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## THE TWENTY THOUSAND SLAVES OF THUC. 7.27.5

*Abstract.* – The paper examines the context and possible origin of the famous claim made by Thucydides (7.27.5) that, after the Spartan capture of Decelea in 413 BC, “more than twenty thousand” Athenian slaves deserted to the enemy. Older historiography tended to accept this claim at face value and to use it as a basis for wider assumptions about size and socioeconomic importance of slave labor in 5th century Athens. Recent historiography was much more reluctant to believe and generally rejected the number as unreliable guesswork or even a figure of speech. However, there is enough evidence, both direct and circumstantial, that the number may originate from outside of Athens. Not, as it was recently suggested, from the Spartans, but from the Boeotians, who were the main beneficiaries of the Athenian misfortune. The runaway slaves, as it is well known, were bought by Boeotians at very low prices. The sale of slaves was regularly taxed and recorded by the Greek cities, a practice that is sufficiently attested in Classical and Hellenistic periods. Thucydides was generally very well informed about Boeotian affairs and, if the information on numbers of runaway and resold slaves was recorded in Thebes, it was likely within his reach.

In the spring of 413 BC the Athenians were in a precarious situation. While they were sending a massive reinforcement to their struggling armada in Sicily, a reinforcement that would only prolong the agony of the overseas force and augment the scale of the final disaster, the enemy was fortifying on their very doorstep. Peloponnesian and Boeotian army, led by king Agis II, took, fortified and garrisoned the village of Decelea as a permanent base in Attica.<sup>1</sup> From this stronghold the hostile force would carry out raids, disturbing the normal life of the Athenian countryside. Thucydides singled out some aspects of this situation as especially unfortunate for the Athenians:

<sup>1</sup> Thuc. 7.16-20, 27, corroborated by *Hell. Oxy.* XVII (XII) 3-4. Thuc 1.142.2-4 makes Pericles consider the possibility of an enemy stronghold established in Attica, only to dismiss it as a minor threat. However, in 6.91.6 Alcibiades says that fortifying Decelea by the enemy is the move “that the Athenians are always most afraid” (ὅπερ Ἀθηναῖοι μάλιστα αἰεὶ φοβοῦνται). Xen. *Hell.* 1.2.14 mentions prisoners from Sicilian campaign, enslaved in the stone quarries of Piraeus, who in 409 BC managed to escape, some to Megara, but most to Decelea. They were probably a part of Thucydides’ “more than twenty thousand”.

Τῆς τε γὰρ χώρας ἀπάσης ἐστέρηντο, καὶ ἀνδραπόδων πλέον ἢ δύο μυριάδες ἠύτομολήκεσαν, καὶ τούτων τὸ πολὺ μέρος χειροτέχνηται, πρόβατά τε πάντα ἀπωλώλει καὶ ὑποζύγια: ἵπποι τε, ὀσημέραι ἐξελαυνόντων τῶν ἰππέων πρὸς τε τὴν Δεκέλειαν καταδρομὰς ποιουμένων καὶ κατὰ τὴν χώραν φυλασσόντων, οἱ μὲν ἀπεχωλοῦντο ἐν γῆ ἀποκρότῳ τε καὶ ξυνεχῶς ταλαιπωροῦντες, οἱ δ' ἐτιπρώσκοντο. (Thuc. 7.27.5)

*The entire countryside was denied to them, and more than twenty thousand (two myriads) slaves have deserted, and the greater part of these were skilled workmen. And all the cattle was lost and the beasts of yoke. And as horsemen were riding out every day to make raids against Decelea and to protect the countryside, the horses were made lame by being driven time and again over hard ground, or they suffered wounds.*<sup>2</sup>

The fact that slaves used an irregular situation to escape is on its own unremarkable.<sup>3</sup> The number, however, given by one of the most reliable authors of antiquity attracted attention early on. If trustworthy, it says something about the size of slave population in ancient Attica: at the very least, it must have been in tens of thousands.<sup>4</sup>

For many older scholars Thucydides' authority was enough to take this claim at face value: twenty thousand or more slaves did flee their Athenian masters after Spartan capture of Decelea in 413 BC. Such was the opinion of Grote, Beloch, Gomme, Glotz, Westermann and many others.<sup>5</sup> There was, however, always a sense of uncertainty,

<sup>2</sup> All translations from the ancient Greek in this paper are mine.

<sup>3</sup> Some dissatisfied free Athenians also took this opportunity to switch sides and take part in plunder of their own land (Dem. 24.128; Lycurg. *Leoc.* 120-121).

<sup>4</sup> The word *χειροτέχνηται* (*skilled workers, handicraftsmen, artisans, experts*), used by Thucydides to describe these slaves, led many scholars to conclude that they must have been miners and other workers at the great mining operation at Laurium (cf. Acton, P. *Poiesis: Manufacturing in Classical Athens*, Oxford, 2014, p. 117: "More than 20,000 slaves absconded from Laurium during the Peloponnesian War between 413 and 409 BCE"). Given that Athens with its suburbs is much closer to Decelea than Laurium is, some historians considered other possibilities, as Jones, A. H. M. *Athenian Democracy*, Oxford, 1957, p. 16 noted: "...these would probably be in the main miners and agricultural slaves, but would include many city workers, since the sixteen miles of city walls cannot have been so completely patrolled as to prevent escapes." Victor Hanson argued vigorously that majority of slaves were in fact agricultural workers (Hanson, V. 'Thucydides and the Desertion of Attic Slaves During the Decelean War', *Classical Antiquity*, 11-2 (1992), pp. 210-228; cf. id. *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London, 1998, pp. 154, 238); see Gomme, A. W., Andrews, A., Dover, K. J. *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides IV: Books V 25 – VII*, Oxford, 1970, pp. 405-406, and Hornblower, S. *A Commentary on Thucydides III: Books 5.25-8.109*, Oxford, 2010, p. 591-592. Xen. *Vect.* IV 43-48 emphasized the remoteness and inaccessibility of Laurium to foreign invaders.

<sup>5</sup> Grote, G. *History of Greece VII*, New York, 1857, p. 354; Beloch, K. J. *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt*, Leipzig, 1886, p. 94; Cavaignac, E. *Études sur*

because it was well known that Athenians (and Greeks in general) kept no slave census. Thus, Gomme utilized the figure, in spite of his skepticism; he believed that it is “largely a guess-work” and asked “who made the estimate?”<sup>6</sup> Westermann explained it like this: “This has no further meaning than that Thucydides had heard this estimate of the number of the runaway slaves during an eight year period. There is no way of knowing whose estimate it was; but, obviously, Thucydides thought it a reasonable one.”<sup>7</sup>

Later scholars were usually much more reluctant to believe. The question they pose is this: how could Thucydides or anyone else possibly know? Moses Finley (a student of Westermann) was famously very dismissive of the number and of any usefulness it might have for historians:

When Thucydides (7.27.5) tells us that more than 20,000 slaves escaped from Attica in the final decade of the Peloponnesian War, just what do we in fact know? Did Thucydides have a network of agents stationed along the border between Attica and Boeotia for ten years counting the fugitives as they sneaked across? This is not a frivolous question, given the solemnity with which his statement is repeated in modern books and then used as the basis for calculations and conclusions.<sup>8</sup>

Is this a fair and rational objection or an example of hypercriticism? Most historians of the later 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century assume the former: the number was and is seen as highly unreliable, a mere guess or maybe even a figure of speech.<sup>9</sup> Ste. Croix summarized the prevailing opinion when he concluded that Thucydides “could not possibly have known, even within wide limits, how many slaves had

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*l'histoire financière d'Athènes au Ve siècle: le trésor d'Athènes de 480 à 404*, Paris, 1908, p. 172; Sargent, R. L. *The Size of the Slave Population at Athens During the Fifth and Fourth Centuries Before Christ*, Urbana, 1925, pp. 305, 380 (cf. ead. ‘The Use of Slaves by the Athenians in Warfare’, *Classical Philology* 22-2 (1927), p. 208); Gomme, A. W. *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.*, Oxford, 1933, pp. 20-21; Glotz, G., Cohen, R. *Histoire grecque II: La Grèce au Ve siècle*, Paris, 1938, p. 697; Westermann, W. L. *The Slave Systems of Greek and Roman Antiquity*, Philadelphia, 1955, p. 7; Jones, A. H. M. *loc. cit.*; Michell, H. *The Economics of Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, 1957, p. 163. But cf. Millar, C. M. H. ‘Some Escapes and Escapers in the Ancient World’, *G & R* 5.1 (1958), p. 58: “an almost incredible number”.

<sup>6</sup> Gomme, A. W. *op. cit.* p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Westermann, W. L. ‘Athenaeus and the Slaves of Athens’, *Harv. Stud.* 51, Supp. I (1940), pp. 464-465.

<sup>8</sup> Finley, M. I. *The Ancient Economy*, Berkley / Los Angeles, 1973, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> There are exceptions, of course. Kagan, D. *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*, Ithaca/London, 1987, p. 3 accepts the figure, and so does Andrews, A. ‘The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition’, *CAH* V<sup>2</sup>, Cambridge, 1992, p. 458. Hunt, P. *Ancient Greek and Roman Slavery*, Malden, 2018, p. 156 uses it, but with qualifier (“Thucydides reports...”).

escaped...”<sup>10</sup> Alison Burford explained it as a rhetorical device of the Athenian writer: “Probably no one knew within a few thousands how many had run off or otherwise vanished – certainly not Thucydides. Perhaps his penchant for making grand statements... may have led him into throwing in a generously rounded figure...”<sup>11</sup> Akrigg went even further in the same direction: “The 20,000 figure should be treated in a similar manner to the figures of 20,000 or 30,000 given in literary sources for the size of the citizen population – as a conventional ‘big number’ that means nothing more precise than ‘lots’.”<sup>12</sup>

The only dissenting and innovative opinions of late are those of Paul Cartledge. At one time he considered the possibility of Theban origin of the number,<sup>13</sup> though this explanation was not explored in detail, and he abandoned it later. In his recent work on ancient Thebes he examines another possibility:

We know that the Spartans had an official office of ‘booty-sellers’ (*laphuropolai*), who presumably kept some records of the sums of booty gained: presumably, because, at the end of the war in 404, in accordance with their normal pious practice, they dedicated to Apollo at Delphi... a tithe of all booty garnered at Decelea. If ‘tithe’ meant anything like its literal meaning of ‘tenth’, Thucydides (or whoever) might have done a rough calculation as to how many slaves the total sum of booty represented. Alternatively, the figure of ‘20,000 to 30,000’ could have been just an arbitrary percentage – say 25-30 percent – of what people reckoned the total servile workforce employed in the mines in 413 might have been.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> De Ste. Croix, G. E. M. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient World*, Ithaca / New York, 1989, p. 506. Similarly Fisher, N. R. E. *Slavery in Classical Greece*, Bristol, 1993, p. 42: “Thucydides cannot have acquired an accurate figure, and this can only be his best guess, arrived at after talking to Athenians...”, and Hornblower, S. *op. cit.* p. 591: “But it is difficult to see where Th. could have got it from.”

<sup>11</sup> Burford, A. *Land and Labor in the Greek World*, Baltimore / London, 1993, p. 266, n. 81.

<sup>12</sup> Akrigg, B. *Population and Economy in Classical Athens*, Cambridge, 2019, p. 92. Cf. McKeown, N. ‘Resistance Among Chattel Slaves in the Classical Greek World’, in: Bradley, K., Cartledge, P. (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery I: The Ancient Mediterranean World*, Cambridge, 2011, p. 155: “According to Thucydides... more than 20,000 slaves *allegedly escaped* from Athens after 413 BC when Sparta established a garrison post at Decelea” (my italics).

<sup>13</sup> Osborne, R. ‘The Economics and Politics of Slavery at Athens’, in: Powell, A. *The Greek World*, London / New York, 1995, p. 39, n. 3: “Paul Cartledge has pointed out to me that it is just possible that Thucydides had reliable information about the number of slaves fleeing during the Peloponnesian War from the tithing of the money raised from selling them on.”

<sup>14</sup> Cartledge, P. *Thebes. The Forgotten City of Ancient Greece*, 2020, p. 160-161. Similar explanation was hinted at, but not developed by Fisher, N. R. E. *loc. cit.*

Scholarly literature on ancient slavery has yet to take notice of this idea,<sup>15</sup> but there is no doubt it will generate further discussion. So far as I can see, there are several problems with it; above all that it rests on a number of unproven hypotheses. The first assumption – that Spartan λαφυροπῶλαι kept written records of their transactions – is very reasonable, thought without direct confirmation. However, it demands another, that there was a unified list with total value of all the loot taken from Attica during the final nine years of the conflict. There is no evidence for such document, and it is doubtful if it ever existed.<sup>16</sup> As to the third hypothesis, that the Spartans dedicated one tenth of loot from Decelea to Delphi, that was, presumably, necessary in order to explain how would Thucydides (or any other Athenian for that matter) had access to records of Spartan military officials. But Xenophon informs us that the Spartans rejected (and resented) the Theban claim of one tenth of the spoils from Decelea for Apollo.<sup>17</sup> This is corroborated by Justin who writes that the Thebans and Corinthians demanded their rightful portions of the plunder, but were summarily refused by the Spartans.<sup>18</sup>

There are other difficulties. Even if informed about the total value of spoils, it is difficult to see how Thucydides “might have done a rough calculation”. Did he also know what percent of the total were the values of escaped slaves, as well as the average price of a single slave? Such information would hardly be stated in the hypothetical dedicatory inscription to Apollo. Unless, of course, the claim is that slaves made up *all* or *almost all* of the loot from Attica, but this was certainly not the case.<sup>19</sup> The underlying assumption that almost all slaves were taken by the Spartans in Decelea is also problematic. Do we know for certain that there were no Boeotian troops operating (and taking runaway slaves) in Attica independently from the command of

<sup>15</sup> It earned a cursory mention by Forsdyke, S. *Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, 2021, p. 91, n. 152.

<sup>16</sup> And why calculate the totals only for Attica? Spartans and allies took spoils from many other theaters of war in the same period.

<sup>17</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.5: Οἱ μέντοι Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἄσμενοι ἔλαβον πρόφασιν στρατεύειν ἐπὶ τοὺς Θηβαίους, πάλαι ὀργιζόμενοι αὐτοῖς τῆς τε ἀντιλήψεως τῆς τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος δεκάτης ἐν Δεκελείᾳ καὶ τοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Πειραιᾶ μὴ ἐθελῆσαι ἀκολουθῆσαι.

<sup>18</sup> Just. *Ep.* 5.10.12-13: “Interea Thebani Corinthiique legatos ad Lacedaemonios mittunt qui ex manubiis portionem praedae communis belli periculique peterent. Quibus negatis, non quidem aperte bellum aduersus Lacedaemonios decernunt, sed tacitis animis tantam iram concipiunt, ut subesse bellum intellegi posset.”

<sup>19</sup> Thuc. 7.27.5 mentions plunder of cattle on the large scale. *Hell. Oxy.* XVII (XII) 4 testifies that Thebans “acquired slaves and all other things captured in war for a small price” (τά τε γὰρ ἀνδράποδα καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πάντ[α <τά> κατὰ τὸ]ν πόλεμον ἀλλισκόμενα μικροῦ τι[ος ἀργυρίου] παρελάμβανον); my italics. Furthermore, they plunder the countryside so thoroughly that even houses were stripped of their woodwork and roof-tiles (*Hell. Oxy. loc. cit.* καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς Ἀττικῆ[ς κ]ατα[σ]κευὴν ἅτε πρόσχωροι κατοικοῦντες ἅπασαν μετεκόμισαν ὡς αὐτοὺς, ἀπὸ τῶν ξύλων καὶ τοῦ κεράμου τοῦ τῶν οἰκῶν ἀρξάμενοι).

king Agis? Be that as it may, many fugitive slaves could not or would not go anywhere near Decelea, but would instead strive to reach any accessible crossing point on the border between Attica and Boeotia (as Finley was well aware), or that between Attica and Megaris. Enslaved prisoners of war running away from stone quarries of Piraeus in 409 BC, mentioned by Xenophon, mostly found refuge in Decelea, but some managed to reach Megara.<sup>20</sup> Even before the war, the Athenians used to accuse the Megarians of harboring fugitive slaves.<sup>21</sup> Similar flights on a smaller but still disturbing scale must have taken place during the first phase of fighting, because a clause that prohibits accepting fugitives, free or enslaved, was part of the ill-fated peace treaty of 421 BC.<sup>22</sup>

Here I will suggest an alternative explanation, one that requires us to accept only one fairly reasonable hypothesis. The number of twenty thousand slaves may well have come from actual records – Theban records made during resale of the runaway Athenian slaves, as Cartledge suspected early on. This explanation is based on what we do know about the sale, taxation and registration of slaves in ancient Greece. The ancient Greek states did not keep census of the entire slave population within their borders, nor did they keep track of the newborn slaves or those who escaped.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the only known records of slaves maintained by ancient Greeks were those for the purpose of taxation. The ownership of slaves as such was usually not subjected to regular taxation,<sup>24</sup> but the sale of slaves was, as were the acts of manumission. Here we are concerned only with the sale of slaves and their taxation and registration.

The evidence for this practice is solid though not overwhelming. There are some instances from the Classical and even one from the

<sup>20</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 1.2.14.

<sup>21</sup> Thuc. 1.139.2.

<sup>22</sup> Thuc. 4.118.7.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Hansen, M. H. *Three Studies in Athenian Demography*, Copenhagen, 1988, p. 11: “In the ancient Greek city states slaves were never counted since they were neither taxable nor liable to military service. The Athenians themselves did not know the number of slaves in Attica and we shall never come to know the number either, no matter how many and how valuable source we may still recover.”

<sup>24</sup> A direct taxation (and registration) of slaves is mentioned by Ps.-Arist. *Oec.* II 1352b, 33 – 1353a, 4. Allegedly, Antimenes, a Rhodian employed by Alexander the Great, demanded that slaves leased for the service (as workers?) in the king’s army be registered, and yearly tax of eight drachmae paid for each of them; however, the veracity of the episode is doubtful. There is also a case of obligatory sale of slaves by the citizens of Mende (Ps.-Arist. *Oec.* II 1350a, 11–15), imposed by the city; the resulting funds were appropriated by the city, formally as a loan. It is debatable whether this should be seen as a form of taxation, or simply as a confiscation of property; cf. Migeotte, L. *L’emprunt public dans les cités grecques. Recueil des documents et analyse critique*, Paris, 1984, pp. 120–121; id. ‘Taxation directe en Grèce ancienne’, in: Thür, G., Nieto Fr. J. F. (eds.), *Symposion 1999. Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte (Pazo de Mariñán, La Coruña, 6–9 septiembre de 1999)*, Köln / Weimar / Wien, 2003, p. 300.

late Archaic period; the Hellenistic examples are more abundant. The first mention of ἀνδραποδωνία – the slave sale tax – comes from a late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC inscription from Cyzicus.<sup>25</sup> The city granted tax exemptions for a certain Manes and some other people who are not explicitly named (“sons of Aisepos”, l. B 2), including the one on slave sale. Xenophon testifies that some form of slave taxation not only existed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens, but that it was a major source of public income prior to the Deceleian war.<sup>26</sup> A lexicographical entry confirms that Athenians taxed all slaves brought in Piraeus from abroad: one fiftieth of the value of each slave.<sup>27</sup> A 4<sup>th</sup> century BC decree of Teos in Ionia gives various privileges to residents of a foreign community, whose name is not preserved on stone. Among these is the exemption from tax on the sale and lease of slaves.<sup>28</sup> During the Hellenistic age, the slave trade was regularly subjected to taxation in both Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires,<sup>29</sup> as well as by many individual cities. A decision of the Acarnanian League from 216 BC decrees that half of the proceeds from the tax on the sale of slaves during the festival of Apollo shall belong to the Acarnanians, and the other half to the town of Anactorium.<sup>30</sup> The so-called *Customs Law of Asia* testifies that there was a regular tax on slave trade, both in the Attalid Kingdom and in the later Roman province of Asia.<sup>31</sup> Some form of taxation (on rental or sale?) of vineyard slaves (ἀμπελοστατεύντες) and female slaves (γυναικεῖα σώματα, house servants?) is mentioned in inscription from Cos, dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, etc.<sup>32</sup> Greek cities continued to tax and register slave trade until well into the Roman Empire.<sup>33</sup>

The purpose of this brief overview was to show that taxes on slave sales and, by implication, the registration of these transactions, were widespread or even standard Greek practice. Its bearing on the

<sup>25</sup> *Syll.* 3 4, B 6.

<sup>26</sup> Xen. *Vect.* IV 25: “Ὅτι δὲ δέξεται πολλαπλάσια τούτων μαρτυρήσαιεν ἂν μοι εἴ τινες ἔτι εἰσὶ τῶν μεμνημένων ὅσον τὸ τέλος ἠὔρισκε τῶν ἀνδραπόδων πρὸ τῶν ἐν Δεκελείᾳ. It is unclear whether the tax on lease of slave labor is meant here (which seems to be implied by context), or tax on sale and manumission of slaves (so Westermann, W. L., *The Slave Systems*, p. 16).

<sup>27</sup> *Anecd. Bekk.* 297, 21-26.

<sup>28</sup> Plekett, H. W. *Epigraphica* I, Leiden, 1964, no. 22, ll. 6-7, 11-12 (for some corrections in reading made by Jeanne and Louis Robert see *SEG* 26.1305); cf. Migeotte, L. *op. cit.* pp. 302-304.

<sup>29</sup> Zelnick-Abramovitz, R. *Taxing Freedom in Thessalian Manumission Inscriptions*, Leiden / Boston, 2013, pp. 26-27.

<sup>30</sup> *JG* IX 12, 583, ll. 32-34. For a detailed analysis of the document, its language and context see: Habicht, Ch. ‘Eine Urkunde des Akarnanischen Bundes’, *Hermes*, 85 (1957), pp. 90-122.

<sup>31</sup> Cottier, M. et. al. *The Customs Law of Asia*, Oxford, 2008, ll. 12, 74-78, 98, 117, 120-121. In l. 117 there is a prescript that every slave imported in the province must be registered. However, this is clearly a Roman innovation, and not the traditional Greek practice.

<sup>32</sup> *LSCG* 168, ll. 8-9 (= *Syll.* 3 1000).

<sup>33</sup> For a full overview of the subject see Zelnick-Abramovitz, R. *op. cit.* pp. 15-27.

topic becomes clear once we consider the immediate fate of the slaves that fled their Athenian masters. The 1906 discovery of the first papyrus containing fragments of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* crushed some early preconceptions, namely that the fugitive slaves were given freedom by the Spartans and their allies. Instead, we learned that they were bought by the Boeotians, and at a very low price.<sup>34</sup> If we accept the likely assumption that slave sales were taxed in Thebes,<sup>35</sup> as they certainly were in many other cities, then each individual transaction and its value would be recorded, as well as the totals for any given year, all for the benefit of the city treasury. Since these sales were irregular events – irregular both in their scale and in the unusually low prices – they would likely be recorded separately from the usual trade in people; an exceptionally low cost of these fugitive slaves would probably greatly discourage the sale of enslaved people from other sources, at least in the short term.

Information about resale of former Athenian slaves could have been displayed in Thebes as a public inscription (or a series of inscriptions), though that hypothesis is not crucial. If their total number was preserved in a Theban record, Thucydides certainly had means of obtaining it. There is no need to repeat here the numerous arguments for the widely held view that he was both much interested and well informed about Boeotia and Boeotian affairs in general.<sup>36</sup> But if this was the case, then why the vague statement, why “*more than twenty thousand*” instead of a more precise figure? Probably because the Athenian historian knew that not all slaves were taken by the Spartans and the Boeotians. A number of them may have avoided renowned bondage altogether, and others certainly reached Megaris. If Xenophon was aware that some slaves run away to Megara, Thucydides must have been as well.

<sup>34</sup> *Hell. Oxy.* XVII (XII) 3-4.

<sup>35</sup> It is unlikely that some of these slaves were sold elsewhere in Boeotia. Eastern Boeotia was largely depopulated during the war, due to frequent retaliatory Athenian raids. *Hell. Oxy.* XVII (XII) 3 testifies that all unwallied settlements placed between Thebes and the borders of Attica were evacuated and abandoned. Plataea, of course, was destroyed early in the war by the Spartans and the Thebans themselves (Thuc. 3.68).

<sup>36</sup> Buck, R. J. *Boiotia and the Boiotian League, 432-371 B.C.*, Edmonton, 1994, pp. xv-xvi; Hownblower, S. *Thucydidean Themes*, Oxford, 2011, pp. 116-138; Cartledge, P. *op. cit.* 9-10.



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