Seleukid Lecture Series III.3

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**Liability for Military Service in the Seleukid Empire**

We are increasingly becoming aware that the core elements of Hellenistic armies were not supplied by mercenaries. In the Macedonian kingdom, the King’s adult male subjects were liable to conscription in time of war. Continued work on the ‘Conscription *diagramma*’, preserved in two fragments, the first of which was found in Drama in the 1950s, the second at Kassandreia in the late 1980s, makes it increasingly clear how this system worked in detail. In Egypt the introduction of the *katoikic* system of military settlement, was aimed at providing a pool of manpower having obligations to the Ptolemaic ruler, which could be mobilized in times of war. The system in place in the Seleukid kingdom is not so clear. Elias Bikerman (*Institutions des Séleucides*, 1938, pp. 74-88) recognised that the Macedonian phalanx fielded by the Seleukid monarchs was composed of descendants of Macedonian settlers. He thought that these were settled in a system of rural colonies, rather than in the cities of Syria. Bezalel Bar-Kochva (*The Seleucid Army*, 1976, pp. 20-48, 55-62) developed these concepts further, and postulated that the elite infantry corps of *argyraspides*, 10,000 strong, was composed of the young sons of these settlers permanently embodied. I have suggested (*The Seleucid Army*, 1994, pp. 13-14) that the usage of the term ‘Macedonian’ in a Seleucid context implied a defined legal status, and it was on that basis that the Seleukid phalanx was mobilized, and not as a *quid pro quo* for the receipt of a settlement plot. The purpose of my paper is to further develop this argument, and to supplement it with ‘Macedonian’ concepts drawn from the Antigonid ‘Conscription *diagramma*’. This paper will return to the musings I first made on the subject at the conference SSD7 in Sopot in 2019.