

In contrast to other sources, Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* portrays the Athenian trierarchy as a privilege rather than a burden of wealth. The opportunity to fit out and command the navy's triremes not only provided an avenue of competitive wealth display, but also, in book eight, seems to have afforded the trierarchs a privileged position from which to influence the course of events during the political unrest of 411 BCE. The evidence of the latter half of book eight especially, and to a lesser extent book seven, suggests that in Thucydides' estimation the trierarchy represented another opportunity besides the generalship and speechmaking in the assembly for the consolidation and exercise of elite power.

Herodotus uses the word trierarch to describe a ship's captain simply, and so does Thucydides when referring to Brasidas and the Spartan captains at 4.11.4 (despite Gomme *HCT* 1959-81 III, 448). That Thucydides refers to the financial component of the trierarchy is secure only from 6.31.3, 5 (despite Hornblower 1991-96 I, 280 on 2.24.2). Thucydides' comments there (in *propria persona*), however, are elaborate and allow us to assume that the Athenian trierarchy in Thucydides corresponds (if not in every particular) to the familiar liturgy. Gabrielsen's 1994 study *Financing the Fleet* rightly emphasizes the social history of the trierarchy, but his conclusions fit his fourth century forensic evidence better than they do the evidence of Thucydides. Gabrielsen argues that the evolution of the trierarchy in the fourth century was designed to deal with the problem of liturgy avoidance. This makes sense in light of the evidence from forensic oratory and especially the *antidosis* procedure. But Gabrielsen distorts Thucydides in order to suggest that the *staseis* of the late fifth century originated in part as a kind of upper-class tax revolt. Other works on the political dimension of wealth and its pertinence to Thucydidean trierarchs will be considered, e.g. Davies 1981, Carter 1986, Christ 1990, Strauss 1996.

Gabrielsen cites Thucydides 8.48.1 and 63.4 as evidence that the trierarchs participated in the revolution because of financial hardships (11-12, 173). His interpretation of 48.1, which rests on the verb *talaipwrountai*, is undermined by the reference to upper class imperial profits in the verb *wphelaisthai* at 48.6. The reference to expenditure from the trierarchs' own estates to fund their revolution at 63.4 is illuminating but not for the reasons Gabrielsen thinks. It does not give a financial motive for the revolution and instead explicitly says (*ta tou polemou hama antechein*) that they would continue the war effort from their own estates. The concluding *ws ouketi allois...talaipwrountas* explains *prothumws* only. The reference to expenditure from their own estates suggests that resentment of the expenditure itself is not their reason for revolting, but in fact presents them an unusually privileged position from which to conduct their revolt. Indeed, the view that wealthy trierarchs all resented the democracy and its progressive financial depredations is not supported by Thucydides' narrative. For example, at 8.73.4, Thucydides describes the trierarch Thrasybulus (along with the hoplite Thrasyllus), together with the generals Leon and Diomedon as among those most opposed to the oligarchic cabal. Thucydides' narrative portrays the trierarchy as a privileged position from which the wealthy could exert political power, but also portrays that power as exercised to diverse ends.