, was widely read in the Imperial period. Indeed, Dio of Prusa, a fellow Bithynian who was still active in Arrian's late teens and early twenties, had recommended that men in public life read Xenophon, and above all the *Anabasis*.[20] Arrian had titled his work *Anabasis*, divided it into seven books like its forebear, and then explicitly drawn out the comparison between the two *anabaseis* in

[18] Compare Arr. *Anab.* 4.11.9 where Arrian has Callisthenes include Clearchus, Xenophon and the Ten Thousand vs Artaxerxes in a list of Greeks who defeated Persians. Once again, it suits the rhetorical purpose of the speaker to manipulate the facts in this way. For this section of Callisthenes' speech being Arrian's own handiwork rather than something from the sources see Bosworth (n. 3), 2.86.

[19] Bosworth (n. 3), 1.204.

[20] Dio Chrys. *Or.* 18.13–17 with E.L. Bowie, 'Xenophon's influence in imperial Greece', in M.A. Flower (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Xenophon* (Cambridge, 2017), 403–15, at 403–5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the Second Preface.[21] He had therefore primed his readers to read his *Anabasis* with Xenophon's in mind.

5. IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF XENOPHON

From the reader's perspective, the purpose of the Athenian archon dates in structuring a comparison between Xenophon and Alexander's *anabaseis* emerges in stages. The first three dates mark the death of Philip and the beginning of Alexander's reign (§1) and then Alexander's successes at Issus (§2) and Tyre (§3): at this point, it is obvious that the formula marks important moments in Alexander's reign, but the Xenophontic significance has yet to become apparent. Thapsacus (§4) then provides the key to the schema: when you see an archon date, think of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. The next two archon dates illustrate how Alexander succeeded where Xenophon ultimately failed: victory at Gaugamela rather than defeat at Cunaxa (§5), and then the death of Darius while fleeing from Alexander as opposed to Xenophon and the Ten Thousand fleeing from Artaxerxes (§6). Up to this point, the archon dates have been appearing with increasing frequency: measured in Teubner pages, the gap between the first and second passages is 85 pages, between the second and third 25 pages, and then between the third, fourth and fifth passages around 15 pages each. There is then a significant gap (110 pages) until the next archon date which marks Alexander's victory at the Hydaspes (§7). This represents the furthest point of Alexander's march and thus underlines quite how much more successful Alexander's *anabasis* was than Xenophon's. An even longer gap follows (122 pages) before the final archon date which marks Alexander's death (§8).

Silberman has noted of Arrian's *Periplus of the Black Sea* that, as his narrative moves along the coast where the Ten Thousand had marched, so the number of references to Xenophon markedly increases: as he puts it, 'le souvenir de Xénophon hante cette description'.[22] The memory of Xenophon's Ten Thousand likewise haunts those sections of Arrian's *Anabasis* where Alexander's army finds itself marching in the footsteps of the Ten Thousand. The different journeys which Xenophon and Alexander took through Asia Minor first converge in Cilicia, and it is here that we get our first explicit references to Xenophon since the Second Preface early in Book 1.[23]

When Alexander reaches the plain before the Cilician Gates which will lead him down into Cilicia itself, Arrian goes out of his way to clarify that the place he arrives at called the camp of Cyrus is named after Cyrus the Younger (*Anab.* 2.4.3). By contrast, Curtius instead states that it is named after the rather more famous Cyrus the Great

[21] Contrast Bosworth (n. 3), 1.7–8, who has questioned whether *Anabasis* was the work's original title given that an alternative title (τὰ περὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου) is attested in Byzantine sources. His scepticism is also based on his downplaying of the importance of Xenophon to the work as a whole: 'Certainly Arrian's work on Alexander is not notably influenced by Xenophon. His stylistic debts are rather to Herodotus and Thucydides, and his direct references to Xenophon's work are sparse and perfunctory' (page 8).

[22] A. Silberman, 'Arrien, *Périple du Pont Euxin*: essai d'interprétation et d'évaluation des données historiques et géographiques', *ANRW* 2.34.1 (1993), 276–311, at 305.

[23] There is an intriguing reference to a distance in parasangs at Arr. *Anab.* 1.4.4 which naturally brings to mind Xenophon's *Anabasis*. However, the imprecision in the distance (ὅσον παρασάγγην τοῦ Ἴστρου) is very un-Xenophontic (compare T. Rood, 'Black Sea variations: Arrian's *Periplus*', *CCJ* 57 [2011], 137–63) and the region of Thrace is far from 'anabatic' space. Bosworth (n. 3), 1.63 may therefore be right to suggest that this is instead yet another Herodotean echo in a section where there are several.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(Curt. 3.4.1). It is unclear who in fact is correct.[24] More important is how Arrian here deliberately puts the reader in mind of a specific passage of Xenophon's *Anabasis* which closely parallels Alexander's own experience of passing through the Cilician Gates (1.2.21). Both Cyrus and Alexander initially paused before attempting to pass through the Gates because Persian forces still held them. In both cases news that other parts of their army had already reached Cilicia by a different route persuaded the Persian forces to abandon the Gates without a fight. The main difference is that Cyrus waited for a day while deciding how to proceed, whereas the ever-restless Alexander immediately mounted a nighttime flanking manoeuvre.

The next explicit reference to Xenophon comes in Alexander's speech to the army before Issus where, as discussed above, Arrian has Alexander deploy a detailed comparison between his own army and the Ten Thousand which includes precise references to episodes in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (Arr. *Anab.* 2.7.8–9). After this, the next reference comes in the midst of Arrian's description of the battle of Issus itself: 'Darius himself held the centre of his whole host, the customary position for Persian kings; Xenophon son of Gryllus has recorded the purpose of the arrangement' (αὐτὸς δὲ Δαρεῖος τὸ μέσον τῆς πάσης τάξεως ἐπεῖχεν, καθάπερ νόμος τοῖς Περσῶν βασιλεῦσι τετάχθαι· καὶ τὸν νοῦν τῆς τάξεως ταύτης Ξενοφῶν ὁ τοῦ Γρύλλου ἀναγέγραφεν, 2.8.11). Here Arrian is referring to a moment in the battle of Cunaxa where Xenophon explains that the Persian king always positions himself at the centre of the line partly for greater safety and partly to speed up the communication of orders (Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.21–3). Arrian here tells his reader that there is relevant information in Xenophon, but does not say in which work and does not repeat the information himself. The implication is that the reader knows that the *Anabasis* (as opposed to, for example, the *Cyropaedia*) is meant, and that he expects his reader either to be able to recall the passage from memory or to have a copy of the *Anabasis* to hand in which they can follow up this 'footnote'.

Arrian's first archon date since the beginning of the work appears six Teubner pages after this cross-reference to Xenophon's *Anabasis*, and thereafter they appear with regularity over Books 2–3 while Alexander is moving through the same space as the Ten Thousand and facing similar challenges. By contrast, once Alexander has left 'anabatic' space, the references to Xenophon's *Anabasis* largely dry up, and Arrian only alludes to the work when it is strictly relevant to do so. Thus, the death of Darius in Parthyaea in north-eastern Iran (§6) and the victory over Porus at the Hydaspes river in northern Pakistan (§7) are marked with archon dates because they advance Arrian's argument about the superiority of Alexander's *anabasis* compared to Xenophon's. When Callisthenes is making his speech against *proskynesis* in Book 4 and is piling up examples of free Greeks defeating servile Persians, he includes Clearchus, Xenophon and the Ten Thousand vs Artaxerxes to bolster what is otherwise a rather thin list: the reference is rhetorically appropriate even if factually questionable.[25] Finally, when Arrian has to deal with the issue of whether Atropates, the satrap of Media, really sent a group of captive Amazons to Alexander in 324 (Ptolemy and Aristoboulus do not mention them, whereas other writers do), it is of course relevant to note that Xenophon passed through

[24] Bosworth (n. 3), 1.189.

[25] Arr. *Anab.* 4.11.9 χρὴ ἐνθυμεῖσθαι ὅτι τὸν Κῦρον ἐκεῖνον Σκύθαι ἐσωφρόνισαν, πένητες ἄνδρες καὶ αὐτόνομοι, καὶ Δαρεῖον ἄλλοι αὖ Σκύθαι, καὶ Ξέρξην Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, καὶ Ἀρτοξέρξην Κλέαρχος καὶ Ξενοφῶν καὶ οἱ ξὺν τούτοις μύριοι, καὶ Δαρεῖον τοῦτον Ἀλέξανδρος μὴ προσκυνούμενος.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the region from which the Amazons supposedly came and yet never mentioned them.[26] Arrian's selectivity in referencing Xenophon's *Anabasis* may help explain why seemingly important events such as the victory at the Granicus and the destruction of Persepolis are not marked with archon dates: they do not obviously correspond to places the Ten Thousand visited or to challenges they faced.[27]

6. WHY ATHENIAN ARCHONS?

In principle, any dating formula could have performed the function that the Athenian archon dates perform in Arrian's text. Arrian creates a connection in the reader's mind between this particular dating formula and Xenophon's *Anabasis* through the selective way he deploys the formula in his text, not through any meaning intrinsic to the formula itself. It would have been easier for Arrian to retain the dating by regnal year and Macedonian month which he found in his two main sources rather than going to the trouble of recalculating these dates according to Athenian reckoning. It would also have been far more thematically appropriate to use the years of Alexander's reign given that the narrative of the *Anabasis* begins with his accession, ends with his death, and is organised throughout around his movements.

By contrast, Athens is of limited historical significance to the narrative, and as a result dating events in the *Anabasis* by the city's eponymous magistrates is, at first sight, a somewhat odd choice. Alexander paid attention to the threat of Athenian resistance so long as Athens was in a position to do him harm in Greece, and during this period he kept Athenian hostages with him to ensure the good behaviour of Athens. Once he had captured Egypt, however, and could thus support himself irrespective of his control of Greece, he no longer viewed Athens as a threat and released the Athenian hostages.[28] Alexander periodically found it ideologically advantageous to frame his actions as vengeance for the Persian destruction of Athens in 480, but this too lost its importance once Persia was defeated and Darius had died.[29] As a result, Athens largely disappears from the *Anabasis* after Book 3.[30] This is most likely an accurate reflection both of what Arrian found in Ptolemy and Aristoboulus and of the underlying historical reality that Athens ceased to be a significant factor in Alexander's thinking past the end of the 330s.

While the city of Athens was therefore of limited importance to the narrative of the *Anabasis*, it was of central importance to Arrian's authorial and public persona. As noted earlier, Arrian styled himself after Xenophon the Athenian in his literary works. In addition to this, however, he was also an initiate of the Eleusinian Mysteries by the time

[26] Arr. *Anab.* 7.13.2–6, especially §4 οὐδὲ δοκεῖ μοι ἐν τῷ τότε σώζεσθαι τὸ γένος τῶν Ἀμαζόνων, οὐδ᾽ ἔτι πρὸ Ἀλεξάνδρου, ἢ Ξενοφῶν ἂν ἐμνήσθη αὐτῶν, Φασιανῶν τε μνησθεὶς καὶ Κόλχων καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ἀπὸ Τραπεζοῦντος ὁρμώμενοι ἢ πρὶν ἐς Τραπεζοῦντα κατελθεῖν οἱ Ἕλληνες ἐπῆλθον ἔθνη βαρβαρικά, ἵναπερ καὶ ταῖς Ἀμαζόσιν ἐντετυχήκεσαν <ἄν>, εἴπερ οὖν ἔτι ἦσαν Ἀμαζόνες.

[27] In the case of Persepolis, however, Arrian's treatment is surprisingly brief and he explicitly states that Alexander erred here: *Anab.* 3.18.10–12 with Bosworth (n. 3), 1.330–3. He may therefore not have wanted to draw any more attention to an episode which showed Alexander in a poor light than he had to. The same, of course, can hardly be said of victory at the Granicus.

[28] Arr. *Anab.* 1.1.3, 1.7.4, 1.10.2–6, 7.9.4 (threat of resistance); 1.29.5–6, 2.15.2–4, 2.17.2, 3.6.2 (hostages).

[29] Arr. *Anab.* 1.16.7 (300 Persian panoplies sent to Athens post-Granicus); 2.15.2–4 (friendship with Athens and respect for the elder Iphicrates); 3.16.7, 7.19.2 (return of Harmodius and Aristogeiton statues); 3.18.12 (burning of Persepolis in retribution for sacking of Athens).

[30] Excluding the archon dates, there are twelve references to Athens in Books 1–3, but only four across Books 4–7 and none in Books 5–6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

he wrote the *Anabasis*, he acquired Athenian citizenship at some point during his career and he ultimately served as eponymous archon of Athens in 145/6.[31] His acquaintance with the city probably began during the period when, aged around 18, he studied with Epictetus at Nicopolis on the Adriatic *c.* 107–110.[32] A few years later, *c.* 112, he served on the council of the governor of Achaea, C. Avidius Nigrinus, at Delphi in the same year that Hadrian was named archon at Athens.[33] Throughout his senatorial career in the 120s and 130s, his travels between Italy and the East would have habitually taken him through Athens. Although there is still debate as to when exactly Arrian composed the *Anabasis*, we can be certain that he did so during this life-long acquaintance with Athens.[34]

It was conventional in Imperial-era histories to provide an autobiographical preface which explained the author's qualifications to write the history he was embarking on.[35] Arrian famously subverts this convention in the Second Preface by refusing to declare his name, homeland, family or history of office-holding because, he claims, these things are already so well known.[36] In the rest of the *Anabasis*, Arrian sticks to the letter more than the spirit of this declaration, finding ways to intimate biographical details to the reader without explicitly stating them. For example, when Alexander is preparing to bridge the Indus in Book 5, Arrian claims that his sources do not tell him which bridging method was used, and that if, as he suspects, Alexander used boats, it is important to establish whether or not the method was similar to the one the Romans employ (5.7.1–2). Since the Roman method is the quickest one he knows and is, he claims, of intrinsic interest, he launches into a detailed description of how it works (5.7.3–5). Arrian is being somewhat disingenuous here, since the Vulgate sources in fact make it perfectly clear how Alexander bridged the Indus, and indeed other large rivers he crossed.[37] Rather, what Arrian is really doing in this passage is looking for an excuse to talk about Roman bridging methods so as to let the reader know that he has had the sort of military career which would make him familiar with such things.

Some of Arrian's references to Athens likewise serve more as ways to indicate his own familiarity with Athens than to communicate information which the reader actually needs to know. For example, after Alexander reached Susa in late 331, he discovered the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in the city's treasury which Xerxes had carried off in 480, and so he sent them back to Athens (Arr. *Anab.* 3.16.7). This provides Arrian with an opportunity to explain precisely where in Athens the statues can now be seen (3.16.8):

καὶ νῦν κεῖνται Ἀθήνησιν ἐν Κεραμεικῷ αἱ εἰκόνες, ἣ ἄνιμεν ἐς πόλιν, καταντικρὺ μάλιστα τοῦ Μητρῴου, <οὐ> μακρὰν τῶν Εὐδανέμων τοῦ βωμοῦ· ὅστις δὲ μεμύηται ταῖν θεαῖν ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι, οἶδε τοῦ Εὐδανέμου τὸν βωμὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ δαπέδου ὄντα.

[31] Initiate of the Eleusinian mysteries: Arr. *Anab.* 3.16.8. Athenian citizen: *Cyn.* 1.4. Archon in 145/6: *IG* II^2 2055, line 2. See Stadter (n. 16), 16–17.

[32] Stadter (n. 16), 4–5, 19–31; R. Syme, 'The career of Arrian', *HSPh* 86 (1982), 181–211, at 184–5.

[33] *FD* III (4) 290, line 8 with Stadter (n. 16), 7–8 and Syme (n. 32), 185.

[34] The bibliography on this topic is expansive and inconclusive. For brief summaries of the cases for an early 120s and for a 130s date see, respectively, Bosworth (n. 3), 1.8–10 and Stadter (n. 16), 179–85. For a recent reassessment of the debate (preferring a 120s date) see Leon (n. 17), 115–21. Gaillard-Goukowsky and Goukowsky (n. 5), 1.ci–cv has recently revived the older view that Arrian did not write the *Anabasis* until he was resident in Athens in the 140s.

[35] See e.g. Diod. Sic. 1.4.1–5, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.7.2, Joseph. *BJ* 1.3, App. *Pref.* 15.62, Hdn. 1.2.5.

[36] Arr. *Anab.* 1.12.4–5 ἔνθεν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁρμηθῆναί φημι ἐς τήνδε τὴν ξυγγραφήν, οὐκ ἀπαξιώσας ἐμαυτὸν φανερὰ καταστήσειν ἐς ἀνθρώπους τὰ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔργα. ὅστις δὲ ὢν ταῦτα ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτοῦ γιγνώσκω, τὸ μὲν ὄνομα οὐδὲν δέομαι ἀναγράψαι, οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ ἄγνωστον ἐς ἀνθρώπους ἐστίν, οὐδὲ πατρίδα ἥτις μοί ἐστιν οὐδὲ γένος τὸ ἐμόν, οὐδὲ εἰ δή τινα ἀρχὴν ἐν τῇ ἐμαυτοῦ ἦρξα.

[37] Bosworth (n. 3), 2.255.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The statues are now set up at Athens in the Kerameikos, on the way by which we ascend the acropolis, just opposite the Metroön, not far from the altar of the Eudanemoi. Anyone who has been initiated into the mysteries at Eleusis is aware that the altar of Eudanemos is in the plain.

The ostensible justification for a brief digression of this kind is that Arrian is telling the reader something they are unlikely to know. But Arrian here addresses the reader as if they are highly familiar with Athens: he locates the statues on the route by which 'we' ascend the acropolis, presumably meaning Arrian and the reader; he explains that anyone who is an initiate of the Eleusinian mysteries will know where the altar of Eudanemos is; and he deploys precise references to Athenian topography which would be difficult for someone unfamiliar with the city to follow. A reader such as Arrian is here addressing would hardly need it explained to them where the famous status of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were located in Athens. Rather, Arrian's purpose in this passage is once again to intimate information about himself without having to state it explicitly: namely, that he is personally familiar with the city of Athens, an initiate of the Eleusinian mysteries, and perhaps already an Athenian citizen at the time of writing.[38]

Arrian's decision to use eponymous archons of Athens and Athenian months as his preferred dating formula can therefore be viewed as a similar example of him intimating details about himself without explicitly stating them. By reckoning time as an Athenian would, Arrian is at a minimum demonstrating his familiarity with the culture and institutions of Athens, and perhaps even implying that he is himself an Athenian. The choice of dating formula is thus not meant to be appropriate to the subject matter, but rather to the author.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The Athenian archon dates in Arrian serve a double purpose. In the *Anabasis* they lead the reader through a comparison between the *anabaseis* of Xenophon and Alexander which establishes the superiority of Alexander's *anabasis* over that of the Ten Thousand, and thus of Arrian's *Anabasis* over Xenophon's. In this respect, they fulfil both the conventional literary goal of establishing the importance of one's work relative to one's predecessors as well as advancing Arrian's specific agenda of portraying himself as a new and better Xenophon. The decision to use Athenian archon dates to achieve this should be understood as an instance of how Arrian habitually identifies himself to the reader in the *Anabasis* through indirect references rather than explicit statements. He was thus able to preserve the conceit of the Second Preface that he did not need to identify himself—unlike, he implies, less accomplished historians—while nevertheless finding ways to inform his readership of precisely the type of person he was.

University College, University of Oxford ANEURIN ELLIS-EVANS
aneurin.ellis-evans@classics.ox.ac.uk

[38] Several other passages can be interpreted in this way. At Arr. *Anab.* 2.16.3 he mentions cultic details of the Eleusinian Mysteries which are at best tangentially relevant to his discussion of the cult of Heracles at Tyre. When discussing the story of Theseus defeating the Amazons at 7.13.5 he adds that the fifth-century painter Mikon depicted this scene at Athens as well as scenes from the Persian Wars even though this information does not advance the argument he is making. At *Peripl.* 9.1 he identifies the goddess Phasiana at Phasis with Rhea on the basis of the similarities of the statue to one of Rhea by the sculptor Phidias in the temple of Cybele at Athens.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838826101116 Published online by Cambridge University Press