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ARGOS' VICTORY OVER CORINTH
ΑΡΓΕΙΟΙ ΑΝΕΘΕΝ ΤΟΙ ΔΙΦΙ ΤΟΝ ΦΟΡΙΝΘΟΘΕΝ

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1. Introduction

This paper is best introduced by the following summary. It concerns a victory of Argos over Corinth in the late sixth or very early fifth century B.C., a battle to which little attention has been paid because it is not mentioned by any ancient historical writer such as Herodotus. Instead our evidence on it comes mainly in the form of Argos' dedicatory inscriptions on captured Corinthian armour that she offered in thanks for his help in it to Zeus at Olympia, where excavators and others have found some of it .

The evidence of this inscribed armour is first set in its archaeological context (section 2). This shows that the battle must have taken place some time between c. 530 and the mid 490s B.C. The historical evidence is then reviewed (section 3) and among other matters is shown to be consistent with this dating. Next the very important evidence of the inscriptions themselves is discussed (section 4). Special attention is paid to the striking variety of styles of Argive scripts used in them. They are illustrated by facsimiles in Figures I to III and tabulated with details in section 4. From all this evidence it is concluded in section 5, that Corinth's hoplites could well have suffered substantial loss in the battle. There would probably have been serious repercussions in Corinth and beyond. Argos' demonstrated military prowess doubtless fed her hopes of regaining Kynouria and even the hegemony of the Peloponnese. All this will have been among the considerations that decided Sparta against helping the Ionian Revolt in 499 B.C. They also show that Cleomenes need not have been at all mad but instead calculatingly ruthless in savagely massacring a large part of Argos' hoplite army at Sepeia in 494 B.C. or a bit earlier.¹

Note on Consultation

Because the styles of Argive script on the armour play a very important role in the argument of this paper, they are illustrated in Figures I to III. There the numbers which the styles are given here are stated, together with the museum catalogue numbers of the objects displaying the styles. The styles are also tabulated and discussed in order in section 4 below. Here original publication, type of armour, find spot and heights of letters are given where known. Individual objects and their inscriptions are thus

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¹ Ionian Revolt: Herodotus V 49–51; Sepeia and Argos' losses, *id.* VI 77–80 and VII 148–49. For the date see J. B. Bury in n. 44 below.

normally referred to below by the numbers of their style of script as given in the tabulation and as shown in Figures I – III.

Main Abbreviations

- Jeffery = L. H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, edn. 2 (Oxford, 1990)
 OB II = E. Kunze and H. Schleif, *II. Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin, 1938)
 OB III = E. Kunze and H. Schleif, *III. Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin, 1941)
 OB V = E. Kunze, *V. Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin, 1956)
 OB VIII = E. Kunze, *VIII. Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin, 1967)
 OF = *Olympische Forschungen* (Berlin, various dates)

2. The Archaeological Evidence

The concrete proof for us of Argos' victory consists first in the remains of eight hoplite shields (with a possible ninth) of the standard Archaic type, circular, convex and about a metre across (details in the tabulation in section 4, under Styles 1 to 4; Style 1.3 is the doubtful case). Only two of these are well preserved. Next are also four complete or nearly complete helmets, Corinthian in design as well as in fact (details are under Styles 5 to 8). A fragment of a fifth has been reported but is unpublished so that it can be noted but not fully discussed here.² One of the helmets is of a mid sixth century type, but the rest are of a later design, having a near horizontal carination at or above eye level, sloping up over the brow. This only developed around 530 B.C. (one of the earliest representations of it is on the Siphnian Treasury frieze).³ The shinguard (details under Style 9) is for the lower left leg, and is of a type used mainly in the second half of the sixth century B.C. As there are carinated helmets present in this material, Argos' victory must have occurred after c. 530, when their type was introduced, a very important point.

After her victory, Argos' displays of her dedicated spoils were probably set up on the south bank of the Archaic Stadium. For almost all the shield facings were found there (see under Styles 1 to 3 for details). Being heavy, shields are unlikely to have been moved far from where they were displayed, when dismantled.⁴

But Argos' displays were eventually dismantled and buried. The sanctuary authorities had complete discretion over dedications as they were Zeus' property (see n. 14 below). This happened when the Archaic Stadium was replaced by the Classical Stadium, an event formerly dated to about 460 B.C. But in an extremely important revision, it has been re-dated to around 500 B.C. or a little later. This is an approximate date; the Classical Stadium could have been built five years or a bit more on either side of 500 B.C. (more probably after it).⁵ For our purposes this revision yields the extremely important further point that Argos' victory and the setting up and dismantling of her dedications must have taken place before the Stadium was rebuilt by the latest date that the new revised dating would allow, say by the mid 490s.

Two comments must now be made. First this result is in no way undermined by the discovery on the north side of the stadium in contexts later than c. 500 B.C. of a buckled fragment of a shield facing (see

² E. Kunze, *Beinschienen*. *Olympische Forschungen* XXI (Berlin, 1991) 126 no. 6.

³ Carinated helmets: A. M. Snodgrass, A Corinthian Helmet, in F. G. Maier, *Alt-Paphos auf Cypern: Ausgrabungen zur Geschichte von Stadt und Heiligtum 1966–1984*. *Trierer Winckelmannsprogramme*, ed. G. Grimm, Heft 6, 1984 (Mainz, 1985) 43–49; H. Pflug, Korinthische Helme, in H. Pflug ed., *Antike Helme: Sammlung Lipperheide und andere Bestände des Antikemuseums Berlin* (Mainz, 1988), 87f.

⁴ Kunze, *OB VIII*, 94–5 for displays on the south bank.

⁵ J. Schilbach, Olympia, die Entwicklungsphasen des Stadions, in *Proceedings of an International Symposium on the Olympic Games 1988* (Athens, 1992) 33–37: 34 'gegen 500 oder kurz danach', 37 'Das Stadion II ist daher im ausgehenden 6. oder zu Beginn des 5. entstanden.'

for details Style 4 in tabulation and Figure II) two helmets (Styles 5 and 6, Figure II) and the shin guard (Style 9, Figure III).⁶ For the shin guard was found in pre-Classical fill and the other three items, though found in wells of the first quarter of the fifth century, almost certainly travelled there from Argos' displays on the south bank, as Kunze himself has trenchantly argued.⁷ They would first have been dumped somewhere around 500 B.C., then later would have been used to fill up the wells they were found in, some time before the mid 470s. As Kunze shows, it is not unusual for different parts of even the same dismantled votive object to be found in different places in the Stadium. The dismantling of votives there was not always a tidy affair, and the sanctuary authorities could dispose of them as they saw fit.

This means (to come to our second comment) that the dedications of Argos that we are here concerned with can have nothing to do with fighting between Argos and Corinth in the 470s or 460s B.C. Some have thought they had, thus obscuring the occurrence of the hostilities that the armour examined here is clear proof of, some time between c. 530 and at the latest the mid 490s B.C.⁸ The re-dating of the Classical Stadium now allows this confusion to be cleared up.

Archaeology and Pausanias may indeed be able to narrow down the date of Argos' victory within the wider period of c. 530 to the mid 490s B.C. For Pausanias (VI 19,12–14) states that Argos once helped Megara in a war against Corinth, and that from her spoils Megara built her treasury at Olympia. This treasury's remains, with the Megarians' name inscribed on them have been found, together with its sculptures. Their style is dated now by experts to c. 510 – c. 500 B.C.⁹ If we were to identify Argos' help to Megara with Argos' victory over Corinth (as is not unreasonable) then the latter could have occurred some time in the later 510s or thereafter. But though it may be reasonable it may not be quite certain, and so the equation is treated here as a possibility not as a certainty. Pausanias dates Megara's war impossibly early, but that can be set on one side. It in no way affects our dating of the general period of Argos' victory to c.530 to the mid 490s B.C. In fact, the evidence of the treasury, with Pausanias' words on the co-operation between Argos and Megara, tends to give independent support to that general period. It is highly likely too that in attacking Corinth, this pair of her neighbours and rivals would have sought to divide her forces by striking at the same time and in concert.

After these efforts to date Argos' victory, we can now try using archaeology to form some idea of how significant it may have been. Here no exact nor even approximate results can be produced. But we can be sure that our dozen assorted items so far found are not all that Argos dedicated. Argos, which under the mighty King Pheidon had controlled Olympia, would hardly make herself ridiculous by now offering the President of the Immortals, in thanks for his gracious aid against the detested Corinthians, a scrappy job lot totalling 5 helmets, 8 shields, and one shin guard (for the left leg). The recent appearance of the unpublished fragment of a fifth helmet could well mean that there is more of Argos' proud dedication still to be discovered. We should be prepared to envisage that originally it contained considerably larger numbers of offerings than those so far found. We may even unknowingly already

⁶ Argos' dedications found on the north bank. W. Gauer, *Die Tongefässe aus den Brunnen unterm Stadion-Nordwall und im Südost-Gebiet, Olympische Forschungen VIII* (Berlin, 1975) 230–31 and 243. Gauer here accepts a date of about 500 for Argos' victory.

⁷ E. Kunze, *OB VIII*, 95.

⁸ J. B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth* (Oxford, 1984), 259f.; D. M. Lewis, *The Origins of the First Peloponnesian War*, in *Classical Contributions: Studies in Honour of Malcolm Francis McGregor*, ed. G. S. Shrimpton and D. J. McCargar (Locust Valley, N.Y., 1981), 71–78; G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1972), 186f. K. Adshead, *The Politics of the Archaic Peloponnese* (Aldershot 1986), 72–75. L. H. Jeffery's dating of Argos' victory to c. 500–480 B.C. in her *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* 162, 169 no. 18 explains why in her discussion of Argos' and Megara's war with Corinth before c. 500 B.C. she does not connect the victory and the war, L. H. Jeffery in *Cambridge Ancient History* edn. 2 Vol. IV (Cambridge, 1988) 353–56.

⁹ J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period* (London 1978), 157, 160 and fig. 215.1; P. C. Bol, *Die Giebel-skulpturen des Schatzhauses von Megara*, *Athenische Mitteilungen* 89 (1974) 65–74; A. F. Stewart, *Greek Sculpture* (Yale 1990), 128–29; L. H. Jeffery in *Cambridge Ancient History*, edn. 2 Vol. IV (Cambridge, 1988), 353–56.

have found more of Argos' dedications than we can identify. For most of the armour found at Olympia is uninscribed; Argos is likely to have dedicated both inscribed and uninscribed armour.

Some might object to the suggestion that Argos could have dedicated substantially more than the inscribed items found to date, on the following grounds. It is quite clear (an objector might say) that arms and armour can survive without serious decay in the soil at Olympia; the superb condition of the armour on display at Olympia Museum proves this. Therefore we need not expect Argos' dedications to have been much more numerous than what survives.

But there are several strong counter-arguments to this. First, the soil at Olympia is not uniformly kind to bronze, as for example *OB V* pl. 17 shows; the thin bronze of shield facings can suffer devastating decay, and much armour may thus have been completely destroyed. Secondly, dismantled bronze votives were sometimes used as scrap metal for various purposes in the sanctuary, and many may have been destroyed in this way.¹⁰ Third, the composition of bronze in armour (very approximately 10% tin to 90% copper) is much the same as that of the bronze in statues. Much dismantled armour could have been sold to sculptors.¹¹ Fourthly, as Siewert has recently argued, in the later fifth century bronze armour dedications were very probably melted down and stored as ingots.¹² Bronze votives even when dismantled were Zeus's property for his temple's authorities to use as they saw fit. We can therefore suppose that some of Argos' dedications suffered serious damage, even destruction on being dismantled and could originally have been more numerous, perhaps considerably more numerous than what survives of them today, even if we cannot estimate their number. Snodgrass has judiciously commented in general on the large quantities of dedicated arms and armour that accumulated in Olympia over the Archaic period, and what is proposed here is in no way unrealistic.¹³ After all victors would want to give generously. They were pious and grateful for divine help, and proud of their victories. They also had very good reason to advertise Zeus's help to them, and their own military excellence.¹⁴ It seems possible to answer our hypothetical objector, then.

Archaeology can thus shed valuable light on Argos' victory, and so can history.

3. The Historical Evidence

It may at first seem very rash to claim that we have any historical evidence bearing on Argos' victory (leaving Pausanias aside). For Herodotus, though he had some sympathy for Argos and rather less for Corinth, and could possibly have known of it, for whatever reason does not mention it. As no other surviving author does either, we do not know its exact date or causes, let alone its location, the nature of the battlefield, the precise numbers and tactics used, the way the fighting went or its exact results in dead, wounded and runaways or what border lands and satellites and forts were lost or taken, or what booty was captured, not to speak of its exact political and economic effects in the victor's or loser's city states.

But let us undespairing set out what evidence we have about Argos' military history at this time and see first if it will support the period that archaeology has defined for our battle. We know of two relevant major defeats that Argos suffered. The first was in c. 546, when she lost 298 of her finest

¹⁰ *OB VII* 8f.; W. Rostoker and E. R. Gebhard, *The Sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia: Techniques of Metal Manufacture*, *Hesperia* 49 (1980) 347–63.

¹¹ Bronze composition, K. Kluge, *Die antiken Großbronzen*, Band I (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), 48–51; J. Charbonneaux, *Greek Bronzes* (London, 1962), 22f.; H. Hoffmann and A. E. Raubitschek, *Early Cretan Armourers* (Mainz, 1972), 54f.; P. C. Bol, *Antike Bronzetechnik* (Munich, 1985), 16f.

¹² P. Siewert, *Votivbarren und das Ende der Waffen- und Geräteweiungen in Olympia*, *Athenische Mitteilungen* 111 (1996) 141–48.

¹³ A. M. Snodgrass, *Archaic Greece: the Age of Experiment* (London, 1980), 131.

¹⁴ A. H. Jackson, *Hoplites and the Gods: The Dedication of Captured Arms and Armour*, in V. D. Hanson, *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (London, 1991), 228–249.

hoplites in the 'Battle of the Champions' with many more in the full scale battle straight after it.¹⁵ The second was in 494 or a little earlier at Sepeia, a massacre.¹⁶ It is unlikely that Argos would think of tackling Corinth for years, one or two decades probably, after either defeat. This would mean that the period for her victory suggested by the archaeological evidence of c. 530 to the mid 490s makes good sense when set against the historical evidence. For by c. 530 Argos might be still refilling the gaps in her hoplite phalanx and after Sepeia it would be a long while before she could take on Corinth. The equation of Argos' triumph over Corinth, known of from her dedications, with Argos' help to Megara against Corinth reported by Pausanias, also fits in well between her two great defeats, for by the period to which Megara's treasury is now thought to belong, c. 510 to c. 500 B.C. Argos' army, her ambitions and readiness to take on Corinth would doubtless be growing.

Let us now turn to the probable manpower of Argos and Corinth, for history supplies some clues to it. First Argos' army strength at Sepeia. Herodotus says that the Argives claimed to have lost 6000 men at Sepeia. He also states that after Sepeia there were about 1000 Argives who volunteered to help Aegina against Athens (and this implies that there were others who did not volunteer).¹⁷ If these figures are correct, Argos may have had over 7000 hoplites by Sepeia. Of course Herodotus' Argive informants may have exaggerated Argos' losses at Sepeia somewhat. But there could be no doubt that these were very serious. For in 481 as Argos stated and as Delphi had warned her, she was far too weak to help in the resistance against Xerxes, and in fact, in 480 to 479 she took no part in it.¹⁸ So we might guess, allowing for some exaggeration of losses, that her total strength at Sepeia was about 6000, with several thousand lost.

Six thousand men is certainly above Corinth's strength of 5000 hoplites at Plataea in 479 B.C.¹⁹ Her 5000 then may well have been at least near her full strength, now that the strategy of holding the Isthmus was replaced with a very large scale commitment of troops by Sparta, her allies and others to Boeotia. In 479 at least 15 years had passed since the very latest possible date for Argos' victory over Corinth. So whatever troops Corinth lost in that (our next question) they might largely, perhaps all have been replaced by then. If this is accepted, then in a regular pitched hoplite battle against Corinth, if there were about 6000 Argives and more facing about 5000 Corinthians that may in part explain the result.

We can now turn to precisely that question of Corinth's losses in her defeat by Argos. For though there is no direct information on these, there are some indications in the historical evidence whose usefulness we must not neglect.

First, Krentz has plausibly argued that the losing side in typical hoplite battles could suffer up to 10% or even up to 20% dead.²⁰ If then Corinth with about 5000 men or so faced Argos, with more men, say about 6000 in a conventional hoplite battle, it would not be unrealistic to suppose that Corinth could have lost some hundreds of men, though whether up to 500 or even up to 1000 we cannot possibly know.

A second clue to Corinth's losses in our battle could be derived from Corinth's 212 dead, fighting in defence of their homeland's soil, at Solygeia in 425 B.C. Then half her hoplite army was narrowly beaten, not routed by a (probably) larger force of 2000 Athenian hoplites with some allied units and 200 cavalry²¹. Had all other conditions been similar but had the numbers on either side at Solygeia been double, then theoretically Corinth's full army could have lost over 400 men. Of course we do not know what conditions applied to Argos' battle with Corinth. But if it was a regular battle between two

¹⁵ Herodotus I 82

¹⁶ Sepeia losses: Herodotus VI 77–80 and 83; VII 148–49.

¹⁷ The volunteers: Herodotus VI 92.

¹⁸ Herodotus VII 148–49.

¹⁹ Herodotus IX 28.

²⁰ P. Krentz, *Casualties in Hoplite Battles*, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 26 (1985) 13–20.

²¹ Thucydides IV 42–44.

(unequal) hoplite phalanxes, and if the Corinthians stood and fought, and if Argos won partly because of her greater numbers, then on the rough analogy of Solygeia Corinth's losses might well have been in hundreds rather than in a few brave tens or twenties, (not to speak of thousands). Or at least Krentz's estimates and the example of Solygeia make it reasonable to suggest so, even though they fall short of proving it.

This is not much in the way of solid evidence but at least the indications of archaeology and history could to some extent coincide.

4. The Epigraphic Evidence

As the evidence of epigraphy on Argos' victory is somewhat complex it seems highly desirable for the sake of clarity, here to summarize and so to introduce the main points both of this section and of section 5, which very largely depends on this section.

First then epigraphy cannot help us to date the battle even approximately.

Secondly, on the inscription itself, it is argued that both our complete and our fragmentary objects either clearly have or probably had the same votive inscription. This it is argued, is a rather unusual one, and so we can be reasonably confident that all the items with this inscription came from one single victory, not from more than one, though that alternative cannot be totally ruled out.

Third and most important, instead of all being inscribed by one man in one and the same style of Argive script, the objects dedicated by Argos were clearly engraved by more than one man. It is suggested that eight or nine men can be seen at work; their various styles are illustrated in Figures I–III and are tabulated at the end of this section. The possible implications of these large numbers of engravers are discussed in section 5. In very brief summary, it will be argued that Argos had decided to have a sizeable number of her captured spoils inscribed. This in turn (it will be argued) probably means that her total of captured spoils was larger still. If accepted this line of argument would suggest that she has won no trifling encounter with a dozen Corinthian dead, but a greater and more significant victory. The indications of the archaeological and historical evidence at the very least allow for this possibility.

First then for the date of the battle. The letter forms in the inscriptions are of no help in deciding this. For many are found alike in the sixth and the fifth century. These include, in Jeffery's terms Alpha 1, Gamma 1, Theta 1 and 2, and Nu 2, together with punctuation by three dots one over the other.²² In any case we do not possess any full sequence of reliably and closely dated Argive inscriptions stretching from the mid sixth to the mid fifth century such as we would need to compare and date our Argive inscriptions at all precisely. L. H. Jeffery herself dated the battle at first to c. 500 to 480 B.C. but was later prepared to consider c. 465 B.C. as a possible date.²³ But as we have already seen archaeology and history permit only the years from c. 530 down to the mid 490s to be considered.

Before asking if our fourteen items of published armour all come from the same battle, we must consider how likely it is that all bear or bore the same inscription. For some are very fragmentary.

There is no doubt that in Figure I nos. 1.2, 2.2 and 2.3 do so. In Figure II, nos 4 to 6 and Figure III nos. 7 to 9 also certainly do (No. 7 has a clear Theta as the first letter of its ending and so must be about spoils from the Corinthians, see Fig. III). Two other objects almost certainly come from this same dedication. One, 1.1 in Figure I, though without the name of the enemy, has the same lettering with dotted Theta as 1.2, with the round letters of both made by exactly the same size of ring punch. The other, 2.1 also in Figure I preserves the start of *Qorinthothen* but nothing else. But its lettering, with tailed Rho, resembles that of styles 2.2 and 2.3, and is surely by their engraver, inscribing the same text.

²² Cf. L. H. Jeffery, *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1990) 151–153. Also the forms in which Rho appears on Argos' spoils do not always obey Jeffery's scheme.

²³ Jeffery *ibid.* 162, 169 no. 18 and pl. 27.18; Jeffery as cited by D. M. Lewis (*op. cit.* in n. 8 above, 75) for the dating to c. 465 B.C.

Two other fragments are slightly less certain, giving only parts of the words 'The Argives'. One, found long ago in poor condition and now perished, is named Style 1 or 2 in the tabulation and in Figure I (at foot to left). The other, with uniquely florid initial letters, is Style 3 in Figure II at the top. Both these texts show the *krasis* of the definite article and noun found in our text. Both come from the same layer and area as 1.1, 1.2 and 2.2 and 2.3. No other victory by Argos is as yet attested by inscribed objects from that area, so it hardly seems reckless to follow Kunze in associating these two fragments with Argos' victory. A third shield is very corroded and rather less certain again (Style 1.3 a and b in the tabulation and Figure I). In addition, despite the most energetic and careful search by members of the German Archaeological Institute, it could not be located for study. Hence the two available facsimiles are both shown in Figure I; some letters appear also in pl. 17 in *OB V*. This shield preserves only the words *anethen toi*. It could thus be a dedication by some quite other victor from some quite other enemy. But some of its letters seem close to some of 1.1 and 1.2 especially dotted Theta, and it seems likely that its engraver used a ring punch of about the size of that used for them (details in tabulation under Style 1.3 a and b). It was found in the same level and area as 1.1 and 1.2. There is also at least no positive evidence that it comes from a different dedication, involving quite different states. Kunze considered it could have belonged in Argos' dedication.²⁴

We thus have nine published objects certainly displaying Argos' votive formula, two more that almost certainly do, two more that probably, but not certainly did and one possible member of the group. None of these last three can be shown to involve any other victory by Argos over Corinth or over any other state, let alone a battle between quite different states. With that fairly well established at least as regards the first eleven objects, let us consider the character and content of Argos' votive inscription. For it can fairly be said to be unusual, which could suggest that only one victory is commemorated by it, a point shown later to be important.

First, to several scholars it appears metrical or quasi-metrical, though to others it does not.²⁵ If this is accepted, it is somewhat unusual, as is shown by a comparison with most of the other inscriptions recording dedications of spoils in Lazzarini's excellent survey.²⁶ Secondly the expression *anethen --- tōn Qorinthothen* contrasts with the much more common formulae she cites. These give the usual name of the defeated in the genitive, with or without a preposition or verb. Lazzarini construes our text as meaning 'they dedicated --- (these arms) from the (booty) from Corinth'. On her view it is certainly unusual; she quotes only about a dozen parallels for dedication of spoils from a place, from almost 50 texts. But none of these parallels is exactly like our text. A slightly different translation is perhaps preferable: 'they dedicated --- (these arms) from the men from Corinth'. This is on the one hand much more like the majority of her other texts, in that they speak not of booty taken from enemy territory, but of booty taken from the enemy as Argos' spoils taken from dead Corinthians literally had been. On the other hand it is unusual, again, in that instead of *tōn Qorinthiōn*, the Corinthians, the Argives chose to call them *tōn Qorinthothen*, the men from Corinth, and this even though *tōn Qorinthiōn* would have scanned exactly the same in the quasi-metre the inscription seems to be in. We cannot explore here why the Argives chose the expression they did; perhaps it was meant to be disparaging. But at least it has been shown that Argos' inscription is in two respects unlike the more usual expressions used in dedicating spoils.

To conclude from the above that Argos' inscribed dedications all certainly or probably bore the same text and that it was a rather unusual text is reasonable. To go on to say that therefore Argos' spoils

²⁴ Kunze, *OB V*, 36.

²⁵ Metrical or quasi-metrical. C. Gallavotti, *Metri e ritmi nelle iscrizioni greche*, Bolletino dei classici Suppl. III (1979) as cited in *SEG XXIX* (1979) 114 no. 407; Kunze, *OB VIII*, 94. Not metrical, P. A. Hansen, *A List of Greek Verse Inscriptions down to 400 B.C.*, Opuscula Graecolatina Suppl. Museum Tusculanum 3 (Copenhagen, 1975) 36, no. 381.

²⁶ M. L. Lazzarini, Le formule delle dediche votive nella Grecia arcaica, *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Memorie: Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Ser. VIII vol. 19, fasc. 2 (Rome, 1976). Parte II nos. 956 to 1000; section d, booty from a place, nos. 989–1000.

all come from one and the same battle might strike some as less so. For theoretically after one triumph, marked by dedications in these terms, Argos might have scored another and re-used the same text, to set it on the same level as the first. Though this possibility remains open, it may involve multiplying hypothetical battles beyond what is necessary. Fortunately we are on surer ground in our next enquiry.

Now for the most important feature of Argos' spoils. If the items of armour did all come from one and the same battle, then the following conclusion argued here and based on the inscriptions becomes all the more interesting. For as mentioned above there seem from the armour itself and from the facsimiles and photographs in the original publications on which the facsimiles here are based, to be quite clearly several different styles of Argive script in use on them. This should mean, at least when the styles are sufficiently different, that several different engravers were employed on inscribing the various items. Figures I to III and the tabulation of styles and items of armour bearing the inscriptions seek to make this clear. But before the implications of this can be explored (section 5 below) the question of just how many styles and engravers can be identified must be examined.

Kunze identified three styles as appearing on more than one object.²⁷ These are Styles 1 and 2 in Figure I and what he saw as one further style, presented here as two styles, nos. 4 and 5 in Figure II and the Tabulation. Accepting Kunze's view of Styles 1 and 2, one can however take the view that all the other styles, 3 to 9 are represented by one object each, because of the differences visible in the styles shown in Figures II to III and remarked on in the tabulation. On this view, we would see here nine different engravers using Styles 1 to 9. If we accept Kunze's view of Styles 4 and 5, that they are by one and the same engraver, then we would have eight different engravers. That is why eight or nine engravers are spoken of here.

Tabulation of Engravers' Styles and Objects

A few introductory comments must be made. In Figures I and II the inscriptions on shields in Styles 1 to 4 are shown as they were originally placed, round half the shield, or in the case of Style 2.2 B1644 on the tail of the Typhon. In Figures II and III the inscriptions on the three helmets in Styles 5, 7 and 8 have had to be divided for reasons of space. In reality they run above the lower edge of the left hand cheek guard and round to beyond the back of the neck guard. In Style 6 (B4411) the inscription is similarly placed, but only the part on the left hand cheek guard survives. In Style 9 (B4462) the inscription is again divided for reasons of space. In fact it runs up the front of the shin guard from the ankle.

Space again prevents showing all scripts at their actual size, apart from Figure II Style 6 (B4411) and Figure III Style 7. Actual heights of letters are noted for all objects except two. One is W. Dittenberger and K. Purgold, *Die Inschriften von Olympia (I.v.O.)* (Berlin, 1896), cols. 365–68 no. 251 (Figure I Style 1 or 2; disintegrated before modern excavations). The other is Style I.3 B2671 (Figure I 1.3a and b). For this only an estimate can be given based on *OB V* pl. 17 because it was not located despite exhaustive search. Only in B4411 Figure II Style 6 is it certain that the text in the title above was abbreviated by omission of the verb. The facsimiles here are based on published photographs and facsimiles, checked against each other where both are available, and against the objects for necessary minor corrections. For Style 3 B956 below the published facsimile is seriously misleading and has been corrected. For B2671 Style 1.3, which could not be found, both available facsimiles are given displayed as they might have appeared on the original.

Style 1 Fig. I nos. 1–3a and b: B163, B1004 and perhaps B2671: respectively *SEG* XI, 1203, 2 and 5, and XV 247 c. Ring punch diam. 0.95 cm used for circular letters,

²⁷ E. Kunze, *OB* III 77; *OB* V 35f.; *OB* VIII 93–4. I must here express my gratitude to Dr. Mario Rausch for most generously communicating to me his view on how many scripts can be distinguished (my estimate exceeds his).

- dotted Theta and Rho without tail used on first two objects and dotted Theta on B2671. As Kunze notes the right hand end is damaged in B1004.
- 1.1. B163 Shield facing *OB* II 68 and 72–3 no. 21; pl. 20. From surface layer of Archaic Stadium south bank. Letters approx. 0.95 to 1.1 cm high.
- 1.2. B1004 Shield facing. *OB* III 24f., 76 and 81 no. 6; pls. 21 to 23 foot. From surface layer of Archaic Stadium south bank. Letters approx. 0.8 to 1.4 cm high.
- 1.3. a and b B2671 Shield facing. *OB* V 36, 51 and 53 no. 17; pl. 17 seen from inside. In pl. 17 traces of some letters are visible in reverse to the left of the end of the shield band, which is B1881 in E. Kunze, *Olympische Forschungen* II (Berlin, 1950) 31, 234 and 243, width 7.1 cm, Form XXX, dated c. 555–540. In Fig. I 1.3a (facsimile based on Excavation Bronze Inventory under B2671a) and 1.3b (based on *OB* V 36 and pl. 17) Theta is dotted. The circular letter visible in *OB* V pl. 17 top, at 2.5 cm left of the shield band and 5 cm above the foot of the photograph looks around 1 cm in diameter by comparison with the width (7.1 cm) of the shield band near it. This is close to the diameter of the ring punch of 1.1 and 1.2 above.
Found in Archaic Stadium south bank surface layer.
- Style 2 Fig. I nos. 2.1 to 2.3: B2737 and 1644 respectively: *SEG* XV 247b and a, and B955 *SEG* XI 1203, 3.
Tailed Rho, crossed Theta, Digamma with arms sloping down. Circular letters made by short strokes thus angular; vertical hastae often long.
- 2.1. B2737 Shield facing *OB* V 35 fig. 16. From Stadium south bank. Height of letters 1.1 to 2.1 cm.
- 2.2. B1644 Shield blazon: tail of Typhon. *OB* V 35 and 58–60; pls. 28–29. Shield bands of the first quarter of the sixth century show Typhons with tails in figure of eight position as here (*OF* II 242 nos. I d, pl. 3 and XV c, pl. 43). This blazon is probably sixth century. From Stadium south bank. Letters c. 1 to 2.5 cm high.
- 2.3. B955 Shield facing *OB* III 24f., 76f. and 81 no. 1 pls. 20 and 23 top and 7 fig. 2. From surface layer of Archaic Stadium south bank. Letters 1.3 to 2.2 cm high.
- Style 1 or 2 Fig. I, at foot, to left.
Dittenberger and Purgold *I.v.O.* cols. 365–68 no. 251; *OB* II 68. The Alpha and Epsilon could match either style and are not evidence for a further engraver. Shield facing from Archaic Stadium south bank, 1879; disintegrated. Height of letters unknown.
- Style 3 B956 Fig. II no. 3, top.
Distinctive curved lines. Tailed Rho, Epsilon with arms sloping. Shield facing. *OB* III 76 and 81 no. 2; *SEG* XI 1203,4. From surface layer of Archaic Stadium south bank. Letters c. 1.8 to 2.6 cm high.
- Style 4 B4959 Fig. II no. 4.
A very stately style, with tailed Rho, double Iota and crossed Theta. Kunze noted similarity to Style 5 below.
Shield facing. *OB* VIII 93 no. 4. Pl. 49, 2. *SEG* XXIV 310 (d) from Well 17 on north bank of Stadium, dated first quarter of fifth c. W. Gauer, *OF* VIII 243 (op. cit. in n. 6 above). Height of letters 1.25 to 3 cm.
- Style 5 B4504 Fig. II no. 5.

The resemblances with B4959 Kunze notes are clear. The fairly level arms of their Epsilons Jeffery 3 and preference for small Omicron Jeffery 152 also argue for his association. But B4504 has a plain tailless Rho, while B4959 has a clear tailed one. Likewise B4959 unlike B4504 employs double Iota (Jeffery p. 152). Thus, one might incline to see two styles not one here. All the same B4504's engraver if he had also engraved B4959 could have left these embellishments out. The lack of the first Nu in *Korithothen* is a simple slip.

Carinated helmet *OB VIII 93 no. 2*; pls. 35 and 36, 2 and 92, Fig. 32.3. Of later sixth century type; *SEG XXIV 310 (b)*. From Well 16 in north bank of Stadium, dated first quarter of fifth c. *OF VIII 243*. Height of letters approx. 0.6 to 0.8 cm.

Style 6 B4411 Fig. II no. 6 (actual size).

The fluctuation of the level of the inscription, the omission of the verb and the small, cramped letters distinguish this script from the others. It was not after all intended to be seen from a distance, as the inscriptions on a shield facing or blazon were.

Uncarinated helmet of mid sixth century type *OB VIII 91–93 no. 1*; pls. 34 and 36, 1; 91 fig. 31. *SEG XXIV, 310 (a)*. From Well 13, north bank of Stadium, first quarter of fifth century *OF VIII 243*. Height of letters only 0.3 to 0.75 cm.

Style 7 Fig. III no. 7. Lettering shown at actual size.

Museum Schloss Fasanerie (Adolphseck) A. Br. 1. Carinated helmet of late sixth century design. Probably from the river Alpheios. Height of letters as Fig. III no. 7, 0.6 to 1.1 cm.

Tailless Rho, crossed Theta with cross diagonal (Jeffery Theta 1) or upright (Jeffery Theta 2) Alpha is Jeffery 1 or 3, Epsilon with arms pointing down Jeffery 2. Nu is Jeffery 3 or 4. Circular letters are more or less well made by short strokes of an engraving implement. Of first ten surviving letters most are upright but some lean left or right. Most of them too are fairly well spaced out. Of *anethen* only the first two letters and part of Theta survive. The long gap from the verb by the left ear to the last five surviving letters of *Qorinthothen* by the right ear is caused by the loss of the nape and has been patched in modern times. The last five letters are close set. The limbs of initial Tau are each made by two close-set parallel lines as if to emphasise it. So are the diagonal cross bars of the last Theta by the right ear. The first half of the inscription follows the sloping line of the cheek guard cf. Figure III.

These features seem to bring this style in some way near to Styles 5 and 6, but its diagonal Theta and wider-set lettering separate it from them. The loss of the original nape guard's letters make a firmer identification difficult. Here the inscription on the Schloss Fasanerie helmet is published. The helmet itself the present writer hopes to publish elsewhere, but meanwhile F. Brommer, *Antike Kleinkunst im Schloss Fasanerie (Adolphseck)* (Marburg, 1955), 5f. fig. 7 gives a photograph and brief description.

Style 8 Fig. III no. 8.

A quite unique style with all circular letters formed by impression, total or partial, of a ring punch diam. c. 0.65 cm. Other lines are commonly engraved by pressure with a sharp tool at first firm and deep (sometimes puncturing the bronze), finishing off with a shallower cut. Rho is tailless, Theta crossed, Epsilon's arms are sometimes level, sometimes sloping (Jeffery 3 or 2).

Carinated helmet of late sixth century design H. Walters, *British Museum Catalogue of Bronzes* (London, 1899), no. B251. L. H. Jeffery 162 and 169 no. 18; pl. 27, 18; best facsimile F. v. Lipperheide, *Antike Helme*, edn. 3 (Munich, 1896), 557. Unstratified; from the river Alpheios 1795. Height of letters 0.55 to 0.8 cm.

Style 9 B4462 Fig. III no. 9.

The script is unique among Argos' dedications from her spoils, with its punctuation by three dots one above another and several forms comparatively early on Jeffery's system, 151–53 (Alpha, Gamma, Delta, Epsilon, Digamma and Rho all Jeffery form 1).

Left shin guard *OB VIII* 93 no. 3; 92 fig. 32,2; pls. 44,2 and 45. Also E. Kunze, *Beinschienen, Olympische Forschungen XXI* (Berlin, 1991), 104 Anhang III group C no. 21; 126 no. 6, pls. 27–28,1. *SEG XXIV* 310 (c). From north bank of Stadium in pre-Classical fill. Kunze dates shin guards of his Late Archaic group III to the two generations down to the end of the sixth century. B4462 is likely to be late in this period. Height of letters 0.5 to 0.7 cm.

5. The Scale and Impact of Argos' Victory

We have now demonstrated a very important point, justified by the Figures and the tabulation, that Argos needed at least eight and possibly nine craftsmen to inscribe that part of her dedicated spoils that was to bear her triumphant inscription. This is likely to mean that her total of spoils to be inscribed was substantial, or why hire so many workmen? The more the engravers surely the more the number of inscriptions to be engraved. Even though no formula can tell us just what size that total was, it must have large. So, similarly the fourteen opponents of Themistocles, whom Broneer shrewdly detected by their different styles of writing on ostraka, doubtless meant to engrave as many potsherds with Themistocles' name as they could.²⁸ For he was popular and to get him ostracized thousands of ostraka would have to be cast against him; they would distribute these among illiterate opponents of Themistocles. The 190 surplus ostraka that Broneer found with his name on them were certainly not all his fourteen enemies had intended to make, but only those they had not found voters for. A rather similar principle holds good in numismatics, where the more dies are used to produce an issue of coins, the larger the issue.²⁹ In the same way, though we cannot calculate how many items of armour Argos' eight or nine engravers inscribed, we can be completely sure it was a large number, not some piffling number like fourteen objects.

To a worth while number of inscribed objects then Argos is likely also to have added a number of uninscribed pieces of captured armour for as noted above, most armour dedicated at Olympia has no inscriptions. Her total of spoils dedicated, both inscribed and uninscribed could well have been conspicuous even if we cannot express it in figures. Argos would certainly have every reason both of piety and of policy to make a big show at Olympia and remind the thousands of visitors there of the help and favour that Zeus had granted to the warriors of Argos whose great king Pheidon had once ordered affairs at Olympia. There would have been many Argives who hoped, when Argos beat Corinth, that with divine aid she might recover Kynouria, stolen by Sparta. Some might even hope the gods would help Argos to beat Sparta and replace Sparta's upstart Peloponnesian League with their restored Argive

²⁸ O. Broneer, Excavations on the North Slope of the Acropolis, 1937, *Hesperia* 7 (1938) 161–263, esp. 228–43; E. Vanderpool, Ostracism at Athens, *Lectures in Memory of Louise Taft Semple*, Second Series (Cincinnati, 1970) 11–16, esp. 12.

²⁹ P. Grierson, *Numismatics* (Oxford, 1975) 156–57.

hegemony. All certainly would pray that their generous thank-offering of spoils from the men from Corinth might move Zeus to grant their wishes, and move men to fall in with them and turn from Sparta.

Though again we cannot put numbers to it, we may reasonably guess that the overall total of spoils Argos had captured was more than the amount she dedicated. For it was a frequent and understandable practice in Archaic Greece and later times to dedicate only a part of one's total booty. Thus sometimes a more or less accurate tenth part, a tithe or *dekate* was presented to the gods.³⁰ Or again we hear of first-fruits being dedicated, as at Delphi, Olympia and elsewhere after the Persian War of 480–79, clearly only part of the total booty.³¹ Though Argos' inscription does not use these or similar terms, we may safely guess that she had captured more than she dedicated. Thus we can take it that, if she needed eight or nine men to inscribe a substantial proportion of her dedication, (and also dedicated some uninscribed spoils) and if all these dedicated spoils were less than her total booty, then that latter total must have been more substantial still.

Bearing all this in mind, remembering the strong likelihood argued for above that armour dedications at Olympia may well have been on a more generous scale than what remains for us to see there today, and recalling also Krentz's conclusions and the dead at Solygeia,³² we may be on safe ground in thinking that Corinth's dead could well have been numbered in hundreds following Argos' victory. Such a defeat, by Argos, of Sparta's chief ally in the Peloponnesian League, cannot have occurred without repercussions and recriminations. For Corinth herself, apart from the grief and bereavements (and perhaps loss of land, allies and strategic posts) there would be galling shame, just as there was in 459 B.C. when her hoplites marched back after a drawn battle against Athens' reserve army, without putting up a trophy as the Athenians boldly had and were jeered at by their elders.³³ Corinth like all Greek city states cared deeply about defeats by her rivals, and doubtless did also about dedications at Olympia.

We do not know the precise effects on Sparta but can make an educated guess at some of them. For here was her strongest single ally, beaten by Sparta's own traditional enemy and rival Argos, for all we know unprotected and, till Sepeia, unavenged by the supposed champion of the Peloponnesian League, one of the aims of which was to suppress any threat from Argos. Sparta had problems to solve between herself and her allies in the late sixth century and Argos' victory cannot have made this easier. That victory, and the revival of Argos' military strength after c. 546 B.C. which made it possible, may well have played an important part in deciding Cleomenes not to send Sparta's crack troops to help the Ionian rebels. Sparta may very well have been most concerned about Argos' growing strength and ambitions and their effects on some of her own allies' loyalty, and on the mood of her less docile Helots. No wonder then that Cleomenes seized the chance that the Argive hoplites gave him at Sepeia, by taking refuge in the sacred grove, to burn them to death in their thousands, not the act of a madman but what today might be called a strategic necessity.³⁴

³⁰ For a *dekate* of ransom money c. 506 B.C. Herodotus V 77; R. Meiggs and D. M. Lewis, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1969), 28f. no. 15; at Olympia of war spoils, *ibid.* 223f., no. 74. An exact *dekate* of captured land 427 B.C. Thucydides III 50.2. A *dekate* promised by Croton outbid by Locri with a ninth, so presumably an exact tenth, Justin XX 3.1. Further on *dekatai* W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge, 1902), 55–60 and 118–48; W. K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, Vol. I (Berkeley, 1974), 93–100.

³¹ Herodotus VIII 121; Thucydides I 132.2.

³² P. Krentz, *Casualties in Hoplite Battles*, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 26 (1985) 13–20; Thucydides IV 42–44.

³³ Thucydides I 105.3 – 106.2.

³⁴ A. Griffiths' suspicions (Was Kleomenes Mad?, in A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her success* (London, 1989) 351–378) that there may be elements not just of exaggeration but of invention such as are produced in atrocity stories and folktales, in Herodotus' account of the massacre are probably unnecessary, in view of Argos' manifest inaction even in 481–479 B.C. Cf. notes 16 and 18 above.

6. The Immediate Context of Argos' Victory

To try to envisage the possible context of Argos' victory, one is obliged to speculate *exempli gratia*. But it is not to be concluded that any of the following speculations are advanced as facts. All that the following can achieve though it is better than nothing, is to show that there were many occasions from c. 530 to the mid 490s when Argos might have felt emboldened by Sparta's failures or by apparent signs of Spartan weakness, to get into a fight with Corinth, (whoever started it). But a word must first be said about the ingenious theory of Jones and Jeffery that as there is no known fighting between Argos and Sparta between c. 546 and Sepeia, a period of roughly 50 years, there may have been a 50 years truce between them during that time.³⁵ Perhaps there was. But if so, no clause in it can have allowed Argos to go to war against Sparta's allies in the Peloponnesian League which Sparta was building up.

At any rate as Argos' fighting manpower was gradually recovering by the 520s, and in the following years, so her ambitions to avenge the Battle of the Champions of c. 546 B.C. and to recover Kynouria would increase. These hopes, alive even in 420 B.C.,³⁶ would be all the more vigorous from the 520s on. To spite Sparta and cover Argos' rear by thrashing the Corinthians would be a cherished aim. Thus Argos would enjoy watching in 524 B.C. the failure of Sparta and Corinth, her hated neighbours, to overthrow Polycrates of Samos, who may have had indirect links with Argos.³⁷ Her patriots may even have dreamed of Persian help, once Darius crushed the revolts of 522–521. So the battle may fit in here.

But let us now consider the 510s. Those wanting vengeance on Sparta would take hope from Sparta's refusal in 517 to help Maeandrius challenge Persia by restoring him to Samos. Further proof of Spartan weaknesses as Argos would see it may have come c. 513 when a Scythian appeal to Sparta for help against Darius was rebuffed.³⁸ For any who hoped for Persian support, the arrival of Persian control at the borders of Thessaly when the King of Macedonia gave earth and water by 511 would be encouraging. For his royal house claimed Argive descent in the early fifth century and perhaps already did.³⁹

Perhaps some time in the 510s then, Argos with Megara's help was emboldened to attack Corinth. The style of Megara's sculptures at Olympia would allow this. If Megara had joined Sparta by 519, fellow allies were allowed by Sparta to settle their disputes by force.⁴⁰ Yet if Megara acted in concert with a reviving Argos, would not both incur Sparta's displeasure? A possible indication that Megara at least was temporarily estranged from Sparta might be the arrival *by sea* as if avoiding the Megarid of Sparta's first expedition under Anchimolius against Hippias, probably in 511.⁴¹ But if the fighting between Corinth and Megara with Argos' help was in the 510s, we might expect some prompt Spartan action against Argos, since part of the point of the Peloponnesian League was to protect Argos' neighbours against her. Either Sparta did retaliate, but with restraint since we do not hear of it. Or she did not. If not, was it perhaps because it had been Corinth (perhaps against Spartan advice) that had started the trouble with Argos and Megara? Or did Sparta do nothing in the 510s because the Corinthian War of Argos and Megara in fact belongs in the 500s (or even later)?

Looking now therefore at the 500s, we can point to Sparta's further failures, especially regarding Athens. Already in 511/10 Cleomenes' policy of friendship with Hippias (Argos' friend too) had been

³⁵ A. H. M. Jones, *Sparta* (Oxford, 1967) 53; L. H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece: The City States c. 700–500 B.C.* (London, 1976) 125.

³⁶ Thucydides V 41.

³⁷ W. G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta* (London, 1980) ch. 7.

³⁸ Maeandrius: Herodotus III 148; Scythians: Herodotus VI 84.

³⁹ Herodotus VIII 137–39; IX 45.

⁴⁰ G. E. M. De Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1972), 107 and 120f.

⁴¹ Herodotus V 63.

shamefully betrayed,⁴² perhaps in part through Spartan concern at Argos' growing strength, or so Argives might think. Soon after came Cleomenes' embarrassing failure to put an end to Cleisthenes' reforms. His expedition against Athens c. 506 failed too, partly because Corinth deserted it, through scruples and friendship with Athens. Or was there a further reason, a recent mauling by Argos' hoplites unavenged by Sparta? Another Spartan failure c. 504 when Corinth led the opposition to Sparta's proposal to restore Hippias would somewhat gratify Argos.⁴³ The disappointed ex-tyrant then turned to Persia, not apparently to his family friends in Argos. Obviously Persia was much the stronger friend. But possibly also Hippias knew that tension was brewing up between Sparta and Argos so that to appeal to Argos would provoke Sparta. Had the fighting between Argos and Corinth occurred by now and was some Spartan action against her old rival likely?

We must finally ask if Argos and Corinth had their battle between c. 504 and Sepeia in 494 or slightly before that latter year. (Jones and Jeffery's 50 year truce, if it existed, could have run out c. 496.) Megara's sculptors if Megara was involved would perhaps have had to be a little conservative and the Argive dedications at Olympia would perhaps have had to be buried by the new Stadium's builders almost as soon as they were put on display. Neither possibility can be ruled out. There is in fact in Delphi's double oracle to Argos a possible sign that many in Argos by 499 wanted war, not just against Corinth, but against Sparta herself. That might be why Delphi, for centuries friendly to Sparta, gave Argos which had asked about her safety, a warning obscure in form but not in fact, against going to war.⁴⁴ Sparta's refusal in 499 to fight Persia as an ally of the Ionians must have looked to optimistic Argive patriots temptingly like more proof of Spartan weakness. A weakness, they would say, inspired by Argos' strength. Argos and Megara, both equally contemptuous of Sparta could have tried to settle their accounts with Corinth now. But Argos, on this scenario, did not get away with bloodying Corinth's nose; that was avenged soon and more than enough in the ashes of Argos' holy wood.

7. Conclusion

Perhaps one day we shall know for certain where to fit this floating fragment of Archaic Greek history into the jigsaw puzzle of better-known events. If one had to choose, a date in the late 510s or later might be preferred because of Argos' help to Megara, whose treasury is dated c. 510 – c. 500 B.C. But one can at least say on present evidence that Argos' triumph makes sense in the wider period c. 530 to the mid 490s. Argos' recovered strength and city-state's hatred of her neighbours Corinth and Sparta must largely explain it. Her ostentatious display of spoils with 'from the men from Corinth' odiously inscribed on many of her exhibits, must have helped to provoke Cleomenes' savagery at Sepeia. If Herodotus knew of them, for him Sepeia obscured Argos' success just as the sanctuary workmen buried her display; ironically in so doing they made it possible for us to learn about it.

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⁴² Herodotus V 63; Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia* 17.

⁴³ Herodotus V 90–94.

⁴⁴ Herodotus VI 19 and 77. J. B. Bury, The Epicene Oracle Concerning Argos and Miletus, *Klio. Beiträge zur alten Geschichte* II, 1902, 14–25. N. G. L. Hammond, in *Cambridge Ancient History*, edn. 2 vol. IV (Cambridge, 1988), 540. P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (London, 1979) 148, 201 and 214.

Figure I

1.1.
B163

ΑΡΓΕΙΟΙ ΑΝΕΘΕΝΤΕ

ΤΑΥΤΑ
ΑΡΓΕΙΟΙ ΑΝΕΘΕΝΤΕΣ
ΙΟΙ ΔΙΦΙΤΟΝ ΡΟΡΙΝΟΘΕΝ

1.2.
B1004

ΑΝΕΘΕΝΤΟΙ

ΑΝΕΘΕΝΤΟΙ

1.3.a.
B2671

1.3.b.
B2671

2.1. B2737

2.3.
B955

ΑΡΓΕΙΟΙ ΑΝΕΘΕΝΤΟΙ ΔΙΦΙΤΟΝ ΡΟΡΙΝΟΘΕΝ

2.2.
B1644

ΑΡΓΕΙΟΙ
1 or 2.
I.v.O.251

Figure II

3.B956

4.B4959

TARTE
 ARTEIIOLA
 ⊕ENTC

5.B4504

ΠΕΙΟΙΑΝΕ⊕ΕΝΤΟΙΔΙΦΙΤΟΝ
 ΡΟΡΙ⊕Ο⊕ΕΝ

6.B4411

TARTEIOITOIPIFITONPOI

Figure III

7. Schloss Fasanerie A.Br. 1.

T A P Γ E I O I A N N
 ⊕ ⊙ ⊕ E N

8. Br.Mus.B251

T A P Γ E I O I A N E ⊕
 E N T O I D I F I T O
 N Q O D I N ⊕ O ⊕ E N

T A P Γ E I O I : A N E ⊕ E N :

T O I D I F I : T O N Q O D I N ⊕ O ⊕ E N

9.B4462