Introduction

“Future ages will wonder at us, as the present age wonders at us now”. This, according to Thucydides, was a message provided by Pericles to his countrymen during the first year of the Peloponnesian War.¹ It has proven, more than two millennia later to be completely accurate. Modern man does wonder at the people of this ancient city-state and at their lasting contributions to the culture of the Western world. Exploration of these accomplishments has occupied the thought and writing of classical scholars since ancient times. The arts, literature, scientific accomplishments, political institutions and philosophies that had their genesis in Classical Athens have been the deserving subjects of substantial scholarly analysis and debate. The military history of classical Athens has also been well documented, by the first-hand accounts of Thucydides and Xenophon, by the references made by Attic orators, and by later analyses of both ancient and modern historians.

A review of the accounts of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars of the late archaic and classical periods and of other military conflicts involving Athens reveals, however, that, while they provide a reasonable account of the military events of the era and significant data on the organization, tactics and equipment utilized by Athens military forces, there is no single treatise concerning the practice of military leadership in this period. What can be found must be gleaned from biographies of military leaders, or from tangential comments in the accounts of the various wars of the period. Similarly, there is not very much scholarly analysis regarding how and why the role of the military leader changed during the classical age, although there is substantial historical evidence that this role was significantly altered by the end of the era. Consequently, the current effort
attempts to systemitize and describe available information regarding the changing role of
the military leader in classical Athens and to suggest a theoretical rationale for the
changes that can be identified.

It will be suggested that the explanation for the changing practice of generalship can
be found in the changing socio-cultural conditions of the time. This concept is supported
by modern military historians such as Santasuoso, Hacker, Black and Hanson, each of
whom has affirmed the inextricable ties between the culture of any society and the
military apparatus implemented to defend it.² It is also suggested by the work of the
modern systems and contingency theorists such as Fiedler, Hersey, Blanchard,
Tannenbaum and Schmidt who postulate, to varying degrees, the mutual dependence
between a social system and the subsystems of which it is comprised.³ These theorists
maintain that any change in a single subsystem will provoke changes in others in order to
satisfy the systemic imperative for equilibrium. Consequently, any of the social changes
of this turbulent period in Athenian history, whether military, political, or economic
could be expected to generate responding alterations in patterns of military leadership
and, in the reverse dynamic, social change generated by changes in military leadership
patterns, would also be expected.

This thesis will offer descriptions of the military, political, and economic
environments in which the role of the *strategos* (‘general’) was practiced at the beginning
of the classical period. It will describe the significant changes that occurred in those
environments and affected military leadership patterns as the era progressed. An example
of the response of military leaders to these turbulent social-environmental conditions,
presented through an analysis of the career of Alcibiades, will be offered and a
culminating assessment of the major changes in the functions of the Athenian general between 500 and 350 BC will be provided. Finally, a brief analysis of the applicability of modern leadership theory as an explanatory framework for the identified changes in the practice of military leadership of classical Athens will be offered.
Chapter One

The Evolution of the Athenian Military 500-350 BC

I. The Athenian Army at the Beginning of the Classical Era: Structure, Methods, and Philosophy

At the beginning of the Classical period the Athenian military was largely a citizen army, dominated by its hoplite infantry. Thucydides, in presenting numbers of troops sent into battle in the Peloponnesian War, consistently refers to these warriors as “hoplites of themselves” and clearly differentiates them from “hoplites of the resident-alien” and also from the cavalry, peltasts, archers and slingers who are consistently recorded in far fewer numbers. These citizen soldiers viewed military service as a civic responsibility; every male citizen underwent military training -- the period of two years is later attested -- and then could expect to be called into service whenever the security of Athens required it.

Until the rise of the Athenian hegemony these episodes of military service were usually episodic and seasonal. The citizen-soldiers were largely members of the agrarian middle-class; domestic wars of the early classical period, reflecting the non-professional status of these soldiers and their need to support themselves through farming, were generally short-lived and often decided on the outcome of only a few battles. As Thucydides says of the earliest conflicts “wars were simply local affairs between neighbors.” Warfare was seasonal, usually occurring in either summer or winter when the farmer’s daily presence in the fields was not required. Parke, in fact, refers to these fifth century Athenian hoplites as “amateurs in war” carrying out a civic obligation. The goals of the wars, particularly those between neighboring states, were often defensive in nature; soldiers sought to protect the homeland from incursion and occupation as quickly
as possible and then get back to their usual occupations in society.\textsuperscript{10} Although there were certainly exceptions to the custom of sporadic, short-lived military encounters, they were the predominant form of Athenian military action as the classical era began.

Hoplite warfare mirrored the dominant features of the new Athenian democracy. The hoplite fought literally shoulder-to-shoulder with his comrades.\textsuperscript{11} Each man was expected to give support and protection to the man on his right, whose unprotected left side abutted him. As Adcock puts it, “Every man in the line knows his life depends on his neighbor’s”.\textsuperscript{12} Hoplites were massed into the famous phalanx formation, a line formation usually eight rows deep “with a width considerably greater than its depth”\textsuperscript{13} which was Santasuosso maintains “the perfect expression of Greek society of that era”.\textsuperscript{14} The use of this closely-knit formation in battle may now seem obvious but was, in fact, a revolutionary development in military tactics. The principal hoplite battle tactic involved retaining this mass formation, i.e. not allowing the unity of the phalanx to be broken, and using the force and weight of the massed phalanx to overcome the enemy.\textsuperscript{15} These structural and tactical choices clearly mimicked dominant themes in classical Athenian culture, including the power of the group and emphasis on the cooperation and discipline of group members rather than individual exploits.\textsuperscript{16} It was a deeply embedded belief of the Greek that this form of citizen warfare was morally superior to other methods and that the citizen army had the greatest motivation for sacrificing all for the sake of the community.\textsuperscript{17}

This cultural message can also be discerned in the lack of esteem that Athenians evidenced at the beginning of the classical period for the various sorts of lightly armed troops both in their armies and in the armies of others. Peltasts, archers and slingers were
certainly utilized by Athens but in much smaller numbers than heavy infantry and in functions that were usually subsidiary to that of the hoplites. Peltasts were used as scouts, for example, and sometimes to skirmish with an adversary before the central battle began. Then, however, it is recorded that the peltasts would be pulled off the field so the hoplites could initiate the real struggle.

Even though the mountainous terrain of Hellas did not provide many of the flat, open spaces needed for hoplite battle the Athenians continued to predominantly use the hoplite way of war well into the classical period for, as Adcock says, “reasons that were clearly not wholly military”. These reasons, as enunciated by both van Wees and Yalichev included issues of both class and morality. Hoplite warfare was a middle and upper class phenomenon and the lighter-armed troops were usually landless lower class men; maintaining hoplite dominance, even in situations in which other military techniques would have been a better fit with environmental conditions, was upholding the social structure of the city-state and its agrarian-based values. Additionally, fighting with weapons that killed “indiscriminately and at a distance” was considered dishonorable by the hoplites.

II. The Evolving Role of the Athenian Navy in the Classical Period

The hoplite army was not the only significant arm of the Athenian military in the classical period. Of significant and growing importance was Athens’ navy, which had been greatly expanded under the persuasion of Themistocles between 483 and 480 BC. Themistocles, both Thucydides and Plutarch relate, urged Athenians to consider dominance of the sea as an integral part of their national security. As Thucydides reports, it was therefore the Persian Wars that made the Athenians “a people of sailors”.
So, the Athenians used the profits from the silver mines at Laurium to fund the construction of a fleet of two hundred triremes to be added to their existing fleet of approximately one hundred ships, assuring their status as the greatest naval power in Hellas.  

The growing importance of the navy and expanding size of the fleet meant that rowers, according to Warry some 170 per ship, must be found to man the three tiers of oars in every trireme. Although Themistocles ordered hoplites to naval duty in 481 and Plutarch indicates that Pericles developed a system that provided citizens with pay to spend eight months learning naval seamanship, there were too few eligible citizens to keep the great fleet staffed through these efforts alone. This fact led to acceptance of large numbers of non-traditional military personnel into the Athenian navy. Specifically, according to Thucydides, rowers were drawn from the ranks of poor citizens, from metic mercenaries and, later in the Peloponnesian War, according to Santasuosso, from the slave population. This change in military manpower had a profound effect upon the relationship between the military and the city-state. While hoplites were largely middle-class agrarian Athenians who, at least until mid fifth century, were unpaid except for sustenance allowances and even bought their own panoplies, rowers were generally paid personnel, a workforce comprised as van Wees describes of “poor men, foreigners and slaves”. The citizen-hoplite was an “amateur” carrying out a necessary civic duty to maintain the integrity of the state, while the rower was “a lower class professional” for whom military service was employment.

The management techniques needed to maintain discipline in the two disparate groups were very different; citizen-hoplites were part-time and had limited training. As
such they did not demand full-time, professional leadership. Professional, full-time military personnel, in contrast, required consistent management from generals whose skills they respected. The changing balance between rowers and hoplites, between the navy and the army, thus had a profound effect upon the role of the military leader in Athenian society. Whereas the traditional method of military leadership of hoplites consisted of establishing a battle plan and then fighting in the ranks with the army without much direct control once the battle was joined, naval leadership required consistent control of all operations. Consistent staff training was necessary to master the delicate battle maneuvers, and in-battle direction was required to successfully execute circumnavigation, ramming and boarding an enemy vessel while keeping your own ship intact. An admiral had to have expertise in these maneuvers, be an able teacher, constantly concern himself with the issue of obtaining money for wages and develop a supervisory structure of officers who would closely oversee the activities of the rowers. Leaders had to be consistently available to oversee a navy that was, in part, manned by a corps of full-time employees. In addition, since loyalty to the state was not a primary motivating force for performance successful naval commanders had to foster personal loyalty as a motivating element. So, as the navy grew in importance during the Classical era so did the need for highly skilled, consistently present, charismatic leadership by men who also had the ability to obtain and manage money.

Ancient and modern sources indicate that the Athenians successfully accomplished this transition to a more professional navy. Thucydides, for example, describes how the Athenian navy was called upon to fight its allies’ naval battles and reports that a member of the Corcyrean embassy told the Athenian Assembly that the Athenians were “the
greatest naval power in Hellas"; similarly, Adcock notes that “it was axiomatic that Athenian naval power could only be rivaled by acquiring Athenian techniques”. In the process of creating this dominant navy, however, the requirements of military leadership were significantly altered.

III. Evolution of Land Forces in the Classical Period

The hoplite army itself was not immune to the pressures of social circumstance on its traditional composition. Thucydides, for example, notes that the manpower of the Athenian army was negatively effected by the plagues of 430 and 428 and mentions specifically the loss of 1,050 hoplites in only 40 days as a result of an outbreak of plague in the ranks at Potidaea. Strauss and Ober discuss the critical decreases in military manpower and equipment that resulted from the Sicilian expedition in 415-13 as does Adcock when he says “the disaster at Syracuse swept away so many fine ships and crews that the unchallengeable supremacy of Athens at sea disappeared”. Also, since by the fourth century warfare occurred in any place and in any season, the possibility of fielding a primarily citizen army greatly diminished, and Athens had no choice but to recruit mercenary hoplites into its ranks.

Thucydides reports, that in 432BC, just before the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, a speaker at a meeting of the allied Congress in Sparta said that Sparta and its allies would win the conflict with the Athenians because “the power of Athens rests on mercenaries rather than her own citizens”. As the Peloponnesian War progressed, mercenaries appeared in ever increasing numbers in the Athenian army. Pritchett notes that as the fifth century progressed and mercenary service expanded there was “an increasing aversion to citizen military service that attended the rise of professional
soldiering unconnected with civic obligations". Thus, according to Pritchett, the decline in the number of citizen hoplites resulted in increased use of non-citizen soldiers, and then the use of non-citizen soldiers further reduced the number of men willing to do military service as a civic duty. To fill the void left by decreasing numbers of citizen hoplites Athens eventually also used conscription of slaves into the navy as well as paid non-Greek mercenaries. As the army came to include more non-citizen mercenaries and involuntary soldiers the type of military leadership required also was altered: what was now needed were “professional” military leaders, i.e. men skilled and experienced in warfare, who had management and strategic skills, would accept expanded financial responsibility and who inspired the respect and loyalty of the troops.

Just as the elaboration of Athens’ navy and the decrease in citizen hoplites affected the requirements for military leadership so did the gradual acceptance of expanded use of light infantry, cavalry, archers and slingers in the Athenian army. As previously noted, the domination of land forces by hoplites continued in the classical period. It is also true, however, that during this period the Athenians came to accept the value of other types of troops, particularly after their hoplite forces had been bested by enemies using such troops. In Aetolia, for example, Athenian hoplites led by Demosthenes were routed by peltasts using the hilly terrain to their advantage. In battles against the Persians the Athenians had the chance to observe how archers and cavalry could be utilized to break the phalanx and to minimize escape of vanquished foes through rapid pursuit. Experiences such as these led the Athenians to understand the battle value of lightly armed troops and to increase their numbers in the Athenian military. They used their light
infantry, for example, to full advantage in the victory over the Spartans at Sphacteria in 425.52

Such a change in the composition of the army was not achieved without conflict or without results for the military leadership structure. The cavalry, for example, had been minimized in the Athenian military of the classical period, being at all times less than ten percent of the city-state’s military forces; this was true because only the rich could afford to keep a horse in Athens53 and also because, in an overarching military environment that emphasized hoplite equality, the importance of the group over the individual, and the moral superiority of hoplite hand-to-hand combat, it was not a popular measure to consider the expansion of the cavalry.54 Increased use of cavalry thus proceeded slowly throughout the period.

More readily accepted were contingents of peltasts, archers, and slingers. These had been given limited use in the early classical period, but the range of uses and numbers of such soldiers in the land forces of Athens expanded as the classical era progressed.55 Such soldiers were, in essence, military specialists, “professionals” as they were termed by Parke56 whose particular skills required consistent practice in order for proficiency to be maintained57. Once again, the growing specialization of the army made the continuance of the dominant role of the citizen soldier difficult to maintain. Constant military training and regular practice of a specialized military skill was not consistent with part-time military participation by middle-class farmers.

To an increasing degree during and after the Peloponnesian War, Athens turned to two sources to meet its expanding need for ground force specialists. These were foreign mercenaries and downwardly mobile Athenians who were making a career of the
These men, particularly the foreign mercenaries, fought not only for country or principle or glory but also for money. They were, as a rule, poor, even poorer than Athenian laborers, and lived a hand-to-mouth existence. Many, given the depressed economic conditions during and immediately following the Peloponnesian War, had no alternative through which they could make a living. So, they became mercenary soldiers for hire to the highest bidder. Athens itself became one of the primary markets for the hiring of mercenaries during this period. By the fourth century the differentiated skills of these warriors led to a new understanding of war craft as a techne, that is, as a professional skill that could be learned and practiced. If military skill and courage could be acquired by training then, Athenians began to accept, it was possible that professionals could be better soldiers than citizens.

Full-time soldiers who were specialists in their fields required military management that matched it in expertise and career commitment. Their inclusion, in expanding numbers, allowed consideration of “a more imaginative use of units and weapons” but required military management that had the strategic skill to effectively utilize them. Their mobility, i.e. ability to move from one employer to another, meant that establishment of personal loyalty and good-working conditions were essential if such a force was to be maintained. As the use of such military specialists for hire increased, therefore, so did the need for military leaders who could command their loyalty, maintain their professional respect, effectively utilize their skills and assure the stream of money necessary to pay their wages. The role of the strategos, as defined at the beginning of the classical period, was ill suited to the changing military circumstances with which it was now presented. It became difficult for the traditional Athenian strategoi, part time
generals and public officials, to carry out both civic and military functions adequately as
the obligations and composition of the military expanded and became more complex.

IV. Changing Goals, Rules of Engagement and Battle Tactics

During the classical period the goals of warfare, the rules of engagement and the battle
tactics utilized also underwent significant transformation. At the outset of the classical
epoch the primary goals of warfare were protection of Athenian territory, preservation of
Athenian honor, furtherance of Athenian national interests, and subjugation of the enemy.
As the Peloponnesian War progressed, however, these goals came to include non-
defensive imperial expansion and, in some cases, total destruction of the enemy, rather
than its subjugation.66 These differences may seem only a matter of degree, but they led
to different military strategies and tactics. In the traditional hoplite war, for example, the
victors would typically not pursue the vanquished forces of their foe far beyond the
battlefield67 and would often allow them to gather the bodies of their fallen comrades
under truce68. The goal had been achieved; the enemy was routed and the honor of the
victors was intact. As the Peloponnesian War progressed and in its aftermath, however,
the concept of war expanded to become “an uninterrupted, all-encompassing activity until
ultimate victory through annihilation or capitulation was achieved” that included
wholesale murder of civilians and direct attempts to destroy cultures.69 Pritchett also
alludes to this change in the practice of warfare when he maintains that the practice of
war became more “barbarous”, and the extent of pillage and civilian damage increased as
the fourth century progressed.70

Similarly, the rules of diplomacy changed significantly during the classical period. At
its outset the intention of going to war was formally announced and grievances that had
precipitated that conflict were usually explicitly stated in formal communications, such as the notice that Themistocles sent to Xerxes before initiating combat at Salamis.\textsuperscript{71} The battles themselves were most frequently day time events, held on level ground and lasted no more than the hours of daylight of a particular day.\textsuperscript{72} There was a ritualized beginning and conclusion to the event, replete with religious and cultural significance. Instances of night or surprise attack occurred, but were rare Altogether, warfare in 500 BC could be reasonably described as limited in goal, standardized in method, short in duration and only modestly costly in life and treasure. By 350 BC none of these attributes could reasonably be ascribed to Athenian warfare. It had become a multi-front phenomenon, with more frequent engagements, using diverse methods, with far-reaching goals of empire and supremacy, and was more costly in lives and money than could have possibly been imagined one hundred and fifty years earlier.

The nature of battle itself was considerably altered during the span of the classical era. At its outset most land battles were largely dependent upon the hoplite phalanx and its “shock battle techniques of striking the enemy with massed force in a huge collision of opposing armies.\textsuperscript{73} The goals were to break the opponent’s line, cut off groups from the main force and overwhelm them with the power of the hoplite spears, swords and shear mass.\textsuperscript{74} Many of these battles were almost staged events that had a quality of theater; the combatants knew when the battle would begin by the preliminary events of sacrifice, paean and trumpet blare and they knew when they were over by the concluding formalities of trumpet call, gathering of the dead and (in some cases) establishment of a trophy in honor of the victory.\textsuperscript{75} The strategy of surprise was not often used nor was night battle a customary event.\textsuperscript{76} Similarly multifaceted concurrent attack by hoplites, light
infantry, archers, slingers and cavalry was clearly not the norm as the period began.\textsuperscript{77} In the old style of hoplite warfare columns of men faced each other in head on collisions in tests of strength and grit; simple tactical maneuvers like keeping troops in reserve, flanking and using terrain had not been considered. As the classical period progressed, however, the record indicates that, although hoplite methods continued to be widely employed, battle plans increasingly utilized various kinds of troops in concert and, on some occasions utilized entirely non-hoplite methodology.

As the Peloponnesian War progressed, for example, night attacks such as the ill-fated effort in Sicily and the surprise attack on the Spartans at Sphacteria became more common\textsuperscript{78}. So too did the use of many types of troops in coordination during battle and, in some instances, use of light troops as an alternative to hoplites; this happened, for example, at the battle waged by Iphicrates at Lechaeum in which a force of peltasts under his command defeated a 600 man Spartan.\textsuperscript{79} Shock battle tactics, though still commonly employed, were gradually losing their dominance in the tactical playbook of the Athenian army\textsuperscript{80}; As van Wees asserts there was “a slow and steady process…which transformed Greek infantry tactics…into the highly sophisticated and demanding manner of fighting practiced in the armies of the most powerful Hellenistic kingdoms”\textsuperscript{81}. This transition was eased by the fact that many mercenaries, used in large numbers during the fourth century, preferred “mobility to mass, broken terrain to open fields…and self reliance more than trust of community spirit”.\textsuperscript{82} So incorporation of specialists changed the very topography of battle as the classical era matured.

Also, as the classical period continued, war was being fought on more than one front, sometimes simultaneously. In the mid fifth century, for example the Athenians found
themselves fighting both in Egypt against the Persians and on the Greek peninsula against the Spartans. The increase in the number of theaters of war and the number of military engagements made part-time military management a virtual impossibility.

Thus, battle was becoming more complex, continual and varied; this in turn required military leadership that was competent, consistently available and experienced in diverse methods and situations. Once again the statesman - strategos was becoming a poor match for the changing conditions of classical battle.

E. Summary

Overall, the history of the Athenian military during the classical period manifests several trends that had important implications for the evolution of military leadership in Athens. Among these trends were increasing emphases on naval operations, increasing participation by paid personnel in both navy and land forces, increasing inclusion of specialist soldiers, increasing occurrence of multi-front military operations, decreasing availability of citizen manpower, changing military goals and expansion of accepted tactics of battle. Each of these trends suggested the need for changes in the existing command structure of the Athenian military. The impetus for such change that was provided by these changes in military practice was augmented, as the next chapter will suggest, by several aspects of the turbulent political environment with in which the Athenian military functioned during the classical era.
Notes

Introduction


Chapter One


2. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.61,1.64,2.13,2.56.


Introduction, i.

10. Adcock, The Greek and Macedonian Art of War, 8.


15. Santasuosso, Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War, 30.


17. Santasuosso, Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War, 72.

18. Pritchett, Greek State at War, Part I, 132.

19. Pritchett, Greek State at War, Part I, 132-33; Pritchett, Greek State at War, Part IV 51-3; Santasuosso, Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War, 13-14; Warry, Warfare in the Classical World, 3.

20. Pritchett, Greek State at War, Part IV, 51-3.


22. Adcock, The Greek and Macedonian Art of War, 68.


27. Ibid, 1.18.


36. Ibid, 201.


42. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, Introduction, i.

43. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.121.


49. Santasuosso, *Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War*, 82.


51. Santasuosso, *Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War*, 82.

52. Ibid, 92.


54. Santasuosso, *Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War*, 19; van Wees, Greek Warfare-Myths and Realities, 66-68.

55. Hanson, *Wars of the Ancient Greeks*, 144.

56. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, Introduction, i.


63. Ibid, 111.

64. Santasuosso, *Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War*, 92.

66. van Wees, *Greek Warfare-Myths and Realities*, 240
68. Santasuosso, *Soldiers, Citizens and Symbols of War*, 68.
69. Hanson, *Wars of the ancient Greeks*, 52.
72. Ibid, 103.
73. Hanson, *Wars of the Ancient Greeks*, 90.
76. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, Part II, 156.
78. Victor Davis Hanson, *Wars of the Ancient Greeks*, 114.
81. van Wees, *Greek Warfare-Myths and Realities*, 152.


Chapter Two
The Political Environment and the Evolution of the Strategos Function

I Introduction

In the previous chapter an analysis of the evolution of the Athenian military during the Classical period was provided and an assessment of the association of these evolutionary changes with the modification of Athenian military leadership patterns was offered. There were, however, in addition to these changes in the structure and functions of the military itself, other events and conditions in Athenian society that also affected the evolution of more independent and professional military management. Prominent among the social circumstances supporting change in military leadership patterns was the political environment of the Athenian city-state during the Classical period. This chapter will identify specific elements of the political environment that had an impact upon the practice of military leadership, and delineate the results of those impacts upon the management of the Athenian military.

Before beginning this analysis a note of clarification must be offered regarding the meaning of the term “political environment.” In this presentation the term will be understood to encompass formal roles and structures established by the Athenian government to govern its military forces, the domestic and foreign policies of that government that influenced military management as well as the informal political interests and activities of the Athenian populace that had relevance for military leadership. This last element of the analysis represents what has been termed by the political scientist Gabriel Almond to be a society’s “political culture” which is differentiated from, and not always consistent with, the formally established structures and policies of its formal political system. In this chapter, each of these three aspects of
Athenian political life will be individually reviewed to determine the separate impacts of each upon the practice of military leadership during the Classical period in Athens.

II Government and the Structure of Military Leadership

Aristotle, or one of his students, provides an extensive description of the structures of Athenian government and of their changes over time during the Classical period. A reading of *The Constitution of Athens*, provides evidence, supported by the comments of contemporary observers of Athenian life such as Thucydides and Xenophon, that there was an elaborate, largely elected, administrative bureaucracy governing Classical Athens along with legislative and judicial structures based upon direct participation by citizens. Keeping in mind that Athens was a society with perhaps no more than 30,000 to 65,000 voting citizens at any point in the Classical period the extensive elaboration of government structures in itself suggests a political culture that considered governance to be a key societal concern and political participation to be a social value of increasing importance.

Within the elaborate system of government administration that was developed by the new democracy of Athens was the redefined function of the *strategos*, a position that is commonly understood to mean “general” or “military leader” but which, as designed and as practiced in Classical Athens, included both civil and military functions. The *strategoi* were elected officials of the state. During the first hundred years of the Classical period there were generally ten *strategoi* who were elected by the ten tribes that had been established by Cleisthenes as part of the democratic reforms following the overthrow of the Peisistratid tyranny. Xenophon confirms that the generals of the Classical period were elected officials. Although these positions were initially subservient to a
polemarch, originally a commander-in-chief, the position of polemarch lost its military functions during the early Classical period and the ten strategoi became the most important military officials of the polis.6 This may, according to Hamel have been related to the decision made in 487 to select the polemarch and other archons “by lot from a panel of 100 previously elected candidates”7 which, in turn, diminished their historic authority.

Elections of strategoi resulted in one-year appointments, although the generals, unlike other elected administrative officers of the polis, could be elected more than once and reelected continuously and often were.8 After the removal of the Thirty Tyrants in 404 tribal elections of the strategoi were eliminated and it appears that after that time the strategoi were “chosen from the whole mass of the citizens”.9 The selection of generals by popular election resulted in a situation in which men of varying degrees of previous experience in military leadership, and sometimes of no experience at all, were made responsible for the military strategy of the polis and its execution, Although these men sometimes rose to the occasion and provided successful leadership, selection of generals by popular election clearly indicates that the demos considered other attributes and values as more important than expertise and experience in its military leadership. This mode of selection allowed wide disparities in military skill and interest among members of the strategia.

The disparate experiences and abilities of the generals was recognized in the division of labor that Aristotle tells us was established among the strategoi, and assigned to them by “open vote”.10 By the late fourth century, this division of labor gave individual generals responsibility for specific functions such as military action outside of
the city-state, homeland defense, responsibility for the Piraeus, and administrative functions such as managing the symmories; there was also provision made for generalists who could be “to be dispatched for whatever business may be at hand at the moment”\(^{11}\). Aristotle also indicates that the powers of the individual generals changed, depending upon whether or not they were actively carrying out military command functions; this distinction reinforces an understanding of the \textit{strategos} as a part-time military leader and part-time civic official.\(^{12}\)

When \textit{strategoi} were engaged in military operations it appears that even among themselves there was no unity of command unless a \textit{strategos autokrator} had been appointed; aside from such instances, decisions in which more than one \textit{strategos} was involved were actually made by group consensus. This is implied by the way that Thucydides and Plutarch describe the development of strategy in the Sicilian expedition\(^{13}\) and is noted in an extensive analysis of decision-making by \textit{strategoi} that is offered by Hamel, who takes the view that strategy may even have been determined by vote\(^{14}\). Since there is significant evidence that the \textit{strategoi} usually functioned as co-equals, decision-making by consensus or vote would have been consistent with both the broader political environment of Athens and their own dual identities as both political and military leaders.\(^{15}\) An unfortunate effect of this, however, as evidenced in the Sicilian campaign, is that “effective implementation of those decisions could be hindered by strong opposition from within the command itself and from the Athenian component of the army”\(^{16}\). It appears, therefore, that the way in which the \textit{strategia} was structured and the methods with which it carried out military leadership functions were conditioned by the political
values of the new Athenian democracy, even when this was not functional for the achievement of unity of command and strategic clarity.

The elected strategoi also faced the possibility of removal from office at any time if the citizen Assembly believed that there had been a dereliction of duty; in fact Aristotle maintains that in addition to removal from office the “people decide what punishment or fine shall be inflicted” if a general was found guilty of not carrying out his duties. An example of the implementation of this constitutional provision occurred after the loss to the Spartans at Notium in 407 when Alcibiades was removed from command and also when the, after the battle of Arginusae the Athenians recalled, tried and executed six of the generals who had directed that action. Thus there was, based on available evidence, no separate military justice system to adjudicate matters of military competence; rather, the system of military justice was administered by the civilian government and served to enhance civilian control of military leadership.

In addition to the possibility of recall and punishment by civilian authorities the strategos also faced a lack of control of officers under their command, resulting from the military structures established by the constitutional government. The constitution of Athens called for the election of the army’s senior officer corps by the ten recognized tribal groups of Athens. According to Aristotle the taxiarchs who led the ten tribal levies of the army were themselves also elected and they in turn appointed the secondary officers under their command. In addition, the army had a corps of elected treasurers to administer its finances. Thus the entire corps of army officers was selected either by civilian vote or by appointment made by the taxiarchs. This method of selection did nothing to reinforce the authority of Athenian generals, but did demonstrate the polis’
political commitment to democratic values, civilian control of the military (as demonstrated by officer selection by civilian vote) and military service as an expression of civic values.

With regard to naval management the situation was similar, and in some respects, even more difficult for the *strategoi*. In about 480 the trierarchy was established as a “naval liturgy” and so remained for the remainder of the fifth century and first quarter of the fourth.²² As practiced, this liturgy involved wealthy Athenians providing financial support and military management of a trireme for a single year.²³ Gabrielson confirms that the *trierarchs* had both military and financial duties.²⁴ Carmichael also confirms this when he says of the *trierarch* “As the ship’s commander, he was responsible for navigational and battle decisions. If lacking experience, he could draw upon the advice of the ship’s helmsman, a professional seaman and tactician” and further that “the trierarch would be assessed the costs of any damage to the ship that resulted from his negligence in command”²⁵. This statement clearly indicates that expertise in naval management was not considered a prime determinant of eligibility for *trierarchs*, who, nonetheless, were put in charge of warships staffed by two hundred men. Since they were only required to carry out their obligation for a single year, any expertise learned while in service would quickly be lost in the planned turnover of responsibility to new *trierarchs*. Once again, the Athenian government established military structures that combined civic (in this case financial) and military obligations in key military management positions. Considering that Athens military dominance relied to a substantial extent on its naval supremacy, the decision to develop the trierarchy as a naval liturgy demonstrates the dominance of political and economic concerns over military professionalism in classical Athens.
These facts indicate that the *strategoi* had to direct a military management system which was not of their choosing and which would have included men of varying levels of experience, skill and commitment. The lack of control over the selection of senior officers and lack of participation in the selection of junior officers by the *strategos* would certainly have reduced motivation for personal loyalty to him by his subordinate officers; the political choices made regarding the selection of the officer corps clearly implies that the Athenian democracy valued its democratic processes and citizen control of its military organization more than maintaining an experienced military leadership.

Further, it appears that the structures developed by the Athenian government did not foster unity of command in the military, i.e. the concept that one person should be responsible for command decisions and assuring unified effort in meeting military objectives. Evidence for this assertion is provided by the fact that, during the Classical period, *hipparchs* who commanded cavalry units were elected by open vote of all citizens and had “the same powers as the generals have in respect of the infantry.” *Hipparchs*, who may have followed the direction of *strategoi*, also faced the difficulty of managing a corps of secondary officers, the phylarchs, who were elected by the citizens, not selected by their superior officers. Altogether, the command structure required by the Athenian Constitution and enforced by its civilian government did not support the development of a military management team that was selected on the basis of skill alone or that reflected concern for unity of command.

Unlike most other elected officials in Classical Athens generals could be, and often were, elected for more than one term. This fact led to the expansion of their role in the civilian government. Robinson maintains that when the archonship was added to
the positions determined by lot in 487 it changed the character of that office, reducing its authority because of annual election and preclusion of reelection. This, in Robinson’s opinion, enhanced the potential for civil authority being vested in the strategos, who could legally be reelected. As the civil authority of the strategos increased, however, the military obligations of the position as a part-time function became institutionalized. At a time when military engagements were becoming more frequent, prolonged and far-flung the military commanders of Athens were becoming more and more embedded in the civilian tasks of creating foreign, and even domestic, policy.

III Government Policies and Their Impact on Military Management

Both domestic and foreign policies of the Athenian government had direct impact upon the military management of the polis. Domestically, the initiation of ostracism had a chilling effect upon the availability of military leaders during a century of fairly consistent military engagement and also limited the willingness of generals to innovate or excel. At the same time, in the realm of foreign affairs, the growing trend to accept imperialism as government policy increased the obligations of Athens’ military leaders. The impact of each of these policies that affected military leadership patterns is deserving of analysis.

Although there has been some dispute regarding the origins of ostracism in democratic Athens, it is generally accepted that it was instituted by Cleisthenes as part of the democratic reforms that followed the Peisistratid tyranny, but it was not successfully applied until 488, almost a generation later. Ostracism involved the ten-year exile of the ostracized person, but did not result in loss of citizenship, or property or even the exile of other family members. Thucydides suggests that the purpose of ostracism was fear of “power or prestige” and, similarly, Plutarch, identified that the
purpose of ostracism was to control the danger to the incipient democracy that existed in
the individual persons of great men “whose power they regarded as oppressive, or who
had an eminence which they considered out of keeping with a democracy”\textsuperscript{36}. That
ostracism also served the political ends of various Athenian statesmen and factions has
been proposed by several modern scholars including Kagan, Robinson, Evans and
Richard\textsuperscript{37}; such a purpose is also alluded to by Plutarch in his biographies of Pericles and
Themistocles\textsuperscript{38}.

As practiced in the classical era the Assembly (\textit{ekklesia}) would vote every year as
to whether there should be an ostracism. If ostracism was ordered, “the judgment of the
potsherds” in which every citizen could participate, would be held soon after; at this
event every voter wrote the name of the person he thought should be ostracized on a
piece of broken pottery. Provided there was a quorum of at least 6,000 voters, the person
with the most votes was ostracized.\textsuperscript{39}

Kagan maintains that ostracism deprived Athens of some of its best leaders at
critical times.\textsuperscript{40} Although this view is disputed, there is no doubt that several prominent
military leaders were forced to leave the polis because of ostracism during the classical
period. Among the eleven men who are known to have been ostracized (there may have
been as many as twenty) were prominent military leaders including Cimon, Aristides,
and Themistocles. These and other military leaders were exiled during a period of
sustained military conflict in Athens. Since they were selected for ostracism, at least in
part, by reason of their personal power in the \textit{polis} their departure into prolonged exile
robbed the city-state of authoritative military leadership during a period of protracted and
consistent military conflicts. Some of these ostracized military leaders, for example
Themistocles, were apparently exiled specifically to “humble his great reputation and his authority”\textsuperscript{41}. Thus, although ostracism had the overt goal of protecting the new democracy from the excessive control of a single individual and may have legitimately served that purpose, it also created new dangers for that democracy by removal of some of its most outstanding leaders at the height of their intellectual and charismatic powers. For the military of Athens ostracism posed two mirror-image problems: first, the military lost experienced and respected leaders, often in time of war; second, the remaining generals learned an unfortunate lesson regarding the fragility of their positions.

Thus, in addition to the loss of exiled leaders, the military was also faced with the remaining leadership’s psychological response to the threat of extended exile. The threat of ostracism did not support the development of bold or innovative military leadership. Kagan proposes that ostracism “served as a threat to possible revolutionaries”\textsuperscript{42}; although this premise seems rational, if it is accepted one must also accept that this practice would likely have promoted conformity and lack of initiative among the \textit{strategoi}. They would have been keenly aware of the fates of some of their peers when their leadership did not adhere to the will of the \textit{demos}. Cimon, for example, was ostracized, at least in part, for the failure of his strategy at the time of the helot rebellion\textsuperscript{43} and Thucydides was exiled after arriving late at Amphipolis\textsuperscript{44}. Many generals, it can be reasonably assumed, would not have wanted to share their fate. Hamel accepts this view when she asserts, “the demos controlled its generals…. by establishing in Athens a climate of fear which was very often sufficient to dissuade generals from acting in opposition to the Athenians’ will”\textsuperscript{45}. In an age of concerted military involvement, against foes with extensive military
resources and renowned military will, the loss and domination of military leaders by the actions of the Athenian government was not conducive to military success.

Along with the barriers to effective military management presented by the domestic policy of ostracism, Athenian foreign policy also was inconsistent with effective continuation of the strategos model of military leadership. Specifically, the development of a robust imperialist policy during the fifth century had military implications, and those implications were not consistent with the continuation of generalship as a part-time occupation conducted by statesmen-officers.

During the fifth century the foreign policy of the nascent democracy of Athens increasingly emphasized foreign expansion, not just as a defensive measure against invasion of Attica, but as a proactive policy based on the view that expansion beyond Attica was in keeping with national character, essential for the preservation of Athens’ existing holdings outside of Hellas and perhaps even simply a right, because of the city-state’s superior military strength. The Athenians’ belief in themselves and in their right to empire was augmented by their victories against the Persians at Marathon and Salamis which some believed to be the result of the natural superiority of the Athens and its form of government.\textsuperscript{46} Thucydides repeatedly refers to Athens as an arkhē (1.118, 2.63, 2.8)\textsuperscript{47} and indicates, through the address of Archidamus to Spartan troops preparing to invade Attica, that the Athenians “think they have a right to supremacy”.\textsuperscript{48} Plutarch similarly identifies fifth century Athens as an imperialist power in his biography of Nicias when he comments that the Sicilian campaign was viewed by Athenians as part of an imperialist expansion, not just a tactic in their war with Sparta.\textsuperscript{49}
Although the allies of Athens initially viewed the city-states of the Delian League as autonomous states joined together for mutual protection, Hanson maintains that their opinion began to change as Athens prevented departures from the League and relentlessly enforced the requirements for financial or troop support for League defense; such measures led the allied states to view Athens as “an aggressive imperialist rather than a democratic polis, preeminent among equals”\(^50\). The Athenian government used military and political methods, including siege, exile, execution and land redistribution, to enforce its will on League states.\(^51\) This increasingly aggressive fifth century foreign policy would eventually be complicit in evolutionary changes in the Athenian military leadership because with imperialism came different goals for military engagements as well as different methods of warfare.

As expressed by Clausewitz, war is “a mere continuation of policy by other means”\(^52\). No longer, therefore, was it sufficient for the military to carry out a policy of assuring the safety and prosperity of the *polis*. Now, as Alcibiades said in his speech to the Athenian Assembly:

“One does not only defend oneself against a superior power when one is attacked; one takes measures in advance to prevent the attack materializing. And it is not possible for us to calculate, like housekeepers, exactly how much empire we want to have. The fact is we have reached a stage where we are forced to plan new conquests and forced to hold on to what we have got because there is a danger that we ourselves may fall under the power of others unless others are in our power”\(^53\)

This speech of Alcibiades was given just before the Sicilian campaign of 415. It clearly identifies the policy goal of imperialist expansion and also suggests support for pre-emptive military attack. That the Athenians supported this notion is evidenced by the fact
that they enthusiastically supported the Sicilian expedition and rejected the cautionary
counsel of Nicias that consolidation, not further expansion, was a more appropriate
foreign policy objective. Although their reason for seeking empire may have been fear
of anticipated and experienced Spartan aggression, the implications of this expansionist
policy for the military and for Athenian society were profound.

The implications of this policy for the Athenian military were many. Maintaining
empire meant dealing with insurrection, and building empire required proactive wars of
aggression. Having an empire at all meant military operations in widely dispersed
geographic areas, with varying terrains and climates. In order to carry out the expanded,
continual and widely dispersed functions of an imperial military force the Athenian army
and navy would have to be greatly increased, technology would have to be expanded and
patterns of military leadership would have to be altered to fit the new imperial goals. The
use of part-time generals, with other civic responsibilities, who were annually elected
based on political popularity rather than selected because of military expertise, was ill-
suited to implement Athens’ imperialist foreign policy.

IV The Political Culture of Athens and the Practice of Military Leadership

Thucydides describes the political environment of the Hellenic city-states in 427
B.C. as fraught with factionalism and internal conflict. As he characterizes it, the
political atmosphere was replete with “treachery”, “revenge”, “thoughtless acts of
aggression” and “fanatical enthusiasm” and he even proposes that “their own internal
strife” caused the Athenians to lose the Peloponnesian war. This civil unrest was
commonly known as stasis. Manicas maintains that stasis in Athens included “faction to
sedition to outright civil war” and postulates that stasis was caused by “the struggle
between rich and poor, the struggle for political rights and power, the struggle for
citizenship and participation”⁵⁸. Similarly, Figueira asserts that the “stasis of the 580’s was caused by efforts to extend …Solon’s reforms”⁵⁹. Stasis in Athens increased as the fifth century progressed, fueled by both traditional clan and personal antagonisms and the increasing political participation of the *demos*. Antagonism between “the people” known as “the many”, and “the best people” or “the few”⁶⁰ was augmented as the political power of the demos was enhanced. Political policies, such as the stripping of powers from the Areopagus by Ephialtes⁶¹, institution of payment for jury service by Pericles⁶² or, conversely, the limitation of citizenship to those who could document Athenian lineage⁶³, further exacerbated inter-group hostility between traditional elites and newly empowered groups. The political environment was so volatile that Donald Kagan maintains that without the ostracism of certain political leaders at certain times stasis would have “rent Athens with factional strife”⁶⁴. Factions developed, changed, died and were reborn creating a fluid political situation that made the development of consistent government policy extremely difficult. One of the unintended, but discernable results of fifth and fourth century stasis was the disruption of the relationship between the city-state and its military.

As the classical period had begun the military ideology and the civic ideology of the polis were in concert. Soldier, citizen and political participant all were one person and military participation was an integral part of the civic responsibility of the few Athenians who were awarded citizen status. Similarly, military leadership was clearly defined as a civic function, with incumbents elected and usually serving dual civic and military functions. As foreign policy required expansion of military manpower beyond the capacity of the citizen group to provide, however, reliance on landless and non-citizen
military personnel expanded and *stasis* in Athens increased as the relationship among social rank, citizenship and fighting for the *polis* came asunder.\(^{65}\) Fornara indicates that as the demos became an increasingly important element in the armed forces their influence “was brought to bear on the ten Athenian generals, by now politicized as the executives of the city-state for foreign affairs. As elected officials they were sensitive to the demands and expectations of this newly empowered class of people.”\(^{66}\) As evidenced in the comments of Alcibiades to the Spartan Assembly\(^{67}\) and his manipulation of both oligarchs and demos during the brief rule of the Four Hundred\(^{68}\) generals could and did use their positions to sway the opinion of the demos with regard to policy issues, sometimes shaping public opinion to match their own. Thus the statesmen-generals, because of their special relationship to the demos, became a powerful force in the development of state policy, and added to the existing stasis by promoting the *demos* as a political force in the city-state.

The attitudes of the demos and those of “men of property” often varied on the issue of military engagement, particularly under the personal and financial stresses that the war with the Spartans created. The propertied class had more to lose in the instance of a destructive war and bore a disproportionate share of the war’s costs\(^{69}\). This, according to Cawkwell, led them to find “much to discontent them in war”\(^{70}\) and according to Plutarch led to their support for the Peace of Nicias\(^{71}\). Conversely, military victories became opportunities for the *demos* and *strategoi* leaders such as Alcibiades to increase their political power in the *polis*\(^{72}\) and military engagements directly improved the economic conditions of the poorer classes through military pay, shipbuilding, distribution of booty and manufacture of armaments. Thus the *strategoi* and their increasingly *demos*-driven
forces had more to gain from military conflict than did other elements of Athen’s political power structure. The differing attitudes toward war between these groups not only increased stasis in the *polis* but served to differentiate the *strategos*, from non-military civic leaders as the support and control of significant elements the *demos* provided them with an additional source of political power.

**V Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed several of the main features of the structures, policies and environment of Athenian politics that shaped the role of the general and would eventually foster change in the definition of that role. A military leadership structure based upon generals who had no required previous experience, were selected by annual popular election, often made military decisions based on group consensus, had no direct control over selection of the officer corps, functioned without the protection of a system of military justice, and had substantial non-military obligations was not well-suited to the environmental conditions with which it was presented. In a political system that espoused an aggressive foreign policy, was preoccupied with internal disputes and was known to display its dissatisfaction with military leaders through exile and execution the role of *strategos*, future chapters shall suggest, would only find equilibrium and survival through alteration of its definition.

**Notes**

Chapter Two


9. Ibid, 2.61.


11. Ibid, 2.61.


15. Ibid, 84-85.


18. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.5.16.
19. Ibid, 1.7.1.


23. Ibid, 3.


28. Ibid, 2.61.


33. Ibid, 41.


48.Ibid, 2.11.


51.Ibid, 110.


55. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 3.82-83.

56.Ibid, 3.82 and2.65.
57. Peter T Manicus, “War, Stasis and Greek Political Thought” [Comparative Studies in Society and History 24, no.4]: 674.

58. Ibid, 680.


60. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 8.48.6; Barry Strauss, “Thrasybulus and Conon: A Rivalry in Athens in the 390s B.C.” [American Journal of Philology105, no. 1, 1984]: 44.

61. Richard, Twelve Greeks and Romans Who Changed the World, 63.


65. Hanson, Wars of the Ancient Greeks, 102-109.


67. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.89.1.

68. Plutarch, Lives, Alcibiades 33.1-34.6; Ellis, Alcibiades, 72-73; Edmund F. Bloedow, Alcibiades Reexamined [Weisbaden: F. Steiner, 1973]: 34.

69. Lawrence Tritle, The Peloponnesian War, 72.


Chapter Three
Economic Issues and the Strategos Function

I Introduction

Previous chapters described evolutionary changes in the Athenian military and aspects of the political environment of classical Athens that did not support continuation of the strategos role as it was designed at the beginning of the classical period. In this chapter economic issues that conflicted with continuation of the classical concept of the strategos will be offered. Specifically, four related economic issues that affected the Athenian military and the role of its leaders will be considered. These issues are the evolving nature of the Athenian economy itself, the fluctuating economic health of the polis during the classical period, the increasing economic burden posed by the Athenian military and the assumption of fiscal functions by the strategoi. Each of these factors, it will be argued, created circumstances that were inconsistent with the continuation of the classical concept of the strategos.

II The Evolution of the Athenian Economy and the Strategos Function

Modern scholars agree that there is no question that the Athenian economy was predominantly agricultural or extractive as the classical period began and, in fact, that agriculture remained a dominant economic motif throughout the era.¹ This agricultural preponderance was mirrored in the composition of the classical Athenian military and in the political institutions of the classical polis. Citizen-hoplites were an expression of the agrarian middle class ideal² and reflected the importance of the independent, landowning farmer to the community. As the era progressed, however, the previously stable agricultural economy underwent a series of stressful events that weakened its economic dominance and fostered the development of a more diverse economy that was less
dependent upon agriculture. This decreased emphasis on agriculture had significant effects on the future of the Athenian military and its leadership.

Chief among the stressors that negatively affected the Athenian agricultural economy was the prolonged struggle of the Peloponnesian War. Van Wees notes that “Athens suffered sustained devastation during the Peloponnesian war” while Miller points out Athens had “always been short of arable land” and the war had created both “food shortages and inflation.” Athenian agriculture was damaged by both the repeated ravaging of farms by Spartan raiding parties and by the evacuation of the ekhora ordered by Pericles. Burke asserts that this forced separation of rural populations from their farms “negated the primacy of the land” and made it both necessary and culturally condoned for previously agricultural Athenians to follow other economic pursuits.

Although the war temporarily damaged farmland, it did not destroy it but those who wanted to continue farming at war’s end were often faced with financing the means of production through mortgaging of ancestral land. Obtaining such financing, however, was no guarantee of success, since foreign farm goods could reportedly be imported at a more attractive price than the cost of local production. Miller and French both report that these conditions led to the partial replacement of the smaller farms of the agrarian middle-class by larger agricultural holdings owned by wealthy Athenians and resulted in “a rural fourth century depression” in Attica. French maintains that during the period following the Peloponnesian War land came to be defined as a commodity like any other, and farming lost much of its values-driven importance to Athenian society.

Although agriculture was the dominant economic motif of this period, there is no question that commerce, and especially maritime commerce, was a substantial and
expanding form of economic activity during the Classical period, as it had been for some time before that.\textsuperscript{11} For example, Pritchett quotes Pseudo-Xenophon as saying “the Athenians by virtue of their command of the sea have found forms of luxury by having trade with every other country … the wealth from the sea trade the Athenians alone among the Hellenes are capable of possessing. For if some town is rich in ship-building timber where will it sell it, if it is not allowed to do so by the ruler of the sea.”\textsuperscript{12}

Xenophon maintained that “this land [Athens] though not literally sea-girt has all the advantages of an island, being accessible to every wind that blows, and can invite to its bosom or waft from its shore all products, since it is peninsular; whilst by land it is the emporium of many markets”\textsuperscript{13}, and Thucydides quotes Pericles as saying “our city is so great that all the products of all the earth flow in upon us…”\textsuperscript{14}

The Athenians, as these contemporary quotes indicate, had a well-established source of income in commerce and apparently exercised considerable control over patterns of maritime commerce in the region. Control of trade became increasingly vital to the economic life of the \textit{polis} for, as commerce flourished in the classical era, Athens became dependent both on income from commerce and on imported food and timber to the extent that French maintains “self-sufficiency was no longer a practicable policy”.\textsuperscript{15} Expanding commercial dominance is suggested by the report that, by the middle of the fourth century, twenty-five to thirty three percent of Athens’ revenue was generated by trade coming through the Piraeus, primarily resulting from the tax imposed on all harbor traffic.\textsuperscript{16} While this assessment may be an overestimation it is clear that, in the late classical period, Athens was dependent upon revenue from trade. The continuing success of Athenian emphasis on maritime trade is demonstrated by the growth in trade coming
through the Piraeus from the mid-fifth century onward, resulting in the harbor being identified as the major commercial district of the *polis* by the fourth century.\textsuperscript{17}

Thucydides confirms that not only trade at the Piraeus but also control of the trade of allies and tributary states became valuable sources of imperial income. He notes that import and export taxes were used to generate income during the war because they would “bring in more money” than the earlier tribute system.\textsuperscript{18} His description of the Athenian decree banishing Megarian ships from Athenian ports and markets, as well as the Megarian response to that decree, indicate the level of control that fifth century Athens was able to bring to bear over trade in the Aegean.\textsuperscript{19} Xenophon emphasized the maritime trade dominance of Athens when he noted in *On Revenues* of classical Athens “From the mariner and the merchant upwards, all seek her, flocking they come, the wealthy dealers in corn and wine and oil, the owner of many cattle”\textsuperscript{20}. In the opinion of Edmund Burke, the increasing importance of maritime trade, and of control of such trade, led to a “disembedding” of the agricultural economy from its previous “embedded” relationship with the broader Athenian culture during the classical era.\textsuperscript{21} The term “disembedding” is defined by Burke as a loosening of agriculture’s traditional associations with the “familial, religious and sociopolitical values” of the city-state.\textsuperscript{22} Thus the “disembedding” of agriculture made it culturally permissible for citizens to look upon economic activity other than agriculture as acceptable for Athenians.

As other economic pursuits increased in importance in Athens during the classical era and non-agricultural careers were followed by an increasing number of Athenians, the historic association between agrarianism and military service was increasingly weakened. The expansion of the economy and its enhanced diversification weakened the traditional
identity of a middle-class citizen as a farmer.\textsuperscript{23} The hoplite was certainly still the
dominant type of Athenian military personnel but the association between being a
landowning farmer, being a citizen and being a soldier was irretrievably broken. Men
who had been farmers but for whom farming was no longer economically feasible turned
to their military experience as a source of income, as did metics and former slaves. As the
traditional definition of the hoplite expanded to include professional soldiers fighting for
the \textit{polis} that employed them, the definition of \textit{strategos} as a civic official carrying out
his military duty, leading hoplites who were also carrying out civic duty through military
service, became less consistent with the actual military paradigm that was in place. Thus,
the decreasing cultural and economic importance of agricultural had two important
effects for the military and its leadership. First, it diminished the cultural importance of
hoplite warfare as a symbol of the agrarian basis of the \textit{polis}, thus fostering more
flexibility in the structure and tactics of the military. Second, it increased social support
for occupational pursuits other than agriculture, fostering the development of a
professional military. This second effect would provide the means for some Athenians to
survive the difficult economic times they were now facing.

\textbf{II Economic Conditions and Their Impact on the Military}

Plutarch indicates that after the Persian Wars, Athens, under the leadership of
Pericles, was transformed “into the greatest and richest of all cities”.\textsuperscript{24} Thucydides
indicates that the Athenian treasury contained 6,000 talents at the beginning of the
Peloponnesian War in 431 BC\textsuperscript{25}, and Xenophon relates that the annual income of the
polis in this period was approximately 1000 talents\textsuperscript{26} suggesting that the reserve
contained approximately six times the city-state’s annual income as the great war began.
Although these financial reserves were somewhat depleted in the Archidamian War, the treasury was built up again in the years of relative calm between the two wars with Sparta. Indeed, the period immediately following the Archidamian war has been described as a time of prosperity for the Athenian *polis*.

As the second phase of the Peloponnesian War unfolded, however, Athenian finances began to quickly deteriorate. Adcock notes that increases in tribute and a war tax (*eisphora*) Athenians imposed on themselves reduced, for a time, the drain on the Athenian treasury that the war created. This was only temporarily successful, however, for war expenses continued to drain public and private reserves and engross current revenue as the result of the resumption of hostilities between Sparta and Athens, in particular because of the enormously expensive and disastrous expedition to Sicily. Evidence for the damaging effect of the Sicilian expedition is offered by the fact that that after the departure of the second expedition to Sicily, Athens sent its Thracian mercenaries home because it couldn’t afford to pay them. Added to the mounting military expenditures were increases in domestic spending, in part the result of the institutions of cash subsidies paid to citizens for carrying out civic obligations.

Economic conditions continued to worsen; Thucydides asserts that in 411 the Athenians had no money left to fight the war. After the war, at the beginning of the fourth century, conditions continued to worsen as Athens was, at times, bankrupt and could not “raise money to pay her forces”. The cycles of relative prosperity and impoverishment continued in the first half of the fourth century as conflicts such as the Social War of the 350s again resulted in “economic exhaustion”.
Many agriculturalists were displaced by the fifth century wars and, when the Peloponnesian War finally ended, there was no treasury to fund public works programs like those of Pericles to provide employment to supplement the income of the impoverished. The other means of making a living that were available to Athenians during these troubled times included maritime commerce, trades, mining, pottery production and military service. So, many Athenian farmers who entered military service as citizen-hoplites during the Peloponnesian War had, as the war progressed and after its conclusion, little economic choice but to put their experience to use by becoming professional soldiers, as “a form of relief for economic necessity”. Isocrates in speaking of all Hellenes including Athenians referred to this development when he noted that “many compelled through lack of the necessities of life to enlist in foreign armies, are being slain, fighting for their foes against their friends” and Xenophon names eleven Athenians involved in Persian mercenary service in *Anabasis*, approximately fifteen percent of all mercenaries named in the book. These men were seasoned veterans who had seen battle and survived; they had become professional soldiers and, as they reentered or remained in the army’s ranks, the need for professional management would have become much more important. Also, their status as full-time military personnel, not men called from their farms for sporadic military engagements, required the presence and attention of full-time management. The increasingly full time army, manned with expanding numbers of hired professional soldiers, was not the same army that had been led by the statesman-strategos. The changes in the composition of Athens’ military forces called for and, as the classical era drew to a close, received a different type of leadership.
III Increasing Military Costs

Another economic issue that fostered alteration of the classical *strategos* function was the increasing cost of the military itself. Pritchett maintains that Athenian armies were generally unpaid through the end of the Persian Wars but believes that pay was a regular feature of the Athenian military by mid fifth century.\(^{40}\) Thucydides, in his description of the revolt of the Mytileneans, makes it clear that Athenian hoplites receiving pay as early as 428 BC.\(^{41}\) The increasing size, nontraditional composition and increasingly full-time nature of the Athenian military created an increasing economic drain on the *polis* as the classical era progressed. Full-time armies were expensive, requiring the resources of an empire to support.\(^{42}\) Thucydides reports that after the expedition to Sicily “expenditure was not the same as it had been but had grown bigger as the war grew bigger, while revenue was declining”\(^{43}\).

Throughout the classical period military engagements were becoming more frequent, protracted and far-flung. This greatly increased military costs experienced by the *polis*. During the classical era military expeditions were often sent to distant locations, requiring substantial per-engagement investment by the government. Thucydides, for example, identifies that the Sicilian expedition and the defense of the invasion of Attica led to the “financial embarrassment” of Athens, particularly because they were concurrent and prolonged.\(^{44}\) If a siege was used the costs of the campaign went even higher, both for long-term maintenance of troops and for the timber and other supplies used in the actual operations.\(^{45}\) If the engagement was not successful, no booty was obtained to offset the costs of this investment, which became an irretrievable financial loss for the *polis*. 
Often, in the fourth century, it became less expensive to hire mercenaries than to support a standing army, both in terms of direct costs and lost production. Mercenaries, however, were contractual employees who had to be paid and, despite the fact that their wages were small and often partially paid off only after completion of service, this cost placed additional stress on the Athenian treasury in the classical era. Van Wees suggests that, despite their cost, Athens were forced to use mercenaries during the Peloponnesian War in the campaign in northern Greece in 423-422 B.C. when its allies deserted and in the Sicilian expedition because the theater of operations was so distant that local allies were few. To reduce these costs Athens fostered, for the first time, the entry of poorer, thetic citizens into the army, particularly as light troops; Thucydides specifically refers to the recruitment of thetes to serve as marines on the Sicilian expedition and van Wees interprets ancient evidence as supporting the contention that hiring thetes into the military was “a normal practice”. Yalichev maintains, that this policy resulted, at least in part, from the fact that these paid citizens were cheaper and more loyal than foreign mercenaries, who entered military service to alleviate “their grinding poverty” not because they were “militiamen motivated by a sense of obligation”.

As war became ongoing rather than cyclical during the classical period, removing citizens from their civilian occupations for military service for long periods of time placed an additional burden of lost productivity and income on the polis. This lost productivity became more difficult for the polis to sustain as the prolonged Peloponnesian War progressed. Different methods had to be employed to meet the military manpower requirements of a polis with an expanding empire, additional
imperialist plans and an intractable war with a determined foe if these productivity losses were to be controlled.

Additional types of manpower were also needed because, considering the relatively small number of Athenian citizens, there would never be enough citizen-soldiers and sailors to meet the military manpower demands created by empire and war. A single trireme, for example, required a staff of approximately 170 rowers, not counting officers and marines. To staff the fleet of 300 triremes developed after the Persian War would thus have required in excess of 50,000 men – just for rowers. This number is almost as large as the largest available estimate of the entire Athenian citizen population during the classical period. Clearly, Athens could not hope to meet its military manpower needs simply by expanding the number of citizen-soldiers.

The need to maintain agricultural production, manage civic obligations and still meet expanded military manpower needs required the use of mercenaries, both domestic and foreign. These troops represented additional costs to the polis for equipment, meeting subsistence needs while on duty and post-duty compensation. Middle-class hoplites had traditionally provided their own panoplies and did not receive military wages; their cost to Athens had therefore been limited to providing maintenance allowances while on duty, and even that was limited by the rations they brought with them into active service. Mercenaries, on the other hand, were contractual employees who entered service with expectation of both subsistence and duty payments for their services. Such troops had been utilized before the classical period to be sure, but it was during this era that they were added to the military forces of Athens in increasing numbers.54 Mercenary manpower met two needs of the classical military: it addressed the problem of manpower
shortage and it also increased Athens’ own limited supply of military specialists such as archers and slingers. Maintaining mercenaries, however, was an expensive proposition for the already financially pressed city-state, leading to a constant problem of raising the funds to both pay enlistment bounties and the ongoing payments needed to maintain their services.

Equipment costs also increased when the government began providing some elements of the hoplite panoplies that had previously been purchased by the hoplites themselves. This was a not insignificant financial policy since a hoplite’s equipment is reported to have cost a year and a half of the average Athenian’s wages. The increasing use of military specialists such as archers, slingers, and peltasts also increased military costs; these men were often mercenaries, but whether citizens or mercenaries, had a skill that required training and practice to maintain. This translated into full-time service that, as indicated above, substantially increased military costs.

The expanding navy also greatly increased Athens’ military costs. Thucydides notes that a single trireme cost the state a talent a month to maintain. He records that even as early as the Corcyra-Corinth conflict in 433BC rowers were paid “on good terms” and notes the possibility of competition among military foes to “attract foreign sailors… by offering higher rates of pay”, an important factor since Thucydides asserts that sailors’ motivation in joining the navy was purely economic. Pritchett provides evidence that the Athenian navy began to pay rowers by the mid fifth century and quotes Plutarch as indicating that this Periclean policy had the economic purpose of “rectification of the embarrassments of the poorer people”. Modern scholars agree that the maintenance of the expanding navy was probably the most significant element of
military cost in the classical epoch. Difficulty in meeting naval expenses was noted throughout the classical period as in Plutarch’s probably fictional narrative of a naval captain named Architeles who, during the Persian War, did not have enough money to pay his crew.

So for the *strategos* the expansion of Athens’ military forces meant managing a more heterogeneous group of soldiers and sailors who were of diverse backgrounds and had entered military service for diverse reasons; it also meant, therefore, increased obligations to inspire men who were not always motivated by a sense of civic obligation. Given the lack of financial resources this additional inspiration often had to be exerted through force of personality alone. Additionally, increases in paid personnel meant that the *strategos* had vastly enhanced economic obligations; first, for administration of compensation but soon, as shall next be discussed, for securing financial support for his troops. These two new functions of leadership in the Athenian military were directly related to the economic environment of classical Athens and were not consistent with maintenance of the statesman-*strategos* model of military leadership that was then in place.

### IV Expanding Economic Functions of the Strategoi

Another economic change that occurred in the classical era and affected the Athenian military was the changing sources of military funding and assumption of broader fiscal functions by the *strategoi*. At the beginning of the classical period the military was largely funded by income generated from the resources of the Athenian *polis* or from the geographic areas dominated by Athens, such as the silver mines at Laurium. As the period progressed, however, Thucydides and Xenophon agree that an increasing
amount of Athenian income came from imperial sources, such as tribute or taxes extracted from allied tributary states, presumably to pay the costs of their defense. Thucydides notes that, even before the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, Athens had taken over the fleets of allies and made them pay contributions of money for their defense. As the period progressed and the number of tributary states expanded, public funds used to support the military came from these states. An exception to this rule was those Athenian colonies that had Athenian citizen-settlers; these colonies did not pay tribute, but instead provided allied troops for war efforts.

Over time tributary funds came to be viewed as the property of the Athenian polis to be used for whatever purposes it saw fit. Plutarch alludes to this in his biography of Pericles when he notes that it was acceptable for him to use the tribute of allies to support public building projects because “the giver of funds had no right to tell the receiver of funds how to spend them as long as the services were received”. Similarly, Pritchett indicates that increasingly war became “a mechanism for national income” and asserts that the practice of the acquisition of the property of other states to augment state income became commonplace in the fourth century. Tritle, in fact, maintains that the cultural flowering of the city-state was only possible because of wealth from the empire “Athens ruled over with an iron fist”. As income from other states became integrated into the funding of the military and of the polis itself, the military took on the economic functions of both a police force and tax collector for the civilian government when the strategoi assumed the responsibility of assuring collection of funds from allies who bore treaty responsibility for funding Athenian military operations as members of the Delian League.
The military not only became the collector of tribute and taxes for the state but also the generator of funds through the acquisition of booty. Plutarch quotes Cimon as saying he “took pride in enriching his own city with the spoils from her enemies” and notes that Cimon’s campaign in Asia resulted in “so much money from the sale of captured spoils” that Athens could meet “various public expenses” and initiate public works projects. Thucydides describes the taking of booty as a routine source of military support and specifically says Nicias took 120 talents of booty from Hykkara in 415. Similarly, Xenophon reports that Alcibiades took 100 talents of booty from Karia in 407 perhaps in lieu of tribute payments. Demosthenes wanted to pay the strike force against Philip only a maintenance allowance and told them “if they wanted more they could ravage the enemy”.

Because military personnel often made less in base pay than other Athenians “booty and the allotted share of any proceeds of victory” were vital elements of military compensation. Clearly, as other sources of military funding diminished while military activities increased, booty became an increasingly important method of funding for the military and a basis for increasing power and autonomy of the strategos who obtained it. Combatants, Pritchett reports, became increasingly “careless about the rights of neutrals” and raids to gather booty from non-combatant states became more common as the Peloponnesian War impoverished the polis. In fact, it is asserted that, by the fourth century, the impoverishment of the polis was so severe that booty often became the sole source of financial support for military operations. For example, Bloedow reports that in the spring of 411 the Athenians could not meet the pay of the fleet at Samos “so that the crews had to fend for themselves”. As financial stress on the polis increased,
economic necessity even began to dictate military strategy. Campaigns, as described by Thucydides and Xenophon, regularly included tangential forays and unrelated attacks, conducted for the stated purpose of obtaining funds for the military endeavor.

Not only did the strategoi distribute booty to their troops, they also sold what remained and sent the proceeds back to Athens as property of the state. Strauss notes that Thrasybulus led “plundering raids” to fund the Peloponnesian War and “assessed 5% taxes” for the purpose of polis support. The financial responsibilities of the generals for supporting the military and the polis was enhanced as the Athenian elites who provided financial support for the war effort found themselves less capable and willing to carry the burden of military or civic expense. Bloedow describes this period, the last decade of the Peloponnesian War, as an “increasing economic crisis” that by 411 had completely exhausted the reserve fund, with new funds “limited to only harbor and market duties which had also decreased commensurate with the war-related decrease in trade and commerce”. Adcock also indicates that, particularly in the last ten years of the Peloponnesian War, “Athens was finding it very hard to pay her way” and that “by the dawning of the fourth century the military strategy of Greek states was often conditioned by financial need”. Thus, as economic conditions deteriorated, and the strategos assumed economic responsibilities for both the military and the polis, his power expanded, both with his troops and with the city-state. Although the strategoi were still answerable to the civilian government one of the key bases of civilian control, the control of the purse strings, was thus greatly vitiated as the era progressed.

Adding to the expanded economic functions of the Athenian strategoi was their responsibility for keeping vital grain routes open during the Peloponnesian War. Richard
asserts that importation of grain predated the Classical period, resulting from specialization of agricultural production fostered by Solon. As Griffith has pointed out “shortage of land had always been at the root of economic problems in Greece” and this shortage increased dependence on foreign grain, especially during the Peloponnesian War. During the fifth century, Pericles expanded trade with Thrace and southern Russia for the purpose of “corn import” and Warry maintains that Athenian military incursions into Asia were motivated, at least in part, “by thoughts of the corn supply from Egypt”. The importation of grain achieved enhanced importance during the second Peloponnesian War when domestic production faltered owing to Spartan raids, reduced agricultural manpower, abandonment of the chora and plague. The fortification of Decelea and periodic Spartan incursions made overland importation of grain more dangerous while the alternative sea routes were both expensive and circuitous. The military importance of maintaining both land and sea grain routes is noted by both Ellis and Bloedow who maintain, for example, that Alcibiades’ victory at Cyzicus was key, not only because it damaged the Spartan navy, but also because it allowed grain routes to Athens to be reestablished through the area.

Even after the war, the recovery in Athenian population continued and the need for imported food supply did not diminish. Especially in the years immediately following the war, economic conditions were fraught with “food shortages and inflation, with some products tripling in price”. This situation is confirmed by Adcock who notes that “an ever more important objective of Athens’ naval policy was to secure for her commerce the passage of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles. Throughout the fifth and fourth centuries the corn that came to Athens from the Black Sea was a vital part of her food
supply. So the strategos not only brought in cash, as tribute, taxes or booty, but also had responsibility for assuring an adequate food supply for the polis through his responsibility for keeping grain routes open. As these economic functions of the Athenian generals increased, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the part-time, elected, civic-official nature of the strategos position.

The Athenian military contributed to the wealth of Athens not only through the collection of imperial income, taking of booty and protection of grain routes but also in the enslavement of thousands of prisoners of war. It has been estimated that there sometimes were more than 120,000 slaves in the Athenian population during the fifth century. Pritchett maintains that “the army must have been a major slave supplying instrument in the Greek world”, asserts that these human captives were “the most valuable items of all the plunder realized in Greek warfare” and further avows that it can be inferred that “the procurement of slaves was the main source of revenue for armies usually impoverished”.

Thus, because of economic necessity, the role of the strategos came to include enhanced responsibility for funding the forces he was expected to lead; as well as providing economic support, food, and slaves for the polis. As generals became a source of economic support their position with both troops and civilian leadership had to be redefined. To the troops they were more and more the employer, the person who provides payment and for whom service rendered, while their autonomy from the control of the civilian government was enhanced by the lack of economic control the polis could exert upon him. Often now the strategos literally held the purse strings of the polis; this fact was not conducive to strong civilian control of military leadership in Athens.
V Conclusion

As the discussion in this chapter has indicated, the economic environment of classical Athens both generated impacts upon and felt impacts from its military forces. The agrarian-military paradigm of the hoplite infantry was diminished by both agrarian depression and the expansion of a more diversified economy. The cost of the military increased at a time when the *polis* was undergoing severe financial reverses. The role of the military in Athenian life expanded from explicitly military functions to a broader set of responsibilities for the economic support of both the *polis* and itself. Each of these economic issues was inconsistent with the continuation of the civilian-statesman *strategos* model of military leadership and made alteration of that role increasingly more likely. In the next chapter an analysis of the career of Alcibiades, a *strategos* whose career was a watershed in the development of a new model of military leadership, will be offered. The changes in military leadership that he embodied will be suggested and a rationale for those differences garnered from the military, political and economic environments in which he functioned will be presented.
Notes
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22.Ibid, 198


43. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 7.28.4.

44. Ibid, 7.28.1-4.


46. Miller, “The Practical and Economic Background to the Greek Mercenary Explosion”, 153


49. Miller, “The Practical and Economic Background to the Greek Mercenary Explosion”, 157


54. van Wees, *Greek Warfare – Myths and Realities*, 73.


57. Miller, “The Practical and Economic Background to the Greek Mercenary Explosion”, 156.


62. Ibid, 1.31.1.


64. Ibid, 6.24.3-4.


68. Ibid, Themistocles 4.1.

70. Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 7.1.27.


72. Ibid, 1.56.2, 8.45.5.


83. Russell, *The Greek as a Mercenary Warrior*, 104


85. Ibid, 74.


96. Ibid, 51.


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Chapter Four
The Career of Alcibiades: the Strategos Role in Transition

I Introduction

It is inevitable that certain times and circumstances produce such individuals as Alcibiades; people who possess natural charisma and a driving superiority complex. When a narcissistic disregard for tradition and norms is also present, these individuals, if enabled, can alter history, often in negative rather than positive ways.

Alcibiades has often been presented as the personification of the late fifth century zeitgeist, a product of the type of divisive and fractional politics that racked Athens during the Peloponnesian War. It would take such a personality to propel forward the paradigm of growing autonomy in military leadership experienced in Greece during the classical era. An analysis of the career of Alcibiades reveals many of the elements that would be continued and expanded in the careers of the great captains of the fourth century. These factors include emphasis on personal autonomy rather than obedience to state mandates, an ability to inspire the loyalty of troops, the use of innovative and extramilitary tactics to achieve military ends, assumption of expanded fiscal responsibilities and espousal of a changing definition of military goals away from protection of the state and reduction of the enemy to total destruction of the enemy and creation of empire. The purpose of this chapter is to present an array of evidence supporting the existence of these transitional aspects of Alcibiades’ generalship and to suggest a relationship between these transitional elements and the socio-political conditions in which they were practiced.
II. Alcibiades, the Boy and the Man

Born in 450 B.C.\(^2\), Alcibiades grew up during the height of the Athenian Empire. Living in the seat of the “tyrant city”, in the very house of Pericles, the young Alcibiades was in intimate contact with the upper echelons of Athenian politicians. Thus he was exposed to the reins of power in his formative years. As a boy he was the darling favorite of many adult suitors\(^3\); perhaps it was these attentions that inculcated him with a sense of special importance. This sense of personal superiority can also be seen as outgrowth of his noble patrimony, as he was “distinguished by the splendor of his ancestry”\(^4\); his mother was Deinomache, an Alcmeonid, and his father was Cleinias whose blood was said to be traced from Eurysaces, the son of Telamonian Ajax\(^5\). It was known amongst his contemporaries that “among the many strong passions of his real character, the one most prevailing of all was his ambition and desire of superiority”\(^6\).

Ward of the most powerful man in Athens, he and his “friends…of the best sort” in giddy bouts of drinking, feeling entitled by their celebrity and status, committed rather brazen acts of delinquency.\(^7\) On a dare he once publicly boxed the ears of Hipponicus “unprovoked by any passion or quarrel between them”.\(^8\) In another incident he crashed a private banquet and confiscated half of the man’s dinnerware.\(^9\) Alcibiades and his friends were also likely guilty of blaspheming the Eleusinian Mysteries in mock ceremonies.\(^10\) What is evident is that the young Alcibiades unabashedly flaunted his power over others and “pushed the boundary between personal loyalties and the paramount loyalty to the state to the breaking point”\(^11\).

These indications of overweening pride continued into his manhood. In 416 Alcibiades entered an unprecedented seven chariots in the Olympics and, according to
Plutarch, took first, second and fourth places. After his victory he had two portraits of himself, commemorating the event, placed in the banquet room of the Propylaea. The multitudes seemed awed by this display, but some people in the city saw it as a scandal, revealing Alcibiades’ possible tyrannical impulses. Plato, perhaps reflecting this popular concern regarding Alcibiades, has him respond to questions by Socrates regarding who should rule by indicating that the “well-born and well-bred are more likely to be perfect in character” and that the common people are inadequate to govern.

Although Plato contrived this discussion when writing *Alcibiades I*, it undoubtedly contains opinions that were common among Alcibiades’ contemporaries.

Plutarch notes that people of good repute were appalled by Alcibiades’ “contempt of law” and thought it “indicating designs of usurpation.” Contemporary authors also noted his lack of temperance in his personal habits. References in comedic works, such as those of Aristophanes, suggest he was known for being licentious. Athenaeus, in a polemical passage, quotes Aeschines as saying Alcibiades was a womanizer and a drunk and Thucydides says that “Alcibiades’ private life gave offense to everyone”; he further indicates that this led the Athenians to reject his leadership. Orators began to write speeches criticizing his personal life, and Aristophanes began parodying him in plays such as the *Frogs* and *Clouds*. His qualities of immodesty, ostentatious display and licentiousness, so widely discussed, seemed out of step with current Athenian social values and gave rise to suspicion regarding his political aspirations.

Thus, as an adult, Alcibiades was feared by some of his contemporaries as a “profound threat to the status quo” and some recognized in him a *paranomia* (‘transgressiveness’) that made them uneasy. In a telling quote from Plato, his fictional
Socrates says Alcibiades wanted the “greatest power in the state and power over other Hellenic states and barbarian nations… the world must be filled with your power”\textsuperscript{24}. In sum, contemporary evidence indicates that the adult Alcibiades was viewed with both caution and admiration by the society that had spawned him.

His acute narcissism began to have serious consequences for the state after the Peace of Nicias was established. Alcibiades was offended that the Spartans negotiated the peace through Nicias and overlooked him and his family’s history as \textit{proxenoi} to Sparta.\textsuperscript{25} He, because he felt “slighted by all” and also because he desired the re-establishment of hostilities with Sparta, tricked the Spartan ambassadors into denying their authority in front of the \textit{ekklesia}, then spoke against the treaty, decrying the Spartans as untrustworthy. He did this to disgrace the Spartans as insincere, fulfill his desire for “glory over security” and specifically to break down the peace between Athens and Sparta.\textsuperscript{26} According to Munn, Alcibiades often responded to imagined affronts by “a bolder assertion of his indomitability”\textsuperscript{27}, as was displayed in this situation. As portrayed by Thucydides, this episode marked the beginning of Alcibiades’ major role in public life and so it is here, buttressed by an understanding of his background and personal character that an analysis of how he conducted his public life will begin.

\textbf{III Alcibiades the General: Personal Goals Above the Needs of the State}

Goals are commonly defined as the end states one wants to achieve. In military terms such goals are usually related to the protection of the state from external or internal threats to its integrity or prosperity.\textsuperscript{28} Military commanders are expected to achieve these goals, without concern for their own interests or objectives. When the military career of Alcibiades is considered in this context, however, it appears that his personal goals,
which have been described by Munn as the maintenance and increase of his own power,
often had primacy over the military goals of Athens in determining the actions he would
take. A brief review of his military career will demonstrate that Alcibiades considered the
goals of the \textit{polis} and his expected obedience to its directives as secondary to the
achievement of his personal objectives and that his service to Athens, as well as to other
states, was more a means to achievement of his own ends than a goal in itself.

Alcibiades began his military career in the Archidamian War at the battle of
Potidaea, was wounded and was awarded a panoply for his courage. As the Peace of
Nicias began, he initiated his political career as a prosecutor and speaker in the
Assembly. Evidence indicates that Alcibiades believed that expansion of the Athenian
empire was the best method both for its defense and, as Nicias suggested, for his own
aggrandizement. He therefore espoused the goals of creating an alliance with the
Argives and other Peloponnesians and undermining the shaky peace that existed
between Athens and Sparta after the Archidamian War. As has been discussed, he
exacerbated the environment of suspicion that already existed regarding the Spartans and
their intentions, cemented the Argive alliance and finally used the opportunity presented
by the Segestian plea for aid to enflame the Athenians with the belief that a “strike-the-
first-blow” attack on Syracuse was the best way to achieve the Athenian goals of
defending their state and expanding their hegemony. Plutarch maintains that he also
saw this military goal as key to his own goal of provoking a far broader war, since with
military victory in Sicily, he hoped to expand Athenian imperialism as far as “Italy and
Carthage”.


Soon, Alcibiades left for Sicily with Nicias, Lamachus and the powers of an autokrator\textsuperscript{36}, while groups opposing him actively fanned the flames of anti-Alcibiades propaganda with hostile oratory, and, perhaps most significantly, promoted the theory that he had been actively involved in the desecration of the Hermes and the profaning of the Eleusinian Mysteries\textsuperscript{37}. Although most historians now doubt the validity of this claim the socio-political environment in which it occurred, replete with factionalism and superstition\textsuperscript{38}, supported the development of a frenzied atmosphere of “witch hunting”\textsuperscript{39} in which Alcibiades’ decadent lifestyle itself became sufficient proof of guilt\textsuperscript{40}. After his departure, the forces in Athens that feared him gathered enough support from the people to order his return for trial.\textsuperscript{41} With this action the convergence between the goals of the state and Alcibiades’ personal goals was destroyed and the stage was set for the entry of a new military partner and a new set of military goals.

Alcibiades realized that the environment in Athens had turned against him\textsuperscript{42}; although he agreed to go home willingly, this was a deception on his part. After betraying the Athenian plan to sponsor a revolt against pro-Syracusan leadership of Messana\textsuperscript{43} he meekly followed the Salaminia in his own ship to the port of Thurii where he escaped without a trace\textsuperscript{44}. His goals at this time changed completely; his new aim, as he himself is reported to have stated it, was to make the Athenians “feel that I am alive”\textsuperscript{45} and as indicated to the Spartan Ephors, to be their friend and advisor\textsuperscript{46}. So, once again, Alcibiades sought a situation in which his personal goal, revenge, and the objectives of Sparta, the defeat of the Athenians, were consistent. He then enunciated for the Spartans the three elements of what he believed would be a winning military strategy. These were: to send Spartan leadership to Syracuse so it could defeat the Athenians, to fortify Decelea
and so immediately threaten Athens and to launch vigorous attacks in mainland Greece itself. Although these policies had been considered before Alcibiades’ arrival his speech galvanized the Spartans into action. It is eloquent testimony to the personal charisma and oratorical power of Alcibiades that he was able to win over the Spartans with nothing but his own presentation to support him.

At Sparta Alcibiades again became a powerful and respected figure. Decelea was fortified and Syracuse did receive the services of Gyllipus, and both developments worked to the strategic advantage of the Spartans. In other arenas, however, Alcibiades proved less successful. Within two years he gained the enmity of King Agis; although the reasons are in dispute, there is no doubt that the relationship between the two had deteriorated severely. His strategy of creating pro-Spartan rebellion in the Ionian city-states was not sustained and soon, he was forced to save himself by arranging a mission to Chios, ostensibly to further rebellion against Athens. While there, however, Alcibiades became aware of a Spartan death sentence on his head and once again faced a change of personal and military goal and strategy.

Alcibiades fled to the only real protection available: to the Persians, in the person of the satrap Tissaphernes. Here his goals become more difficult to discern. Did he ever really meld his personal goals with those of Persia? Or were his efforts on Tissaphernes’ behalf always a cover for his own grand strategy of securing his return to Athens? The answer to this question is unknown. What is known, however, is that Alcibiades immediately became Tissaphernes’ most trusted advisor and that he recommended, overtly at least, a goal of maintaining a balance of power between the Athenians and the Spartans as the best alternative for the Great King. Proving his value to the Persian, he
advised a strategy of reduction of pay for the Spartan sailors, now funded by the satrap and suggested that Tissaphernes withhold the Phoenician fleet from the Spartans in order to prolong the war and wear out the combatants. The ultimate goal of these actions, overtly at least, was the reduction of both rival states to impotence and hence to domination by Persia. Tissaphernes agreed with this strategy and implemented it.

Alcibiades, however, as recorded by Plutarch, began to fear that if Athens lost the war he would then fall into the hands of the Spartans and thereafter started negotiations with the Athenians at Samos to secure terms for his return to Athens. Once again the requirements of personal, rather than state, objectives determined Alcibiades’ goals and strategy. He informed the representatives from Samos that he controlled Tissaphernes, and could bring his friendship to the Athenians but would only do so if assured that an oligarchy would be established in Athens and he himself assured of a safe return. Some of the Athenian leadership, those comfortable with the imposition of oligarchy, agreed to Alcibiades’ terms and, led by Pisander, went to Athens to obtain support for the plan.

Alcibiades had a difficult task to accomplish if he was to achieve his goal of returning to Athens with safety and respect. The situation was complicated by recent events in both Athens and Samos. In Athens there had been a successful oligarchic coup while in Samos, unaware of the coup in Athens, there had been an unsuccessful attempt at an oligarchic coup that had been successfully resisted by the citizens and its resident Athenian military. Invited by Thrasybulus, Alcibiades went to Samos and made a speech to the basically democratic troops who, aware of the potential oligarchic coup, were angrily stating their intention to sail to Athens immediately to protect the democracy. He told the crowd that he could bring the Persians to the Athenian side and urged it not to
leave Samos undefended. In gaining their agreement to this strategy, Plutarch maintains, Alcibiades protected the islands, Ionia and the Hellespont from almost certain conquest by the Spartans. He also achieved his own objective of delaying their departure because, as described by Plutarch he “thought it best not to meet them empty-handed, without any positive achievement to his credit…but rather to arrive in a blaze of glory”. His personal goal of returning to Athens as a hero required that he be able to return as a victorious warrior who was also bringing glory and booty to the diminished Athenians. He immediately proceeded to implement this strategy and in a series of victories including Abydos, Cyzicus, Chalcedon, Selymbria and Byzantium regained his prestige as an Athenian military leader and gathered the booty he wanted to assure his welcome at home.

It would seem that Alcibiades’ lifetime objective of personal glory paired with the ascent of Athens was going to occur. He was, indeed, greeted as a returning hero and received multiple signs of the respect and favor of the demos upon his return. But this period was short-lived; for Alcibiades soon left Athens to confront the Spartans again. This time his goals were thwarted. Departing to raise funds, he left the fleet at Ephesus in the control of a loyal, but minor ranking officer named Antiochus with orders not to engage the enemy. Antiochus violated these orders and suffered a stinging defeat at Notion. After the battle was lost the angry Athenians stripped Alcibiades of his command. Alcibiades, now went to Thrace where he may have assembled a mercenary force and lived as a “robber-baron”. At this point in his career his own goals and strategies could not be successfully melded with those of any state.
He made one last attempt to assist the Athenians by offering strategic advice at Aegospotami, but the Athenian commanders would not heed him, and subsequently suffered a disastrous defeat. In the end, Alcibiades was on the run in Thrace, accompanied only by his personal retinue, and eventually murdered, probably on Spartan orders carried out by minions of Pharnabazus because they feared his potential active opposition to the government of the Thirty in Athens. Alcibiades was finally viewed as a rogue force that was both dangerous to Spartan interests and too unpredictable to be ignored.

Thus, the overwhelming body of evidence from Alcibiades’ life indicates that he would consistently choose the course of action that he believed to be in his own best interest, regardless of his obligation as a military leader to carry out the will of the polis. For, as Strauss and Ober point out, “neither Alcibiades nor any of his opponents were willing to place the national interest over personal advantage.” The divergence of the interests of the state from the personal objectives of military leaders was to reappear with increasing frequency as the fourth century progressed.

IV Alcibiades the General: Imperialism and Preemptive Attack as Strategies of War

The contemporary record of Alcibiades’ statements and actions as a strategos that is provided by Thucydides supports the conclusion that he, for both personal and patriotic reasons, was in favor of an expanding the Athenian empire. It should be noted that his attraction to imperialism was fully in keeping with Athenian philosophy, policy and practice during the fifth century. The Athenians, as noted by Munn, believed that power was evidence of superiority and that those who could be dominated were therefore legitimate targets of domination. Plato, in the disputed Alcibiades I, describes an imagined conversation between Alcibiades and his mentor-lover Socrates that
emphasizes the moral attitude toward power and its use that was common in the contemporary Athenian society. In response to concerted questioning by Socrates Plato has Alcibiades declare that “the good”, by definition, are those who are able to rule.80 Plutarch notes that the Athenians had wanted to acquire Sicily even in the times of Pericles.81 According to Plutarch, Alcibiades understood this aspect of Athenian political philosophy and took the opportunity to “inflame it”.82

That Alcibiades became a critical proponent of this philosophy is verified by Thucydides, who records Alcibiades’ speech before the Athenian Assembly supporting the ill-fated expedition to Sicily. Here, Alcibiades avows that the expedition may make Athens “the master of the Hellenes” and notes that Athens “is not inactive by nature” an apparent allusion to preexisting Athenian attitudes toward military aggression and political domination. He urges the Athenians to “live up to their character” by proceeding with the expedition. To this appeal to the expansionism of Athenian society he adds the warning that Athens “will decay without struggle” and the promise that Sparta would be humbled because the invasion would demonstrate “how little we care for the peace we are now enjoying”.85 He finally points out that the superiority of the Athenian navy will minimize any possible negative outcome and further recommends a strategy of preemptive attack, “striking the first blow”, as the best means of defense of the polis. He urges the Athenians not to consider the needs or motives of Sparta in determining their course of action.87 With these comments Alcibiades comes very close to directly recommending the strategy of “total war” initiated without notice, specific grievance or possibility of compromise that would become a frequent characteristic of later military conflicts.
Leaving no doubt as to his broader imperialist intentions Alcibiades, in this same speech, also urges additional empire-building aggression in Greece itself. Aggression and empire-building was thus tied to national character, indeed to its very survival, by a charismatic leader in an overt statement of national military policy for, as quoted by Ellis Alcibiades believed that “empires are made by coming to the aid of those who ask” and, according to Strauss and Ober “that Athens’ destiny lay in expansion” Alcibiades was also a supporter of his own interests more than anything else, and expansionism and preemption best suited his needs. His direct role as the precipitating force in a military policy of the state and his support for preemption and expansionism would become standard policies of later mercenary generals who more and more became not only the instruments of national policy in Athens, but also often its framers.

V Alcibiades the General: Non-Hoplite Techniques of War

Little is reported regarding the battle tactics of Alcibiades aside from the descriptions of the battle of Cyzicus and even these are in dispute. Yet, despite this relative silence on Alcibiades role as a leader in battle he is positively evaluated as a military leader by Thucydides and reported by Xenophon to have the reputation of a successful military commander. What aspects of his performance merit this evaluation? Here a deduction must be made from those aspects of his performance that are described by contemporary sources. A review of these sources indicates that Alcibiades strengths as a general rested on the use of non-traditional techniques to achieve military goals. First, he repeatedly used extra-military strategies and tactics, often to good effect. Primary among these were the use of deception, spies and conspirators as conscious tools to achieve military ends. Second, in his later career, in some of his greatest military
triumphs, he is recorded to have used non-hoplite troops and non-traditional battle strategies very effectively.

Plato, in *Alcibiades I*, has Socrates force Alcibiades to answer the question would he advise Athens only to go to war for a just cause. Alcibiades responds that it’s an “awkward question” because certainly even the just would be made to look unjust before the war began.\(^9^4\) Although this dialogue is imaginary, it certainly suggests that Alcibiades had an established reputation for using subterfuge when it suited his military objectives. He was particularly skilled in identifying issues that could be used to achieve his ends and putting events in motion that would have the military and political results that he desired. For example, according to Bloedow, Alcibiades, acting as provocateur, convinced the Argives to begin a quarrel with the Epidaurians. This deception on his part precipitated the crisis between them that resulted in the battle at Mantinea.\(^9^5\) In Sicily, after the arrival of the *Salaminia* to accompany him home for trial Alcibiades sent word to the pro-Syracusan leadership of Messana to expect the pro-Athenian coup that he had instigated\(^9^6\); this duplicity led to the execution of the rebel leaders\(^9^7\) but achieved Alcibiades’ military objective of damaging the Athenian forces in Sicily.

At Sparta, Alcibiades convinced the Ephors that Athens intended to conquer not only Sicily but also Italy and Carthage and then attack the Peloponnesus with their expanded resources\(^9^8\); this was another episode of self-serving deception since there was no approved plan to go beyond Sicily. Later, feeling endangered in Sparta, he arranged his deputation to Chios and then lied to the Chians, telling them that an entire Spartan fleet was following him to encourage their revolt.\(^9^9\) He then convinced Miletus, Erythrae and Clazomenae to revolt with similar promises of Spartan aid.\(^1^0^0\) Bloedow maintains that
when this Ionian strategy eventually failed, the Spartans were so accustomed to his use of
deception that they believed his failure was deliberate and therefore began to mistrust
him.101 Thucydides confirms this when he states that an order for the death of Alcibiades
was issued by the Spartans both because he was the personal enemy of the king and “in
other respects not worthy of confidence”.102

After establishing himself at the court of the satrap Tissaphernes, Alcibiades,
acting as his military advisor, recommended a strategy that combined bribery and non-
intervention as tactics to achieve Persian military objectives. Specifically, he advised
withholding the Phoenician fleet from providing aid to the Spartans103 and bribing the
allied captains to accept reduced and irregularly paid wages for the men under their
command104.

Later, Alcibiades promised the Athenians at Samos that he could provide the
friendship of Tissaphernes to Athens even though he knew he could not deliver it, in
order to cement the loyalty of the army to him and secure his election as general.105
Thucydides relates that Alcibiades, not wanting the Athenians to know he couldn’t
produce the support of the satrap then presented treaty terms from Tissaphernes, to
which he knew the Athenians would never agree, this second deception was apparently
unsuccessful as Thucydides reports that the Athenians broke off negotiations thinking
Alcibiades had deceived them.106

Still later Alcibiades, knowing Tissaphernes would not support Athens, engaged in
a ruse by visiting him to make it seem he still had the confidence of the satrap and thus
undermine Tissaphernes’ position with his Spartan allies.107 The ruse worked for,
according to Ellis, the Spartans lost confidence in Tissaphernes that he never regained.108
Although Tissaphernes actually imprisoned Alcibiades at this point, Alcibiades was able to convert even this misfortune into a deceptive victory. Somehow he escaped after only a month of captivity; he then circulated the story that Tissaphernes had allowed him to escape. Whether this is true is not known, but the circulation of the story (or truth) was a stroke of strategic genius since it permanently damaged the Tissaphernes-Spartan alliance\(^{109}\) and, as an added benefit, Alcibiades was later able to take credit for this among the Athenians.\(^{110}\)

It is also clear that Alcibiades had a well-developed understanding of the value of propaganda in military and political life. In his speeches he associated himself, through his lineage, with the glorious past of Athens and through his looks and demeanor with the image of the hero in classical society. He carried a shield emblazoned with the sign of the god Eros\(^{111}\) and constantly reminded people of his great Olympic victories\(^{112}\). It was understandable that he would do so since Olympic victory was interpreted as a sign of approval by the gods\(^{113}\) and gained the victor reputation beyond the walls of the *polis.* After his victory Alcibiades received lavish gifts from states including Ephesus, Lesbos and Chios\(^{114}\); the reputation that he created for himself abroad was no doubt of great value in securing military allies for Athens, Sparta and Persia. He also created and circulated the story that the Epidaureans had committed a minor, but meaningful, violation of the religious customs of the Argives in order to precipitate antagonism and military action between them.\(^{115}\) This too succeeded and helped Alcibiades forward his objective of provoking continuation of the war between Athens and Sparta.

Alcibiades also understood the power of the written word and of permanent propaganda; he had the Laconian Pillar, which had been erected to commemorate the
Peace of Nicias, inscribed with the message that the Spartans had broken their word, in effect were without honor, because they had violated the terms of that peace by putting a garrison in Epidaurus. This sort of propaganda had long-lasting value since it would be seen not only by current Hellenes but also by their descendants. It was a move calculated to increase animosity between the two states and that was exactly the goal Alcibiades wanted to achieve at that time.

When supporting the resumption of hostilities in front of the Athenian Assembly he put out the propagandistic prospect of an easy victory, referring to the people of Sicily as a “motley rabble”, portraying its cities as weak and disorganized and assuring the Assembly that unspecified barbarians hated Syracuse and would come to Athens’ aid. In fact Sicilian city-states did not immediately succumb to Athens and the easy victory became a costly and protracted defeat, but apparently this propaganda was believed because as Ellis reports “Sicily fervor swept Athens” following his speech.

When Alcibiades returned to Athens after his time with Tissaphernes he used the propaganda value of victories and booty to full advantage. It was a true propaganda coup; when he finally arrived in Athens his ship was adorned with a purple sail, the color of kingship and a huge amount of booty gathered in the Aegean was arranged in full view covering the deck of his ship. He was also followed by many captured triremes towed in his wake as he entered the harbor, and carried the figure-heads of at least two hundred more that he had destroyed. The messages of rank, beneficence, and victory could not have been clearer or more welcome to the battle-weary Athenians.

During his homecoming ceremonies he was, apparently, “crowned with gold” and made a general “at land and sea with absolute power”. The crowning, an act of
obvious symbolism, indicated both the impact of his recent victories and the success of
the propaganda campaign that had been mounted before his arrival. When he later led the
first land procession to Eleusis since the Spartan fortification of Decelea\textsuperscript{122}, the
propagandistic picture of Alcibiades as an invincible, heroic leader was amplified even
more. In fact, Plutarch reports that the people said Alcibiades performed the role of “high
priest” as well as general on that day.\textsuperscript{123}

Alcibiades used informants and spies as well as propaganda to achieve his
military objectives. Several episodes underscore the effectiveness of Alcibiades’ use of
spies as part of his military strategy. Plutarch, for example, indicates that Alcibiades was
under a sentence of death from the Spartans when he was in Ionia but escaped because he
had “stealthy discovery of this that put him on his guard”.\textsuperscript{124} Then, at the court of
Tissaphernes, Alcibiades brokered the bribing of Spartan generals and accepted
intelligence from the Spartan general Astyocharus.\textsuperscript{125} Additionally, Alcibiades is reported
to have used spies within the cities of Byzantium and Selémbria in order to gain entry to
their walled confines.\textsuperscript{126}

The adaptability of Alcibiades to changing conditions has also been noted by
historians. Plutarch refers to him as like a “chameleon” who could adapt to his
surroundings and “equally wear the appearance of virtue or vice”.\textsuperscript{127} When in Sparta he
affected Spartan dress, ate Spartan food and engaged in their rigorous program of
exercise.\textsuperscript{128} When at the court of Tissaphernes he made a complete change of style,
dressing as a Persian and following their mores.\textsuperscript{129} Plutarch records the same acceptance
of alien cultural mores by Alcibiades during his time in Thessaly and again in Thrace.\textsuperscript{130}
This extraordinary cultural competence made it possible for Alcibiades to make people as
different as Spartans and Persians feel comfortable with him and take him into their
confidence. The information he would gain regarding alien societies and their goals
would then be used to develop his own grand strategies and to protect him in time of
danger.

In addition to the extra-military tactics described above, both Xenophon and
Plutarch report that Alcibiades used non-hoplite troops and non-hoplite methods to good
effect. For example, Xenophon notes that Alcibiades led large contingents of cavalry at
the battles of both Bithynia and Calchedon and that he commanded no less than three
hundred horsemen at Byzantium. Additionally, Xenophon notes that Alcibiades
engaged in the building of fortifications at Calchedon, specifically describing a stockade
that ran from “sea to sea” which he ordered to be built. Plutarch describes that
Alcibiades and fifty men, of whom twenty were peltasts, gained entry to Selymbria at
midnight and, once inside, used surprise and deception to give the rest of the army time to
enter the city. A very similar set of tactics was used at Byzantium. Here Plutarch says
Alcibiades made a great show of leaving the city’s harbor during the day, only to return
at night and gain entry to the city with a small contingent of men while his naval forces
created a distracting commotion in the harbor. After hard hand-to-hand fighting the city
was taken. Finally, in one of the last images drawn of Alcibiades, Plutarch describes
that he “rode over” to warn the Athenian generals of their poor position at Aegospotami
accompanied by his “large force of light-armed troops and cavalry”. The fourth
century was about to dawn and, in the methods used by Alcibiades as the fifth century
was about to close, there was a portend of what was to come.

VI Alcibiades the General: Charisma, Loyalty and Money as Leadership Tools
In any situation, military or civilian, there are several sources of power and authority. These include the power provided by a position granted by the state or organization, power that accrues because of expertise, power generated by control of resources, and finally, power and authority that one has by virtue of the strength of his personality, character or entire persona.\(^{137}\) Alcibiades had the opportunity to have power and authority from all four sources. He was an elected *strategos*, a respected military advisor to king and satraps, provided financial support for military forces, and also had power in his own right as a result of personal charisma. That this was the case cannot be disputed; it is emphasized by sources such as Thucydides, Plutarch, and Plato and is evident in their descriptions of the events of his life. Plato in his dialogue between Socrates and Alcibiades in *Alcibiades I* has Socrates allude to Alcibiades personal attributes at the very beginning of their conversation when he says “you say to yourself that you are the fairest and tallest of the citizens”.\(^{138}\) Indeed Alcibiades was so handsome and charming that even Socrates himself probably succumbed to his charms and became his lover.\(^{139}\) Tall, handsome and athletic Alcibiades was also an Olympic victor in a world that viewed such men not only as famous and gifted but even as favored by the gods.\(^{140}\) By the time he was 23 he was famous enough to be parodied in Aristophanes’ *Banqueters*.\(^{141}\) He looked like, and lived as, the embodiment of a “young hero” in the Achilles mold\(^{142}\) which gave him an advantage in persuading troops and civilians to follow his bidding.

Added to his physical attributes was the gift of eloquence. His speeches before the Athenian Assembly\(^{143}\) and Spartan Ephors\(^{144}\), as reported by Thucydides, are marvels of the orator’s art, at once persuasive and challenging. Strauss and Ober note that his
rhetorical skills included knowing his audience, knowing their goals and motives, and addressing them with clever, sophisticated rhetoric. Plutarch notes that Alcibiades would individualize his remarks, addressing different people in the audience with different techniques based upon his understanding of the person. According to Thucydides this gift for public speaking was so profound that he was able to move the Spartan Ephors to take action to fortify Decelea, send Gyllipus to Syracuse and create a position of respect for himself in Spartan society on the basis of his word alone.

This charisma was ably used by Alcibiades in his role as military commander. Thucydides says that one reason that Alcibiades was not tried immediately for the profaning of the Mysteries was that his enemies feared that he would have the army’s support if tried immediately. Plutarch indicates that Alcibiades had a peculiar talent for gaining men’s affections and that the Athenians were careful not to use force to bring Alcibiades from Sicily because they feared “mutiny and sedition in the army” which they believed Alcibiades could have caused if he so desired as the expeditionary force’s “most popular leader”. Indeed the Argives, with whom Alcibiades had carefully cultivated a relationship, had refused to go on the Sicilian expedition without him. Thucydides says the arrest was carefully done to avoid agitation among the troops and most importantly to maintain the cooperation of the Athenian allies who were loyal to Alcibiades. Plutarch asserts that, when Alcibiades was removed, the soldiers were dispirited because they viewed him as the “spur to action”.

Later, when Alcibiades fled to the protection of Tissaphernes Plutarch reports that he “immediately became the first and most influential person about him” and states that Tissaphernes admired his “charm” and “subtlety”. When his plans required him to
reconnect with Athenian troops at Samos he did so despite the many complications of the situation, being elected general by the assembled troops after just one speech.\textsuperscript{156} Even Bloedow, who is very critical of the military role played by Alcibiades, admits that Alcibiades’ speech must have been persuasive and impressive\textsuperscript{157} and Thucydides comments that Alcibiades was able to convince the troops to stay in Samos rather that sail to Athens to protect the democracy despite their emotional intention to “sail at once for the Piraeus”\textsuperscript{158}. Just before the successful battle of Cyzicus, he gave another motivational speech to his troops which is reported by Xenophon\textsuperscript{159} and the morale of his troops was apparently high; they later claimed never to have been defeated and did not want to fraternize with the troops of other commanders who had been defeated in battle\textsuperscript{160}.

The record of history confirms that Alcibiades in his person, lifestyle, lineage, and eloquence had power based upon personal charisma. It is telling that Thucydides, according to Ellis, spends more time on Alcibiades than any other figure in his History\textsuperscript{161} and that even in the twenty-first century novels are being written about his life\textsuperscript{162}. He used that charismatic power to gain the support and obedience of his troops, calling not only to their patriotism, but to their personal allegiance and trust in him. Engendering this kind of personal loyalty, to a leader rather than a state, would be used effectively by future great captains to insure the obedience of diverse bodies of troops.

In addition to his use of his own persona, Alcibiades had one additional leadership tool that he used to full effect. This was his use of money to support his troops, his military efforts and the \textit{polis}. As the Peloponnesian War ground on, the ability of Athens to pay for its military expenditures from its own resources greatly diminished. Alcibiades
often stepped into the financial breach and provided the funds needed to support the war
effort. This was particularly true near the end of his career as the war took its toll on
Athens’ finances. For example, Alcibiades is reported as taking, under threat of force, the
possessions of the Calchedonians that had been left with the Bithynians for safe-
keeping.\textsuperscript{163} Xenophon also reports that he collected money, under unspecified
circumstances, from the Chersonese\textsuperscript{164} and collected one hundred talents at Caria\textsuperscript{165}.
When Alcibiades returned to Athens after exile he brought with him a treasure trove of
booty that he had gathered from these and other locations. When his forces suffered
ignominious defeat at Notion, his absence from the battle was noted by Plutarch as
related to the fact that he was “repeatedly forced to leave his headquarters and sail off to
look for money and rations for his men”.\textsuperscript{166} In his retirement he is described as leading a
mercenary band in “collecting plenty of money from the prisoners he captured”;
apparently Alcibiades now directly earned his living through brigandage in Thrace.\textsuperscript{167}
Altogether, the record indicates that Alcibiades had accepted expanding fiscal obligations
throughout his military career. These obligations helped to bind his men to him as both
leader and paymaster; it was a duality of function that would be central to the roles of the
generals who would follow him.

\textbf{VII Conclusion}

The career of Alcibiades provides a useful example of a trend toward the
development of more autonomous military leadership that would continue to unfold in
the fourth century. In the history of his endeavors, characteristics of a more independent
military leadership can be discerned. The qualities of this evolving military leader that
can be observed in Alcibiades include willingness to alter basic alliances based upon
pragmatism, determination of military goals and strategies based upon personal rather than state interests, the transfer of troop loyalty from the state to the charismatic leader, expanded responsibility for funding military efforts, the use of non-hoplite methods and incorporation of extra-military techniques such as diplomatic deception, espionage and propaganda. The nature of the relationship between such a leader and the state he serves was suggested by Aristophanes when he remarked “Best rear no lion in your state, but if you do, as a lion treat him, do”\textsuperscript{168}. Athens had such a lion in Alcibiades, and although among the first, he would certainly not be the last.

\textbf{Notes}


2. Ibid, 2.


11. Ibid, 108-109


15. Plato, *Alcibiades I*, 29


18. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 6.15.4

19. Ibid, 6.15.3.


32. Ibid, 5.52.2; Ellis 41


37. Munn, *The School of History*, 103-104

38. Ibid, 104-105.


40. Ibid, 106.


42. Ibid, 22.2.

43. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 64.


45. Ibid, 22.2.


47. Ibid, 6.91.1-7.


51. Ibid, 23.2.


53. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 70.

54. Ibid, 71.


56. Ibid, 25.1.


58. Ibid, 8.46.1-3.


63. Ibid, 26.4.

64. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 8.82.1.


66. Ibid, 27.1.


68. Ibid, 28.1-6.


70. Ibid, 30.2-5.


73. Ibid, 1.5.16.

74. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 94.


78. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 6.12.2 and


82. Ibid, 17.2.


84. Ibid, 6.16.1-6.18.7

85. Ellis, 56-57.


87. Ibid, 6.18.2.

88. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.18.2-3.

89. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 57.


92. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 6.15.2


95. Thucydides 5.53.1; Bloedow 7; Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 69-70


97. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 64.


100. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 70.


103. Ibid, 8.46.1


110. Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 82


112. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 6.16.2; Ellis, Alcibiades, 50.


117. Ibid, 6.17.2-6.


120. Ibid, Alcibiades 37.1.


124. Ibid, Alcibiades 24.3.


128. Ibid, 23.5.


130. Ibid, Alcibiades 23.5.

131. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.3.3, 1.3.6.

132. Ibid, 1.3.10-11.

133. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.3.4-5.


140. Munn, The School of History, 108.
141. Ibid, 79.
142. Strauss and Ober, Anatomy of Error, 61
143. Thucydides 6.15-6.18
144. Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.89.1-6.92.5.
146. Plutarch, Lives, Alcibiades 36.5-6.
147. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.88.10-6.93.3.
148. Ibid, 6.29.3.
152. Plutarch, Lives, Alcibiades, 19.3.
153. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.61.5.
155. Ibid, 24.3-4.
156. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 8.82.1.
158. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 8.82.1.
159. Xenophon, Hellenica, 1.1.14.


163. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.3.3-4.

164. Ibid, 1.3.8.


167. Ibid, 36.3.


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I Introduction

Preceding chapters have identified key socio-cultural aspects of classical Athenian society that impacted upon patterns of military leadership in the polis. In the last chapter the influence of these factors, as exemplified in the career of Alcibiades, was explicated. In this chapter the effects of these political, military and economic trends upon the strategos function as observed in the careers of fourth century Athenian military leaders will be assessed and a theoretical basis for the observed influences will be suggested. First, however, a brief review of the socio-cultural influences that have been identified and their hypothesized effects on military leadership will be presented.

II Societal Influences and the Genesis of “Transitional” Military Leadership

It has been suggested that elements of the military, political and economic environments of Athens conflicted with the continuation of the strategos function as defined by the Athenian democracy at the beginning of the classical period. Specifically, within the military itself, changing manpower composition, the incorporation of non-hoplite technologies and the expansion of both theaters of combat and numbers of engagements created conditions that did not support the continuation of the military leadership by citizen-statesmen generals. Similarly, aspects of the political environment such as the consistent stasis, ever-present threat of ostracism or trial, civilian election of subordinate military officers, dual military and civic responsibilities of the strategos role, as well as the expanding military obligations necessitated by Athens’ imperialist foreign policy created a situation in which it was very difficult for the statesman-general model to be successful. Concurrently, the enhanced diversity of the Athenian economy weakened the cultural underpinnings of hoplite warfare and depressed economic conditions fostered
the development of a professional, full-time army that required full-time professional management. Finally, Athens’ diminished financial circumstances required that generals play an expanding role in supporting themselves, their armies and the *polis* itself. All of these factors had the conjoint and synergistic effect of fostering change in the role of the classical *strategos*.

It will be argued that the military, political and economic issues which have been described led to specific changes in the practice of Athenian generalship in the fourth century. In particular, it will be suggested that these socio-economic conditions required military leadership to become more autonomous, develop more military expertise, use non-hoplite troops and methods, and assume expanded fiscal responsibilities both for the army and for the *polis* itself. In effect, a modified model of generalship developed in the later classical period that represented a transition between the concept of the citizen-statesman- general and the professional mercenary military leaders of the Hellenistic period. These “transitional” *strategoi* were still responsible to the Athenian democracy but clearly functioned in a more autonomous, professional and financially independent manner than earlier Athenian generals.

But can such changes in the practice of generalship actually be documented? This chapter will now present three types of evidence to support the contention that fourth century Athenian *strategoi* practiced a transitional form of generalship. These are a narrative review of the career histories of six of the most famous fourth century Athenian generals with particular reference to the transitional qualities exhibited by each, a tabular review of the frequency with which ancient sources documented the presence of these “transitional” practice factors when discussing these six generals and, finally, an analysis
of the trial histories of classical strategoi to determine the extent to which Athens’ response to unauthorized behaviors among its generals changed during the classical era.

III The Fourth Century Strategoi: Military Leadership in Transition

Chief among the fourth century strategoi about whom a historic record exists are Conon, Thrasybulus, Chabrias, Iphicrates, Chares and Phocion. Ancient historians wrote about each of these men and all have been the subject of analysis by modern scholars. A review of what has been written about them reveals that each exhibited the increased autonomy of practice, enhanced emphasis on military professionalism, extensive use of non-hoplite methods, elaborated set of financial obligations and willingness to lead troops of foreign leaders that set the fourth century strategoi apart from most of their fifth century counterparts and mark them as evolutionary figures in the development of a truly professional military.

a. Conon

Conon was a military leader whose career spanned both fifth and fourth centuries. According to Xenophon, Conon was informally elected strategos by the troops at Samos along with Alcibiades and Thrasybulus in 407 B.C. (Thucydides 8.76.2). It was Conon who was later officially sent to replace Alcibiades after the ill-fated battle at Notium in 411 (Strauss 42). Conon, however, took a detour from Athenian service to act as general of the navy of Artaxerxes during his struggles with the Lacedaemonians. Xenophon tells us that Conon was a strategos at the battle of Arginusae but, seeing that it was lost, “sailed off to King Evagoras in Cyprus” taking eight Athenian triremes with him (Xen. Hel. 2.1.29). Diodorus Siculus, writing two centuries later, tells us that Artaxerxes pursued Conon while he was at the Cypriot King’s court and engaged in financial
negotiations to secure his services, offering him “such money and other supplies as his plan required”. He also “honored him with rich gifts” (Diodorus 14.81.4-6) and allowed Conon to select the Persian associate commander of his choice. The reason for his interest in Conon, we are told was that he “was experienced in the encounters of war” and “excelled at warfare” (Diodorus 14.39.1-3).

Seager confirms that Conon accepted this offer and was, from 397 until 392, an admiral in Persian service (101). Xenophon suggests that Conon acted not as superior, but as subordinate, to the Persian satrap Pharnabazus, particularly at the battle of Cnidos in 394 (Xen Hel. 4.3.10). Pritchett thoroughly documents the fact that, throughout his period of Persian service, Conon led mercenaries, largely supported by Persian financing (II 120). Although his activities while in Persian service may have furthered Athenian interests (Strauss 46) there is no ancient or modern evidence that Conon’s primary rationale was to help Athens, that he was in any way an official Athenian operative or that he was under the control of Athens during this period (Seager 101-102). In fact Diodorus specifically maintains that although Conon wanted to further Athenian interests that he was no selfless citizen, taking on Persian service, in part so “that he would himself win great renown” (14.39.3-4).

When he later returns to Greece, leading the Persian fleet into Corinth, Diodorus tells us that Conon talked with the allied Council, “left them money” and then sailed back to Asia (14.85.5). Again there is no mention of Conon seeking direction from the allies, in fact he was apparently their benefactor. Also, there is no evidence that he requested or was given any form of approval, from either the allies or Athens itself, before returning to Asia. As he defeated Aegean allies of Sparta for the Persian King many of the former
Lacedaemonian allies “attached themselves to Conon” and “joined him” (Diodorus 14.84.3-4) without any evidence that he had directions from Athens that allowed him to accept their fealty. When Conon finally returned to Athens in 393 he was the “Hero of Cnidus” who had defeated the Spartans as a Persian admiral (Strauss 39). There is also no evidence, based upon Hamel’s trial listing (150-164), that he was ever tried for disloyalty to the state or any other charge. The impression is therefore created that the Athenians accepted success that benefited them even when it came from an Athenian general they did not control. This impression is enhanced by the fact that, upon his return, Conon “hired a multitude of skilled workers, and putting at their service the general run of his crews, he speedily rebuilt the largest part of the wall” (Diodorus 14.85.3). It would appear that the financially embarrassed Athenians were willing to overlook Conon’s lack of civic consent for his dealings with Artaxerxes and accept the results of his efforts as evidence of his loyalty (Strauss 39).

The career of Conon, therefore, exhibits several of the transitional characteristics that have been hypothesized. He worked for other masters, he acted as general without formal approval as required by the Athenian constitution, he made strategic decisions without ekklesia approval, he fought against Greeks (Strauss 38), was viewed as a professional military commander by his contemporaries and provided economic support to the polis. The fact that the Athenians accepted Conon’s mode of practice without any recorded attempt to discipline him indicates that the polis’ relationship to its generals was undergoing significant change.
b. Thrasybulus

Another transitional figure in Athens’ military leadership was Thrasybulus. Like Conon, Thrasybulus was appointed as a *strategos* at Samos, having been selected not by the constitutionally required method, but by the acclamation of the troops themselves (Thucydides 8.76.2). McCoy believes that Thrasybulus functioned as *strategos* by “will of the fleet” alone until he was later elected in absentia to the “official” *strategia* in Athens (317). Later Thrasybulus was a key figure in the routing of the Thirty Tyrants; in this instance, Diodorus notes that Thrasybulus, leading exiles and dissidents, made “an unexpected attack” which eventually resulted in the reinstitution of the democracy (Diodorus 14.33.1-2).

The economic activities of Thrasybulus are discussed by Xenophon when he notes that Thrasybulus “raised money for his troops by plundering the lands of those who refused to join him at Lesbos where he tells his marines that by serving with him they will “secure a great deal of money for themselves” (Xen. Hel. 4.830,4.8.25). McCoy indicates that Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus interrupted an ordered siege of Eresus to pursue the escaping Spartan fleet of Mindarus (267) because of the urgency of protecting “vital grain routes to the Euxine” in order to meet the economic needs of Athens (267) and Seager indicates that Thrasybulus collected money from Athenian “allies” in Ionia who no longer viewed themselves as Athenian allies, in acts that were almost tantamount to piracy (109). Still later, in 389, Thrasybulus was apparently dispatched to Rhodes to fight the Spartans but, on his own authority, “he judged it expedient to go first to the Hellespont” (Pritchett II 50). Pritchett maintains that this deviation from direction occurred because he wanted to raise money (II 50). Seager indicates that this venture into
Aspendus was “far out of his way” from the assigned destination of Rhodes but notes that Thrasybulus took on the action “in the quest for money” (110). Xenophon reports that Thrasybulus was killed by the people of Aspendus who were “infuriated by some acts of brigandage committed on their property by his soldiers” which Diodorus indicates occurred after Thrasybulus had received their “contributions”. (Xen. Hell. 4.8.30, Diodorus 14.99.4-5). Thrasybulus had been recalled at the time of the Aspendus incident that took his life (Hamel 148); but the cause of the recall and what its outcome would have been remain unknown.

Once again a review of the career of a fourth century strategos reveals behaviors that were at odds with the classical concept of the strategos. In this case there is evidence of acting as strategos without constitutional appointment, making strategic choices without consultation, being identified as a skilled military commander and carrying out economic functions for the army and the polis even when doing so interfered with addressing military objectives.

c. Chabrias

Chabrias was another famous fourth century general whose career exhibited characteristics that may be considered as transitional between the traditional strategos role of classical Athens and the mercenary captains of the Hellenistic period. Diodorus lists him among the great Greek military captains of the classical era (15.88.2). Pritchett indicates that the first recorded appearance of Chabrias was in 393 when he was sent to replace Iphicrates at Corinth (II 73). In 388, according to Diodorus, Chabrias voyaged to Cyprus to help Euagoras with a force of eight hundred peltasts augmented by “hoplites obtained from Athens” (15.34.1-4); he used his peltasts, we are told by Xenophon, in a
night ambush and the next day in a surprise attack against a combined force of Lacedaemonians and Aeginetans led by Gorgopas. Both attacks were successful (Xen. Hell. 5.1.9-13).

After his command in Corinth Chabrias “accepted service with Akoris, King of the Egyptians” and went there, Diodorus indicates, in about 386-384 B.C. “without first securing the permission of the Athenian people” (15.29.1-4). We are told that Chabrias was pursued by the Egyptian King because he was “distinguished both for his prudence as a general and his shrewdness in the art of war” (Diodorus15.29.1-4). While in Egypt he exhibited his skill as a military instructor by instituting a program that trained Egyptian youths to man the fleet of the Egyptian navy (Polyaenus 3.11.7). Some time after this, probably in about 380 B.C. (Henderson p 25, D.15), Chabrias returned to Athens upon Athenian request, and was made general (Pritchett 73). Here he is recorded in 379B.C. as using peltasts as his main force to hold the Athenian frontier against the Spartans (Xen.Hel. 5.4.14). Xenophon documents Chabrias’ continuing successful use of light troops against the Spartans at Eleutherae in 379 B.C. where “except for a few who may have escaped, the peltasts killed every last one of them” (5.4.14) Later, in 376B.C., Chabrias reappears as a commander of the Athenian navy, sent to end a Spartan naval blockade (Xen. Hel. 5.4.60-63) in order to reopen vital corn routes. Following this naval victory he laid siege to Naxos, using siege-engines against its walls (Diodorus 15.34.1-4), and engaged in a great sea battle there against the Spartan admiral Pollis. Further evidence of military prowess is offered by his performance at Naxos, where he effectively used deception by ordering the lowering of distinctive flags to lure the Spartan ships closer before the fighting began (Tritle 56-57). Chabrias won the battle of Naxos,
although Diodorus indicates he did not pursue the defeated Spartans because, remembering Arginusae, he feared the response of the *demos* if he did not stop to collect the Athenian dead. He then “sailed back [to Athens] laden with spoils…and met with an enthusiastic reception from his fellow citizens” (Diodorus 15.35.1-6). Pritchett confirms the financial success of the triumph at Naxos by quoting Demosthenes in his oration against the Leptines in which the speaker notes that Chabrias’ brought Athens “three thousand captives and paid into the treasury one hundred and ten talents” as well as “forty-nine triremes, and ten talents of silver” in booty resulting from the victory (II 75-76).

According to Xenophon, Chabrias was chosen by Iphicrates to campaign with him against the Lacedaemonians in 370 B.C. because he was “regarded as a very good general” (Xen. Hel. 6.2.37). He was still working for Athens as a *strategos* in 369, when, according to Diodorus, he was told to “hold the Isthmus” (15.68.1-3) and, according to Xenophon, used a force of mercenaries to keep the Argives within the territory of Epidaurus (Xen. Hel. 7.1.24-26). He also won a great victory in Corinth in 369 B.C. when he defeated a force of Boeotians who attacked the city; Diodorus reports that he won this victory by skillfully selecting the site of the battle and effectively leading his troops, for which he “won great admiration for his courage and shrewdness as a general” (14.69.1-70). Later still, in 362, it is reported that Chabrias was recruited as a mercenary admiral by King Tachos of Egypt (Pritchett II 100); Diodorus, in describing this event, makes it clear that Chabrias did not go to Egypt in any official capacity but rather as a private mercenary captain (Diodorus 15.92.1-3) who lived an affluent lifestyle, including owning a stable of horses (Henderson in Dio Bk 15 p25 note 3). In Egypt
he was placed in charge of the navy while the Spartan Agesilaus was made general of the army (Diodorus 15.92.1-3). He finally returned to Athens, whether by summons or on his own decision is unknown, and was called to his final service for Athens during the Social War. Most sources agree that Chabrias died in naval combat at Chios in 358/7 B.C. (Pritchett II 75).

Overall, an analysis of the historical record of the career of Chabrias reveals several components that are hypothesized as transitional between the classical strategos and the Hellenistic mercenary leader. These include working for foreign states without formal approval of the demos, carrying out expanded economic functions for both state and army, professional military leadership skills valued by his contemporaries, command of nontraditional troops, use of nontraditional tactics and personal enrichment as a result of professional practice.

d. Iphicrates

Perhaps the most famous of the fourth century Athenian strategoi was Iphicrates who was renowned in his own time for his skill as a commander and technical innovator. Unlike most strategoi, Iphicrates was from humble roots; his father, in fact, may have been a cobbler (Pritchett 62, Mitchell & Rhodes 27). He rose, however, to be listed among the most famous fourth century generals by Diodorus (15.88.2) and to be considered by modern analysts as a dominant force in the mid fourth century strategia (Salmond 48). Yet, Iphicrates, as other of his fourth century colleagues in the strategia, worked not only for Athens but also for other states and rulers and enriched himself as much as the polis.
Iphicrates first is noted as a young mercenary boarding the ship of an enemy at Knidos (Pritchett II 62). Tritle maintains that his first noteworthy military exploit was in the mid 390s when he commanded a force sent to support the Boeotians, although at this time he may not yet have been a *strategos* (Tritle 64). By 390 B.C., however, Iphicrates clearly was a *strategos* when he won the famous battle of Lechaeum in Corinthia (Tritle 65). Here Iphicrates led mercenary troops (Xen. Hel. 4.4.9) and defeated a six hundred man Spartan *mora* (Pritchett II 122-123). It was also here that Iphicrates proved his skill as a strategist and commander of peltasts (Xen. Hel. 4.5.11-19) and first showed his independence from the Athenian government. After the battle at Lechaeum Iphicrates wanted to put Corinth itself under siege; the Athenian government, however, refused permission for this assault. Iphicrates, instead of accepting this decision, resigned his command, apparently in protest (Tritle 65). Instead of punishing Iphicrates for his refusal to lead using the government’s strategy, the Athenians gave him a new command almost immediately. This time Iphicrates was given twelve hundred peltasts - possibly the same men he had led at Corinth - and eight triremes to “combat Anaxibios in the Hellespont” (Xenophon hel. 4.8. 34-36). By 388/7 Iphicrates defeated Anaxibios at Abydos, using ambush and surprise tactics, and was again an elected *strategos* (Pritchett II 64, Yalichev 153).

During this period Iphicrates developed a reputation as a technological innovator and a skilled trainer of troops. Lendon quotes Cornelius Nepos (2.2. 1-2) as saying that “no soldiers in Greece were ever better trained or more attentive to the orders of their leader”. Diodorus describes both Iphicrates’ use of fortifications (15.42.2-5) and his development of innovations in military equipment (15.44.1-4). Aeneas Tacticus maintains that
Iphicrates developed a system of double passwords that was least likely to be betrayed to the enemy (24.11-16) and Xenophon provides a detailed and laudatory description of his training protocols and tactics both while on the Corcyrean expedition (24.2.25-31) and in general (Xen. Hel. 6.2.32). Pritchett notes that Iphicrates was well known for his constant training of the paid soldiers under his command (I 28) and quotes Polyaenus as saying that Iphicrates “never suffered his men to be idle but constantly engaged them in fortifying their camp, training or fighting” (II 124). When on naval missions he required strenuous training to prepare his men for naval battle; for example, he ordered the use of oars instead of sails to condition his men (Pritchett II 220). Polyaenus notes that Iphicrates “used to exercise his soldiers in various maneuvers, sham sallies, feigned ambuscades, sham betrayals, sham revolts, and sham panics” (3.9.32). Pritchett notes that Iphicrates put this ambuscade training to good use when his peltasts fought in Abydos and elsewhere (P II 186). In considering the military training programs initiated by Iphicrates Pritchett concludes that Iphicrates and his peltasts “broke all of the traditional rules” (P II 187).

It is also noted by contemporary historians such as Polyaenus that Iphicrates used booty and the promise of booty distribution to motivate good performance (3.9.31). Polyaenus additionally notes that Iphicrates kept a quarter of his army’s pay in his hands to prevent desertion (3.9.51). Iphicrates’ financial value to the polis is made clear by Diodorus (15.47.7) who describes how, on the way to Kerkyra in 373, Iphicrates captured Sicilian ships, sold the captives as booty and collected sixty talents with which he paid his forces. In the summer at Kerkyra, Iphicrates again showed his value as a financial
manager when he rented out his men to work the field of the local farmers (Xen. Hel. 6.2.34-37).

Pritchett and other modern scholars maintain that Iphicrates then elected to stay in Thrace in the 380s on his own decision; specifically Pritchett maintains that “there is no implication that Iphicrates was in Athenian service at that time” (II 66). There he is reported to have functioned as a military commander for King Cotys and even to have married his daughter (Henderson in Diod. 15 p 25-26 note4). Harris quotes Demosthenes as indicating that while in Thrace Iphicrates not only fought for Cotys but actually fought on his behalf against Athenian generals (266). Diodorus notes that subsequently Iphicrates served both Persians and Egyptians, probably with polis approval (15.29.1-4).

In 374 B.C. Iphicrates is reported to have commanded 20,000 mercenaries in Artaxerxes’ successful campaign against the revolting Egyptians (Diodorus 15.40.4-41).

His success apparently prompted his military colleague Pharnabazus to begin to fear that Iphicrates might “take possession of Egypt for himself”; Iphicrates, fearing Pharnabazus’ intentions toward him, fled home to Athens (Diodorus 14.42.5-43). According to Henderson “he returned from Persian service to Athens in 373” (25). He apparently returned home without Athenian approval, since Pharnabazus complained to the polis after his departure and the Athenians indicated they “would punish him if they found evidence of wrongdoing” (Diodorus 15.43.3-44). Apparently no “wrongdoing” was found since Iphicrates was quickly given another command and served Athens between 368 and 365 both as admiral of the fleet (Diodorus 15.43.3-44) and on the northern frontier (Mitchell & Rhodes 28). While on Athenian commands, according to Xenophon,
Iphicrates “raised money. Some contributions were voluntary, others enforced” (Xen. Hel. 6.2.37).

There is no doubt that Iphicrates benefited personally from his generalship. The cobbler’s son married a king’s daughter, became a “self-made man” and enjoyed such personal acclaim as being the first *strategos* to “have his name instead of his city’s inscribed on the spoils of war” (Wheeler 139). He exhibited in his military service many qualities of leadership that foreshadowed the Hellenistic captains to come. Among these were his use of nontraditional troops, his innovations in military technology, his service to foreign states, his overt refusal to comply with *polis’* military policy, his acceptance of obligation to pay army expenses and the personal fame that resulted from his service.

e. Chares

Another example of fourth century generalship is offered by the career of Chares. Pritchett records that Chares is first seen in 366 as a *strategos* sent to assist the Phliasians against the Argives (II 77). At that time he led a force of both citizens and mercenaries (Xen. Hel. 7.2.19-21) and was successful in “securing the position of the Phliasians” (Diodorus 15.75.2-76). Chares, who is reported by Diodorus as a man who carried out “lawless acts” and “accomplished nothing good but brought his country into discredit” (15.95.2-4) and whom Isocrates described as a “common thug” (15.116), was apparently an unsavory character. Modern historians describe him as “boastful and self-serving” (Moysey 222), a “brawling, working class hero” who was “as unscrupulous as Alcibiades” (Salmond 45,49).

Nonetheless, Chares had a history of repeated official military command in Athens during the 360s, through the Social War of the 350s and apparently concluding at the
battle with Philip at Chaeronea. In 356 B.C., during the Social War, Chares refused to accept the collegial opinion of his fellow generals Iphicrates and Timotheus that a sea battle near Embata in the Hellespont should be delayed because of heavy weather (Pritchett II 7). Not only did he refuse to be guided by the collegial decision of his peers, he condemned them to the *ekklesia* as cowards (Diodorus 16.21.1-4). As a result of this action Diodorus reports that Chares “succeeded to the command of the whole fleet” (16.22.1-3). Chares then accepted foreign service; later in 356 he became a military commander for the satrap Artabazus in his revolt against the Persian king Artaxerxes Ochos. Diodorus records that Artabazus gifted Chares with “a large sum of money” for his services with which Chares bought supplies for the army (16.22.1-3); Diodorus also reports that obtaining financial support for his army was the motivating force in Chares’ acceptance of mercenary service (16.22.1-3). Modern historians including, Pritchett (78), Moysey (221-223) and Yalichev (162) agree, however, that there is no ancient record that indicates that the Athenians agreed to this decision before it occurred or officially authorized it, though Diodorus indicates that the Athenians tacitly approved of Chares’ mercenary service until threatened with retaliation by the Persian king (16.22.1-3).

Chares returned to Athens and continued to serve the *polis*, often with forays that returned needed booty home to Athens. Diodorus reports that, probably acting in official *strategos* capacity, Chares sacked Sestos in 353 B.C. The sack of Sestos is described as a brutal incident in which Chares “slew its adult inhabitants and enslaved the rest” (Diodorus 16.34.3). Chares is also reported to have sent captured cattle home to Athens as a gift for the Athenian people; he even had them paraded through the streets of the city to display his victory and beneficence (Moysey 226). Pritchett also confirms that
Chares regularly sent booty to Athens, even during his mercenary service with Artabazos (II 79). Despite his very public displays of largesse, Pritchett maintains that Chares was one of the Athenian fourth century generals who also amassed a personal fortune through both foreign service and “stealing public money” while the fourth century demos suffered “increasing poverty and pauperization” (II 132). The fact that Chares survived eight separate instances of allegation of abuse of money-raising activities (Pritchett II 131) is eloquent testimony to both the centrality of raising funds among his functions and to the reduced effectiveness of polis oversight of those activities.

Chares served Athens at least through the battle of Chaeronea in which he was one of the commanding generals (Diodorus 16.85.2). Arrian informs us that after Chaeronea, during the time of Alexander’s invasion of Asia, Chares was living in Sigeum (1.12). Although the circumstances of his death are unknown, it appears that he survived to a comparatively old age, living in comfort on his Asian estate.

Why was this self-serving, excessively barbaric, non-collegial, mercenary general repeatedly given official command positions in the mid fourth century? The best evidence available indicates that Athenian stasis and financial distress were the factors that resulted in the continual acceptance of Chares by the polis. Evidence that elements within the polis did not approve of his behavior is demonstrated by the fact that he was accused of wrongdoing and brought to trial on several separate occasions (Hamel 157). The fact that he was never found guilty on these charges, however, may indicate the increasing need of the Athenians for a self-directed, self-funding military, whose decisions they could later reject, but which would pay for itself and provide the polis with the protection and
support it needed. Expediency may have trumped political policy and ethical values in Athenian society at this time.

Chares’ record speaks for itself and parallels those of the other fourth century strategoi that have been discussed in terms of its transitional characteristics. Chares made unilateral decisions, engaged in mercenary service, violated traditional strategia rules of collegiality, was deeply involved in obtaining money and engaged in tactics that were closer to the concept of “total war” than those needed to achieve the more limited military goals of the earlier classical period. These elements of his performance as a military leader place Chares squarely in the forefront of generals who can be considered transitional figures between the classical strategos and the Hellenistic mercenary captain.

f. Phocion

During the fourth century there was one strategos who remained in military authority far longer than any of his peers. That was Phocion who, Plutarch tell us, was elected to the strategia forty-five times (Plut Ph.7.3-8.2). Although he considered himself a politician-general (Plu Ph 7.3-8.2) Tritle notes that Phocion had considerable military skill (56) and Diodorus documents his use of diverse military tactics including employing siege-engines at the battle of Naxos (Diodorus 15.34.4). At Naxos Phocion’s skills in naval maneuvers are credited with “saving the day for the Athenians” (Tritle 60). Plutarch notes that, defying the traditional classical concepts of bravery and military leadership, Phocion would refuse to lead men into battle if he personally believed the time or the cause were not right, despite the will of the demos. (Plu Ph 9.2-5).

Plutarch comments on Phocion’s positive characteristics as a general; he tells us that Phocion gave good example to his men “walking without shoes or outer garment unless
the cold was excessive” (4.2-5.3). He is described as a man of few words but a powerful speaker who could persuade others to his position (Plu. 4.2-5.3). We are told that he was a protégée of the great general Chabrias, trusted by him to gather “contributions” from the islanders which he did so successfully that he returned with “many ships, which the allies sent off with money for the Athenians” (Plutarch Ph 6.3-7.2). During his time as a strategos Phocion had many victories including expelling Plutarch from Eretria (Plu.Ph.8.1-4), taking possession of Zaretra (Plu. Ph.8.1-4) and expelling Philip from the Hellespont (Plu.Ph.9.4-9.2).

Diodorus notes that later in his career Phocion was recruited into mercenary generalship in a campaign conducted against the rebellious Cypriot kings by Artaxerxes, King of Persia (16.42.4-9). Tritle describes Phocion as being sought for this service because he was valued as a “veteran commander familiar with all the standard techniques of warfare” including the establishment of fortified camps (74). During the engagement in Cyprus it is clear that Phocion was leading a mercenary army that sustained itself, at least in part, by gathering “much booty” (Diodorus 16.42.4-9) It is also possible, based upon more limited evidence, that Phocion, acting as a mercenary leader, assisted the rebel satrap Orontes while Chabrias fought for King Tachus in Egypt (Tritle 70). Based upon the analysis of Tritle, it also seems that Phocion, like other fourth century strategoi, personally profited from his mercenary service outside of the polis (74).

The career of Phocion is of particular interest since his lengthy period of service required continual reelection; this suggests that the Athenians found him, for almost half a century, to be an acceptable strategos. Yet when the known events of his career are scrutinized they reveal many of the same non-traditional characteristics of those of other
fourth century generals. He engaged in mercenary service, led mercenaries, supported his army and the *polis* with his military efforts, displayed independence from the will of the *demos*, and was believed by contemporaries to be a skilled commander.

The individual careers of fourth century *strategoi* have been reviewed and transitional characteristics have been identified in the practice of each. In order to provide additional evidence for the suggested “transitional” paradigm a review of the written works of eight ancient sources that describe military affairs of classical Athens was conducted. The purpose of the review was to determine the frequency with which evidence of autonomy, mercenary service, personal expertise, use of non-traditional troops and methods and assumption of financial responsibilities was documented by those sources. The results of this analysis will now be presented.

**IV Transitional Qualities of Fourth Century Strategoi Noted by Ancient Sources**

As the preceding discussion of the careers of six fourth century *strategoi* indicates, there were identifiable characteristics of the practice of generalship during the first half of the fourth century that varied from the model that was established at the beginning of the classical period in Athens. The practice patterns of these six generals are discussed by many ancient writers, some who were the contemporaries of these men and others who wrote centuries later using earlier sources. In order to determine how frequently transitional practices were noted by ancient authors, eight sources who discussed elements of the military history of classical Athens were reviewed and passages that provided documentation of such practice among the six fourth century generals were recorded. The specific references recorded were those that confirmed exercise of autonomy from the *polis*, mercenary service, use of non-hoplite troops and methods,
personal military expertise or acting as *strategos* without constitutional authority. The sources who were used to complete this analysis are Xenophon, Thucydides, Isocrates, Polyaenus, Diodorus Siculus, Aeneus Tacticus, Cornelius Nepos, and Plutarch. The results of the analysis are displayed on the table below.

**Evidence of Transitional Practice Elements Among Six Fourth Century *Strategoi***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategos</th>
<th>Mercenary Service</th>
<th>Non-Hoplite Troops and Methods</th>
<th>Military Expertise</th>
<th>Autonomous Decisions and/or Personal Goals</th>
<th>Economic Functions</th>
<th>Strategos Without Legal Election</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conon</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.391-2, 14.79.5, 14.81.1-6 Xenophon Hellenica 4.3.10 Nepos 9.2</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 1.6.19-21</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.39.1-3, 15.88.2 Xenophon Hellenica 1.5.19-20 Nepos 9.1,9.4</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 2.1.29 Diodorus 14.39.3-4, 14.84.3-4</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.85.3-4 Xenophon Hellenica 1.5.19-20 Nepos 9.4</td>
<td>Thucydides 8.76.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thrasybulus</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.33.1-4 Xenophon Hellenica 2.4.2-7, 2.4.10-12</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 2.3.42, 2.4.12-20 Diodorus 14.94.4</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 4.8.25-27</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 1.1.12-13, 1.5.10-11, 4.8.28-30 Diodorus 14.94.2, 14.99.4-5</td>
<td>Thucydides 8.76.2</td>
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<td>Chabrias</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.29.1-4, 15.92.1-3 Nepos 12.2</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 5.4.14, 5.1.9-13, 7.1.25 Diodorus 15.34.1-4</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.88.2, 15.29.1-4 Xenophon Hellenica 6.2.37 Nepos 12.1</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.29.1-4 Nepos 12.3</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 5.4.60-63 Diodorus 15.35.1-6 Polyaenus 3.11.5</td>
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<td>Iphicrates</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.40.4-41</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 4.4.9, 4.4.15-16, 4.5.3, 4.5.11-19, 4.8.34-35,</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.88.2, 15.42.2-5, 15.44.1-4</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.92.1-2, 15.43.4-6</td>
<td>Polyaenus 3.9.30-31, 3.9.51</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.47.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chares</td>
<td>Diodorus 16.22.1-3, 16.34.1-2</td>
<td>Xenophon Hellenica 7.2.16-21</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.88.2, 15.42.2-5, 15.44.1-4</td>
<td>Diodorus 14.92.1-2, 15.43.4-6</td>
<td>Polyaenus 3.9.30-31, 3.9.51</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.47.7</td>
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<td>Tacticus 11.13-14</td>
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<td>Phocion</td>
<td>Diodorus 16.42.4-9</td>
<td>Diodorus 15.34.4</td>
<td>Plutarch Phocion 8.1-4, 9.2-9.4</td>
<td>Plutarch Phocion 9.2-5</td>
<td>Plutarch Phocion 6.3-7.2</td>
<td>Diodorus 16.42.4-9</td>
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This table displays ninety-three pieces of documentary evidence from eight different ancient sources, all supporting the existence of nontraditional elements of professional practice among fourth century Athenian *strategoi*. All except Thrasybulus engaged in some form of mercenary military leadership (defined as employment outside of the *polis* for pay) at some points in their careers. All are reported to have made frequent use of non-hoplite troops including extensive use of mercenaries of all types, particularly peltasts. Most of them often used fighting methods other than phalanx battle including
night attack, ambush, sham maneuvers and open deception. All were described by their contemporaries as military experts, and some, particularly Iphicrates and Chabrias, were actually thought of as tactical innovators in their own time. All exercised autonomous decision making, even when that put them into conflict with the *polis*. Many, except perhaps Phocion, were substantially concerned about their own wealth and glory; most became wealthy as a direct result of their military service. All were very involved in providing economic support and enrichment for their troops and for Athens (indeed there are twenty-four citations about these functions) and two actually functioned as *strategoi* without constitutionally valid election. In aggregate, the data suggests the genesis of a consciously professional military leadership, with a growing body of tactical tools at its disposal, a full-time army for which it was responsible, expanding military objectives and enhanced obligations to provide economic support for military endeavors.

V Evidence of Change in the Relationship Between the Strategoi and the Polis

When the classical period began the *strategoi* were civic officials in both name and reality. They were involved in civic affairs, including the development of non-military policies and initiation of civilian programs such as the Periclean programs for public construction (Plu.Per. 35) and the policies that created payment for civic service by citizens (Plu.Per. 27). They participated actively in the *ekklesia* and were used as non-military ambassadors to other states (Hamel 5-14). The *demos*, as Hamel has asserted, believed in maintaining control of these men and their activities lest they became too powerful and endanger the democracy itself (84).

Did, however, control of the *strategoi* by the demos continue with equal vigor throughout the classical period? There appears to be a substantial body of evidence that
this was not the case. Hamel, for example, provides an exhaustive record of the trials of Athenian *strategoi* that were ordered during the entire classical period. She provides, where the record permits, the name of the general, date of the trial, the charge(s) leveled against him and the outcome of the trial, i.e whether the general was acquitted or found guilty; for those who were found guilty Hamel provides the penalty that was invoked (Hamel 140-157). An analysis of the information Hamel offers suggests that as the classical period progressed *strategoi* had less to fear from a *demos* weakened by stasis, war and economic distress; the data also suggests that the definition of appropriate *strategos* behavior was changing, in practice if not in principle.

Hamel records a total of fifty eight known trials of *strategoi* that were ordered during the period 500 B.C. to 350 B.C.; of this number, forty one completed trials with known outcomes are listed and described. In order to assess whether these trials resulted in substantially different outcomes as the classical period progressed, I have divided the trials listed into three chronological groups and assessed trial outcomes for each group. The groupings represent the period before the Peloponnesian War, the period of the Peloponnesian War, and the first half of the fourth century. The results of this analysis are presented below in tabular form.

**Verdicts of Trials of Strategoi With Known Sentences from 490 B.C. to 350 B.C.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>#Trials with Known Verdict and Sentence</th>
<th>#Acquitted/ % Acquitted</th>
<th># Guilty/ % Guilty</th>
<th># Guilty and % of Guilty/ Sentence-Execution</th>
<th># Guilty and % Guilty/ Sentence - Fine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>490-430</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>430-400</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>18 (95%)</td>
<td>15 (83%)</td>
<td>3 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-350</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>14 (70%)</td>
<td>8 (57%)</td>
<td>6 (43%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review of this table reveals that during the Peloponnesian War and in the half-century that followed it there were approximately equivalent numbers of trials of *strategoi* with known outcomes. (The numbers of trials with unknown outcomes are 1, 8 and 5 for the three periods under analysis). The trials with known outcomes from 430 to 400 resulted in ninety-five percent of the accused generals being found guilty; of those who were found guilty eighty-three percent were sentenced to death while seventeen percent were fined for their transgression. In the fourth century (400-350 B.C.) the acquittal rate rose from five to thirty percent and, of the seventy percent who were found guilty, only fifty-seven percent were ordered executed. Clearly, fourth century *strategoi*, based upon the available records of their trials, had a much better chance of acquittal or fine than their predecessors. Of the twenty fully documented trials between 400 and 350 B.C. reported by Hamel only 40% of the defendant *strategoi* were both convicted and executed, while in the earlier period of 430 to 400 B.C. 79% of *strategoi* who were defendants in fully documented trials were found guilty and executed for their crimes. This is a decrease in the execution rate of convicted generals of virtually 100%. This pattern is consistent, not with a situation in which civic control of the *strategoi* was undiminished, but rather a period in which dissatisfaction with performance, though unabated, was tempered by a new understanding of military experts as precious human resources who had professional and economic value to the polis.

Is this analysis of changes in the practice of generalship and *polis’* response to those changes consistent with a broader, conceptual understanding of how and why leadership behaviors evolve? To answer this question the literature of leadership theory and research
was reviewed. The goal of this analysis is to determine if the hypothesized and observed changes in leadership behavior in the classical Athenian military was consistent with currently accepted theories and concepts of leadership practice.

VI Leadership Theory, Environment, and the Changing Role of the Strategos

Scholarly study of leadership has consisted primarily of research into three issues. These are human traits that result in effective leadership, human behaviors that comprise effective leadership and, most recently situational determinants of effective leadership behaviors (Jago 317-322). Two of these areas of research, trait and behavioral theory have now been largely abandoned because of failure to identify significant relationships between them and “successful leadership”, which is usually measured by standard indicators of organizational success such as goal achievement, financial outcomes or stability of staff and markets. Situational theories of effective management, as a generalization, postulate that the most effective management technique depends on the set of environmental circumstances at a particular point in time (Jago 322, Luthens). These environmental conditions are both those internal to an organization (such as the military) and those which characterize the external environment with which it interacts (such as the polis).

Situational theory has been elaborated over the past fifty years into a group of related theories that examine leadership/ situational intersections from slightly varying perspectives. Among the most well developed and researched of the situational leadership theories is contingency theory, which was initially suggested by Fred Fiedler and has now been elaborated by many researchers working with various leadership applications. The situational factors that Fiedler postulated to be related to effective leadership performance
include situational elements internal to the organization itself such as degree of control over subordinates, positive regard or loyalty between workers and leader and the extent to which the leader was able to provide structure for the task, i.e. identify and provide paths to goal achievement (.Utrecht and Heier 607).

R.E. Utrecht and W.D. Heier have applied contingency theory to successful military leadership (Utrecht & Heier 606-618). These authors maintain that there has been little organized study of effective military management because “all officers are assumed to be leaders” (606). They identify that Fiedler’s theory suggests that “one leadership style is not effective in all situations” and effective performance may, indeed, be dependent upon “the situation”. In a study of 2,500 military leaders Utrecht and Heier found that “the task-oriented leader with strong position power, high task structure and good leader-member relations was successful” (615).

Does the contingency model offer relevant insights into the rationale for alteration of the strategos function in fifth century Athens? I maintain that it does. If the first factor, "leader-member relations" is considered it appears that the strategos model as then practiced was in conflict with the development of strong, positive association between military leaders and staff. There was a regular, planned turnover of military leaders by annual election in classical Athens and, although strategoi could and were sometimes reelected, the selection system for generals and limited term of service certainly did nothing to build esprit de corps in the Athenian military. Similarly, the fact that the troops and even junior officers were not selected by the general eliminated one possible source of positive “leader-member relations” leaving the strategos to identify and use other mechanisms of securing troop loyalty. At that time the only means available to
develop troop loyalty were respect based on perceived expertise, force of personality and provision of material rewards. As preceding analysis demonstrated, use of each of these methods is displayed in the careers of the fourth century strategoi.

When the second factor, “task structure”, is considered it is clear that in the fifth century the methods of goal achievement for the military were limited; most battles, excluding naval engagements, were conducted primarily using a single prescribed form, hoplite battle. This fact, when cast in terms of contingency theory, left the strategos with only two accepted routes to goal achievement- one on land and one at sea- thus negating the value of innovation and “multiplicity of paths” postulated by Fiedler as essential to achieving the desired end in diverse situational conditions. The dominant dependence on a small arsenal of methods did not permit military leaders to adjust to situational variables of terrain, adversary, troop skills and even weather. The fourth century strategoi responded to this lack of fit between military method and environmental circumstances by use of non-hoplite troops, expanding their arsenal of strategies and tactics, increasing troop expertise through training and expanding his own span of control over military decision-making.

Finally, Fiedler maintains that the extent of “leader position power” will be a partial determinant of management success. This factor, i.e. control over subordinates, was somewhat limited in fifth century Athenian military. To be sure, a general was allowed to discipline troops while on campaign but his willingness to do so, some modern scholars maintain, was limited by the fact that these same soldiers would potentially be part of his jury if he was ever brought up on charges in Athens (Hamel 119). Furthermore, as already discussed, the general did not have the basic power function of staff selection at
his disposal. He was not the source of soldiers’ compensation and he was not viewed by many hoplites as their personal superior. The practice patterns of fourth century generals increased the limited military authority of the *strategos* through the use of paid mercenaries, their own mercenary service, autonomous decision-making, becoming the source of compensation and development of their own expertise,

If we accept that elements of the situation in which leadership is exercised have relevance for determining the success of various leadership behaviors, the changes observed in the practice of military leadership in classical Athens become comprehensible. As agriculture gave way to a truly mixed economy, as prosperity gave way to economic distress, as factionalism led to constant stasis, as defensive imperialism was transformed into expansionism for its own sake, as dependence on hoplite warfare was supplanted by use of a broader set of military methods, as warfare was redefined from a duty of citizenship to a recognized *techne*, the leadership characteristics that bred successful performance changed as well. The new, fourth century *strategos* was more autonomous, used innovative military methods and non-traditional manpower, was viewed as a military expert by his contemporaries, had an expanded role as economic provider both for the army and for the *polis* and was often personally enriched by his military service. He practiced his generalship in this way because environmental circumstances supported, in some instances, required it.

**VII Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper has been to suggest that there were identifiable changes in the practice of military leadership during the classical period in Athens and that these changes were related to certain elements of the socio-political environment of the era. In
order to support these assertions key elements of the socio-political environment were explored and their impact upon military leadership hypothesized. The careers of individual classical *strategoi* were then analyzed to discern the presence of practice patterns that were not consistent with the original classical conception of the *strategos*, but which represented appropriate leadership responses to the changing environment in the *polis*. These individual career analyses were buttressed by an analysis of the validation of these transitional practice characteristics in the writings of ancient and contemporary sources. An analysis of the trials of classical strategoi was also provided in order to assess the extent to which attitudes of the *demos* toward variance from the classical model of generalship changed over time. Finally, the fit between the hypothesized and observed changes in the practice of military leadership in classical Athens was placed in the theoretical framework of contingency theory to determine whether the observed phenomena were consistent with theoretical expectations.

The results of each of these analyses indicate that generalship and public attitudes toward generalship were transformed as political, military and economic conditions changed during the classical era. Analysis further supports the contention that the observed changes were consistent with theoretically expected responses to environmental conditions. By the mid fourth century the concepts of warfare as a *techne* and of the general as a skilled professional had definitely begun to emerge and the era of the true citizen statesman-general was drawing to a close as political, economic and military support for this role continued to diminish. A revised role, one that was in equilibrium with prevailing socio-economic conditions, developed and often was tacitly accepted by the Athenian democracy. The fourth century *strategos* clearly resembled a “military man”
far more than a civic official, was more expert than amateur, more independent of the will of the *demos* than his predecessors. Viewed in this context the development of the mercenary captains of the Hellenistic era can be seen as the natural continuation of the evolutionary development of a military leadership responding to the situational imperatives of its time.


