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Two Notes on Greeks Bearing Arms: The Hoplites of the Chigi Jug and Gelon's Armed Aphrodite¹

For Tonio Hölscher

If the theme “Medien der Geschichte” offers wide scope for in(ter)vention, then an invitation to discuss “Körper: Bilder vom Menschen” offers an even wider one. It is in the spirit of Tonio Hölscher’s voluminous and varied writings on and around these subjects that I offer these two notes, which bridge the archaic Greek world and the Hellenistic, the city state and the kingdom, the historical and the monumental, the human and the divine, the masculine and the feminine, and last but not least, the real and the imaginary.

1 The Warriors of the Chigi Jug

The Chigi Jug (Figs. 1–2) rightly commands a privileged position in histories both of archaic Greek art and archaic Greek warfare². A masterpiece of the miniaturist Corinthian polychrome style, apparently the earliest depiction of Greek phalanx warfare, and (as Jeffrey Hurwit has shown)³ the earliest Greek artwork to present an integrated iconographic program, it has achieved a status in the field of classical archaeology out of all proportion to its small size, utilitarian function, and humble material.

Almost forty years ago, in the published version of his *Habilitationschrift*, Tonio Hölscher eloquently discussed the Chigi Jug’s depiction of hoplite battle⁴. In particular, he dwelt at some length on how it exemplifies in truly classic form one pole of the archaic Greek artist’s engagement with the twin imperatives of contemporary hoplite warfare: collective discipline and individual prowess⁵. (The latter, the opposite pole, is represented by the ubiquitous black-figure one-on-one duels: Fig. 3). En route, Höl-

1 I would like to thank Tonio Hölscher, Ortwin Dally, Susanne Muth and Rolf Schneider for their kind invitation to contribute this essay, and Peter Bing, Christopher Hallett, Tonio Hölscher, Rachel Kousser, Michael Padgett and lecture audiences at Berkeley and Washington University in St. Louis for help at various stages in its production; and Marta Fodor at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All mistakes and misstatements remain my own.

2 Rome, Villa Giulia 22679, from Veii: Amyx (1988) 32 Nr. 3; see most recently Hurwit (2002).

3 Hurwit (2002).

4 Hölscher (1973) 25ff. Fig. 1.

5 Well understood (though not apropos this vase) by Lendon (2005) 45ff.



Fig. 1: Middle-late Protocorinthian olpe, the “Chigi Jug”: Hoplite battle, center. Ca. 650 B.C. Rome, Villa Giulia 22679.

schers allowed that in certain respects the picture seems to illustrate a phalanx that still had some way to evolve, since (echoing Homeric practice) all of the soldiers carry a second, backup spear and two of them at far left still have throwing loops attached to their spear shafts (Fig. 2).

In recent years, this less rigid picture of the archaic hoplite phalanx has gained ground rapidly, to the extent that some military historians now contend that the “mature” phalanx, purified of archers, missile-throwers, and other irregulars, was actually a creation of the period of the Persian Wars⁶. Although I leave this particular contest to others, it is worth pointing out that the Chigi Jug’s battle scene offers little concrete support for the revisionist view. Even the spears with throwing loops belong to soldiers accoutered exactly like the other phalangites, whose spears conspicuously bear no such loops (Fig. 1). Yet recently one leading historian has radically reinterpreted even this picture along revisionist lines. He contends that this is a case of *pars pro toto*; that every spear in the scene should be thought of as looped; and that far

⁶ E.g. Krentz (2002); van Wees (2004) 166–98; Krentz (2007a); Krentz (2007b).



Fig. 2: Middle-late Protocorinthian olpe, the “Chigi Jug”: Hoplite battle, left side. Ca. 650 B.C. Rome, Villa Giulia 22679.

from using these spears for stabbing, “the two front lines are about to hurl javelins at each other, and contrary to appearances are evidently meant to be standing some way apart.”⁷

The qualifier “contrary to appearances” gives the game away. A classic case of special pleading, this proposal rests on a misunderstanding of archaic Greek pictorial convention. For archaic Greek art is above all a literal mode of representation – which emphatically is not the same thing as saying that it is realistic. To simplify somewhat, scholars from Carl Robert through Nikolaus Himmelmann to Susanne Muth have shown that archaic figural compositions are governed by a formal syntax that assigns every figure and every detail its place in the context of the whole, and that each individual figure and detail tells its own story, which in sum make up the whole⁸.

Thus, if a picture shows two men fighting each other at close quarters with spears and shields interlocked (Fig. 3, left), that is exactly what we are meant to envisage: a toe-to-toe, shield-to-shield, spear-to-spear, and face-to-face duel between two brave

⁷ Van Wees (2004) 170.

⁸ Robert (1881/1975); Himmelmann (1967/1998); Muth (2008).



Fig. 3: Middle Corinthian column-krater: Hoplite battle. Ca. 600–575 B.C. Berkeley, Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 8/361.

men⁹. Add a corpse at their feet, and we understand the immediate reason for the encounter. Add a woman behind each of them tearing her hair or otherwise gesticulating, and we remember that somewhere – at home, or on the city wall – their respective womenfolk are anguishing over the outcome. Add another duel where one man has turned to flee and is being speared through the thigh (Fig. 3, right), and we recall that some warriors in this situation are less strong, less brave, and less lucky than others. Add a bird flying towards the victor (Fig. 3, right), and we see that the omens, and thus the gods, are on his side – the side of the bravest and strongest. In each case the logic is primarily causal, not temporal and/or spatial, and the governing theme is simple: hoplite battle. Time and space are secondary, even irrelevant to these very literal messages about it, and Aristotle’s notorious trio of classicizing unities lies far in the future¹⁰.

⁹ Middle Corinthian column-krater, Berkeley, Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology 8/361; Amyx (1988) 156 Nr. 5 Taf. 59,2–60,1: A: hoplite fights; B: armed riders.

¹⁰ Arist. *Poet.* 5,8,23.

Thus, in the same way those archaic Greek pictures of the phalanx battle and the duel (Figs. 1–3) represent the twin poles of archaic warfare as contemporaries actually experienced them, the various subtypes of duels (Fig. 3) complement and comment on one another, exemplifying *in toto* the exhilarating yet terrifying experience of face-to-face fighting with edged weapons. As Victor Hanson has eloquently remarked:

The peacetime fascination with the use of shield and spear, the hoplite's ritualistic dance, the competitive race in armor – and the interest of sculptor, vase-painter and poet – was, I believe, symptomatic of the anticipation and anxiety that gnawed in the heart of every man, growing large in inverse proportion to the relatively few moments of actual fighting on the battlefield ... For men aged twenty through sixty – uninitiated and veteran alike – the charge, the collision of spears, the pushing, trampling, wounding, panic, confusion, even the pile of battlefield dead, were all similar events to be experienced one awful, fatal time, or perennially, until a man could fight no more ... For the Greek citizen of every age, there was one image alone of the hoplite spearman, imprinted in the mind like the warriors on the frieze courses of so many Greek temples, a picture that every man shared with every man he knew.¹¹

Or, as a feminist critic once shrewdly put it: “In mastery of fear, men experience freedom: Conflict is action, action is masculine.¹²” This is why in the archaic and classical periods, phalanxes such the one shown on the Chigi Jug (Fig. 1) can be numbered almost on one hand. The supreme image of unfettered, triumphant masculinity in archaic and classical Greek art was not the collective killing machine of the phalanx but the individual hoplite warrior, represented exactly as he was at that fateful moment: alone. With this image every Greek male could identify, for in it he saw himself.

Where does this leave the Chigi Jug (Fig. 1)? First, against the assertion that “the two front lines ... contrary to appearances are evidently meant to be standing some way apart,” the toes, shields, and spears of the warriors furthest from the picture plane, but *at the very focus of the entire composition* overlap. This must signal that the armies have closed and are just about to clash. Second, against the assertion that “the two front lines are about to hurl javelins at each other,” their spears are pointing not upwards for the throw but downwards, hoplite-style, straight towards the vulnerable eyes, mouths, and necks of their opponents. And third, against the assertion that all the spears are to be thought of as equipped with throwing loops, the few thus endowed not only are placed at the extreme left of the composition but also are given to two stragglers (Fig. 2). So the painter has literally sidelined them and their tardy owners – who have lost their chance to use them as intended – along with them. They have missed their opportunity, their *kairos*.

In sum, the painter has spoken and we must take him literally. Had he intended us to interpret these weapons as throwing spears, he never would have omitted their throwing loops and at the same time represented the two front ranks so close to-

¹¹ Hanson (1989) 221f.; compare now Lendon (2005) 45 ff.

¹² Dworkin (1981) 51; on all this, see already Stewart (1996) 89 ff.

gether. We must take all this at face value. They are stabbing at each other at close quarters, not “standing some way apart” and readying their spears for the throw. That sort of warfare, the painter suggests, is now obsolete and literally a sideshow. Moreover, implying the same thing, he has omitted both to give the rear rank of the left-hand army – by archaic convention, the eventual victor – backup spears either (see Fig. 2, right) and has given none of the soldiers a sword¹³.

In the end, then, the traditional interpretation of the scene in Fig. 1 holds. This is the split-second before the clash: the *ôthismos* or face-to-face shoving match that would determine the outcome of this exclusively hoplite battle and the fates of its participants. As Tyrtaios exhorted his Spartan audience, don’t stand aloof beyond the hail of missiles, but:

ἀλλά τις ἐγγύς ἰὼν αὐτοσχεδὸν ἔγχεῖ μακρῶι
 ἢ ξίφει οὐτάζων δῆϊον ἄνδρ’ ἐλέτω,
 καὶ πόδα πὰρ ποδὶ θεις καὶ ἐπ’ ἀσπίδος ἀσπίδ’ ἐρείσας,
 ἐν δὲ λόφον τε λόφωι καὶ κυνέην κυνέηι
 καὶ στέρνον στέρνωι πεπλημένος ἀνδρὶ μαχέσθω,
 ἢ ξίφeos κώπην ἢ δόρυ μακρὸν ἔχων.

[Tyrtaios 12 West]

Instead, each man get close and spear your enemy,
 Or spit him with your sword and take his life.
 With foot set against foot and shield set against shield,
 And crest against crest and helm against helm,
 And chest thrusting hard against chest, let each man fight
 With sword in hand, or far-injuring spear.¹⁴

Regardless of the precise stage in the development of hoplite warfare that the Chigi Painter intended to show, this is his true achievement, to combine in one picture the twin poles of phalanx fighting: the rugged discipline of the mass and the iron courage of the individual. Together, he declares, they represent the hoplite ideal.

¹³ As Michael Padgett aptly notes (pers. comm., 12/28/10): “The fact that the Chigi vase shows the new hoplite formation is evidenced not only by their massed formations with overlapping shields, but by the absence of swords, the ubiquitous mark of a warrior on Geometric vases. There are very few vase-paintings, Attic or Corinthian, that show either a warrior throwing a spear or a thrown spear having landed. The only time one normally sees a short throwing spear is in the hands of a cavalryman. However much later Greek warriors wanted to emulate the Homeric heroes, they were too smart to let go of their spears!” Indeed, to go into battle with only a throwing spear (or two) and no sword would be insane, since one would have only one’s bare hands to fight with if one missed. A second spear, however, would be just as useful in a hoplite stabbing fight as in a Homeric javelin contest, since if one’s spear splintered against an enemy’s armor, having no backup would put one at a major disadvantage.

¹⁴ Translation Richmond Lattimore, slightly adapted.

2 Arsinoe-Aphrodite at Arms

Sometime after 269/8 B.C., Poseidippos of Pella, at that time residing in Alexandria, wrote an epigram for a dedication of a piece of linen, perhaps a curtain, veil, mitra, or even a royal diadem, by a Macedonian maiden, Hegeso, to Queen Arsinoe II Philadelphos:

Ἀρσινόη, σοὶ τοῦτο διὰ στολίδων ἀνεμοῦσθαι
 βύσσινον ἄγκειται βρέγμ' ἀπὸ Ναυκράτιος,
 ὣι σύ, φίλη, κατ' ὄνειρον ὀμόρξασθαι γλυκὺν ἰδρῶ
 ἤθελες, ὄτρηρῶν παυσαμένη καμάτων·
 ὡς ἐφάνης, Φιλάδελφε, καὶ ἐν χειρὶ δούρατος αἰχμὴν,
 πότνα, καὶ ἐν πήχει κοῖλον ἔχουσα σάκος·
 ἢ δὲ σοὶ αἰτηθεῖσα τὸ λευχέανον κανόνισμα
 παρθένος Ἥγησῶ θῆκε γένος Μακέ[τη].

[*P. Mil. Vogl* VIII 309, col. vi. 10–17; Poseidippos 36 AB]

Arsinoe, for you this tissue of linen from Naukratis is hung here
 To flutter in the wind across your dress!
 In my dream, beloved, your eager struggles over, you seemed
 To reach for it, as if to wipe the fragrant sweat
 From your limbs – I see you still, Lady Philadelphos, the sharp
 Spear in your hand, the hollow shield on your arm.
 Here, then, it is: to you from maiden Hegeso, of Macedonian
 Stock, this delicate strip of white cloth.¹⁵

The first editors of the poem, puzzled by its mention of spear and shield, thought that Arsinoe was appearing in the guise of Athena, adducing a dream recounted in Plutarch's *Lucullus* in which the goddess's efforts on behalf of Kyzikos during the Mithradatic Wars cause her to break out in a sweat. In 2003, however, Peter Bing realized that the goddess in question ought to be Aphrodite and argued that the cult was the famous maritime one of Arsinoe-Aphrodite at Cape Zephyrion. He concluded with a query: "Could it be that the maiden was thinking about an armed Arsinoe-Aphrodite, even dreaming of her, because she cared about someone involved in a war, a prospective husband perhaps."¹⁶

Although this interpretation now seems to be generally accepted¹⁷, and we must not forget that Arsinoe's epiphany occurred in a dream (which the ancients believed

¹⁵ Gutzwiller (2005) 25 (translation Frank Nisetich), slightly adapted. Since Hegeso addresses Arsinoe as "Philadelphē" the poem must postdate her death in 269/8: see Hölbl (2001) 101ff. for a convenient survey of the development of her cult titles.

¹⁶ Bastianini and Gallazzi (2001) 151, citing Plut. *Luc.* 10; Bing (2003) 258ff.; reprinted in Bing (2009) 247. Might this sweaty epiphany be a double-entendre: a cheeky allusion also to Arsinoe's bed-time trysts with her brother/husband Ptolemy?

¹⁷ See, e.g., Gutzwiller (2005) 108 (Dirk Obbink).

would foretell the *future*), its implications have yet to be fully explored. In particular, how does it square with the cultic, literary, and iconographic tradition of Aphrodite-at-Arms? Fortunately, the cultic evidence has been explored very thoroughly in a recent book by Gabriella Pironti and the rest in a 1991 dissertation by Johan Flemberg¹⁸.

At Zephyrion, Arsinoe was worshiped as Aphrodite Euploia, referencing the goddess's control over all liquids and the foam (*aphros*) that they generate. The Ptolemaic admiral Kallikrates founded the cult shortly before the queen's death in 269/8 and at least three leading Hellenistic poets celebrated it in multiple epigrams¹⁹. Unfortunately, none of them describes its cult image, though the Poseidippos epigram quoted above would suggest that it was at least partially draped if (as Bing proposed) Hegeso was dreaming of this goddess and not of a separate image of Arsinoe/Aphrodite-at-Arms. Yet might the queen have been worshiped in both guises in the same temple, given the vividness of Hegeso's dream; the close association between Aphrodite the sea goddess and Aphrodite the warrior; and the prior existence of an ancient iconographic tradition for the latter?

As a sailors' goddess, Arsinoe-Aphrodite was responsible above all for calm seas and prosperous voyages, which (as Louis Robert saw long ago)²⁰ linked this cult not only with the many humble private dedications to Arsinoe found in port cities around the eastern Mediterranean (some of which actually were named after her), but also with such major Aegean cults of Aphrodite Euploia as those at Piraeus and Knidos. The Athenian admiral Konon had founded the former after the battle of Knidos in 394 – a victory widely regarded as reversing the result of the Peloponnesian War – and Praxiteles had created antiquity's most famous statue of Aphrodite for the latter, probably during his *akme* in 364–361. As Bing has remarked, “the links Kallikrates forged went in both directions: from old Hellas to Egypt and from Egypt back to old Hellas.”²¹

The same is true of Arsinoe/Aphrodite-at-Arms. According to the sources, the cult of Aphrodite-at-Arms originated in Cyprus but soon spread via Kythera to the Peloponnese, where *inter alia* it took root in Sparta at an early date and in Corinth after the Battle of Salamis in 480²². At first sight, the love goddess seems distinctly out of place on the battlefield, and Homer's account in *Iliad* 5 of her discomfiture outside the walls

¹⁸ Pironti (2007); Flemberg (1991).

¹⁹ Poseidippos 39, 116, 119 AB, and possibly also 36 and 37 AB; Callim. *Ep.* 14 Gow-Page (= 5 Pfeiffer = Athen. 7.318d); Hedylos 4 GP (= Athen. 11.497d); see esp. Bing (2003); Bing (2009); Susan Stephens in Gutzwiller (2005) 244 ff.

²⁰ Robert (1966) 201f.; 208; summary and update, Hölbl (2001) 104.

²¹ Paus. 1.1.3; cf. Pirenne-Delforge (1994) 33, 373, 399, 433f., 469; Pironti (2007) 166, 203, 245 ff., 271; Bing (2009) 244. On Praxiteles' statue see most recently Corso (2007) 9–186, with the present author's remarks in Stewart (1996) 97 ff., updated in Stewart (2010) 13 ff.

²² Cyprus: Hesych. s.v. “Encheios.” Greece: e.g., Paus. 3.15.10–11, 17.5, 18.8; Plut. *Mor.* 239A, 317F; Plut. *Anth.Gr.* 9.320 (Sparta); Paus. 23.1 (Kythera); Paus. 2.5.1; Strab. 8.6.21, 379 (Corinth); cf. *Anth.Gr.* 9.321; 16.171–177; Flemberg (1991) 27 ff., Nr. 1 ff.; Pironti (2007) 231 ff.

of Troy has often been cited in support. Yet she fights in the Gigantomachy from at least the mid sixth century, and as Pironti has shown, her domain included all forms of desire and corporeal *mixis*, from the sexual to the martial²³. In cult, this domain embraced not only the soldier's love of battle but also the eros that bonded him to his fellow soldiers, to his commanders, and to his city and its governing regime. Apart from the numerous cults of Aphrodite Areia scattered throughout Greece, on Kos (for example) Aphrodite Pontia and Aphrodite Pandamos occupied twin temples, and the local soldiery sacrificed to the former; and at Athens, Aphrodite Hêgemonê was honored both in the frontier towns of Attica by their garrisons and in the city by the general "in charge of equipment" (ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευήν)²⁴. Alexandria and the Ptolemies had strong ties to all these places, and Kallikrates and his advisers cannot have been ignorant of the precedents that they had set.

Together, these testimonia and Poseidippos's epigram, cited above, suggest that (at least in the Alexandrian imaginary), Arsinoe was idolized not only as Queen or *basilissa* of the Ptolemaic kingdom and its far-flung possessions, but as *basilissa* of both sea and land (i.e., of the entire *oikoumenê* in both war and peace) in the cultic sphere also.

As to how Hegeso could have envisioned Arsinoe/Aphrodite-at-Arms or (in a maximalist interpretation) could have seen her in reality, the ancient *xoana* of Aphrodite Areia at Sparta and elsewhere no doubt were fully draped. If the Aphrodite at Amyklai by Polykleitos II, dedicated after the battle of Aigospotamoi in 405, is to be identified with the armed Aphrodite of the Epidauros type (Fig. 4), as some believe, the statue was draped in a thin chiton and himation that left her right breast bare, and carried a sword and probably also a spear²⁵. A century or so later, the armed Aphrodite of Acrocorinth carried a shield, wore only a himation, and was naked to the waist, if the long-postulated association between this statue, a series of Corinthian coins, and the Capuan-type Aphrodite is to be trusted²⁶.

A splendid engraved red garnet ring-stone signed by Gelon (Fig. 5), found in the Tomb of the Erotes at Eretria and probably predating the end of the third century, shows Aphrodite similarly attired, but now her himation has slipped enticingly below

²³ Aphrodite in the Gigantomachy: Michael Padgett kindly reminds me of the Attic black-figure dinos by Lydos, Athens NM Akr. 607: *ABV* 107/1; *Beazley Addenda*² 29; Moore (1979) 87f. Taf. 12,5; *LIMC* II (1984) s.v. Aphrodite Nr. 1394 Taf. 137; *LIMC* IV (1988) s.v. Gigantes Nr. 105; Muth (2008) 272ff. Fig. 174A. *Mixis*: Pironti (2007) 41ff. and passim.

²⁴ See Pironti (2007) 242ff. with references; and, e.g., *SEG* XLI 90f.; *SEG* XLIII 64; *IG* II² 2798, with Stewart (2012) 288ff.

²⁵ Paus. 3.18.8, cf. 4.14.2; on the Epidauros type see *LIMC* Aphrodite Nr. 243f. pl. 28; Flemberg (1991) 46ff. Fig. 1.

²⁶ Paus. 2.5.1; for the coins see Imhoof-Blumer u. Gardner (1887/1964) 25ff. Nr. 33 Taf. G; *LIMC* Aphrodite 627ff. Taf. 61f.; and for a thorough discussion of the Capuan type in this context, Kousser (2008) 19ff.; yet the latter can only be a variant of the Corinthian statue, since as Hölscher (1967) 124 noticed, the coins show clearly that the statue held her shield with *both* hands, a pose now confirmed by a Roman fresco found near the theater in 1990: Kousser (2008) 21 Fig. 9.



Fig. 4: Aphrodite-at-Arms, from Epidauros. Roman copy, original ca. 400 B.C. Athens, National Museum 262.



Fig. 5: Garnet ring stone signed by Gelon, from the Tomb of the Erotes at Eretria. Ca. 250–200 B.C. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 21.1213.

her buttocks²⁷. Yet like the goddess in Hegeso's dream, she is now equipped with both shield and spear, and suggestively also seems to wear a scarf around her hair that flutters down her back. One is tempted to connect text and image more directly, especially since the only other example of this type is also provenanced to the eastern Mediterranean littoral. Yet the "scarf" is probably the corner of her himation (its continuation is clearly visible between her breasts), and the three-quarter back view would be most peculiar for a cult statue, which normally would not be visible from this angle. Probably, then, Gelon's model was a Ptolemaic painting or even another gem. Images of this sort seem to have been popular in third-century Alexandria, to judge from some suggestive lines of Apollonios of Rhodes's *Argonautika*²⁸. (Famously, Caesar's finger ring bore a similar one, probably echoed in various forms on Augustus's coins and those of his successors.²⁹)

Finally, there is the fully naked Aphrodite with a sword known in at least fifteen Roman copies (Fig. 6). The location of the original cannot be determined with certainty, though Roman coins of both Corinth and Kyzikos feature a very similar figure, and the wide hips and relatively small torsos of some of the replicas have suggested a date later in the Hellenistic period rather than earlier. Yet like the Capitoline Aphrodite type, the Florentine replica (Fig. 6) is accompanied by a slim, ribbed loutrophoros. This vessel type disappeared after ca. 300 and thus (as the *lectio difficilior*) should

²⁷ Signed by Gelon, *Ring with Aphrodite Taking Up Arms*. Greek, Hellenistic Period, 3rd century B.C. Greece Euböia, Eretria, Tomb of the Erotes. Gold; garnet. Length × width: 2.9 × 2.4 cm (1 1/8 × 15/16 in.). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: Francis Bartlett Donation of 1912, inv. 21.1213; Furtwängler (1900) II. 305f. Taf. 66,4; Richter (1968) 143 Nr. 552, cf. Nr. 555 (from Amrit in Syria); *LIMC* Aphrodite Nr. 658f. Taf. 65, with earlier bibliography; Zazoff (1983) 205 Taf. 53,1; Flemberg (1991) 58; Plantzos (1999) 68f. Nr. 165f. Taf. 29, arguing strongly for an Alexandrian origin; Huguenot (2008) vol. 1, 180ff, vol. 2, 18 Nr. 69, Taf. 32,1–3. Huguenot assigns the tomb tentatively to the first quarter of the third century and to Kratesipolis I, the occupant of Throne A in the tomb and perhaps identical with the wife of Polyperchon's son Alexandros; widowed in 313, she is last heard of in 307 desperately seeking a husband. This date, however, provides only a *terminus post quem* for the finds, which cumulatively suggest continued (re)use of the tomb through most of the third century.

²⁸ I.742–6 (though evidently draped, coiffed, and poised differently):

Ἐξείης δ' ἤσκητο βαθυπλόκαμος Κυθήρεια
Ἄρεος ὀχμάζουσα θεὸν σάκος, ἐκ δέ οἱ ὤμου
πῆχυν ἐπι σκαῖον ξυνοχῆ κεχάλαστο χιτῶνος
νέρθε παρέκ μαζοῖο· τὸ δ' ἀντίον ἀτρεκέες αὐτῶς
χαλκεῖη δείκηνλον ἐν ἀσπίδι φαίνεται ἰδέσθαι.

[Next in place Kythereia the deep-tressed goddess was fashioned
Gripping a swift shield, the armor of Ares; away from her shoulder
Over her left forearm her tunic was fastened to hang down
Loosely beneath her breast; and the image of her that was gleaming
Opposite, there on the bronze-wrought shield, showed her to perfection.]

(Translation courtesy of Rodney Merrill)

²⁹ Dio 43.43.3; cf. *LIMC* VIII (1999) s.v. Venus Nr. 196ff. Taf. 146; Flemberg (1991) 35 Nr. 26, 110ff., Fig. 56f.

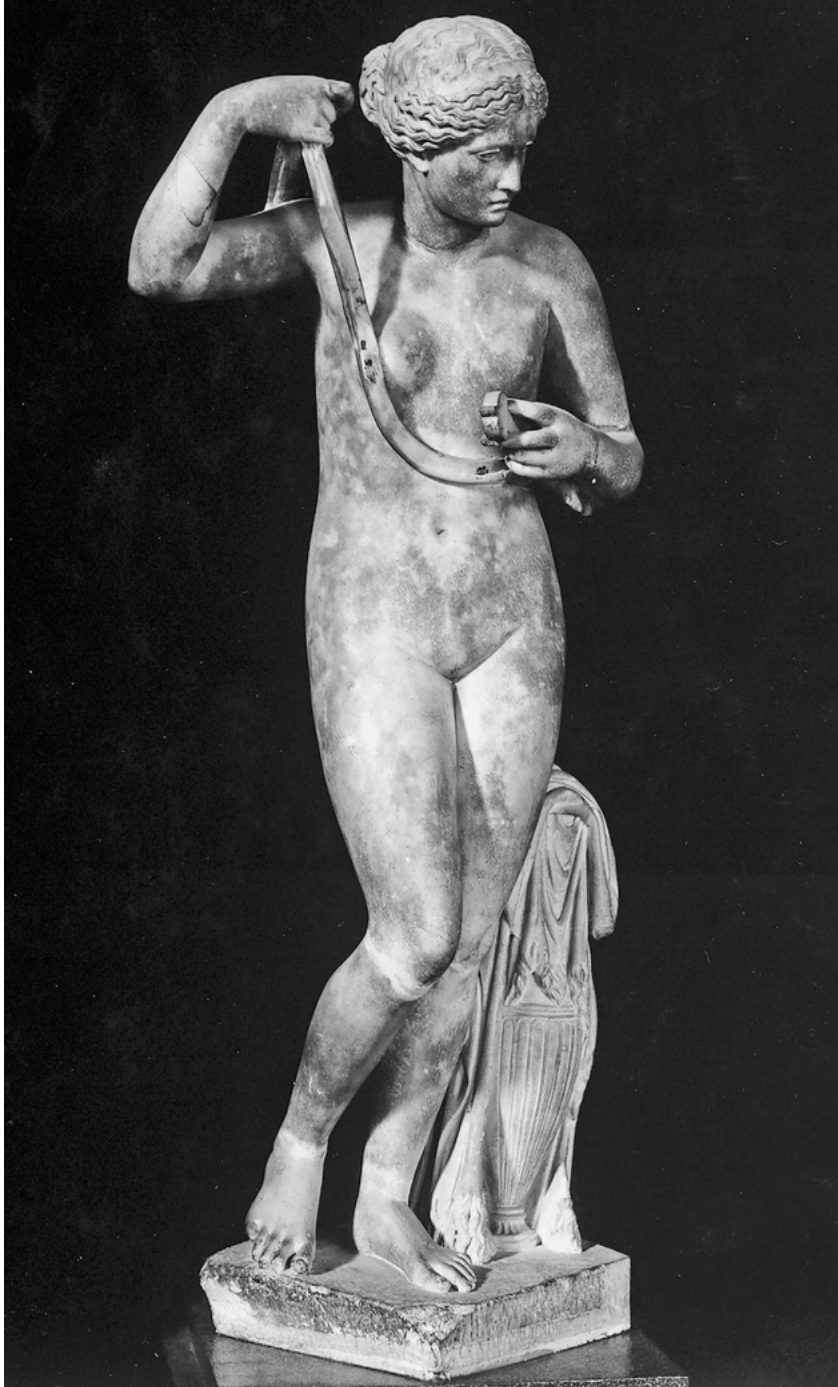


Fig. 6: Aphrodite-at-Arms. Roman copy, original ca. 300 B.C. Florence, Accademia di Belle Arti.

date the copy's original to that period, contemporary with the Capitoline type. So just as in Hegeso's dream, cited above, the goddess must be taking off her sword to bathe after her sweaty labors, not putting it on as normally believed. Like the Capitoline Aphrodite, she turns towards an intruder off to the right (again, presumably Ares), but, being caught *in medias res*, has yet to react properly to his presence³⁰.

These types give us an excellent conspectus of the ways in which Hegeso could have envisioned Arsinoe/Aphrodite-at-Arms, and how any such Ptolemaic image of her might have looked. Whether Poseidippos was alluding to an actual statue of the queen in this guise or fancifully referencing the already established type(s) of Aphrodite-at-Arms of course cannot be determined unless more evidence comes to light.

3 Conclusion: History as (Self-)Image

The four centuries spanned by this brief discussion witnessed a radical change in the self-image of the Greek community in arms: From the bronze-clad, spear-wielding citizen hoplite of the seventh century (Figs. 1–3) to the draped or maybe even semi-draped body of a deceased, deified, idealized, third-century Ptolemaic queen also equipped – most incongruously to our eyes – with spear and shield (compare Figs. 4–6).

As Wittgenstein famously remarked, art is a 'form of life' (*Lebensform*) and thus is linked inextricably with cultural change³¹. So it is reasonable to argue that the radical changes in Greek culture that occurred during these four centuries, culminating in the foundation of the Hellenistic kingdoms around 300, must have been largely responsible for this extraordinary iconographic transformation. These shifts in the geographical location, size, composition, structure, and power of agency of the Greek social body itself are perhaps best summarized in tabular form:

	Ca. 650 B.C.	Ca. 270 B.C.
Location:	Greece	Egypt and environs
State:	Polis	Kingdom
Armed forces:	Citizens	Mercenaries
Army:	Hoplites (plus peltasts and cavalry)	Cavalry, elephants, sarissophoroi, hypaspists, peltasts, slingers, archers, etc.
Symbol:	THE HOPLITE	QUEEN/GODDESS

³⁰ LIMC Aphrodite Nr. 456ff. Taf. 44; Flemberg (1991) 62ff. Fig. 7–54; cf. Stewart (2010) 15, 19f. on the Capitoline Aphrodite type and its loutrophoros. The other replicas of the Armed Aphrodite type substitute Eros, a tree trunk and cloak, and/or helmet and shield; for a similar pattern of substitution, compare the replicas of the Capitoline type.

³¹ See esp. Gier (1980); Wollheim (1980), as qualified by Cooper (1985); cf. Hanfling (2002).

To focus on the last column, four closely associated changes of relevance to this essay occurred more-or-less simultaneously during the period in question. First, the Hellenistic kingdoms decisively eclipsed the independent Greek poleis as the powers to be reckoned with in Greece and the East, marginalizing the ideology of the polis and problematizing its traditional expressions in word and image (*i.e.*, Greek literature and art). Second, mercenary armies largely usurped the dominating role in Greek warfare hitherto played by citizen militias (Fig. 1), effectively sidelining the citizen hoplite also. Third, these armies were far more diverse, featuring cavalry (their main strike force), elephants, sarissophoroi (pikemen), hypaspists, peltasts, slingers, archers, and/or sundry other light-armed troops and auxiliaries. And fourth, the ruler cult joined the Olympian religion as an index in the realm of the imaginary of the social body's new structure and enormously augmented power of agency. In these circumstances, to place the Ptolemaic kingdom's pretensions to hegemony over land and sea and to pre-eminence in both war and peace under the sign of the deified Arsinoe/Aphrodite was more than a stroke of near genius³². At that time and place, perhaps it was all but inevitable.

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³² As Tonio Hölscher remarks *per litteras*, all this in turn prompts a reconsideration of the Armed Aphrodite's possible links, on the one hand, with the ancient Near Eastern goddesses Inanna, Ishtar/Astarte (largely bracketed by Pironti (2007) 12, 154ff.), Anat, Anahita, Tanit, and especially in the present context the Egyptian war goddess Neith; and on the other, to the Roman Venus Victrix, as represented, for example on Julius Caesar's signet ring, Octavian's Alexandrian victory coins, and so on: Dio 43,43,3; Flemborg (1991) 110ff., figs. 56ff. Limitations of space prohibit me from pursuing these inquiries here.

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