

The Many Faces of War in the Ancient World

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Edited by

Waldemar Heckel, Sabine Müller
and Graham Wrightson

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INTRODUCTION

This volume on different aspects of warfare and its political implications in the ancient world brings together the works of both established and younger scholars working on a historical period that stretches from the archaic period of Greece to the late Roman Empire. With its focus on cultural and social history, it presents an overview of several current issues of the “new” military history. Although several of the papers contained in this volume formed part of the second conference on “The Many Faces of War,” held in Calgary, Alberta, on 29-31 March, 2012, the editors have invited additional papers by scholars who were unable to attend that conference. The first was held in Calgary on 2-3 October 2009. Both conferences in this series were organized by Waldemar Heckel and Graham Wrightson, and their success spawned another stimulating meeting on the topic convened by Lawrence Tritle at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles in 2013.

The current volume contains papers that can be conveniently divided into three parts. Part I, containing the first three papers (by Heinrichs, Raaflaub and Tritle), deals primarily with archaic and classical Greece, though Tritle, in his customary fashion, covers a wide range and relates the experience of the ancient Greeks to that of soldiers in the modern world—one might even argue that the comparison works in reverse. Part II, as chance would have it,¹ comprises five papers (by Müller, Howe, Olbrycht, Anson and Heckel & McLeod) on warfare in the age of Alexander the Great. These demonstrate that the study of Alexander as a military figure is hardly a well-worn theme but rather in its relative infancy, whether the approach is the tried and true (and wrongly disparaged) method of *Quellenforschung* or that of “experiencing war,” something that has recently come into fashion. Part III offers three

¹ It is, of course, more than coincidence, since all three editors are first and foremost Alexander scholars.

papers (by Vanderspoel, Bertolazzi and Whately) on war in the time of Imperial Rome, particularly on the fringes of the Empire.

In Chapter 1, Johannes Heinrichs addresses the implications of a hitherto-unpublished bronze pinax on military training in Arkadia. Providing the first translation of this damaged and corroded text of 23 lines in Arkadian Greek bringing to light previously unknown stylistic, historical, religious and cultural information, he argues that it originates from the Lykaion (or nearby Lykosura) and was “part of the sanctuary’s identity”. His concern is with certain passages that describe training for both youths and perhaps refresher courses for elders up to the age of 50. Examining the actions of Arkadian soldiers in the battles of the Greco-Persian Wars, he argues that Arkadian soldiers were trained in warfare in large part to address the threats of the warlike states on their borders. He also argues that Arkadian soldiers were more often trained in and used to fighting as light troops on difficult terrain and that, since there was never a political unification of Arkadia, the Lykaion served as a communal location of doctrine for all the various Arkadian communities. This important discussion sheds new light on classical Greek military training in general, but in particular it reveals the level of preparation other states had to have in order to compete with Sparta and shows Arcadia in a previously unknown light.

Chapter 2 presents Kurt Raaflaub’s engaging re-examination of the relationship between citizen politics and the military in hoplite focused poleis. He argues that “a connection between the citizens’ military and political functions can be established plausibly from the earliest visible stages of the polis’ emergence and that it is due to the nature, structure, and mode of development of the Greek polis.” He reviews the evidence first by analyzing the sources for archaic constitutions of Sparta and Athens arguing that the reorganization of political voting groups according to wealth was inherently, and perhaps overtly, connected to military service as were the later more radically democratic changes in Athens and the Servian reforms in Rome. He ends with a brief analysis of the politico-military connections in the Homeric epics as evidence for a pre-hoplite association of citizens and soldiers. Raaflaub’s paper clearly argues for the connection of hoplite warfare with political reform. This is

a source of contention in Greek warfare and this essay establishes a secure position grounded in the extant sources before the classical period.

Chapter 3 displays Lawrence Tritle's talent for relating the psychological aspects of warfare in ancient Greece to the experience of those engaged in battle in modern times. "Laughter in Battle" appears at first to be paradoxical, frivolous and disrespectful. But, as Tritle argues, recent efforts to sanitize war have made it difficult to understand why soldiers laugh in the heat of battle (a very normal occurrence) and this aspect, along with mutilation of the dead, demands further study. He discusses the beliefs on the origins of humour in Greece and then expands to more modern analyses. A study of laughter in battle follows, separating examples throughout history into three categories of laughter. Tritle ends with a brief discussion of laughter or games as a way to laugh off trauma of conflict. This paper deals with a topic that is not often considered in studies of ancient warfare and raises some crucial points for understanding the experience of warfare in general, not just in the Greco-Roman worlds.

Chapter 4 shifts the reader's focus to the history of Alexander the Great. Sabine Müller examines the depictions of war in the epigrams of Poseidippos of Pella, in particular those newly discovered on the so-called Milan papyrus, found in Egypt. She also addresses the representation of Ptolemaic ideology in the poems, beginning with a detailed discussion of Ptolemaic court ideology and the need to ape Alexander as an autocratic warrior-king. There follows an examination of several of Poseidippos' epigrams in turn with an emphasis on his ideological representation of war, Alexander and his conquests. Müller argues that war is a central theme of all the poems of the Milan Papyrus and is used to define Alexander and his conquests. But actual images of battle are not present, rather the results of battle (booty, spoils, statues etc.) are central and the main focus of the poems' military theme. No study of Poseidippos' poetry since these new poems were discovered has addressed the military representations in his poetry. Mueller analyses the texts in detail and demonstrates well the level of ideological propaganda that was in place in the Ptolemaic Egypt of Poseidippos; an

important issue to understand Ptolemaic society, politics and warfare of the period.

In Chapter 5, Timothy Howe examines Arrian's account of the battle of the Persian Gates (331 BC), with particular emphasis on Ptolemy's prominent, and otherwise unattested, role in command. Since Arrian is the only historian to narrate events in this way, it has been assumed—correctly, in all probability—that Ptolemy is, at this point (as in so many others) his main source. Howe seeks to reexamine why Ptolemy 'invented tradition' through an examination of Ptolemy, his motives for writing, and the historiographical context of Ptolemy in the other sources for the battle. Howe argues that the battle at the Persian Gates was chosen by Ptolemy as the best place to establish his military reputation by embellishing his actual unheralded role at the expense of Krateros. Thus having introduced himself at the Persian Gates, in the description of the conquest of the Aornus, Ptolemy represents himself as a major figure enabling Alexander's success and hence as his predestined successor. Howe reveals an inner connection between these two episodes pointing out that Ptolemy casts himself first into the role of the rising star, then of the established right-hand-man of Alexander. This is an important study of the historiography of this battle and sheds new light on the reality of the battle arguing convincingly for the identity of the actual commanders involved. The identity of the now lost sources of the Alexander historians is an issue that is vital to any study of Alexander's campaigns and this paper will aid future discussions of this problem.

The sixth chapter, by Marek Jan Olbrycht, analyses the implementation of an Iranian phalanx battalion, the Epigonoι, and assesses what this reveals about Alexander's relationship with Iranians and Macedonians. He demonstrates that this unit of 30,000 arrived in 326 in India and were left behind for training only to be presented at Susa in 324. He also separates the Iranian Epigonoι from the ancient use of the term referring to the children of Macedonian soldiers on campaign. He concludes by briefly suggesting how this unit of Iranian Epigonoι was used militarily by the Diadochoi. The identity of the Epigonoι and their significance in the political upheaval in the last years of Alexander's reign is an often overlooked topic. Olbrycht demonstrates not only when and where these

troops were conscripted but also why their inclusion in the army was so troublesome to Macedonians. This paper will be vital to help further discussions of Alexander's policy in the footsteps of the Achaemenids, as well as those of his intentions in ruling his empire.

Chapters 7 and 8 should be read in tandem, since (although each was written without previous knowledge of the other) they cover much of the same terrain in different ways. Hence they both complement and supplement each other. In Chapter 6, Edward Anson looks at Alexander's varied use of the tactic of "shock and awe" to enable his overall goal of conquest. Anson proceeds to discuss in detail every example of Alexander's use of this tactic throughout his campaign in order to show how it aided his overall strategy of empire building. This paper covers Alexander's strategy of conquest in detail and demonstrates exactly how he was able to impose rule on so many people over such an area.

Chapter 8 is a collaborative study by Waldemar Heckel and Jolene McLeod. It attempts to quantify the number of people killed and enslaved by Alexander in his campaigns placing his 'atrocities' in a historical and historiographical context. The authors break down their analysis into 5 sections: casualties in battle, victims of vengeance, victims of systematic terror, victims of personal terror, and the fates of women. Each section examines examples in the sources and some provide a summary of estimated totals in easy to read tables. McLeod provides an informative appendix outlining the physiological and psychological response to combat trauma. As the authors state in their introduction, Alexander is often seen as a butcher who committed countless atrocities of all kinds. In this paper some actual figures are presented to seek to clarify the issue based on the primary sources. Without being an apology for Alexander the paper suggests why Alexander killed and enslaved so many people and places his atrocities in a historical context. In addition, it carefully treats the dimension of literary artifice in the ancient portraits of Alexander as a commander. This topic is crucial for general histories of Alexander and his campaigns, especially in a modern view of wartime atrocities as disgraceful and inhuman.

In Part III, the focus shifts to Imperial Rome. In Chapter 9, John Vanderspoel examines the brief reign of the Emperor Jovian and, in particular, the withdrawal of the Roman garrison and colony from Nisibis, an important administrative and military city on the eastern border. This was demanded by the Persians in the peace treaty to which Jovian agreed. Vanderspoel describes in detail the gradual erosion of the eastern frontier as described by Ammianus, particularly at Amida, to demonstrate how important a city Nisibis was to both the Romans and the Sasanians. He then addresses Nisibis and the treaty Jovian signed agreeing to the safe transfer of Romans out of the territory to be given to the Sasanian Empire, again attempting to find the middle ground through the harsh lens of Ammianus. Jovian's brief reign as Roman Emperor is largely characterized by his actions in abandoning the Eastern frontier thanks principally to Ammianus Marcellinus' account. Here, Vanderspoel attempts to see past Ammianus' views and present Jovian's position in a real light if not a necessarily favourable one. Most Roman history is clouded by the bias of the sources and the abandoning of the Eastern frontier to Persia was a key part of the ancient perspective on the ongoing decline of Rome as an Empire. This paper addresses both topics without becoming a Jovian apology.

Although, the context of Riccardo Bertolazzi's paper (Chapter 10) is chronologically earlier than that of Professor Vanderspoel's, it has been paired with Conor Whately's study of Late Roman military settlements, primarily because the two papers make use of non-literary evidence. Bertolazzi presents an interpretation and translation of a hitherto unpublished inscription from Algerian Lambaesis commemorating a Roman soldier from Upper Moesia named Aurelius Marcinus who died in battle. He takes on the difficult task to establish the identity and dates of the soldier. Hence, this paper is important in publishing a new inscription from Numidia casting more light on the military situation there.

The concluding chapter of this volume (Chapter 11), by Conor Whately, addresses the question of the provenance of small finds in Late Roman military settlements. His focus is on the site of el-Lejjūn in Jordan on the Roman Eastern frontier. After showing that there is evidence for women

(and children) living with soldiers in other army camps in the Later Empire, he proceeds to argue that although there is no conclusive evidence for women living at el-Lejjūn, the evidence is suggestive of their presence. He ends by demonstrating that comparative evidence, such as papyri or physical evidence from other sites, confirms his conclusions. The topic of the admission of women into Roman military bases is often of concern to historians both in a military and socio-cultural perspective. Whately sheds light on this issue by using archaeological approaches as a tool to reconstruct history. Too often archaeologists and historians do not see eye to eye, but this paper is an example of how the two fields work together fruitfully. Thus, it is an invaluable study of small finds in Roman camps.

Covering a wide chronological span, Greek, Macedonian and Roman cultures and various topics, this volume intends to show the importance and actuality of the research on the history of war and the diversity of the approaches to this task as well as the different angles from which to look on it.

Waldemar Heckel
Sabine Müller
Graham Wrightson
June 15, 2014

CHAPTER ONE

MILITARY INTEGRATION IN LATE ARCHAIC ARKADIA: NEW EVIDENCE FROM A BRONZE PINAX (CA. 500 BC) OF THE LYKAION

JOHANNES HEINRICHS

Routine lacks interest: ordinary activities are rarely treated at length by Greek literary sources. Most military training is of such a kind.¹ Exceptions to this rule of silence do occur, but not often, and only under special conditions. The most prominent case is archaic and classical Sparta, exceptional in many respects. Military training and paramilitary activities—chasing wild animals in the mountains and athletic contests during cult festivals²—dominated the lives of nearly all the male youths and adults. They must have continued up to an age of (close to) 60 when the duty to take part in military activities ended (see below). But even for Sparta we rarely learn details, let alone technical ones: we know next to nothing about armor and arms and exercise in handling both in action, about military formations and orders to change them, and signals to communicate such orders. The Spartan phalanx was renowned for its

¹ At any rate, there are some exceptions to the rule, cf. Gehrke 1997a, 37 ff., in most cases for later periods, starting with Xenophon and his time: *Lak. pol.* 11 ff. with Lipka's (2002) notes and his appendix III (The structure of the Spartan army according to Xenophon and Thucydides), moreover Fazelaar 1967; *Hipparch. passim*; an outline of the *ephebia* at Athens from the late 4th c. in (Ps.) Aristotle, *Ath. pol.* 42.2–5, cf. Pélékidis 1962.

² Sketches illustrating military manoeuvres of the Spartan phalanx are in Lipka 2002, 265 ff.; paramilitary activities in Sparta Xen. *Lak. pol.* 4; for agonal competition in religious feasts see e.g. Wide 1893, 73 ff. (the *Karneia*) and generally Hodkinson 1999.

quick, exact maneuvers. Operations on the battlefield must have come close to artful dances—the Muses were highly esteemed at Sparta³—or athletic perfection. To accomplish it, much training was required. Not only here, since others were not much inferior, also Sparta’s Peloponnesian neighbors, including the Arkadians, who were Sparta’s allies in the Peloponnesian League and at times her bitter enemies.⁴

We may guess that military standards were high in Arkadia as well, and indeed some Arkadians could match the Spartans during the Persian Wars. But we learn nothing about military matters in late-archaic Arkadia. This is the case regarding the initial training of youths (the *ephebia* or alternate concepts⁵), the ongoing training of veterans, and the inspections of arms and equipment that might be damaged or even get lost in action. In such cases that needed adequate repair or substitution, the security of military formations—also the perfection of the *phalanx*—depended on the quality of each man’s weapons and armor. Since such objects were often personal property and individually acquired, they needed permanent control by military officials. Nothing was reported about such people, about places where and intervals when reviews took place, about announcing the *ephebia*, training for elders or mobilization in case of war, and this is all the more problematic since the

³ Mayer 1933, 703. I do, however, decidedly contradict those who argue that Sparta was nothing but a military camp. That is not true even for classical Sparta, so eager to make the rest of Greece believe just that. It was a myth, with an intention to earn respect: who is impressed is not inclined to war. But Sparta’s neighbors knew better. The Arkadians were on their guard—needless, if the Spartans would have really been invincible— and they did not shrink from military conflicts. Beyond myth, classical Sparta was much more normal than public opinion would have it. That is not to say that it was a “normal” Greek state, but did such a thing really ever exist?

⁴ For the structure of the Peloponnesian League—as it seems, a series of bilateral treaties between Sparta and her single allies—see Cawkwell 1993, Yates, Bolmarcich, Cartledge 2002 and the detailed discussion of what seems a reflex of the early standard treaty (cf. ML 67 *bis*) by Gschnitzer 1978. Whether the League was an instrument primarily for preventing asylum or even help for Messenian helots, *pro* Baltrusch 1994, 19–30, can be disputed, but certainly the helots were an essential point; cf. id. 2001.

⁵ Burckhardt 1996, 26–75; Gehrke 1997, 37–43 (Crete), cf. id. 1997, 1071–74.

greater part of Arkadia consisted of small communities in remote rural districts. So far, we can only guess.

A New Bronze Tablet

New information is available now from a bronze tablet originally from the Lykaion, which from epigraphical criteria probably dates to *circa* 500 BC.⁶ It turned up around 2010 on the London and Munich “art markets.”⁷ The unusual difficulties it causes for several fields of epigraphy and linguistics only allow for a pre-publication of the Greek text here; nevertheless a first, tentative translation can be given, not in the hope of solving the manifold problems connected with the text, but only to convey a first general idea of the text’s structure and nature. Even this requires explanatory notes, since the tablet was not copied for “average” readers and certainly was not on public display.⁸ But neither was it a kind of handbook for experts, for these almost certainly would have known all its entries by heart (or could ask each other), and so they did not need to look them up in a written document. That might be the reason they accepted the actual tablet with all the mistakes and omissions that cause many problems for us—but only for us. What mattered for the officials (priests) of the sanctuary was not instruction, but conservation of old texts, just to keep them, because they were part of the sanctuary’s identity. We may presume that they were

⁶ A discussion must be postponed to a further publication of the Greek text that is planned in a forthcoming volume of *ZPE*. Some criteria are: use of F throughout, letter forms (e.g. still \otimes in l. 1 f., from the end of l. 2 \oplus , X, four barred *sigma*), alphabets 1 and 2 according to Jeffery, Johnston 206 predominant, to compare to letter forms occurring on the Arkadian “confederate” coins of the early 5th c. (cf. appendix 2 with figs 1–7), fondness of dual, several old theonyms resp. epikleses etc.

⁷ Allegedly it was in English private ownership and acquired around 1965 in a London flea-market for a moderate sum.

⁸ Neither Plato nor Pausanias can have known or even seen it (let alone the Roman authorities), otherwise they would have been better informed about human sacrifice in the Lykaion. The “real name” of Despoina can only have been known to persons initiated to the Eleusinian mysteries or their Arkadian counterpart at Lykosura (near the Lykaion, cf. Paus. 8.37.9); it was certainly kept as a secret. Perhaps it is mentioned in l. 16 (Kachila: “she in bloom,” in an Arkadian genitive not familiar to the copyist and therefore misspelt). The tablet is without doubt an endoteric document, and this accounts for some of its problems.

written on perishable materials, perhaps already damaged. To prevent further decay, they were copied on a solid table for some archive, or were attached to a wall or some object inside a temple, since the texts making up in their sum the contents of the tablet must have been regarded as a kind of sacral property, not differing much from cult objects or offerings.⁹

The tablet itself was not submitted to me. I only had access to two digital photos, in two qualities. A conventional photo-file is in color, a second file in b/w was taken in a x-ray technique (today widely applied in archaeology), with the result that most letters incised into the thin metal come out as bright structures against a black surface, but so do numerous fissures and other defects. In the second file structures become visible beneath the corrosion, but in places it is difficult to distinguish between intentional and accidental damage to the surface. One version of the passage that will be discussed below becomes visible only on the second (b/w) photo, whereas the first (colored) version displays another and, it seems, former version. In this special case it is not simply that a mistake is fixed, but a correction is executed that in effect leads to an alternative version.

Since one of the photos was taken with a yardstick at the top, it is possible not only to gather the size of what is actually preserved, but also to calculate what the original document was. Horizontally, it probably reached approximately 46 cm,¹⁰ covered with letters written in lines from the left rim to the right always without border zones. Vertically, the inscribed zone, from the preserved upper rim (touched by the uppermost letters) down to l. 23 (of which only the beginning was executed, and is now completely lost along with the broken left rim), covers ca. 22 cm. From l. 23 down to the lowest point of the irregularly broken lower rim follow ca. 10.5 cm of seemingly blank area, in sum amounting to ca. 32.5 cm of vertical extension; but there was a further

⁹ Most entries will be older than the year 500, but on the other hand we may expect that directives only concerning a remote past and without relevance for what was valid when the tablet was copied would not have been mentioned.

¹⁰ From l. 18 downwards the right rim might well have accounted for ca. 2-3 letters' space.

section beyond the actual lower rim, the extension of which is impossible to estimate.¹¹

The text consists of 23 lines, the last one to be deduced as a continuation of the preceding, though only two very faint letters of it are preserved beyond the broken rim. The writing is non-stoichedon: therefore the number of letters per line is not equal, larger letters (M, N etc.) take up more space than short ones (I, slender C = *gamma* etc.), but due to the uneven interval spaces and the length of the lines the average size of letters comes near to a constant number. A major problem occurs due to the broken rims, but on the right the missing zone is negligibly small (see what follows). On the left, however, the losses must be substantial. To assess how much has broken off or decayed due to heavy corrosion, the key lies in lines 6 and 7. Since they play an important role in the following argument, the issue can be treated here summarily: The catalogue of weapons and equipment opened in l. 6 and finished in l. 7, before the preserved part, must be nearly complete. There are hardly options for missing items if the list is restricted to ordinary equipment and heavy armour is excluded; that this is the case can be seen from the phoinikis, a cloth cloak, ordered instead of a body-thorax. In the list of lighter arms below hoplite standard, only a helmet is missing, κόρυς or κυνέη/κυνία - both occur already in the *Iliad*, the latter originally a cap made of dog's leather studded with metal applications. Both terms are equal in length, the initial κ preserved at the end of l. 6. What remains

¹¹ The tablet consists of two (or three) very thin layers of bronze. This explains why it is not broken into even more fragments irrespective of its many cracks. Most of them have affected only one layer, the other one(s) intact and the material cohesive. It is not a normal material, nor does it provide any advantage for incising letters: one needs less strength for incising into it, it is true, but one has to be extremely careful not to break it, and parts of the cracks result perhaps from the act of incising. But why use such a material? We cannot be sure, but it may well be some material left over from the production of another object, which would account also for the irregular form of the tablet in its inferior part: perhaps a shield with its several layers of bronze?, the coating of a wooden *agalma*—at Delphi a full size bull of thin silver mounted to a wooden trestle was unearthed (see Bommelaer 1991, 202 ff. and Scott 2014, 88, 297), or the cover of a wall or door, as in the famous temple of Athena Chalkioikos on the *akropolis* of neighboring Sparta?

are 4 letters at the beginning of l. 7. The catalogue is followed by a regulation concerning military service, which is incomplete before line 7 in its actual state and starts beyond the broken rim. To complete it, 2 further letters are required: κᾱ]τᾰ. Finally one should expect a division mark (three vertical points) between catalogue and regulation, in sum space for 7, at most 8 letters, owing to the irregularly fractured rim. Inclusive a supplement of that size, the average line in the tablet's upper part amounts to 60 – 65 letters.

In all, the tablet should have comprised originally between 1300 and 1400 letters and marks, but uncertainties remain: The right border seems to be drawn in somewhat to the left down from l. 16, as may be guessed from its continuation in the inferior, blank section. There the border is regular and smooth, evidently not broken off. Whether there was a comparable reduction of the more seriously broken left border in the corresponding zone is open to speculation – as is the reason for the reduction. The tablet consists of 6 fragments fitting together nearly perfectly. What is missing at the left and right borders seems not just broken off, but might have been badly corroded to small illegible pieces, otherwise one wonders why the person who unearthed the tablet has not taken further fragments. There are no ligatures, but in some places single letters are written near to each other resulting to some uncertainty in supplementing missing passages in the broken border zones.¹²

From l. 23 downwards, the tablet was, it seems, not inscribed, but due to serious corrosion in this zone there cannot yet be any certainty, especially since the document has not been cleaned. Sections of pre-marked ground lines can be discerned, and maybe even some traces of letters indicative of further text, but they may well be due to imagination.¹³

¹² As do, moreover, mistakes, abbreviations and forms of dialect.

¹³ One must be afraid that the actual bad state of conservation in the inferior part will deteriorate soon unless the tablet is professionally cleaned and the process of decay stabilized—as is the case with many bronze items from the very moment they are unearthed.

Both rims are broken off irregularly. To the right, at most only single letters are missing down to l. 15 and from there increasingly more. To the left the loss is more substantial, ca. 8 letters seem to be lost down to l. 16 and from there increasingly more up to a maximum of ca. 15 letters in l. 22, the last one that with certainty continues beyond the broken rim into the inscribed field. The calculations of the lost zones are based on my supplements, which for some lines seem sufficiently sure, illustrating how much is missing in the rest.¹⁴

The tablet starts with a complete entry that corresponds to the end of l. 12, where the text of the first part comes to an end with a signal term. So the tablet is complete in its first section, and was not inserted in a series of similar tablets. Its second part, comprising three days of the Lykaia, it seems, has a substantial lacuna from l. 13. Half of this line is left blank by the copyist, who perhaps could not decipher what he had before him or may have had serious problems with terms in the Arkadian dialect, as he did not understand single words or forms elsewhere. For this reason instructions for the initial day of the festival—being the seventh one of a Holy Month—have fallen out. The following second (i.e. eighth) day seems to be treated completely, but just after reaching the third (i.e. ninth) day the text breaks off. If two faint letters of this last line are really preserved, it ends in a way similar to l. 13.

Provenance and Dating of the Tablet

There is no information about the provenance of the document. Its Arkadian origin is clear from its dialect and some place names, and its dating to around 500 BC from palaeographic criteria. That it must belong to the Lykaion (or nearby Lykosura)¹⁵ can be seen from several details:

¹⁴ A discussion cannot be backed up here by examples but must be postponed until after a more detailed publication of the Greek text.

¹⁵ Further places in the neighborhood of the sanctuary are mentioned: as it seems Lykosura, in referring to the altar of Kachila = Despoina (see appendix 1, concerning the opening passage) (l. 16); the Alpheos-valley, since piglets were offered to the river-god on three occasions (l. 1 f., 4, 12) probably on its bank; not far might have been located the “Geese’s ground” (l. 22), whatever it was like (a site

- the boy offered to (Zeus) Kataibatas (l. 6) – this alone suffices to infer where the tablet comes from, since such an offering only occurred at the Lykaion; human sacrifice there was a well known scandalon for classical authors from Plato and Pausanias to Augustine and Isidore of Sevilla who believed that it took place in reality and therefore commented on it negatively; had there been another human sacrifice of the same type anywhere else in the Greek world, at least one classical author would have known and transmitted it to us; in fact, boys cannot have been slain at any time in the Lykaion, since the ash-altar on the mountain-top, starting in late Mycenaean time, contained large amounts of bones, but always animal, never human material, as the new American analyses of the DNA clearly show;
- the prominence of Zeus (at least 10 epicleses);
- the name of Olympos for the Zeus-sanctuary—its gods being the Olynpiaioi (sic, l. 21), its games Olynpiaia (sic, l. 9): cf. Paus. 8.38.2: the Parrhasians referring to the Lykaion as Olympos;
- the triple occurrence of the river Alpheos flowing at the foot of the sanctuary’s hills (l. 1 f., 4, 12);
- the archaeological evidence on the site of the Lykaion, where in new excavations the hippodrome indirectly mentioned in l. 9 (cf. 14 f.) is documented—sporting grounds of this special type are generally rare and this one, is allegedly the only one preserved in the Greek world - it is no longer: on the very spot was built a modern sport field, as illustrated by photos on online sites of the Lykaion;¹⁶

or a village?). In greater distance was Kle(i)tor (l. 21), maybe also the altar of Alea (l. 4), not further identified and therefore perhaps at the most important sanctuary of the goddess at Tegea. Whether the final letters of a word opening now l. 21 (-]αυτι) have something to do with Pallantion or other places is open to discussion.

¹⁶ But cf. the “stadion” at Karian Aphrodisias and what is left at Byzantion resp. modern Istanbul. David G. Romano alone 2005 and, together with his colleague from the University of Arizona, M.E. Voyatzis, 2010 gives a very instructive summary of the new surveys and excavations in the Lykaion area. The project was directed by both of them and conducted with students from Pennsylvania University, under supervision of the 39th Arkadian ephorate at modern Tripolis and its director, Anna Karapanagiotou.

- the Korynition (“altar on the mountain-top”: l. 3 and 7) as the most prominent altar during most of the year, described by Pausanias (8.38.7) and once more dug up since 2006;
- no entries for the winter (Oct./Nov.–Feb./March): in a sanctuary high in the mountains (the summit with the altar at some 1420m) poor weather must have discouraged extensive activity for official festival dates with many participants;
- during the Olynpiia (= Lykaia) the altar of (Zeus) Geneswanax, “lord of the *gene*/clans,” being amongst the earliest subdivisions of an entire region, here Arkadia; such an altar should be expected at a central place such as the Lykaion
- the stereotypic images of Arkadian coins during the 5th c., which on their obverse display Zeus Lykaios on his throne, and on their reverse the bust of a young goddess without really distinctive features (a small *tainia* in her hair, a simple pearl necklace)—in the tablet the principal female goddesses are Demeter and her daughter (with Poseidon) Despoina, especially prominent in nearby Lykosura being responsible, as it seems, for the cult of the central Arkadian sanctuary (see appendix 2 with fig. 1–7).

To sum up these arguments, the sanctuary the tablet comes from can only be the Lykaion, and the matters it deals with can only concern its local cult. So, matters of cult dominate, and therefore the texts should be meant for the priests of the sanctuary. A part of their functions are, however, profane, amongst them is one of seemingly political relevance—which has perished in the large lacuna at the beginning of l. 22—and another one concerning the military organization of the rural parts of Arkadia (l. 6 f.).

Regulations for the *Ephēbia*

The relevant passage fills parts of l. 6 and 7, and taken together amounts to roughly one line. It gives a cohesive entry, preceded and followed by individual entries. A correction—marked out here by |_|—falls to an extent of two letters in the lacuna at the beginning of l. 7:

06 ... E+ArEA AΣΠΙΔΑ ΑΚΟΝΤΙΟΝ ΦΟΙΝΙΚΙΣ +ΙΦΟΣ Κ [

07 -----]TA |corr. |Δ]FETON ΑΣΚΑ : ...

The original version (with my supplements) says:

06 ... Ἐξάγελ(οι)· ἀσπί[ς], ἀκόντιον, φοινικίς, ξίφος, κ
07a[όρυς. : Κα]τὰ Φέτων ἄσκα(σις). :

06 ... Messen(gers from inside the sanctuary) out: (round) shield,
javelin, (purple, i.e.) red (military) tunic, sword, h
07 elmet. || F]or always one year (military) train(ing). || ...

This first version can be clearly read in the conventional, colored photo. The lacuna of l. 7 can be filled to a high degree of probability with the Greek term for helmet (*korys*), since just this piece of armor is so far missing and must be expected with certitude: Without it, the equipment would be not only incomplete, but next to useless. There remains room for three (or four) letters in the lacuna until the broken rim of what is preserved is reached. We may expect a division mark (:) and the beginning of the preposition κα]τὰ, which here commands a genitive. It occurs in the plural thus expressing continuity, a series of service terms, each of one year. The same concept in l. 9: though there was only one winner of the stadion in each Lykaia, the direction concerning this monument is formulated in the plural (ἱερωνί<κ>ὸν Ὀλυμπιαῖο στ(αδίῳ) because it is addressed not only to one special athlete, but to each single winner of that discipline.¹⁷ Thus, what follows is defined as always for one year of duration, and labelled as ἄσκα(σις): (military) service,¹⁸ for

¹⁷ As I learn from J.L. García-Ramón, the Arkadian dialect differs in that respect from Kyprian that has a special form in the gen. sing. masc. of o-stems: “in Cyprian -ὸν beside-ὸ, ... usually -ὸν in nouns, whether vowel or consonant follows”: Buck 1955, § 106.1.

¹⁸ The term applies primarily to athletic exercises in *gymnasia* (see LSJ), but also to military training, cf. Xen. *Kyr.* 8.1.34 ἄσκησις πολεμική. - Since the letter K appears only partially (resembling an I: FETONACIA), an otherwise not documented adjective (or noun), formed as γυμνάσια: 'bodily exercises' (Pi. fr. 129.4, Hdt. 9.33, cf. LSJ). Since the meaning of such a term (we would rather expect Φετίασια) should be similar to (τὰ) ἔτεια ('per year' or 'lasting one year') military training might be considered once more, with respect to arms and armour listed immediately before. But it seems less problematic to improve resp.

which the weapons and armor enumerated before are prescribed. They had to be provided and brought by the invited persons themselves, they are not supplied by the sanctuary as the inviting authority.

A whole year of training cannot be for each participant a recurrent procedure; it must be regarded as an event to be undergone once in a young man's life as a precondition for integration into the regular military units and, as we may guess, for the legal status of a full citizen. The Greek term for such a procedure, so far only known from late 4th c. Athens, is *ephebia*, a period of "basic training" for youths just becoming adults. In this case these youths not only learned to fight in military units and in formations (*taxeis*), amongst them the *phalanx*, but coming as individuals from different parts of Arkadia they adopted also a political and cultural identity.

As an expression of this common identity may be regarded the Arkadian "federal" coins of the 5th c. BC.¹⁹ On their obverse they depict Zeus (Zan) Lykaios (Olympaios) on his throne, on the reverse a portrait of Despoina as the most prominent goddess of nearby Lykosura. The *ephebes* must have known both from their period of training, from spring to autumn (also) in the hills around the Lykaion/Olynpos, in the winter down in the plain near Lykosura. Even if they did not return later during the Lykaia, they had a clear idea of both places where they had been trained and educated as Arkadian soldiers and citizens. So it is understandable that the coins minted to sustain them during military service (exceeding a maximum length) and maybe to a certain degree as a maintenance for their families featured just these deities.

complete one letter than postulate a new, rather peculiar word. And ΑΣΚΑ(σις) can well be equally abbreviated as the preceding ΕΞΑΓΕΛ(μα). - Anyway we must refrain from speculation about another outright mistake by the copyist who might have misspelt ΑΘΛΑ: 'games', meaning the Lykaia, which would thus attain also military character: the athletes must bring their weapons for at least one discipline of military character. But this is just not what the tablet says, the less as the term occurs in l. 1 and 2 in an older, more appropriate spelling: ΑΦΕΘΛΑ.

¹⁹ See appendix 2 with arguments for what is given here only in the form of statements.

Finally these ephebes formed one single group as a basis for regional structures underlying the political order. When they returned to their families they had become members of “the Arkadians,” only to renew their experience during future wars—and engage in further periods of training for elders, as we may expect. There seems to be a hint of that in the tablet.

A Later Correction: Military Training for Elders up to their 50th Year?

In long periods of peace what had been learned in one year could easily be forgotten. Moreover progress in military techniques had to be taken into account, also to react to the improved skills of prospective enemies. To stand still meant to risk defeat. Therefore it was necessary for those who had already undergone their basic training to rehearse and to learn, and moreover to get acquainted to ever new soldiers and to confirm and strengthen the political cohesion of the common group of “the Arkadians.”

We may, however, presume that brushing up was necessary only in phases without military activities, for in campaigns, during the days that preceded combat, while troops assembled and marched to the theaters of war, there should have been time enough to renew military qualifications. Only in peaceful years training at the Lykaion made sense, but perhaps not in all. So decisions had to be taken depending on the actual situation, and invitations sent by messengers when it seemed appropriate. Since the procedure hardly took place every year, we should not expect a general rule leading to a special entry in the tablet, nor something like a timetable or even a to-do list for such training. There is, however, one item that needed general regulation, since rolls with the personal data of each combatant certainly did not exist. That is why it made sense to combine the invitation for training with a maximum age beyond which the duty of military service expired—and with it the duty to participate in training units. So when messengers were sent to the farms, villages, and towns of the single districts to invite all men who had undergone the *ephebia*, they might well have added a maximum age up to which men in good health and under normal

circumstances were expected to serve. And that age may not have been defined from the beginning, but added later, perhaps in reaction to a crisis.

At Sparta, it was the 60th year of age that ultimately set a man free from military service, and elders belonging to the immediately preceding age-group classes were mobilized only under special circumstances.²⁰ Moreover, the general rule might have been restricted to higher ranking officers and not applied for rank and file soldiers who simply lacked the physical strength for real combat. Ordinary soldiers under normal circumstances may well have been overlooked for service during their last decade, from their 50th to their 60th year, only forming a reserve for special needs in cases of emergency. If things were similar in neighboring Arkadia, a maximum age for service around the 50th year might also have been laid down there.

Just that seems to have been adjusted after some time in the tablet, not by an addition that was no longer possible once the text had been written, but by a correction visible only in the b/w version of the photo: At the beginning of the preserved part of l. 7 a square structure becomes visible that opens downwards and is set around the second letter of the line (A, going back to KA]TA); the first letter (T) now constitutes the left border of the new boxlet, the right border goes right through the initial F of the following word (FETON).²¹ The A within the box, complete on the colored photo, in the b/w version seems to lack its two tips below the horizontal bar—only the upper part of the letter seems to be stressed in an act of reworking, making the result resemble a Δ in common Greek; the lower part of the letter can even have been erased by filling the

²⁰ Lazenby 1985, 9 ff. (40 age-classes, starting at the age of 20); cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.17 (immediately after Leuktra the ephors summoned all men available, i.e. up to the 40th class, including men of 60 years of age, and even people in political functions)—however, this was an exception.

²¹ One may consider that the modification was noted in a time when the F seemed dispensable—or by some person to whom it was no longer familiar. But with a view to neighboring Elis this should be expected not too early, and the incision of the right bar of the boxlet right through the F may have occurred by a mere slip of the writer.

existing incision and the remaining parts of the engraved letter highlighted by paint, but this is a mere hypothesis.



colored photo



b/w photo



In the tablet, *delta* is generally expressed as a slender D,²² so one hesitates to read a modified letter Δ—it would be the only instance of its kind in the tablet. A solution might be a different meaning of the new structure as a whole, being no longer a letter, but within a boxlet a number, as elsewhere in Greece: Δ(έκα): 10. The Arkadian letter might well have caused problems in commerce beyond the Arkadian “frontiers.” That is why Δ(έκα) may be considered after all, the square around it indicating the factor 5: Π(έντε). In this case, the new structure means 50.

To make any sense, the preceding word also needs correction, but most of it remains uncertain since it occurred in the part of the line now lost. Most probable is an alteration from κα]τὰ to ἐς], and since the following genitive (temporis) needs a commanding noun, one must supplement roughly the word “age” (ἡλικία). There is a further possibility, marked in what follows 07 b corr. In this case we must additionally assume that the paint was scratched out of the two final letters of ἔτῶν, effecting a further abbreviation that could, however, be easily resolved:

07 corr.

] | Γ Α Ψ | Ε Τ Ο Ν Α Σ Κ Α : ...

07 a corr.

... : Γ Ε ς] <ἡλικίαν> | τ Γ Δ Γ Ψ | (πεντήκοντα) ἔτῶν
ἄσκα(σις). : ... or

²² This is the normal form in Arkadia, see the alphabet in Jeffery, Johnston 1990, 206, moreover the early sketches in Roehl 1907, 105 ff. (the photos in Jeffery, Johnston 1990, pl. 40 f. are at times too faint in reprints, but also there are some sketches). Cf. also the developing letter forms of the coin legends in appendix 2, fig. 4 ff.

07 b corr. ... : Γ'Εζ' <τὰ>] |τ'Δ'F| (πεντήκοντα) ἔτ{δν}(εα)
 ἄσκα(σις). : ...

The meaning is in either case:

07 corr. ... || Up to (the / the age] of) 50 years (military)
 train(ing) || ...

The former text aiming at the *ephebia* had not become obsolete, but what remained of it might well have sufficed as a hint, the more so if the tablet was kept in an archive (the military superiors knew the regulation and certainly did not need to look it up). But the new formula, with a view to military training for men who had already completed their basic service, was regarded as important enough to be noted later, for also Zeus Lykaios and his *synnaoi* should have a full and valid version.

During the Persian Invasion of Greece: the East-Arkadian Cities and “The Rest of Arkadia”

The tablet, written around 500 BC, sheds new light on what Herodotos reports about two battles two decades later, at Thermopylai (480 BC) and near Plataiai (479 BC); in turn Herodotos helps to understand better the military regulations on the tablet. In both battles Arkadian troops were prominent, by their number and their effort, and the historian had once more detailed information.

Of the 5,200 Greek troops in all that assembled at Thermopylai in the summer of 480, 1000 came from Tegea and Mantinea (half of them from each town), 120 from Arkadian Orchomenos,²³ “and from the rest of Arkadia 1000” (Hdt. 7.202).²⁴ The total number of Arkadian soldiers is high, 2,120 out of 5,200, or 40%.²⁵ Such a large Arkadian contribution of

²³ ML 27, coil 4: ΕΡΧΟΜΕΝΙΟΙ.

²⁴ Σπαρτιητέων τε τριηκόσιοι ὀπλίται καὶ Τεγεητέων καὶ Μαντινέων χίλιοι, ἡμίσεες ἑκατέρων, ἐξ Ὀρχομενοῦ τε τῆς Ἀρκαδίας εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν καὶ ἐκ τῆς λοιπῆς Ἀρκαδίας χίλιοι. For Thermopylai see—in reaction to Miller’s 300—Cartledge and Matthews (both 2006), and Kofler 2011.

²⁵ The amount of Arkadian military manpower can probably be explained by the rather poor nature of the land: many a younger son could not live off his father’s

troops is notable since the theater of war was in central Greece, not at the Isthmos of Korinth or even within the Peloponnese.

In any event, this was only a modest part of what Arkadia could muster under conditions of emergency. In the following year, the Tegeates alone sent a contingent of 1500 (Hdt. 9.28.3), an increase by a factor of 3; if the same applies for the other Arkadian contingents reported at Thermopylai, they may have even surpassed the 5000 Spartiates (ibid. § 2). But the Spartans had additional manpower, mustered by *helotes* and *perioikoi*.²⁶ Anyway, the military capacity of Arkadia was clearly high, as evident already from the *Iliad* (2.603–614), and still from Xenophon, for the very end of the 5th century (*An.* 1.1.2): the younger Kyros' bodyguard consisted of 300 men, as did that of a Spartan king, under the command of Xenias from the region of Parrhasia around the Lykaion, the troops probably of the same provenance as their commander; moreover, of the 10,000 Greek mercenaries in all 4,000 came from Arkadia, amounting to the same percentage as at Thermopylai.²⁷

So, the military field must have been of first rate importance in Arkadia, and the passage of the tablet concerning it is hardly inserted by chance. Arkadia is a rough and poor country,²⁸ with the strong Spartans just to

farm or even marry and have children without money earned outside Arkadia. So, soldiers and mercenaries seem to have been amongst the region's most important resources, next to wool and textiles; probably it is not by chance that a *phoinikis*, a dyed article of clothing of presumably high standard, is mentioned in l. 6.

²⁶ One may wonder whether all of the additional 35,000 combatants of the Spartiates were really helots. Their number may well be correct, but they were hardly used all as light troops, as Herodotos puts it; such an immense number of armed helots would have caused great danger for their masters, who were, moreover, in a very precarious situation. With greater probability a large proportion of them served (nearly) unarmed in logistics, between the Megarid and the northern foothills of the Kithairon, see appendix 2. In this case, we may guess that most of the light armed troops within the Spartan contingent were in fact *perioikoi*.

²⁷ Roy 1967, 308 f.; cf. for the middle of the 4th Xen. *Hell.* 7.4–5.

²⁸ The land consisted for the greatest part of highlands and valleys, those to the north covered with lakes that tended to expand from time to time when their subterranean clearings were blocked off. The land was nucleated by its mountainous surface, and did not reach the rather fertile coastal strips of Elis