

Stephen O'CONNOR Armies and Markets in the Greek World in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.E.

Soldiers and sailors in the classical Greek world provisioned themselves in a number of ways while on campaign, and one of the main ways was to purchase food in the *agorai* of Greek cities or in temporary markets provided by cities outside their walls. It has sometimes been thought that the markets established outside city walls were in some way 'special' because of their location and temporary nature, but the organization and operation of these markets were arranged, in fact, by the city in question, and they were organized along precisely the same lines as the 'normal' *agora* of the city. References to markets granted to armies and navies, scarce and scattered throughout Thucydides, Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, Aristophanes, and the Demosthenic corpus, thus provide evidence for thousands of men purchasing barley meal, oil and wine in the *agorai* of Greek cities throughout the Mediterranean.

These markets have received little attention; most studies have been content to note their occurrence and to list a few examples (see, e.g., Anderson 1970, 52-53; Pritchett 1971, 45-46; de Ste. Croix 1972, 399-400; van Wees 2004, 105). And although Stanley (1976: 122) and Descat (1995: 106) have written briefly on the legal and institutional aspects of *agorai* given to military forces, there has never been a discussion of what these markets might tell us of fifth and fourth century Greek economies.

This paper, in contrast, will examine the markets granted to armies and navies in Thucydides' portrayal of the Sicilian expedition, and Xenophon's account of the activities of the remnants of the Ten Thousand after they had reached the Black Sea on their way back from Cunaxa, in an attempt to introduce some new data into the debate about levels of economic activity in the Greek world. Both of these narratives offer coherent and unusually precise descriptions of large forces purchasing goods in urban markets. Using data on standard daily rations and caloric requirements, one can establish informed minima for the consumption and amounts purchased of grains and other goods in these markets. The plausibility of such figures can be checked by comparison with figures we possess for the purchases and consumption of armies and navies on campaign in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean. The presuppositions present in the accounts of Thucydides and Xenophon are important, too: both authors, in speeches placed in the mouths of various individuals, describe a world where commanders and soldiers alike took it for granted that many Greek cities would be able to sell at least one to three days' worth of provisions to forces upwards of thirty thousand men. Analysis of the practice of Greek military forces participating in markets in or provided by cities presents a picture, then, of a Greek world where, in contrast to what is sometimes thought, there were many active and robust markets in agricultural products.