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Conclusions

1. Introduction

In the preceding eight chapters, the main types of evidence have been discussed that shed light on early Greek warfare and related aspects, such as the use of martial equipment in everyday life. In this chapter, I shall first discuss the strengths and weakness of the various types of evidence, before turning my attention to a brief summary with regards to developments in weapons and armour. I then attempt to answer the main questions posited in this book's introduction, namely: (1) analysis of warriors and their fighting styles *c.q.* modes of warfare; (2) examination of regional differences; (3) examination of diachronic developments; (4) discussion of applicable Greek terminology, and finally; (5) analysis of martial values and activities in times of peace, grouped under the term 'warrior society' to underscore the close link between warfare and society.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the evidence

The various types of evidence are not spread evenly through the Aegean basin, nor does the evidence of a single region cover the whole of the period under examination. More specifically, the Mykenaian evidence stems mostly from southern and central Greece, and some of the islands (*e.g.*, Naxos). Burials with arms have been examined for only a few sites (Lefkandi, Eretria, Athens, Argos, and some minor localities) and are dated to the period between 1000 and 700. Evidence from sanctuaries centres on Olympia (Southern Greece), with additional material from other sites, such as Kalapodi, Sparta, and Samos; all dated to the eighth century or later. The iconographic evidence from the eighth century onwards is characterised by a few production centres (especially Athens, Korinth, Sparta, Euboia, some of the islands, and parts of East Greece); Athens is the main production centre from the middle of the sixth century onwards. Matters are complicated by the fact that each centre may have had clearly local preferences for what they depicted on their pottery. The textual evidence dates to the seventh century and beyond, and is dominated by the Homeric epics (originally from East Greece), with additional material from Asia Minor and the islands, as well as a few sites on the southern mainland.

Furthermore, the evidence that has come down to us represents only a portion of what once existed. For example, we know virtually nothing about early Korinthian poets, such as Eumelos, whose poetry may have added to

our insights into warfare in the northeast Peloponnese. In addition, whole classes of material may simply have disappeared. We have no pottery from, for example, Achaia that depicts combat or weapons, but perhaps they instead produced such scenes in other media that have left no trace in the archaeological record (*cf.* Penelope's elaborate burial shroud for Laërtes, or the chance find of fragments of a seventh-century wall-painting from the temple at Kalapodi).

Nevertheless, by comparing different types of evidence we can gain some insight into possible lost pieces of evidence. Furthermore, by comparing evidence from different regions we can get some insight into how widespread certain phenomena may have been. For instance, the fact that *hippobatas*-type warriors are attested in Korinth, Lakonia, and Athens suggests strongly that they may also have been known in closely connected regions for which we otherwise have no (contemporary) evidence, such as Achaia. Finally, by examining the evidence in the proper chronological order, it is possible to recognise continuity as well as discontinuity. For example, it is clear that the galleys and rail chariots of the Late Bronze Age continued in use through the intervening 'Dark Age' until they reappear in the art of the eighth century.

3. Weapons and armour

Warriors of the period between the Late Bronze Age down to shortly before outbreak of the Persian Wars cannot be conveniently analysed according to a specific type (*e.g.*, spearman, swordsman, archer), as this suggests a degree of specialisation that appears to have been mostly absent (see discussion in the next section). Instead, it is more profitable to briefly review the various types of weapons and armour that warriors of the period in question used on and off the battlefield.⁸⁶⁸

a. Shields

It seems as if shields were not used during the Mykenaian Palatial period, although figure-of-eight shields were used as a decorative motif and are also known as votive miniatures. For the period between roughly 1200 and 700, there is much diversity as regards shields. This diversity is also a characteristic of the Geometric period, where we have roughly similar types of shields still in use. These shields can be round, rectangular, or of the so-called Dipylon variety. These are all so-called single-grip shields, fitted with a handgrip in the centre of the shield. These shields appear to have been often fixed with a *telamōn*, a strap that allowed them to be carried more comfortably around the neck and shoulders.

The new, so-called Argive shield is introduced shortly before the end of the eighth century. This is a round shield, strongly convex, with a clear rim; at least sometimes it also had a bronze facing. Its most distinguishing

868 The basic work on Greek arms and armour remains Snodgrass 1964*b*, now supplemented by Jarva 1995 and more specialised volumes such as Baitinger 2001, Kunze 1991, and so on.

feature is its double-grip. A variation of the Dipylon shield survives the transition to the seventh century and is fitted with a double-grip to become the so-called Boiotian shield. These double-grip shields are relatively large and heavy, but their weight is distributed across the arm and shoulder and are therefore relatively easy to carry. The double-grip thus seems an improvement over the older *telamōn* in that allows the wearer greater control over the shield itself.

Furthermore, the single-grip shields are closely associated with chariots while the double-grip shields are often depicted in use by horsemen. The Dipylon shield in particular is often worn, slung around the back, by warriors on chariots in Geometric scenes. Its double-grip descendant, the Boiotian shield, is also a favourite of charioteers in art of the sixth century in particular. It is possible that the scallops cut from the sides provided enough elbow room for the charioteer to control the horses while still being protected from attacks in the rear. By contrast, the Argive shield, carried as it was on the left arm, would have been easy to carry by a man on horseback; a single-grip shield slung around the back might have bounced off or chafed the rear end of the horse.⁸⁶⁹

b. Helmets

The most common type of helmet depicted in the Mykenaian Palatial iconography is the so-called boar's-tusk helmet, which endured for some time after the fall of the Mykenaian palaces. In addition, the late thirteenth and especially twelfth centuries saw the introduction of new types of helmets; some of these were made of bronze (*e.g.*, the eleventh-century bronze helmet from Tiryns), but the majority appear to have been made of perishable materials, such as the so-called 'hedgehog' helmet. By the Geometric period, there are two types of helmets. One appears to have been a sort of leather cap with a plume while the other was conical and has a more limited geographic range.

Bronze helmets are not known for the tenth and ninth centuries and were only reintroduced shortly before the end of the eighth century. They are known from a relatively small number of graves, from finds at sanctuaries, from depictions in art, and from texts ('shining helmets' in the Homeric epics, for example). One of the earliest types was the so-called *Kegelhelm*, the earliest known example being the specimen from the tomb T45 at Argos. This was a very impractical type of helmet, with its top-heavy stilted crest, and appeared to have disappeared before 700.⁸⁷⁰ It morphed into the simpler and stronger 'Illyrian' helmet.

More common by far was the so-called Korinthian helmet, which was made of a single sheet of bronze and covered the whole head and face, leaving only slits for the eyes and mouth. This type of helmet first appears in Korinthian vase-painting before the end of the eighth century and then spreads throughout the Aegean. Around the middle of the seventh century at the latest, a new type of helmet appears in East Greece. This Ionian

869 For further details, see Brouwers 2007a.

870 Whitley 2001, 181–182.

helmet left more of the face exposed and generally featured hinged cheekpieces (adopted from Assyrian models?), and sometimes had a reinforced section across and above the forehead. These helmets are similar to Lydian types, such as a bronze-decorated iron example with moveable cheekpieces from the mid-sixth century that has been unearthed at Sardis.⁸⁷¹

In the later sixth century, a new type of helmet is introduced in Attic art. The so-called Chalkidian helmet was clearly based on the Corinthian. It left more of the face exposed and the ears were left clear. The cheekpieces were sometimes hinged. A variant on this type without the noseguard is commonly referred to as Attic, but it is essentially the same kind of helmet. At the same time, the older Corinthian type helmet was modified by adding cut-outs to expose the ears. These developments show a preoccupation, at least in Athens, with making it easier for warriors to hear and, in the case of the Chalkidian/Attic type, also see.

c. Body-armor

In the Mykenaian Palatial period, body-armor, like shields, was apparently not used, though finds such as the Dendra cuirass indicate that plate armor had been known before. Instead, low-ranking soldiers are generally shown bare-chested and wearing a kilt, while higher-ranking warriors (the *heqetai*?) wear tunics. Of the Postpalatial material, the warriors on the Warrior Vase appear to wear either greaves or some sort of wrappings around their lower legs, and may also be equipped with some sort of shirts or body-armor, in addition to their crescent-shaped shields and helmets. By the Geometric period, most warriors appear to have fought naked.

Clothing apparently remained optional for much of the seventh and even sixth centuries, although the bronze bell-shaped cuirass was available from the late eighth century onwards. The earliest attested example is the front-and backplate from tomb T45 at Argos. The Chigi *olpe* is the earliest example, to my knowledge, in which all of the visible warriors appear to wear a bronze bell-shaped cuirass. This can be regarded as part of the process toward more standardised equipment that characterises the seventh and sixth centuries (see below). However, not all of the men in the battle-scene wear a tunic; some are still naked apart from their armor.

By the late sixth century, a new type of body-armor is clearly attested in Attic art, the linen corslet, or more properly the 'shoulder-piece' corslet (according to Eero Jarva). However, the linen corslet was known much earlier, although this may have been of a different type. Jarva believes a Protoattic fragment already depicts a type of linen corslet in the seventh century (see page 97, above). There are references to linen corslets in the *Iliad* (e.g., *Il.* 2.529); they are also part of the cache described by Alkaios (fr. 140.11 Voigt). It seems certain, therefore, that linen corslets of some kind were used from the seventh century onwards.

871 Greenewalt & Heywood 1992 *passim*.

d. Protection of the limbs

Some warriors in Mykenaian Palatial wall-paintings are equipped with gaiters, presumably made of linen, to which one or two greaves could be fixed; Diane Fortenberry has suggested that a single greave denoted rank,⁸⁷² but it may have indicated a connection to the palace. In Late Helladic IIIC, some warriors used bronze greaves; the grave from Amphiloikia, for example, contained a pair of greaves. These greaves tend to be shorter than the ones that reappear in the Aegean from about 700 onwards, and also tend to lack the stylised musculature that characterises these items from the seventh century onwards.

Aside from greaves, other types of armour used for the protection of the limbs include upper- and lower arm-guards, as well as thigh guards and ankle-guards. Of these, arm-guards appear to have been rare. The earliest is a lower arm guard of the late seventh century. Ankle-guards were more common, as were thigh guards (although only a single example of the latter has been unearthed at Olympia). Most of these pieces of armour date to the second half of the sixth century, a period during which more centrally-organised armies may have appeared that were probably also more socially complex. Perhaps some men wished to express their wealth by donning more expensive pieces of armour.

e. Spears

The spear is the most commonly attested weapon in graves, at sanctuaries, in art, and texts, followed closely by the sword. In Mykenaian Palatial wall-paintings, spears tend to be very long. Relatively long spears are also depicted on the Late Helladic IIIC 'Warrior Vase', but shorter spears are also shown on other contemporary vases. In Geometric figured scenes, warriors typically carry a set of two, sometimes even three spears, which are typically shorter than the warrior himself and may have been used for both thrusting and throwing. We know from both texts and iconographic evidence that the spear was also carried by men in times of peace.⁸⁷³

Combinations of long and short spears appear from the seventh century onwards, when warriors could be equipped with either a single spear or a set of two. Some very heavy spearheads could only have been used in thrusting, as were certain huge spears known from epic (*e.g.*, the Pelian ash), and the *naumacha xusta*, the 'sea-pikes' known from Homer, as well as Late Helladic IIIC and later pictorial evidence. Whenever a set of two spearheads of unequal size are found in a grave, we may assume that they perhaps had different functions, with one serving as a javelin and the other as a lance. The exclusive use of the single thrusting spear by armoured warriors appears to be a feature of the fifth century.

True throwing spears are difficult to recognise, both archaeologically and iconographically, and in many cases spears appeared to have been multifunctional (*e.g.*, the spears in the Homeric epics are both thrown and

872 Refer to Fortenberry 1991.

873 Van Wees 1998 provides the necessary overview.

thrusted). Some javelinheads have been unearthed at sanctuaries, such as at Nemea, where they may have been used in athletic competitions. There are also a few examples in art of the seventh and sixth centuries that leave no doubt that some spears were clearly javelins. Aside from their generally shorter length, javelins may also be equipped with throwing loops (leather thongs). The warriors on the Chigi *olpe* are each equipped with a throwing and thrusting spear, and a heavily-armoured warrior on a sixth-century Attic plate also wields a short spear with throwing-loop.

f. Swords

The sword is almost as commonly attested in the evidence as the spear. Very short swords are shown in Mykenian frescoes; longer swords of the new Naue II type are used by men on Late Helladic IIIC. This type of cut-and-thrust sword remains in use throughout the period down to the late sixth century, when it is replaced by a shorter sword with a straight cross-guard. Swords are commonly encountered in burials with arms and were also dedicated at sanctuaries; sometimes, they were ritually 'killed'. The textual evidence makes clear that they were also used as sidearms by warriors who fought with spears.

Of the various types of weapons, the sword was undoubtedly the most durable and perhaps also the most expensive, especially when fitted with silver rivets as the swords of some Homeric heroes were. The sword is the only weapon that never leaves the side of a (high-ranking) man, not even when in the comfort and safety of his own home, as Hans van Wees has clearly demonstrated.⁸⁷⁴ By carrying a sword around the town, the man demonstrated he was able-bodied, a warrior deserving respect, as well as a wealthy man. It was also by far the most personal weapon in a man's possession, no doubt because of these qualities.

g. Axes

Double-axes were sometimes used as weapons. They are known from both graves and sanctuaries, as well as art. The famous T45 grave at Argos contained the remains of a warrior who was equipped with bronze bell-shaped cuirass, bronze helmet, and also possessed a pair of double-axes. The grave did not contain any visible remains of a shield. The two axes, if they indeed served as weapons of war, may also have been a token of his prowess on the battlefield, or his ability to lead others in battle.

The double-axe is attested in mainland Greece, and in particular the Argolid and Euboia, although it is also encountered on some Attic, Boiotian, and Cycladic pots, often in combination with one or more horses. Axes have been unearthed in some graves (for example, at Lefkandi and Argos), some as early as Late Helladic IIIC. In some cases, axes are the only weapons included in the grave (as in tomb T45 at Argos). The axe is a peculiar implement, not merely useful as a weapon, but also used for other purposes, such as in the preparation of meat for roasting (*cf.* the firedogs in

874 Van Wees 1998, 335.

said tomb).⁸⁷⁵

h. Ranged weapons

The bow was the principal ranged weapon. While arrowheads have been unearthed in graves and at cult sites; possible remains of a composite bow have been unearthed in Toumba pyre 1 at Lefkandi (a piece of horn). Based on an examination of the Geometric vase-paintings, Anthony Snodgrass expands on Hilda Lorimer's earlier work by identifying three types of bow, namely the simple bow, the composite bow with reflexed tip, and a double-curved bow (possibly another type of simple bow, as Snodgrass suggests); the first two were apparently known from the Bronze Age onwards.⁸⁷⁶ A very detailed description of a composite bow can be found in the *Iliad* (*Il.* 4.105–126).

However, the bow was not the only ranged weapon used by Greek warriors during the period under examination. Aside from the javelin (discussed above), the Greeks also used the sling, a leather thong that allowed the user to hurl a stone (slingshot) a great deal farther and more accurately than if it were thrown by hand. Slingers are rare in both texts and painted scenes, and slingshot notoriously difficult to recognise in the archaeological record. The *Iliad* includes slingers in the form of the Lokrian contingent (more on this below), but also has warriors who pick up rocks from the ground and throw these at their adversaries.

4. Different kinds of fighters and styles of warfare

Before we turn to an examination to the different types of warriors and how they fought, it may be useful to briefly summarise how they may have been organised. In the Mykenaian Palatial period, it is clear that the palaces used a mix of public and private means to muster their armies: this is made clear by such evidence as the *o-ka* tablets. The palace administration delegated a lot of the responsibility for the army to nobles (the *heqetai*) and local authorities, supplying any equipment that might be lacking. Some kind of authority may have survived the collapse of the palace at Mykenai, to judge from the uniformly equipped warriors on the famous 'Warrior Vase'.

However, the Late Helladic IIC material from elsewhere strongly suggests that centrally-organised armies were replaced by something smaller, that was presumably organised on a more personal level: the warband. This highly mobile and flexible unit, which consisted essentially of a leader and his followers (as familiar from Homer), did not require its members to be arrayed in any particular fashion, and a man may just as soon chose to fight armed with a spear as he may pick up a bow and arrow. This is the basic organisational unit, as far as I can tell, from the twelfth century down to the late sixth.

These warbands, to judge by the evidence, consisted of members of the elite, possibly supplemented by some of their dependents (see especially

875 For details, refer to Crielaard 1996, 54 n. 116 (with further references).

876 Snodgrass 1964b, 141–142.

discussion in chapter 7). I would suggest that the elite formed a sizeable class within early Greek societies, perhaps as much as a quarter of the population of the principal town in a territory. The fact that warriors could fight on an equal footing regardless of their armour (or clothing), as demonstrated by the iconographic evidence, is a strong indicator that they belong to the same class or social group. Furthermore, these warbands were mobilised through feasting, which is typically a ritual limited to members of the same social group. Evidence from Homer, especially Menelaos' desire to 'vacate' a town and offer it to Odysseus and his family, also suggests strongly that military power is limited to—or monopolised by—a specific group of people, who may seize what they want because of their (perceived) warrior prowess.

As noted earlier, it is misleading to speak of different types of fighters for the period preceding the outbreak of the Persian Wars, as this suggests a degree of specialisation that was simply absent for the most part. Instead, warriors of the period under examination are remarkable for their diversity and flexibility. Warriors who fought at close range could use a variety of different weapons and armour. In the Mykenaian Palatial period, they generally lacked shields and wore limited amounts of armour; the Postpalatial and Geometric periods sees a wide array of unarmoured men with helmets, some equipped with one of a variety of types of shields (round, rectangular, Dipylon), fighting with one or more spears, a sword, or a combination thereof. Some of the men with shields use chariots to transport themselves to the battlefield.

Around 700, the equipment tends to become more uniform, with most close-range fighters using the double-grip Argive or Boiotian shields, at least some pieces of armour (nearly always helmet and greaves), and usually one or two spears and a sword. Some of these men used horses to transport themselves to the battlefield (*hippobatai*). Nevertheless, the main mode of warfare appears to have remained flexible from the Late Helladic IIIC period down to the later sixth century, with men operating in relatively small groups (warbands) that were suited for any mode of warfare (siege, naval combat, pitched battle); in essence, they were geared toward fulfilling multiple tasks. In addition, there was ample room for some men to demonstrate their worth by engaging in single combat, as Alkaios' brother Antimenidas showed.

Tyrtaios is the first to make a distinction between *panoploi* ('armoured troops') and *gumnētes* ('naked troops'). Further description makes clear that Tyrtaios' *gumnētes* are javeliners, who have to rely on the shields of nearby *panoploi* for cover (fr. 11.35–38 West). This subdivision of troops based on armour only reappears in Herodotos. It is possible that the Tyrtaian use of *panoploi* and *gumnētes* is a regional or local characteristic, but it may also suggest that the Tyrtaian evidence, or at least this passage, should be dated to a later period (see also the discussion on the subject in chapter 8).

Archers are rare on the battlefield and appear to have operated as modern-day snipers. In Greek art, they are typically shown kneeling and taking aim with the arrow parallel to the ground. We know from the *Iliad* that they took cover behind the shield of a comrade. In sixth-century

Athens, some men apparently commanded one or more so-called 'Skythian' archers. The fact that private individuals, including the tyrant Peisistratos, were able to hire such men demonstrates that violence was not a monopoly held by the State, but rather still the province of wealthy aristocrats. These exotic bowmen may have been particularly adept at wielding the bow and perhaps at times operated as a unit.

The commonly-held notion that archers were generally culled from the lower classes, or otherwise held in low esteem (considered cowards, *et cetera*), is demonstrably false. Finds of arrowheads in graves are rare, but they always belong to high-ranking individuals. In art, archers are consistently portrayed supporting other fighters, and there is no reason to assume that they are of low status; rare depictions of archers in armour underscore this point. In Homer, too, archers are valued combatants, who apparently could also afford to fight as heavily-armoured *promachoi* if need be. Only enemy archers are ever described as cowards.

The Lokrian contingent in the *Iliad* provides further support to the notion that particular regions cultivated specialised types of warriors (*cf.* the Rhodian slingers or Kretan archers from Classical texts); in this case archers who could also double as slingers (*Il.* 13.712–722). One of the important Geometric pots from Paros features slingers, who are shown clustered together as if working as a single unit. Combined with the testimony of Homer this suggests that slingers, for some reason, typically fought in a group rather than on their own, like most archers did. Paros indeed may have been an area where the sling was relatively common, if we assume that Archilochos' conception of ranged troops consisting of both archers and slingers reflects contemporary Parian customs (*fr.* 3 West).

As explained in this book's introduction, there is a tendency to regard the heavily-armoured spearmen of the late eighth century and beyond as 'hoplites', *i.e.* analogues to the heavily-armoured troops familiar from Classical texts. The general assumption is that these warriors could only operate well in phalanx formation. But there is little evidence for the phalanx before the second half of the sixth century. Instead, both the iconographic and textual evidence demonstrate that these men could not only fight in small groups, possibly in some kind of formation (see, for example, the Chigi vase, the Amathus bowl, some descriptions in Homer), but that they could also row warships (*e.g.*, the Sounion plaque and the inscription at Abu Simbel), serve as 'marines' aboard vessels (*epibatai*), assault and defend fortifications, stage ambushes, ride on horseback, and travel by chariot.

5. Regional diversity

The geographical region examined in this book can be divided into four main areas, namely Southern Greece (Attica and the Peloponnese), Central Greece (everything north of the Attic border and south of Mount Olympos), the Aegean islands (including Euboea, the Cyclades, and Thasos), and East Greece (Western Asia Minor and the islands off-shore, including Chios, Lesbos, and Samos). While there are common themes that recur throughout

the evidence for each of these regions, especially as far as basic aristocratic elements are concerned (horse-riding, feasting, and so on), there are also an important number of differences. The developments are far less unilinear than has often been assumed.

The evidence makes clear that horses were used throughout the Aegean and during the entire period under examination, possibly even in relatively great numbers (*contra*, for example, Hdt. 9.13). Mounted warriors are commonly depicted in Corinthian art of the seventh and early sixth centuries, and also in Attic figurative art of the latter half of the sixth century, when it supplanted Corinthian and other local styles of pottery. The mounted warriors or *hippobatai* depicted in the material from the mainland and the islands appear to have usually dismounted to fight on foot. In East Greece and Anatolia, it appears that men fought from horseback (what is anachronistically referred to as 'true cavalry', see below). In addition, the iconographic evidence makes clear that these warriors from Asia Minor also used other animals in battle, namely dogs. Klazomenian sarcophagi, as well as the Amathus bowl, feature wardogs, most often running beside mounted warriors, men who may have fought from horseback rather than dismounted to fight on foot.

Some types of helmets were peculiar to specific regions. In East Greece and some of the islands, the so-called Ionian type helmet, characterised by the lack of a nose-guard and often featuring hinged cheekpieces, is introduced possibly as early as the middle of the seventh century.⁸⁷⁷ It is commonly depicted in East Greek art, as well as on the famous frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi, a Cycladic piece of art from around 525.⁸⁷⁸ By far the most common type of helmet, which also spread to East Greece, is the Corinthian helmet. Linen corslets may have been introduced from Lydia and therefore perhaps first used in East Greece (see chapter 8); they are common in Attic art of the later sixth century onwards.

There are also clear regional patterns with regards to fortifications. The earliest Iron-Age fortifications were constructed in Asia Minor and some of the islands in the Aegean. In these cases, it has been suggested that fear from hostile natives or pirates were prime motivators for building walls. However, the Greeks were also perfectly capable to war amongst themselves, and this appears to have been an important catalyst for constructing walls. In addition, Greek towns in Asia Minor may also have built walls in order to compete for prestige with rival Lydian towns further inland. In the course of time, towns on the Greek mainland also turned toward building fortifications, not just out of military concerns, but perhaps also as a monument to their military or political strength, or in emulation of other Greek towns.

Finally, we have to ask ourselves whether we are justified to talk about 'Greek' warriors and 'Greek' warfare, or whether or not at least some of the general trends fit more broadly within an Aegean, Aegean-Anatolian, or—even more broadly—an East Mediterranean context. Lydian and

877 See Edrich 1969 for a full, if outdated, discussion.

878 Biers 1996 [1981], 175 figs. 7.22–23; Boardman 1991 [1978], 120 fig. 130.

Phrygian artefacts, as well as references to close co-operation between Greeks and Karians, and the activities of Greeks further East and in Egypt, demonstrates that early Greece was very much a part of a larger cultural matrix, forming in particular a cultural *koinē* with Asia Minor, where Karians, Lydians, and Phrygians used similar equipment and styles of fighting, and probably also shared a similar warrior ethos.

6. Diachronic developments

As far as diachronic developments are concerned, we may note that there are two points in time when important changes are to be noted, namely: (1) in the years around 700, when equipment became more standardised and there appears to be an increase in rivalry and war between neighbouring territories, and; (2) the second half of the sixth century, which witnesses the emergence of centrally-organised armies (including the phalanx) familiar from Herodotos onwards, to judge by the predominantly Attic material. The general conclusions are similar to those posited by Henk Singor in his 1988-dissertation, with a number of important differences, including the very small-scale nature of war in the Geometric age and the use of horses in the seventh and sixth centuries.

The period between the fall of the Mykenaian palaces and the end of the eighth century is characterised by continuity. The characteristics of the Postpalatial period can be best made clear through contrast with the Mykenaian Palatial period. In the latter, it is clear that the *wanax* was able to field a well-organised army, consisting of lower-class soldiers commanded by aristocratic leaders; none of them apparently used shields. Battle-scenes are rare, but they suggest fighting took place at extreme close range; scenes such as the 'Tarzan Fresco' at Pylos depict combat as a kind of wrestling match or knife-fight, with fighters grabbing each other limbs and trying to stab each other with short swords.

Some of the organisational structure of the earlier palaces may, for a brief spell of time and only in some places, have survived the catastrophe that brought about the slow decay of Mykenaian culture after *c.* 1200. The Mykenaian 'Warrior Vase' depicts a group of warriors with knapsacks tied to their spears, which suggests some kind of central organisation. They are also equipped in a uniform manner, which is different from other contemporary representations of groups of warriors. Other elements of the equipment introduced shortly before or after the collapse of the Mykenaian palaces continued in use throughout the Early Iron Age. These include a specific type of chariot (rail chariot), the galley, and the Naue II type sword. Both the galley and the sword would continue in use down to the end of the sixth century.

a. Changes around the end of the eighth century

The iconographic material of the eighth century gives us a good idea of what battle may have been like then. Both battles on land and at sea are shown. Particularly interesting are battles that appear to take place on and around one or more ships that have been dragged onto the beach; seaborne

raids were probably common, but we also have depictions of engagements on open sea between groups of armed men, and it is possible that some vessels were equipped with devices to ram enemy vessels from perhaps as early as *ca.* 900. The warriors themselves are very diversely equipped, some armed with spears, others with swords or bows, some also carrying shields of various type. A few of the warriors with shields also transport themselves using chariots; some objects depict horses carried aboard ships, so that we may assume they sometimes transported their chariots across sea, or that these men captured horses during their raids.

Based in particular on the Korinthian iconographic evidence, the time between roughly 720 and 650 emerges as an age of transition, with Korinthian figured scenes on pottery providing important evidence. The single-grip shields of the preceding age are slowly replaced by the new Argive shield, with a double-grip, and warriors appear to don more pieces of bronze armour, especially helmets and greaves. Bronze bell-shaped cuirasses appear optional, as are tunics; a more consistent approach toward nudity and dress only appears in the latter half of the sixth century. Spears can be carried singly or in pairs, and they are perhaps heavier on average than before. The equipment tends to become somewhat more uniform.

By 700, burials with arms disappeared for the most part, to be replaced by dedications of weapons and armour at sanctuaries, especially the larger regional and supraregional ones, of which Olympia was the most important. This shift signifies an increased importance of competing with neighbouring aristocracies, rather than engaging in overseas raids to acquire honour and glory within the confines of one's own community. The iconographic evidence in particular suggests an ever increasing emphasis on war over land rather than seaborne raids. Ships are less commonly depicted in the art of the seventh century. Chariots, which are useless when one has to traverse larger distances over land, are replaced by warriors on horseback.

b. The century between c. 650 and 550

The century between *c.* 650 and 550 forms a reasonably consistent period, with an abundant amount of evidence—relatively speaking—from a fairly large number of different regions, including archaeological evidence (dedications at sanctuaries, fortifications), figurative art from Korinth, Lakonia, the Aegean islands, East Greece, and some other places, as well as ancient texts, especially fragments from poems attributed to Archilochos, Tyrtaios, Alkaios, and so on.

The equipment of warriors appears to become somewhat more standardised, although small-scale army organisation (warbands) and flexible tactics appear to continue. Horses may have been a fixed component in the accoutrement of these warriors, to judge by the depictions in art, the dedication of horse-trappings (from chariots) at some sanctuaries, finds of horse-bits in graves, and references in texts. I have earlier suggested that the Argive shield, like the bronze bell-shaped cuirass, was specifically

developed to be easily carried by a man on horseback.⁸⁷⁹ By the sixth century, Theognis could write the following in an offhand, matter-of-fact kind of way:

The voiceless messenger, shining from the far-gleaming lookout, is rising fearful war, Cynrus. Come, place bits on the swift-heeled horses, for I think they'll meet the enemy. The distance between is not great; they'll get there, unless the gods deceive my judgement. (Theognis ll. 549–554; translation Gerber)

Theognis sees that a fire has been lit, signalling that they are under attack; he immediately tells Kynros—who probably served as his *hippostrophos*—to ready the horses. It seems like the standard response to an invasion or a raid. In other words, men in this period may have typically ridden to the battlefield rather than marched on foot.⁸⁸⁰ This suggests that 'armies' were small, numbering perhaps no more than a few hundred at the most, and likely even smaller, a point also stressed by Henk Singor.⁸⁸¹ Skirmishes over borderland, as well as (tit-for-tat) raids between expanding, neighbouring territories may have been become increasingly common in the course of the seventh and sixth centuries.

This period also includes some of the earliest Greek evidence for the possible use of formations on the battlefield. From Homer onward, Greek authors emphasised how warriors fight together to achieve victory, operating in small units (*e.g.*, Homeric warbands). The *Iliad*, which may predate the period slightly, describes how warriors array themselves into temporary, defensive formations, especially the so-called 'shield wall' erected around the body of a fallen comrade. Furthermore, some descriptions make clear that warriors could advance in 'waves', as also argued by Singor.⁸⁸² This mode of advancing toward the enemy may have inspired the artist who painted the battle-scene on the Chigi *olpe*, which likewise appears to show warriors moving in 'waves'.

This close co-operation between Aegean warriors, their use of what a modern military historian would call 'small-unit tactics', especially when combined with their high-quality armour, may have been what made Aegean warriors (*e.g.*, Greek Ionians and Karians) so popular in the armies of ancient Babylon and Egypt. Greek service in Near-Eastern armies may have been an important influence on the development of the phalanx, as the Greeks experienced first-hand how an army of thousands—rather than hundreds—would have operated on the battlefield. Military organisation in Egypt and Babylon may have inspired the creation of military units (the *telea* familiar from Herodotos onwards) in ancient Greece, such as the Attic *taxeis* and *lochoi*, commanded by officially appointed officers, such as the *taxiarchos* and *lochagos*.

879 For further details, see Brouwers 2007a.

880 Aside from my own article, see especially De tienne 1968, particularly pp. 134–138.

881 Singor 1988, esp. pp. 300–328; also note discussion in Salmon 1977.

882 Singor 1988, 16–19.

c. Changes during the second half of the sixth century

By the end of the sixth century, it seems likely that phalanx tactics were employed on the battlefield. There is some circumstantial evidence that suggests that Athens was able to field a relatively large, centrally-organised, and socially diverse army, rather than a collection of aristocratic warbands. The iconographic evidence points toward an increase in scale, especially with regard to the increased use of linen corslets, which may have been easier to procure than bronze cuirasses, as well as trumpets and the use of helmets that leave the ears and eyes free. Furthermore, an inscription from Salamis makes clear that some people, at least, were required by law to purchase a set of armour and report to a government official; in Herodotos, 'officers' and centrally-organised armies are the rule.

The later sixth century also witnesses the construction of new fortifications. Earlier fortifications were usually defended by a single tower, often flanking the gate to form a kind of bastion (*e.g.*, Old Smyrna, Minoa, Aghios Andreas, possibly Asine); they could, if the descriptions of Homer are correct, be relatively easily assaulted by a concerted effort on the part of the attackers. It seems likely, therefore, that most battles would have taken place outside the town, with the defenders meeting the enemy head-on, hoping to drive them away before any serious damage could be done.

However, as armies grew larger and towns became better organised, it might have seem more profitable to build better fortifications, especially those that could be less easily scaled and better defended. From the later sixth century in particular, walls generally feature several towers (*e.g.*, Iasos, Larissa, Pythagoreion), suggesting a stronger concern with defending the community as well as an increase in the amount of manpower available to construct additional towers. It is interesting that early fortifications in Anatolia and the ancient Near East usually possess multiple towers; it is possible that the Greeks learned both more elaborate fortification and siege techniques from their Near-Eastern neighbours.

The earliest evidence for use of the battering ram in the Aegean is the bronze ram from Olympia, dated to the first half of the fifth century and currently on display in the museum at Olympia. We know from excavation that the Lydians, presumably under Alyattes II, took Old Smyrna by building an earthen siege ramp.⁸⁸³ The use of siege-ladders, well known in the East, is not attested in Greece until the fifth century at the earliest.⁸⁸⁴ Instead, the ancient Greeks fought on the field outside of a town (*cf.* the fighting in the *Iliad*), and took towns by storm when the opportunity presented itself, climbing the stone and mubrick walls; they would focus their attacks on weakly defended points or simply tried to overwhelm the enemy.

7. Ancient Greek terminology

Modern treatises on ancient Greek warfare abound with anachronistic

883 Kern 1999, 90.

884 Van Wees 2004, 139–140.

terminology. Greek warriors are often referred to as ‘soldiers’, a word derived from the Latin that actually refers to professionally trained men who fight for pay and are part of a standing army. Early Greek warriors, unlike Roman legionaries and modern-day soldiers, were not drilled by professional instructors, did not earn a salary, and were never part of a standing army. A word like ‘soldier’ should be used in a specific context. Careless use of modern terms can wholly alter our perception of the ancient world, as in the case of the Homeric army, where the *basileis* are sometimes considered ‘officers’ in command of lowly ‘soldiers’.⁸⁸⁵ But what modern army features aristocratic leaders in command of their personal—and often apparently quite wealthy—followers?

Similarly, terms such as ‘infantry’ and ‘cavalry’ suggest a binary conception of armed forces that strikes me as misleading when applied to early Greek warfare. The word ‘infantry’ is based on the same root as our word ‘infant’, and was applied by ‘knights’ (the French *cavalerie* is derived from the word *chevalier*), who literally and metaphorically occupied an elevated position on the battlefield, to refer to the lowly men who fought on foot. However, as we have seen in previous chapters, it was common for high-ranking men to use horses and chariots to reach the battlefield quickly, where they would have dismounted to fight on foot; such a mode of fighting obliterates any clear-cut distinctions between modern concepts such as ‘infantry’ and ‘cavalry’, unless one would want to go all-out on anachronisms and refer to them as ‘dragoons’ (mounted infantry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). The same goes for warriors on ships; Herodotos refers to these as *epibatai*, but these were clearly not ‘marines’ in our modern sense of the word, as they were arrayed in equipment that also allowed them to fight on land, take part in ambush, assault a town, and so forth.

So modern terminology should be used with care and even avoided in most cases. Furthermore, we are fortunate that, from Homer onwards, we know what terms the ancient Greeks used themselves to denote specific types of troops. In addition, a remarkable Korinthian *aryballos* provides us with the names for those troops that rode on horseback, but dismounted to fight on foot: they were called *hippobatai*, and their mounted attendants *hippostrophoi*. These words are wonderfully descriptive: *hippobatas* means (literally) ‘horse-walker’, *hippostrophos* translates as ‘horse-turner’. There is thus no need to use anachronistic terms such as ‘knight’ and ‘squire’ to refer to these men, as Peter Greenhalgh and other modern authors have done—including myself, I must admit!

The literary evidence provides a wealth of terms denoting fighting men and related subjects, most of which are very descriptive, though some are frustratingly vague. The word *hippeus* is a good example of the latter: it can mean horseman, but also charioteer, and is also used by Homer to denote a warrior who travels by chariot, but is not the driver himself. The word thus denotes simply someone who uses one or more horses. The earlier named

885 As demonstrated by the deliberately modernising approach used by Jonathan Shay: ‘Officers, the only soldiers we meet in the *Iliad*...’ (Shay 1994, 13; emphasis mine).

hippobatas was clearly a mounted warrior. We do not know what the Lydian *hippomachoi* mentioned by Mimnermos may have been, but they were presumably men who actually fought from horseback.

From Homer onwards, the typical types of warriors are *aichmētes* (spearmen), *toxotes* (archers), and *hippeis* (horsemen). In the epics, these different kinds of warriors mixed freely together. This is unsurprising, considering that warriors were grouped according to warband rather than type. A particular leader would assemble his force, and while most men may have been equipped to fight at close range, with spear or sword (or axe, and so on), some may have accompanied him as archers (*cf.* scenes on Geometric vases, some Korinthian *aryballoi* with spearmen and archers, the dynamic sixth-century Attic cup from Vulci discussed on p. 105, above). It is clear from the *Iliad* that men were flexible with regards to their equipment. When his bowstring snapped, the skilled archer Teukros heads off to fetch his shield and spear (*Il.* 15.458–483).

The situation is very different in Herodotos, where different types of warriors operate as distinct bodies of men, as true military units (*telea* or *lochoi*, the latter also a term familiar from Homer and used to simply denote a group of men). For example, the *pezoi*, foot troops, are generally kept separate from the *hippeis*, the horse-mounted troops (Hdt. 9.32); these basic groupings were further subdivided into units of spearmen, archers, and so forth. Herodotos is conscious of this development and attributes it—whether rightly or wrongly is not important here—to Kyaxares, king of Media from c. 625–585:

He is said to have been more warlike than his ancestors. He first divided the people of Asia into cohorts, and first divided them into spearmen, archers, and cavalry; whereas before they had been confusedly mixed together. (Hdt. 1.103)

Both Herodotos and the earlier Spartan poet Tyrtaios also make a distinction that is absent from Homer and the other sources, namely between heavily-armoured and lightly-armoured troops. Tyrtaios refers to the former as *panoploi* and the latter as *gumnētes* (fr. 11.35–38 West). The latter term is also used by Herodotos, in addition to *psiloi*; the former are called *hoplites* by him, a term that is never used by earlier authors.

8. Early Greek warrior society

For much of the period under examination, war was mostly the prerogative of what we might term the aristocracy, *i.e.* the upper echelons of society that consisted of the affluent and the powerful. Warfare, in the broadest sense of the word including not simply fighting, but also ‘martiality’ (the totality of martial values, shown for example by bearing weapons in public even in times of peace), emerges as something peculiar to early Greek elites, a defining characteristic of the aristocracy, from which the lower classes of society may have been excluded for the most part.

To my mind, the evidence is fairly clear on the matter, and only modern-day ‘common sense’ assumes that, for example, the armed forces described by Homer and the armies (partially) depicted on seventh-century

Korinthian pots included masses of 'commoners'. Weapons are only found in the graves of some high-ranking individuals, and these must have been leaders within their community or particularly important warriors. These men took part in martial games and may have been the principal competitors at the Panhellenic Games, and presumably dedicated arms and armour to the gods. The iconographic evidence depicts men fighting using expensive kit, or engaging in small-scale raids. Descriptions in Homer suggest that only aristocratic families ever provided warriors. Importantly, war is beyond the purview of Hesiod. The lyric poets likewise leave an impression of war as the province of the elite. Only Herodotos, with descriptions of massive armies and the appointment of officers, who had no close personal ties to their men, is different in this regard, and suggests that aristocratic warbands only disappeared in the latter half of the sixth century, as argued above.

In other words, martial activities in general were part of the aristocratic lifestyle of elites in early Greek communities from at least 1000 down to the middle of the sixth century. Paul Treherne in his important article, 'The warrior's beauty: the masculine body and self-identity in Bronze-Age Europe' (1995), has pointed out that this lifestyle seems to focus on aspects of the body in particular. Treherne argues that the appearance of 'warrior graves' can be related to

the development of a specific form of life, a life style, among an emergent warrior elite, which marked the growth of a new understanding of personhood—specifically male selfidentity—rooted in both social practices and cultural representations.

Treherne adds that

this life style, and the male body's place in it, is only to be understood in conjunction with an equally important death style, a socio-culturally prescribed way of expiring. Central to both life and death was a specific form of masculine beauty unique to the warrior.⁸⁸⁶

His observations are based on Bronze-Age Europa, but they can be usefully applied to the Greek situation. The collapse of the Mykenaian palaces may have disrupted the existing balance of power and led to the emergence of either a new elite or an older ruling social group that tried to reclaim some of their bygone glory. These elites emphasised a military—or at least violent—ethos by burying some of its men with weapons and, in a few rare instances, armour. This group of people shared a similar life style and attempted to reinforce their life style in death.

Four main themes are at the core of this life/death style, to wit, in Treherne's words: 'warfare seen in weaponry, alcohol seen in drinking vessels [...], riding/driving seen in horse harness/wheeled vehicles [...], and to a lesser degree bodily ornamentation.'⁸⁸⁷ That this specific life- and death style is found across a large geographic area ought to be attributed to inter-regional 'exchange and emulation between the upper echelons of local

886 Treherne 1995, 106.

887 Treherne 1995, 108; see also Shanks 1999, 115–121.

hierarchies.⁸⁸⁸ All of these four themes are accounted for in the Greek evidence analysed in the previous chapters, to which we may add a fifth aristocratic theme, namely seafaring and overseas activities.⁸⁸⁹ Public displays of wealth, of power and prowess, tie all of these aspects together. In the remainder of this section, I shall apply Treherne's four themes to the Greek situation.

a. Symbols of power

As regards the first theme, it is clear that Greek men were commonly equipped with weapons even in times of peace.⁸⁹⁰ This is clear in Late Geometric scenes depicting processions and mourning scenes: men are commonly equipped with a sword. The close association of an aristocratic man and his weapons no doubt explains why some high-ranking men, presumably leaders of the community, were also buried with arms. Funerals would have allowed the conspicuous display of armed men, including sometimes the deceased himself, and could also be accompanied by funeral games in the case of a particularly noteworthy person. These funeral games would have featured a wide array of martial sports; descriptions in the *Iliad* include a duel, a chariot-race, and an archery contest.

The public display of mourning and remembrance, including the organisation of funeral games, and the connections that this emphasised with the deceased, should not be underestimated: 'Paying visits to the tombs of famous ancestors was not a pious duty, but a way of reminding contemporaries of the glory of one's own family.'⁸⁹¹ Greek aristocrats were fiercely competitive, striving to always be the best; the word *agōn* ('strife', 'contest') perhaps best summarises the lifestyle of the elite.⁸⁹² Strife requires an arena for public display of merit and wealth, and the funerals and associated rites and customs of other high-ranking men offered opportunities for such displays.

Burials with arms disappeared in the course of the eighth century, at around the same time that deposits at sanctuaries, including metal items such as weapons and armour, increased. Some have suggested that this indicates a shift from the private sphere to the public,⁸⁹³ but there was nothing particularly 'private' about aristocratic funerals. Instead, it seems more likely to me to denote a shift from a local to a regional or indeed, in the case of Panhellenic sanctuaries such as Olympia, supraregional level. Both funerals and sanctuaries offered public arenas for rival men to compete. The first was public but destructive (weapons were interred, the body cremated, and so on), while the second was public and permanent (weapons and armour on display).

888 Treherne 1995, 114.

889 In addition to observations in previous chapters, see especially Crielaard 1996 and 2006; cf. Tandy 1997, esp. pp. 112–138 (rather modernistic).

890 Van Wees 1998 *passim*.

891 Humphreys 1980, 123.

892 In general, see Nagy 1999 [1979], esp. pp. 26–41 and 309–316.

893 E.g., Morgan 1990, 19.

Fortifications may have been among the largest building projects to be undertaken especially in the eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries. Some of these walls may have been built in response to attacks; coastal and island towns had every reason to fear seaborne raiders. However, many fortifications were built only around part of a settlement or just the *akropolis*. The exact reasons for this cannot yet be answered, but it seems clear that military concerns alone did not always prompt the construction of walls. In many cases, walls may have been a powerful statement that served both to deter would-be attackers as well as to demonstrate the strength of the community's leaders to harness available manpower. In some cases, it may even have been prestigious *not* to have walls; Sparta was still unwallled by the time of the Peloponnesian War (Thouk. 1.10), and Alkaios emphasised that men, not walls, were a community's main defence (Alk. fr. 112 Voigt).

b. Fighting and feasting

As regards Treherne's second theme, the evidence shows that there was a strong link between fighting and feasting. Some burials with arms also contain spits or other implements associated with roasting meat in particular; virtually all high-ranking burials also contained pottery specifically made for the consumption of alcohol. The literary evidence further attests to the importance of organising feasts in forging friendships, in male-bonding, and in recruiting troops (*e.g.*, *Od.* 14.248–291); consuming food and drink at another man's expense naturally created an obligation to return a favour.

The groups of fighting men who presumably congregated in the second *Hekatompedon* at Samos, or the men who dined in Alkaios' *meγas domos*, no doubt formed warbands in the manner of the Homeric heroes, a mode of military organisation that probably emerged following the fall of the Mykenian palaces and was eventually replaced, perhaps only as early (or as late, depending on one's point of view!) in the final decades of the sixth century, by larger and centrally-organised armies commanded by men who did not possess a close personal tie with the men under their command.

Furthermore, I would suggest that war was an affair of high-ranking men and their male next of kin. This further strengthens the notion that war was the concern of a limited group in early Greek society. Young men, presumably sons, younger brothers, and so forth, would serve as attendants to their older brothers and fathers. In the Homeric epics, we have references to *kouroi* ('young men'), who perform services such as filling drinking bowls (*Il.* 9.173); a statement in the *Odyssey* suggests that young men also undertook small expeditions themselves (*Od.* 4.642–644). In iconography, mounted warriors are generally accompanied by mounted youths. Furthermore, it is possible that semi-naked warriors, such as those on the Chigi vase, are supposed to be younger men cutting their teeth on the field of battle; a Lakonian plate of the sixth century shows young men carrying the bodies of bearded warriors. In sum, war may have been a craft passed on from father to son, like Peleus handing his spear to Achilleus.⁸⁹⁴

894 Age-groups are particularly well-known from Classical Sparta, see MacDowell 1986,

c. *Ownership and use of horses*

Horses, Treherne's third theme, were demonstrably hallmarks of the aristocracy. Chariots are common in Palatial, Postpalatial (Late Helladic IIIc), and Late Geometric art, where they mostly served as vehicles to transport warriors to and from the battlefield. Horse-riding was known in Late Helladic IIIc, but rarely portrayed; it becomes common in Corinthian art from the end of the eighth century onwards. To judge by the iconographic evidence (and some of the literary material, as well), mounted warriors were so common that the horse appears to have been just as fixed an element in a warrior's accoutrement as was his shield or spear.

Furthermore, the most common type of crest on bronze helmets, at least, has the shape of a horse's mane and is also made of horse-hair, lending the warrior a horse-like aspect even when he has dismounted. In some cases, the names used to denote certain groups or even an aristocracy as a whole referred to the ownership of horses; examples include the Spartan elite unit of *hippeis*, familiar from Herodotos and who may once have consisted of warriors who rode to the battlefield,⁸⁹⁵ as well as the *hippobotai*, the horse-owning gentry of Chalkis.

d. *The (masculine) body*

The importance of the male body, Treherne's fourth theme, is central to the way that (high-ranking) Greek men represented themselves. Whenever warriors were not nude, their armour instead served to emphasise their bodies. Bronze plate armour as used by Greeks and other peoples can be aesthetically pleasing. Once neatly polished, a man's armour would gleam in the sun. 'Shining' is an adjective often used to denote something that is grand or awe-inspiring, including armour (*Il.* 3.83, 5.680, and 4.422–432; *Alk. fr.* 140.3 Voigt). The gods themselves are often described as 'shining', or otherwise radiant in some fashion (*e.g.*, Phoibos Apollōn, 'Shining Apollo'; Glaukōpis Athēnē, 'Athene with the flashing eyes' or 'bright-eyed Athene'). Men who walked unto the battlefield in their gleaming armour may have possessed something of the divine.⁸⁹⁶

The bronze bell-shaped cuirass in particular, as well as greaves and arm-guards, with their molded musculature, served to emphasise, rather than hide the naked male body that these pieces of armour protected. In addition, naked warriors are fairly common in art. The men in Geometric scenes were presumably naked, as suggested in particular by contemporary nude warrior figurines. Furthermore, warriors throughout the seventh and first half of the sixth centuries are often depicted partially or wholly naked.⁸⁹⁷ This may have changed by the end of the sixth century, when nudity was something displayed only in specific contexts (*e.g.*, athletic competitions) or was reserved in art for heroes or gods.

Warriors were concerned with looking after their general appearance.

159–167 for a brief, but useful discussion.

895 Greenhalgh 1973, 94–95.

896 *Cf.* Van Wees 2006.

897 On the 'power' of nudity, see Bonfante 1989.

Hair was used as a distinguishing feature. In the more detailed art of the seventh and sixth centuries, boys and young men are beardless and often have a close-cropped hair, whereas more mature men have beards and long hair. Homer frequently describes his warriors as possessing long hair; Archilochos specifically asks for a commander who is good at his job, rather than one who is more concerned with his wavy hair; a late sixth-century statue from Samos depicts a warrior with Ionian helmet, finely made bell-shaped cuirass, and long hair.

In addition, the central importance of the body is clear when we look at descriptions of death. The ideal dead warrior is young, cut down in the prime of life; his body must be secured at all costs (*cf.* the battle over Patroklos' body in the *Iliad*). The young warrior is beautiful, whereas the old man is hideous, grey and weak (*e.g.*, *Il.* 22.71–76). A lifestyle that puts so much emphasis on the body naturally prefers cremation as a means to dispose of the bodies of dead warriors. By reducing the body to ashes, the flesh cannot be corrupted in the soil; the (memory of the) dead warrior is, in essence, preserved through burning (although it should be pointed out that some localities nevertheless preferred inhumation). Importantly, we know from the *Iliad* that particularly outstanding warriors were burnt in full armour, which offers new insights into interpreting burials with arms: these are not merely high-ranking men, but an elite within an elite, famed fighters or especially remarkable leaders of either the community at large or their followers.

The male body and the ideology of male prowess formed a single unit. But aristocratic men did not exist in a vacuum: they were part of a community, a *polis*. Status groups as well as the community as a whole accepted and strove to maintain that unity, to prevent it from dissolution.⁸⁹⁸ Aristocratic men were the leaders of their communities, the preservers of the body politic. They were accepted as leaders and in exchange they had to act as the protectors of their communities, as rightly stressed by Ebbinghaus in her inspired discussion of the famous relief pithos from Mykonos.

9. Closing remarks

Some of the conclusions and interpretation presented in the course of this book in general, or this final chapter in particular, are uncontroversial. Others are perhaps more difficult to swallow, such as the suggestion that armies in the Archaic period, down to somewhere in the sixth century, were small and consisted solely of the upper classes of early Greek society: did the mass of the army not consist of regular rankers, drawn from the lower classes, as 'common sense' would suggest? Some may accuse me of being too naive, of accepting the evidence too much at face value and not disentangling truth from fiction, genuine practice from either fantasy or idealisations, mythology and ideology.

It is true that some of the iconographic material, as well as parts of the literary evidence, especially of course the Homeric epics, deal with

898 *Cf.* Connor 1988 (warfare as 'symbolic expression'); Berent 2000.

situations known from mythology. However, ancient authors and artists clearly based the equipment and mode of fighting on contemporary models. Much has already been said on this topic, especially in chapter 6, so I shall be brief here and discuss just one example, picked at random. It is a scene on a Korinthian cup that depicts the famous duel between Achilles and Hektor.⁸⁹⁹ We know it is them, because the artist has conveniently inscribed their names (which suggests that ancient Greeks themselves might not have recognised them otherwise). Both are equipped not as Mykenaian heroes, but rather as contemporary Korinthian warriors, with Argive shields, bronze helmets and greaves, swords and spears. Achilles wears a short tunic, whereas Hektor is naked: perhaps in this case the hero's nudity is intended to highlight his vulnerability, his impending doom. The duel is flanked by youths on horseback, holding the reins of their masters' horses. In other words, Achilles and Hektor are shown as dismounted *hippobatai*, accompanied by their *hippostrophoi*, exactly as in other, comparable scenes of the seventh century; the artists has made no attempt, as far as we can tell, to deliberately archaise or mythologise the scene.

It is equally true that ideological concerns undoubtedly influenced all of the evidence discussed in this book. But is ideology always a purely artificial construct and therefore somehow misleading or inaccurate, rather than representative of everyday reality? Let us return to Paul Treherne for a moment, who has rightly stressed that ideology, and in particular the warrior ideology sketched in a preceding section, permeated 'the entire social fabric, ideology is a component of all forms of human practice'; it was not the product of any small group within society, but was central to the identity of the community as a whole. In short, 'ideology is a taken for granted part of any particular life style, even that of an elite, which adheres to a particular set of practices and beliefs with deep commitment and not merely as part of a cynical charade.'⁹⁰⁰ The importance of this last sentence should not be underestimated.

I hope that I have succeeded in writing a fuller and more accurate account of warfare in early Greece and what role it may have played in shaping early Greek societies. Even if the reader disagrees with some of my interpretations, I still hope that this book and the evidence collected herein will serve to stimulate future research into the subject. For my own part, I intend to continue research in this particular field – which I believe to be far from exhausted – by turning my attention to a more detailed examination of Greek fortifications in the period between 1000 and 500.

899 Burgess 2001, 67 fig. L.

900 Treherne 1995, 116.