

The main weaknesses of my primary sources are namely revolving around the biases that the ancient authors would've had that prevailed in their recordings of the Spartans, and subsequently the Mothax.

The perception of the Spartans via the idea of the Spartan Mirage (Frances Ollier, '*Le Mirage Spartiate*', 1933) will be one of the biggest limitations I will face in terms of supporting evidence for my essay – specifically when most of the authors don't write the given name, 'mothax', instead opting to describe the sociopolitical class; "sons of the Spartiatae by Helot women" (Xenophon, '*Hellenica*', 5.3.9). When referring to them, there is never any in-depth analysis based off of pure fact. The Spartans had a severely upheld xenophobic reputation, considering that only one ancient source we have surviving works from, Xenophon, lived in Sparta's territory. All other authors are namely from Athens, which was critically against Sparta in sociopolitical methodology – when Aristotle was writing to uncover what led to the Spartans downfall after their defeat at the Battle of Leuctra in 431BCE, because of his experience within Athens and Persia, one of his main reasons was because the Spartan women had too much freedom from 'resisting the laws [of Lycurgus]' (Aristotle, '*Politics*', 2.1270a)

With the Spartan Mirage being the utmost weakness of all my primary sources, a close second would be the ever-present biases – all city-states of the time were independent, as it wasn't until the first and second Persian Invasions that they allied together for common cause (Thucydides, '*A History of the Peloponnesian War*', 1.1). Most of these city-states had their own feuds, one famous example being Athens and Sparta for their differences; therefore, it makes sense that for most of the writings of Sparta to be from individuals from Athens steeped in the learnings of literature (Plutarch, '*Lycurgus*', 13.1), the natural biases off of reputations would stay within their works.

However, with these weaknesses, they also offer me the opportunity to find what evidence for the recognition of Mothax as citizens is underdeveloped, and as a result support my points on how there are far too many inconsistencies on the understanding of Sparta and the classes, especially the Mothax, for there to be one set answer. Therefore, it will be up to me to find the evidence and make my own conclusion by learning from their mistakes and creating a more accurate, and conscious viewpoint.