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THE CAMPAIGN OF CYRUS THE YOUNGER AND THE RETREAT OF THE „TEN THOUSAND“: THE CHRONOLOGY

Professor Karl Koch was the person who, in the middle of nineteenth century, gave a detailed description of chronological tables for the course of Cyrus' the Younger campaign from Sardis to Babylonia (*anabasis*), and for the retreat of the „Ten Thousand“ from the battle-field in the vicinity of Cunaxa to Trapezus and to Cotyora at the seaside of Black Sea (*katabasis*).¹ His specification is grounded on the information from the Xenophon's *Anabasis* and concerns days of march, length of passed way – measured in parasangs (as far as Xenophon made it known), days of halts and day's dates. These last are not mentioned by Xenophon, of course, but Koch reckoned them assuming that Cyrus – according to our calendar – left Sardis of March 401 B.C.

So we can easily catch a glimpse of the most important moments of the campaign: 3 June – Cyrus entered the capital of Cilicia, Tarsus; 27 July – crossed Euphrates; and 29 August was already in Babylonia only to fight this tragical for him battle of Cunaxa. Then Greeks started to retreat from Babylonia for good not before 29 September, 4 October they crossed Tigris, and 19 October found themselves on the river Zapatas, where they lost their commanders – deceitfully murdered by Persians. Between 11 and 18 November Greeks forced the way through the mountains of Karduchs only to enter Armenia then. 4 December they crossed East Euphrates, 25 December they reached the river Phasis and the 27 January 400 B.C. they got a sight of the longed-for sea from the mountain Teches, next they appeared in the neighbourhood of Trapezus – the Greek colony in the country of Colchians.

That chronology of Cyrus' campaign, elaborated by Koch, had been generally accepted.² His chronological tables were reprinted in the Greek text of *Anabasis* editions for school. The dates determined by him got history handbooks (especially the date of the battle near Cunaxa). Even if some scholars, as Franz Heinrich Weissbach, Eduard Meyer or Karl Julius Beloch, did not approve unreservedly day's dates proposed by Koch – even so they accepted a general scheme of his chronology. Without any reserve, as a ground for his considerations, the Koch's chronology was accepted by Eduard von Hoffmeister, who was a voyager and the author of the work about the route of the „Ten Thousand's“ retreat through Armenia. That book was very innovatory before the first world war; even today it is a work of a very big value.³

But hardly anybody, as well in Hoffmeister's days as later, realized the matter of the fact that the Koch's chronology has an entirely conventional and relative character. Because it is not based on any constant fixed date, certified by ancient sources, which could be a starting-point and reason for calculations of the particular day's dates. Koch does not explain anywhere in his work, why he determined that very day, 6 March, as a date of the departure of the Cyrus' army from Sardis.⁴

He only points out that day seemed to him the most likely (as a date) for a start of the campaign; Thought other scholars, for example Karl Wilhelm Krüger (the well-known editor of *Anabasis* in the early part of the nineteenth century), transfer that date one month later, as far as to the beginning of

¹ K. KOCH, *Der Zug der Zehntausend nach Xenophons Anabasis geographisch erläutert und mit einer Übersichtskarte versehen*, Leipzig 1850.

² Cf. G. F. HERTZBERG, *Der Feldzug der Zehntausend Griechen*, Halle a.S. 1894.

³ E. VON HOFFMEISTER, *Durch Armenien eine Wanderung und der Zug Xenophons bis zum Schwarzen Meere, eine militär-geographische Studie*, Leipzig-Berlin 1911, pp. 187 ff.

⁴ The same date used F. W. AINSWORTH before Koch already in his *Travels in the track of the Ten Thousand Greeks*, London 1884.

April.⁵ Free choice in the Koch's procedure is otherwise completely clear for neither Xenophon, nor any other ancient source lets us know about even a season of the year, when Cyrus left Sardis, to say nothing of the accurate day's date. We just know the campaign went on in 401 B.C., when Exaneitos was an archon in Athens (DIOD., *bibl.* 14,19,1 ff.).⁶

Obviously Cyrus had to start in spring of that year, because it was customary in the ancient time to start any military operations in spring, and to wage it until autumn in order to stop it for winter with unpermitted weather. But the question is, whether Cyrus left in early spring (and how early, because in Greece and on the coast of Asia Minor spring begins in February), or in late spring (in April or even in May)? Koch, apparently, with the help of the golden mean, chose March as a month of the campaign's start. But why he kept Cyrus leaving far into Asia until the very 6 March – it's the unsolved riddle till now.

The matter could be trivial to outware seeming, but to appoint such a date of departure, not another, is to condition all following day's dates. Thereby the complexion of those dates begins to be every bit as discretionary and accidental, distinctly speaking they are as well trumped-up as a date 6 March. In this connection the 3 September, mentioned usually in handbooks as a date of the battle of Cunaxa, is also without any value.⁷ Though the more cautious researchers propose ordinarily only September, or even generally autumn, as an approximate date of the battle⁸ – nothing, except a general probability, betokens that the battle took place in September precisely, or in autumn indispensably. It is impossible to solve those questions without verification of the Koch's chronology. Such verification must be founded either on sources, which have not been considered until now, or on other criteria, which are non-based on authority; best of all on both of them together.

Using such a method for the first time, G. Gassner called Koch's chronology in question to the letter only in the middle of our century.⁹ As a consultant of the Turkish agriculture ministry he was staying in the thirties over the North-East Asia Minor, so he came to know closely geographical, natural and climatic conditions prevailing there. By dint of observations made during the travels and of compiled scientific materials, he could bring forward new suggestions regarding the location of Xenophon's mountain Teches, and the course of the Greek march through mountains of Pontus to Trapezus. But first Gassner questioned the certitude prevalent in science up to the present that Greeks could step the Pontic mountain chain in midwinter (27 January, according to Koch's chronology). Not even because days of march and halt numbers mentioned by Xenophon (especially with regard to the route through Armenia, of which Xenophon – by reason of commander's duties and of the prevailing conditions – could not probably keep a regular diary) could arouse reservations, just as the dates fixed on that ground – but simply because it is impossible to overcome in winter Pontic Mountains, measuring more than 2 000 meters.

Most of the voyagers certify that for last hundred and scores' years in their reports. Till the time when modern roads were built and motor transport progressed, traffic on the ancient caravan-route from Trapezus through Pontic Mountains to Ersurum had been petrified for winter time from November till April. From early autumn till late spring the summits of mountains are coated with snow, so every connection is of the summer-road nature. On the lowest pass – Zigana (2 036 m) – big snowflakes are visible even in the second half of April, and new snow appears many a time as early as in the beginning of October. Therefore if Greeks, as Hoffmeister argued, had got to Trapezus really through that very pass, they would have crossed it not earlier than on the turn of April and May. Gassner is certain that it happened much later – in the beginning of summer.

In support of his proposition he sets forth successive arguments, quoting mentions in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, in the main neglected by commentators:

⁵ KOCH, *op. cit.*, pp. 12 and 139.

⁶ Diogenes Laertios mentions the archon's name as Xenaenetos (DIOG. LAERT. 2,55).

⁷ Cf. A. T. OLMSTEAD, *History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago-London 1948.

⁸ Cf. H. BENGTON, *Griechen und Perser. Die Mittelmeerwelt im Altertum*, vol. 1 [= *Fischer Weltgeschichte*, vol. 5], 1971, p. 194.

⁹ G. GASSNER, *Der Zug der Zehntausend nach Trapezunt*, *ABrWG* 5, 1953, pp. 1-35.

- 1) On the mountain Teches, from which the sea was visible, soldiers raised a heap of the stones collected hastily (XEN., *anab.* 4,7,25) – in Gassner's opinion it could not be possible in winter, when snow coated the mountain; besides Xenophon does not mention snow at all neither on that occasion nor even earlier – describing the second stage of the march through Armenia.
- 2) In Colchian's villages, at a two-days distance before Trapezus, Greeks were poisoned with honey, as we know nowadays honey was taken by bees from flowers of *Azalea Pontica* (XEN., *anab.* 4,8,20 nn.) – according to Gassner the honey arose from fresh spring crops and azaleas bloom in May about Trapezus, so Greeks appeared about here in late spring or in the beginning of summer, because last year's honey collected in hives would have been most eaten by bees in mid-winter;
- 3) Greeks found among other supplies new grain lying with straw in captured fortress of Mossynoics, in the proximity of Kerasus (XEN., *anab.* 5,4,27) – according to Gassner it bespeaks the harvest occurring on the Black Sea-coasts of Asia Minor in August was only just finished, and since Greeks appeared in the country of Mossynoics not before August to Trapezus, as we know from Xenophon's data, they would have got six weeks earlier, that is to say on the turn of June and July.¹⁰

Climatic reasons, in Gassner's opinion, not only render it impossible that Greeks crossed Pontic Mountains in winter, but they also make us question the notion about Greeks' winter crossing through Armenia, which has been prevailing in science until now. The winter in the mountains of Armenia is much more severe and longer (Gassner quotes average temperatures of winter months on Armenian table-land, in Ersurum and Kars) than it follows from Xenophon's words in *Anabasis*, where Greeks have to do with snow and frost for a few weeks only, without too many casualties, according to Gassner, and after that winter and interrelated trouble recede from author's of diary view. Gassner comes to conclusion that Greeks got only the end of the winter in Armenia. Transferring the widely accepted dates of the Greek march through Armenia so much in time, Gassner impairs all the standing up to the present chronology of Cyrus' campaign and of the retreat of the „Ten Thousand“.

So first and foremost he rejects as too early date 6 March settled by Koch as the day of the campaign's start (March by Gassner is not the right time for the beginning of military operations also because of heavy rains in Sardis area at this time). He dates the Cyrus' crossing of Euphrates in Thapsacus not at the end of July, as Koch did, but only in September (the lowest water level in the river, which could help with crossing, falls at the end, not at the beginning of the dry season – Gassner quotes the researches of the meteorological station in Ankara, they show the lowest level of rainfalls in the river-basin of Upper Euphrates in July and August, just then the snow on mountain tops of Armenia thaws finally in the neighbourhood of Euphrates sources). At last he argues also the date of battle of Cunaxa (3 September) standing since Koch's days, and he transfers it to the turn of October and November, on the plea of indirect Xenophon's mentions (XEN., *anab.* 2,3,13 and 15), which testify that it was late autumn when Greeks retreated through Babylonia – irrigation canals in the area were full of water, purposely poured by the order of the Persian king, because it was not time for irrigation, that is to say the dry season, when irrigation takes place, was over.¹¹

¹⁰ One sees at once that proposed by Gassner interpretation of this episode is doubtful, because – as critical editions show – the text of *Anabasis* is damaged in this passage (Cf. XÉNOPHON, *Anabase, texte établi et traduit par P. Masqueray*, vol. 2, Paris 1967, p. 64, and *Xenophontis Exeditio Cyri*, rec. C. Hude, Stuttgart 1969, p. 175. In that episode Xenophon describes the supplies, evidently, collected in Mossynoics' houses for a winter: so-called 'paternal bread' – a kind of biscuits, sheafed grain (mostly spelt), salted meat and grease of dolphins in jugs, flat nuts without inner partitions inside or Pontic chestnuts (there were plenty of them on attics), and wine. Specificity of these supplies, and especially profusion of nuts, proves that situation could happen only in late autumn or even in winter. Xenophon's words „a new grain“ (*νέος σῖτος*) mean simply 'the grain of last harvest' ('still untreshed grain') and they are not in conflict, as Gassner wants, with the mentioned earlier 'paternal bread' – which could be as well last year's (*perysinōn*) (that appears from a lection of SUDA book), as even much elder, then 'paternal' can be in other words 'hereditary after fathers' ('come down from father to son') – *πατρῖος*.

¹¹ As Otto Lendle proved not so long ago, Greeks suspected Persian king unjustly in that case, because in their retreat from the vicinity of Cunaxa they met not ditches and irrigation canals but drains dewatering the big,

Greeks found plentiful supplies of dates in the Babylonian villages, so it must have happened after harvest (the supreme dates picking occurs in October in Iraq nowadays). And since the Greeks' retreat northwards to the Black Sea was to start, according to Gassner's chronology, in the beginning of November, they would have got to Armenian table-land not in the end of November, as Koch wanted, but in the end of January and in such a case they would have had to do with progressively abating winter.

As we can see, the Gassner's argumentation bares on carefully selected and unconventional proofs, which go far beyond the humanities and the traditional ancient sources and those making capital of contemporary researches of natural sciences – of geography, climatology, meteorology, biology and agriculture. So no wonder that he easily brings his argumentation home to everybody. But questioning Koch's chronology (otherwise fair, as we said) Gassner did not avoid some inconsistency in his reasoning and error in calculations. On the one hand he says Greeks could come to Trapezus not earlier than on the turn of spring and summer (the end of May, June), so at least four months later than Koch assumed (8 February), but on the other hand he transfers the date of the battle of Cunaxa two months only (from the 3 September to the turn of October and November).

As we know not only from Koch's calculations, but from *Anabasis* as well, the route from Cunaxa to Trapezus took Greeks about five months. So they should have appeared in Trapezus as early as in the beginning of April, according to Gassner's assumptions. Thus Gassner lost two months in his chronology, making Greeks wander in the mountains of Armenia since the turn of January and February till June, which seems not very likely, even if we assume that Xenophon's data about the very march through Armenia are incomplete, shortened and not reliable in every way. And since from Gassner's chronology it appears with mathematical necessity that Greeks must have got to Trapezus in the beginning of April, the evidence for supposed later appearance of Greeks on the sea-side of Black Sea, obtained from *Anabasis*, automatically loses sense or rather gets opposite meaning; on the turn of March and April the mountain Teches could be still coated with snow, bees did not have time to gather new honey, because the azaleas bloom not earlier than in May, and six weeks later, or in other words in the third decade of May, Mossynoics did not harvest. Gassner missed another weakpoint in his chronology of Cyrus' expedition and the „Ten Thousand's“ retreat.

If, according to his idea, Greeks had begun retreating Babylonia in the beginning of November, they would have met winter conditions and snow not as far in Armenian table-land, but much earlier (after about two months of the march) – as well in Kurdish Mountains, as between the river Kentrites and the river Teleboas (in the mountainous region, west of Lake Van), whereas Xenophon writes that first snow overtook Greeks when they were quartered in Armenian villages, in the valley of river Teleboas (XEN., *anab.* 4,8). It was the 28 November in Koch's chronology and first snow would be quite normal in Armenia at 1 200 - 1 300 meters above the sea level just then. If it had been the end of Januar, as Gassner wants, the snow would have been covering all the distance from Kurdish Mountains (where Greeks would have been in the second decade of January) and any abundant snowfalls would not have been surprising.

Those advanced reservations shake greatly veracity of Gassner's chronology. No wonder it could not replace the old Koch's chronology. It seems to me that frailty of Gassner's method is in his quite perfunctory relation to the fundamental source, which is Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Gassner takes from *Anabasis* only these episodes, which in his belief confirm his arguments, whereas he questions veracity and honesty of Xenophon's numerical and topographical data (especially with reference to the march through Armenia), and that is a variance with prevailing in science opinions (local researches of such scientists as K. Koch, G. Cousin, E. von Hoffmeister, A. Boucher, C. F. Lehman-Haupt, referring to topography of the retreat, confirmed that Xenophon's description is precise, however not as much accurate as other descriptions). But Xenophon is not responsible for the dates questioned by Gassner – it should not be forgotten. Xenophon enumerates only the days of march, which became a ground for scientists to calculate those doubtful, as we can see, dates. These dates require, of course, to be corrected and specified, but since the method applied by Gassner, however comprehensive, failed, we should borrow informations from *Anabasis* again and look there for a solution to all the problem.

marshed syncline of ground – called Aqar Quf nowadays (O. LENDLE, *Xenophon in Babylonien. Die Märsche der Kyreer von Pylai bis Opis*, *RhM* 129, 1986, p. 203.

The warrant for our considerations, aiming at specifying the chronology of Cyrus' expedition, will be that short Xenophon's reference to the sojourn of the Cyrus' army in the city of Peltae in Phrygia: „From there he makes in two days ten parasangs to the populous city of Peltae, where he is staying for three days. In that city Xenias of Arcadia was celebrating the Lycaean festival and he organized the games“. He set the golden combs as a prize. Even Cyrus was looking at those games (XEN., *anab.* 1,2,10). Peltae was the third city (after Colossae and Celaenae) on the route of Cyrus' march from Sardis and the army's halt lasted since 21 till 24 April. The march to Peltae took a month and a half; not a distance was the reason but Cyrus, because he stayed on his way for seven days in Colossae and as many thirty days in Celaenae (in Colossae he was waiting for a contingent of Greek mercenaries led by Menon of Tessalia; in Celaenae he was also waiting for the last Greek parties, which had missed the concentration in Sardis, but in the same time he played probably a diplomatic game with the ruler of Cilicia and the satrap of Syria in order to secure a safe way through those lands he also arranged with Sparta co-operation of the navy). Xenias was one of the Cyrus' Greek mercenaries. He was in the van of four thousand heavy-armed foot-soldiers (hoplites), called for Cyrus' use from the crew of Ionian cities. He was from the Arcadian country, Parrhasia (West Arcadia). He would already joined Cyrus earlier as a commander of three hundred heavy-armed foot-soldiers on the way to Babylonia, when – in 404 B.C. – Cyrus was called to his dying father – Darius II (XEN., *anab.* 1,1,2). In the ulterior part of the expedition, in the city of Myriandos, Xenias had deserted Cyrus' army with Pasion of Megara (XEN., *anab.* 1,4,12).

It was not by chance, of course, that Xenias was celebrating his native, Arcadian festival of Lycaean Jupiter just in Peltae. The reason for holding it was that the fixed date of the festival fell exactly during the army's halt in this city. If it had not been the real date, he would have organized festive celebrations and games much easier during, for example, the long, one-month halt in Celaenae, or even later – during five-day halt in Kaystrupedion, when Cyrus met Epiaxa, the queen of Cilicia. Therefore a conclusion can be drawn that the festival of Lycaean Jupiter was celebrated in Arcadia in the accurately observed date. If we knew even approximately that fixed date, it could be the basis to set the chronology of all the Cyrus' campaign and the retreat of Greeks.

The feast *Lycaea*, one of the oldest Greek holidays, was connected with an aboriginal, Arcadian cult of Lycaean ('Wolfish') Jupiter, who was worshipped in the holy circle on the top of Mount Lycaeus (nowadays: Diaforti) in the South-West Arcadia.¹² The cult of Lycaean Jupiter was a mystery (priests were the only persons, who were admitted to the holy circle, with the sacrificial altar), and in the course of sacrificial ceremonies, in special cases (still in Roman period) there were not only animal but also human oblations – of young boys (PAUS. 8,1,6 and 38,1-7). The sport-games, according to the tradition, created by the mythical king of Arcadians – Lycaean, son of Pelasgus (PAUS. 8,2,1), added splendour to that feast. At the foot of Mount Lycaeus, in the vicinity of Pan's temple (the cult of Pan on the Mount Lycaeus could be even elder than the cult of Jupiter) a hippodrome and a stadium was built (the archaeologists found remains of the temple of Pan and of the racecourse, towards the close of nineteenth century – Paus. 8,38,5), where games were played, analogical to Olympic ones – for example panoplied-races, one-stade and two-stade-long races (PIND., *Ol.* 9,145, 13,157, *Nem.* 10,89; PLIN., *n.h.* 7,205). The winners did not get wreaths, but were endowed with varied precious things, especially with dishes (tripods) of bronze (*schol. Pind. Ol* 7,153; XEN., *anab.* 1,2,10), there were also statues raised for them in the place (PAUS. 8,38,5).

Unfortunately, none of ancient sources inform of a date, when *Lycaea* feast was celebrated and games were organized. Some scientists think that it was a periodic holiday and occurred every nine years (because it was the time, for which – in keeping with tradition – this one of sacrificers, who had drawn duty of paying human oblation by lot, had to leave his country, because he perpetrated so-called *pium scelus*; while – in the popular opinion – he would change for 8 years in the werewolf (PLAT., *polit.* 8,565D; PLIN., *n.h.* 8,34; PAUS. 6,8,2, 8,2,3 and 6) or every four year, as any other Greek

¹² Cf. E. CURTIUS, *Peloponnesos. Eine historisch-geographische Beschreibung der Halbinsel*, vol. 1, Gotha 1851, pp. 299-304; entry *Lykaios* /in:/ W. H. ROSCHER, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. 2,2, Leipzig 1894-1897, pp. 2165-2168; entry *Lykaia* /in:/ RE, Hlbbd. 26, 1927, pp. 2231-2235, entry *Lykaios* /in:/ *ibid.*, pp. 2244-2246.

feast.¹³ No matter was it every year or periodically, but we know today for a certainty that it was an expiatory vernal feast, celebrated in mid February – just as Roman *lupercalia*.¹⁴ The oblations offered during that feast, including human victims, were about to placate a deity and to absolve all people of Arcadia from sin (the holy circle of Jupiter on Mount Lycaeus was a kind of national sanctuary of Arcadians) for a new, fortunate time. Character of that holiday points out that it should be celebrated in early spring (or rather in the beginning of spring) when the snow lay yet on the mountain's tops in Arcadia, and whole nature just came to life. The only date, which could come into play in this instance, is the symbolical start of spring, that is to say the day of astronomical vernal equinox (people of palaeolith could already state it).

In my opinion the date of *Lycaea* feast coincided not with a summer solstice, as the former researchers wanted, but with the vernal equinox and it was the very time, when Xenias of Arcadia had celebrated that holiday in distant Peltae, moving the cult of native feasts to a foreign land – according to the Greek custom.¹⁵ So in that case the halt of Cyrus' army in Peltae happened not between 21 and 24 April, as Koch estimated, but between 21 and 24 March or in the other words – exactly one month earlier. One ought to move the whole Koch's chronology back: the Cyrus' march out from Sardis – 6 February 401 B.C.; crossing of Euphrates – 27 June; battle of Cunaxa – 3 August; first snow on the river Teleboas in Armenia – 28 October; the mountain Teches – 27 December; Trapezus – 8 January 400 B.C. In that way Koch's chronology gets so to say a new dimension and solid support in the definite date, testified in *Anabasis*. The date – 6 February is possible as a date of march's start, because in Mediterranean Sea countries the spring starts in very February.

One knows that Cyrus was in hurry he wanted to surprise the king as not ready to fighting. So he could start earlier purposely, without watching for weather, which was at that season of the year in West Anatolia. We can even suspect that longer army's halt in Colossae and Celaenae could be just because of unpermitted weather. Unfortunately Xenophon does not mention weather at all in first part of *Anabasis*; about the drought he speaks not earlier as when he describes the march through Arabian steppes of Mesopotamia (XEN., *anab.* 1,5,5). From *Anabasis* it does not follow even that the Cyrus' army crossed Euphrates when the level of water was the lowest (XEN., *anab.* 1,4,17 ff.).

On the contrary Xenophon punctuates the people's of Thapsacus opinion that it is impossible to cross Euphrates in that place without using a barge. Therefore the low level of water in the river during Cyrus' crossing was something unique, and that is why people suspected an omen of God in that. Such a case could happen in the particularly dry year even in the end of June, because the highest level of water is in the latter part of May, usually, on that section of the river – and in the summer time that level comes down considerably.¹⁶ Since Cyrus had crossed Euphrates in the latter part of June, the

¹³ G. F. SCHOEMANN, *Griechische Alterthümer*, vol. 2, Berlin 1873, pp. 252 ff., p. 507; entry *Lykaios* /in:/ *RE*, Hlbbd. 26, 1927, pp. 2244 ff.; entry *Lykaia* /in:/ *ibid.*, p. 2233.

¹⁴ First Walter Immerwahr noted that *Lycaea* had to be a vernal holiday, referring that very Xenophon's mention about the celebration of that feast organized by Xenias of Arcadia. He pointed out the fact that to organize such a festival could make sense only when its date was the same as the date of authentic one. But relating the date of *Lycaea* feast with chronology of the Cyrus' campaign generally, Immerwahr limited himself to the only conclusion that holiday had to be celebrated not later than in the mid of May. Other researchers, as for example Martin P. Nilsson, were also careful (Cf. entry *Lykaia* /in:/ *RE*, Hlbbd.26, 1927, p. 2232). According to opinions, which prevailed in science earlier, the cognomen *Lycaeus* was explained as 'Luminous' and in Jupiter celebrated on Mount Lycaeus one suspected the god of light, the god of the high summer, who ravages all the flora with his deadly rays. In this connexion *Lycaea* were interpreted as a feast of the full summer or of the summer solstice – so were also dated in that way. But in fact Jupiter had gotten the cognomen of a wolf-god worshipped on Mount Lycaeus ('Wolfs Mountain') first, then Jupiter on Mount Lycaeus started to be identified with Jupiter 'Luminous' – the god of light, similar to Apollo). Cf. entry *Lykaios* /in:/ ROSCHER, *op. cit.*, pp. 2167 ff., and *RE*, Hlbbd. 26, 1927, pp. 2245 ff.

¹⁵ It is not essential of course for setting up the new chronology of the Cyrus' campaign, if Xenias celebrated *Lycaea* in the very day of vernal equinox in 401 B.C. exactly – even several day's error does not matter; an approximative date – that is the point.

¹⁶ HOFFMEISTER, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

march through semidesert steppes of Arabia could occur in the first part of summer (July) in that case, what is testified by Xenophon's information about difficulties of the route from Thapsacus to Pylae. There were depressions of ground (in Arabian language – *vadis*) coming down to Euphrates from Mesopotamian Valley. These *vadis* were full of mud at that time and waggons got stuck there (XEN., *anab.* 1,5,7-8).¹⁷ That betokens the water, which had filled those *vadis* in the flood time, did not have time to flow from them completely, and the hot sun did not manage to dry the marshy bed of them. Therefore could be only beginning of summer, when Cyrus progressed along the east riverside of Euphrates.

There is also no objection to dating battle of Cunaxa for 3 August. Xenophon mentions a whirling cloud of dust, which was raised by the king's army attacking in the vicinity of Cunaxa. That seems to betoken it was the very midsummer – time of the biggest drought, when Babylonian Valley is completely scorched by the sun and assumes a yellow-brown colour, and even the lightest breeze kicks clouds of white powder up (XEN., *anab.* 1,8,7).¹⁸ It could not be so likely in the beginning of November (as Gassner wants to date battle of Cunaxa), when abundant rains start already in Mesopotamia. Whereas speaking that the third day after the battle Greeks met ditches filled with water on their way to Babylonian villages, however it was not the right season for pouring water on fields, Xenophon lets us understand Greeks had not found grain on fields in Babylonia – in other words it was simply after harvest. It is a matter of course such an observation could be made in the beginning of August, since the harvest of barley and wheat occurred in May in the ancient Babylonia.¹⁹

The fact remains that Greeks found dates among supplies of grain and palm-wine in these Babylonian villages, but it does not mean at all that it was already late autumn, as Gassner suggests. Though the supreme dates picking occurred in the month *Tishri* (September-October) in the ancient Babylonia,²⁰ but it does not mean that first dates could not be ripe in August already (dates, as well figs, are picking little by little as they mellow). Besides Greeks quartered in those villages waiting for Tissaphernes more than three weeks, that is to say they stayed there till the end of August – so they had plenty of time to use more and more abundant crops of dates).

As anyone can see the modified Koch's chronology is not at odds with the general veracity of events or with facts mentioned in *Anabasis*. But it comes first that moving successive occurrences one month back we get the explicit solution of all troubles connected with the Xenophon's description of Armenian winter. And so Greeks met not the end, as Gassner tried to prove, but the very beginning of winter. Lying encamped on the river Teleboas (at 1 200 - 1 300 meters above the sea level) they passed by first, completely unexpected, attack of the greatly premature winter with the frost and plenty of snow. That winter remained three next weeks, then lets up in the second part of November, or even abated utterly when they found themselves on the river Phasis. After all its very likely winter did not start yet at that very time on the contemporary plain Pasin. Since the right winter starts in the latter part of December in Armenia and takes a long time, even till the beginning of April.²¹ But Greeks had already reached the mountain Teches then, and on the turn of December and January they started to descend to Trapezus, where the climate of Black Sea was much softer (on the way they were poisoned with honey in the Colchians' villages – hives were full of honey, because it was beginning of winter).²² Thereby it grows clear, why Xenophon gives his attention so much to troubles connected with winter, and later step by step he leaves that matter out of account. Not exactly stylistic and compositional respects (to not tire readers with recurrent descriptions – as many philologists explained), but the fact that the winter was not so formidable in the second phase of march through Armenia (on the turn of November and December). One must remember that the climate of ancient Armenia was a little softer,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

¹⁹ B. MEISSNER, *Babylonien und Assyrien*, vol. 1, Heidelberg 1920, p. 196.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 205 ff.

²¹ KOCH, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

²² So the sojourn of Greeks in the Mossynoics' country occurred on third decade of February. No wonder their houses were full of winter supplies at that time.

especially in valleys, than nowadays, because the forest stand on local mountains was very dense then. The forest protected Greeks from wind and cold, and provided them with wood for fuel.²³ Such conditions let Greeks to cross Pontic Mountains much easier even in third decade of December. Mountains were coated with snow at that time for sure, however Xenophon's relation did not mention anything about this subject. After all the guide, sent by the ruler of the city of Gymnias, showed the way and took them on the mountain Teches, from which the sea was visible. The crest of the mountain had to be treeless, since it was so easy to gather stones for a heap. It was possible to collect stones in a disforested region even with slight snow cover (not only in the warm season of the year – as Gassner wanted), all the more so as the snow cover is more thin in winter than in other seasons of the year, because of vehement winds. Affirming that crossing of Pontic Mountains is impossible in winter, Gassner underestimates Xenophon's soldiers, their endurance and will of survival, but on the other hand, for interpretative reasons, he endeavours to miss heavy casualties of Greeks, when they retreated through Armenia; and those casualties were about 1/4 or even 1/3 of aboriginal number – from circa 13 000 of Greek mercenaries, who fought in the neighbourhood of Cunaxa, only 9 800 reached Trapezus (XEN., *anab.* 4,8,15). Xenophon speaks about it: „These survived; the rest was killed by enemies and snow, and not a few dies through illness“ (XEN., *anab.* 5,3,3). So for the author of *Anabasis* the winter is the second, equiponderant enemy, who purged his army so much, however – everything shows that – Greeks had to do with the beginning of Armenian winter only.

Though Xenophon's description of the march through Armenia is too shortened for to satisfy contemporary researchers and to be not controversial in interpretation, nevertheless there is nothing to be said for shaking a veracity of informations from *Anabasis*. I tried to demonstrate that in this very *Anabasis* we can find advice, which help us to modify (without resources to unlikely suppositions) the chronology of the Cyrus' campaign and of the retreat of the „Ten Thousand“. To move all the dates one month back is not in variancy with facts recorded by Xenophon. On the contrary – those facts testify the rightness of such a decision; and the dates bound together with events form the sound and, in my opinion, weighty whole.

²³ HOFFMEISTER, *op. cit.*, p. 236.