

## The Spartan Raiders in Asia Minor, 406-394 BCE

Pritchett's *The Greek State at War* presents a model of a generic Greek army that subsists primarily on money and supplies from its home *polis* or allies, only occasionally subsisting via other means; as Perikles says in book 1 of Thucydides, "surplus reserves (*periousiai*)... maintain wars" (Th. 1.141.5). Thucydides' portrayal as outlined by Kallet is similar, wherein the Spartans prefer *misthos* (regular pay) from Persian patrons such that only "the lack of money [for the army] leads to violence" (Kallet, p.273). The Spartans and their allies in Xenophon's *Hellenica*, however, did not conform to these models. Instead, they preferred raiding first and foremost, even at their own expense.

This paper presents a new subsistence model of the Spartan army in Asia Minor, 406-394 BCE. The Spartans in Asia subsisted by many means: they received or extorted gifts from allied powers, used political maneuvering to gain treasures without bloodshed, and even farmed or contracted their labor when necessary. Their *modus operandi*, however, was raiding. The Spartan subsistence model required raiding to supply the *laphyropolai* (sellers of booty) with captives to sell for money on the spot to slave traders, camp followers, or the captive's own relatives via ransom. That money was utilized to pay the regular *misthos*, in addition to which the soldier under Spartan command could supplement his earnings with other booty. When raiding wasn't possible, the Spartans struggled, and each leader used different strategies to ensure prompt and consistent payment. New allies and mercenaries, such as the remaining men of Xenophon's Ten Thousand that joined under Thibron, found it difficult to conform to the Spartan subsistence model; once they did, however, they enforced it against others with vengeance.

We may then apply that model to episodes of Spartan leadership in Asia. I begin with Eteonikos, who represents a low point in Spartan resources just after the naval defeat at Arginousai. Deprived of the ability to raid, Spartans turned to farming; when deprived of farming, they turned extortion. The next relevant commander, Lysander, applied the Spartan model successfully, enforcing his right as commander to retain sole control over captives while allowing his troops to raid all other types of booty. The general Thibron welcomed a diverse collection of new allies and mercenaries, but was unable to incorporate them successfully into the Spartan model. His replacement Derkylidas understood the issue and temporarily altered his method of resource collection as a result. By the time Agesilaos took over, those new allies and mercenaries had incorporated fully into the Spartan subsistence model, and enforced it upon new foreign allies. Agesilaos himself, however, found difficulty working within the limitations of the model; in order to enrich himself and his *philoï*, he had to employ creative tricks without disrupting the system upon which his soldiers relied.

#### Bibliography

Kallet, L. *Money and the Corrosion of Power in Thucydides: The Sicilian Expedition and its Aftermath*. Berkeley: 2001.

Pritchett, K. *The Greek State at War, I*. Berkeley: 1971.