
INTRODUCTION

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The study of ancient Greek warfare begins with what scholars might infer about fighting techniques from the archaeological remains of the late Bronze Age (1600–1100 BC). It appears that, similarly to the situation in the contemporary Near East, the war chariot was the main offensive arm of the king's military. But during the chaos that attended the collapse of Bronze Age civilization, infantry seems to have become capable of breaking the charges of the palace's chariot forces. The ensuing period from the eleventh to the eighth century, which scholars often call the Dark Age,¹ is notable to the military historian for the introduction of iron weapons. However, to the ancient Greeks themselves this was the Age of Heroes, and the bard Homer was its most famous witness.

At its most basic level, the hoplite orthodoxy argues that critical changes took place in Greek warfare around 700 BC that had fundamental importance for the rise of the polis. Prior to that "revolution" in arms, armor, and tactics, the aristocrats dominated in war. They fought at long range with missiles and in close combat as individual "heroic" champions with swords. The main equipment they used included the short throwing spear, an open-face helmet, a round single-grip shield, and a sword. Since these heroic figures bore the brunt of battle in the protection of their communities, it followed that they had a monopoly on political power as well. The semidivine heroes of the *Iliad* give the most brilliant expression of the fighting style and ethos of this period. For example, there are the famous duels between the champions Menelaus and Paris, Hector and Ajax, and Achilles and Hector above all. Hector learned to be valiant always and fight far out in front of the others. Achilles was taught always to be the best and to be preeminent among men in order to win his own godlike glory. The consensus placed Homer in the second half of the eighth century and claimed that the *Iliad* provided an idealistic depiction of warfare before the polis.

But warfare changed with the introduction of the double-grip hoplite shield and the tight formation of the phalanx at the beginning of the seventh century. In the new fighting style the warrior substituted for his pair of throwing spears a single heavy thrusting spear. The new shield, which was much wider, heavier, and more difficult to wield than a single-grip model, only made sense in close ranks, where one soldier sought cover for his vulnerable right-hand side behind the redundant half of the shield

of the neighbor on his right. Therefore, soldiers arranged themselves in orderly rows with about three feet between them and in columns about (usually) eight men deep. The phalanx required many more men and much greater cohesion than the open-order combat of the Dark Age. It was essential for each soldier to keep his assigned place in the formation in order to provide cover for his neighbor and to make it possible for his side to break through the opposing ranks of the enemy.

Whereas in the Dark Age the common soldiers fought as an unorganized, open, and fluid mass subordinate to the elite, the hoplites played a decisive role in the phalanx. Unlike the heroes in Homer's epics who strive for individual honor, the hoplites in the martial poet Tyrtaeus' elegies must hold their ground in the phalanx to win glory for the polis. The phalanx was unique in ancient warfare in that each soldier was a citizen of his polis and provided his own arms to fight in its defense. The hoplites comprised a middling stratum,² wealthy enough to afford their own panoply, but lacking the divine ancestry and large landholdings of the elite aristocrats. On the other hand, the newfound military importance of the hoplite put him in a position to demand greater political power from the aristocrat who now fought at his side and in an identical fashion. In some poleis, the hoplites supported an aristocrat as a tyrant to overthrow his oppressive peers. The hoplite revolution brought an end to narrow aristocracies and paved the way for the creation of democracy. The American Philological Association panel and discussion showed how closely the hoplite orthodoxy has become associated with the work of Victor Davis Hanson over the past two decades.³ Notwithstanding the undeniable influence that Hanson's *Western Way of War* and *The Other Greeks* have exercised in the field, the grand hoplite narrative has in fact taken shape over the course of more than 150 years.⁴

George Grote in the 1846–1856 edition of his famous twelve-volume *History of Greece* gave the first full expression of what was to become the hoplite orthodoxy. His narrative of the rise of the polis includes all the hallmarks of the later narrative. A revolution in military tactics occurred at the same time as the political change in Greece from monarchies to republics. During this period the numbers and importance of the middling farmers rose for manning the ranks of the phalanx. At the same time, the Greeks transformed their political institutions from heroic kingdoms to narrow oligarchies in which eligibility for high office was based on a claim to divine or heroic descent. Grote considered the *Iliad* useless for historical accuracy, but a reliable witness of Greek warfare and society in the ninth century. The champions of Homer had enjoyed armor and fighting skills far superior to those of the common soldier in both long-range and close combat. During the eighth and seventh centuries, on the other hand, the phalanx became the driving force behind the political and cultural as well as the military developments in Greece. The hoplite, having an assigned place and duty in battle, transformed what had been an unorganized and ineffective mass into a disciplined group striving for a common victory.

The discipline of the phalanx, Grote points out, trained citizen soldiers to understand their civil and social rights and duties by making the polis their primary source of obligation. The common citizen did not acquire much political power at first. But the intellectual revolution that accompanied the emergence of the first oligarchies had

trained the Greek mind not to accept a subordinate role in the polis. A second revolution took place in the seventh century when in some poleis the hoplites supported a tyrant to break the power of the exclusive aristocracies. The age of tyrants marked the rise of the citizens of middling property, who might back a despot for a limited time. However, by the seventh century there was universal hatred for the idea of permanent hereditary rule, which worked against the principles of the polis. For Grote, the hoplite citizen soldier as an autonomous middling farmer effected the major political and social changes in the early polis. Hoplites, in whose mind the idea of equality was instilled through training for the phalanx, determined the direction of Sparta as well; but the Spartans avoided tyranny and had a subject population to work their fields. Athens, on the other hand, may have remained an oligarchy after Solon, but he gave the middling farmers enough power to oppose the aristocrats.

The field of scientific archaeology has made some of the most significant contributions to the hoplite question in the twentieth century. For example, Wolfgang Helbig in 1909 used the earliest datable finds of hoplite arms and equipment to determine when the Greeks first adopted the phalanx. The appearance of the phalanx in art, the Protocorinthian Chigi vase in particular, gave the basis for Martin Nilsson's 1929 classic statement of the hoplite orthodoxy.⁵ Lorimer in 1947 became the first English scholar to employ the monuments, vase painting above all, to date the origins of the phalanx. Grote had had to rely on Homer's epics alone to discuss early Greek warfare and the rise of the polis. Scholars could now use actual finds not only to be more precise in their arguments. They could also provide the framework for more nuanced arguments and disagreements. Nilsson, for instance, thought that the martial elegies of Tyrtaeus were inconclusive for proving the existence of the phalanx in the seventh century, since the poet mentions foremost fighters (*promachoi*), reminiscent of Homer's champions. However, the round shields of the figures depicted in art and of the lead figurines dedicated at the temple of Artemis Orthia in Sparta seemed to leave no doubt.⁶ The phalanx may have taken time to develop; perhaps the transition lasted until the period of the Chigi vase in the mid-seventh century. But the census classes of Solon showed that the principle of having citizens provide their own arms to defend the polis in return for political privileges was well established by the early sixth century. Therefore, Nilsson reasoned that the practice must have begun much earlier.

For Lorimer, the single structural change involving the replacement of the round shield slung on a telamon marked the end of the long-range fighting of the eighth century.⁷ The substitution of the single central handgrip for a central armband of metal (*porpax*), through which the hoplite thrust his forearm up to the elbow, and a handgrip (*antilabe*), which he grasped with his left hand, just inside the rim of the shield, created a shield suited for only one form of combat. Whereas the single-grip shield had been easy to maneuver, the double-grip shield restricted the hoplite to the close confines of the phalanx, which afforded him maximum protection as long as the entire formation stood firm. The new formation led the soldier to substitute the throwing spears of the Homeric hero for a single heavy thrusting spear as well. Lorimer dated this momentous change to about 675 BC. She argued that artists in Corinth and Athens at the time depicted hoplite equipment and the tight formations that

characterized the phalanx. In addition, there were the lead figurines of the warriors in hoplite armor from Sparta to confirm the date. Lorimer accounted for the anomalies of the lyric poets by positing that they drew on epic diction and that the extant poems contained interpolations.

Like Grote, both Nilsson and Lorimer had connected the early Greek tyrants with the emergence of the hoplite middle class. A seminal study in 1956 by Andrewes, moreover, applied to the tyrants Aristotle's theory on how political systems in Greece changed from aristocracies to democracies. The most important element was military strength. The early poleis relied on cavalry to defend the state, which only the wealthy could afford. The next stage involved the middling farmers possessing enough wealth to provide their own hoplite arms. The final stage of democracy and naval supremacy gave political power to those who rowed the ships, the landless poor. Prior to that, however, Andrewes argued that hoplite revolutions played a crucial role in transferring power from narrow aristocracies to a much broader class of citizens. Aristotle himself does not say that the hoplites backed the tyrants in their struggles against their peers, but Andrewes found it impossible that no connection existed. He details the rise of the tyrants from Cypselus to Peisistratus. To compete with its neighbors and stave off civil war, polis after polis adopted the phalanx and yielded power to the citizens that manned its ranks. The hoplites drove the tyrants from power and created broad oligarchies in their place.

The seminal work of Snodgrass in the 1960s began the first sustained attack on the hoplite orthodoxy, which has continued to the present. He concluded from his study of arms and armor, much of which was unknown to previous scholars, that the adoption of hoplite equipment was a "long drawn out, piecemeal process," and that the double-grip shield did *not* imply the phalanx. Furthermore, the fully developed phalanx did not appear until after 650 BC—too late to play a role in the Greek tyrants' rise to power and the other revolutionary changes associated with the emergence of the polis. In fact, the aristocrats filled the first phalanxes, and it was only with prodding that the middling farmers joined them; hoplite *equipment* had been adopted by aristocratic warriors before the later development of hoplite *tactics*. The demands of the mature phalanx with its denser formations forced the elite in time to recruit reluctant commoners to help fill its ranks.

In response to Snodgrass's thesis of gradual phalanx development, Cartledge proposed some nuances to the sudden-change theory. He emphasized above all the nature of the double-grip shield and its severe limitations for the *unorganized* tactics of prehoplite warfare. The shield's design indicates that the Greeks created it with a new style of fighting in mind, and that a change in tactics toward organized, hand-to-hand fighting had already been taking place. Frontal protection became valued over mobility and protection in the flank and rear. On the other hand, Cartledge finds the visual and literary evidence too insecure to ground an argument. Instead, the whole gamut of economic, social, and political changes during the last half of the eighth and first half of the seventh century explains the broad revolutionary effects that the phalanx had on the polis. Relative overpopulation and land hunger placed a premium on arable land and forced the aristocrats to relinquish their military dominance. Success in

war now depended on fielding the greatest possible number of men for a battle. Yet the number of farmers wealthy enough to equip themselves still represented less than one-half of the state's citizen population. Between 675 and 650 all the major poleis had adopted the phalanx to secure and to defend the maximum possible amount of land.

There has been a tendency over the last thirty years to try to dismantle just about every aspect of the hoplite orthodoxy through the gradualist position. On the one hand, some gradualists maintain that the hoplite reform came early in the seventh century. But they deny that the hoplite class could have had the confidence and experience necessary to bring about revolutionary political and social change. A great deal of the revisionism, however, has challenged the very idea that any significant reform took place in infantry tactics in the archaic period. Krentz has argued not only that hoplite warfare went through a long period of transition before reaching the classic formation described by Thucydides. He contends that throughout its history hoplite battle involved much looser deployments of troops and emphasized the hand-to-hand combat of individual fighters and small groups in the front rank. Hoplites did not seek to maintain the cohesion of their line, while breaking apart the phalanx of the enemy. The warriors kept much greater spacing between themselves and their neighbors than the traditional narrative imagines. Krentz has also challenged the notion that the two-handed hoplite shield was much less maneuverable than the single-grip model.

In this spirit, an important 1989 paper by Cawkwell explains that the orthodox model for how hoplites fought in the phalanx is far too rigid. Troops may have advanced into battle in tight formation, but in actual combat they would have required more room to fight. The phalanx must have been flexible for hoplites to employ the type of fighting skills the sources such as Xenophon and Plato mention that they developed in training and used in battle. The iconography also indicates open-order fighting and more variety in style and technique than some of the literary sources suggest.

One of the most thoroughgoing critiques of the hoplite orthodoxy has come from van Wees. He argues for a third position among the gradualists and sudden-change theorists. For him the hoplite phalanx had much less cohesion and evolved over a much longer period of time than the two to three generations for which most gradualists allow. There was no great change in tactics from the eighth to the seventh century, and, in as far as Homer can be taken as an historical witness, the fighting in the *Iliad* bears a striking resemblance to the picture one may reconstruct for the early phalanx. Perhaps mass combat, and not massed hoplite warfare per se, undermined the power of the aristocracy and initiated political and social change.

The theses in *The Western Way of War* and *The Other Greeks* reassert the tradition of the grand hoplite narrative. In *The Western Way of War* Hanson provides from the ancient sources the most graphic account available of what the experience of battle might have been like in the phalanx. He finds unconvincing the attempts to prove that the fighting was fluid, and that individual skirmishing took place instead of collective pushing. His argument stresses the cumbersomeness and sheer weight of hoplite equipment, especially the helmet and the shield. Mass infantry fighting in some less rigid form probably existed before the complete adoption of the panoply. But it is inconceivable that men fought in hoplite equipment in *any* formation apart from the

phalanx. The battles were brief and depended on the shock collision of heavy infantry with the aim of breaking apart the enemy phalanx or shoving it off the battlefield. The idea was to limit the killing through a decisive contest, so that the farmer-citizen-soldiers could return to their fields with minimal disruption to their way of life. Conflicts became highly ritualized pitched battles fought over farmland. The main elements included the tight deployment of troops, an accumulation of shields, and the charge across a level field, the crashing together of opposing lines, the push and collapse, and the rout. Hoplite warfare remained virtually unchanged for more than two centuries, from its start until the fifth century.

Two remarkable features set Hanson's account of the hoplite apart from that of his predecessors. First is the idea that the preference of Western armies for decisive battle began with the archaic Greek phalanx. Second, he identifies intensive farming as the main element that shaped the character and values of the middling group that provided its own arms to fight for the polis. These *georgoi* in turn shaped the ideals, institutions, and culture that gave rise to the polis. Unlike any prior civilization, the culture of the Greek polis combined citizen militias with the rule of law. That involved having a broad middle class of independent small landowners that met in assemblies where the votes of these nonelite determined laws, and foreign and domestic policy. These smallholders gained in status as population growth in the ninth and eighth centuries forced an agricultural revolution. Labor-intensive farming of marginal lands came to replace the Dark Age pastoral economy. This required a growth in private landownership, which motivated *georgoi* to assume the risks involved in cultivating land that was unproductive using traditional farming techniques. These farmers created the ritual of hoplite warfare to decide disputes in a manner that did not contradict their agrarian agenda. The *georgoi* and their agrarian ideology became the driving force behind the hoplite revolution during the early seventh century.

Scholars in the past decade have heavily criticized the hoplite orthodoxy in general and Hanson's model of it in particular. For example, some gradualists have lowered the date for the introduction of the phalanx to well into the fifth century. They claim that the equipment hoplites wore was much lighter and that the warriors were more mobile than the traditional narrative contends. In addition, revisionists have challenged the idea that opposing phalanxes maintained rigid formations and crashed into one another in the opening stages of battle. They have attempted to refute the notion of collective pushing. Another form of revisionism has used Homer's *Iliad* to argue that a protophalanx existed in the eighth century, hence lessening the significance of the adoption of hoplite arms and armor in the seventh. According to this thinking, there was no hoplite reform, let alone revolution, to effect changes in the political and social structures of the polis. Van Wees, in his examination of the iconography and the elegies of Tyrtaeus, sees much continuity in the fluid style of the protophalanx and early hoplite warfare. Therefore, the hoplites did not suddenly emerge in the seventh century to support the tyrants and break the backs of the aristocracy. In fact, the warfare and the politics of the Greek state remained very much an elite affair until the fifth century. And when change occurred, the hoplites had little to do with bringing it about. Foxhall has employed survey archaeology, moreover, to deny that

a substantial middle stratum of farmers living on the land even existed as early as the orthodoxy believes. She has suggested that the countryside remained largely devoid of settlement far into the sixth century in most places, while the best lands were farmed from nucleated settlements, with little evidence for intensive agricultural practices or the cultivation of marginal lands.

The idea for the Yale conference was to bring together the leading scholars from both the orthodox and the revisionist' schools of thought to examine the current state of the field, which is at a crucial turning point. A number of outcomes were possible. First, everyone could have agreed that in fact the traditional hoplite narrative was correct and that there was no need to rewrite the textbooks. Second, the revisionists might have convinced the orthodox that their model had fatal flaws. In that case, we all might have either conceded that we could know little or nothing about the rise of the Greek state and culture, or at least that the early hoplites had nothing to do with it. Or we could have agreed that what we thought we knew was wrong, but an alternative theory could better explain the major movements of the formative period in classical Greece. Third, a great synthesis might have combined key elements of the traditional model with new insights to produce a higher truth. Despite the recognition of much common ground among the participants, none of those things happened at the conference. Instead of working toward a consensus, each side sharpened its position in response to the latest research. The keynote speaker, Paul Cartledge, set up the framework for the debate that took place. Panels were arranged in pairs of scholars to discuss essential aspects of the orthodoxy in light of recent attempts to revise it. In the first panel, Kurt Raaflaub and Gregory Viggiano considered whether or not a hoplite revolution transformed the Greek world in the seventh century. In the second, Peter Krentz and Adam Schwartz presented opposing views about the significance of hoplite arms and weapons and how hoplites fought in archaic Greece. In the third, Anthony Snodgrass responded to current theories on early Greek warfare, and John Hale considered the role of Greek mercenaries in the seventh and sixth centuries. In the fourth panel, Hans van Wees critiqued *The Other Greeks* and argued that an agrarian revolution did occur but centuries later than Hanson envisions. For his part, Victor Davis Hanson explained why the orthodoxy is still orthodox. The conference concluded on the third day with a roundtable discussion, which covered topics debated over the three-day event. The chapters in this volume represent the rewritten drafts of the papers presented at Yale, though they often contain the original spirit in which they were delivered.

Paul Cartledge notes and welcomes the shift in the study of ancient Greek warfare over the past thirty years from the "narrowly technical" toward sociopolitical issues and approaches. The study is no longer an abstract exercise in military history, but a "totalizing history of war and society." He reveals how his own views on the subject have and have not changed since his first major publication in the field. Cartledge also sets the stage for all the essays that follow by examining several key issues. What were the causally related variables or factors that link the evolution of the hoplite phenomenon to the rise of the polis? Do the notorious source(s) problems prevent us from understanding them? What tipped mass fighting over into phalanx fighting? Was there a

hoplite “ideology”? Did Aristotle get it right when he posited a connection between warfare and political development in Greece? In light of the nature of the sources, Cartledge emphasizes the strength of a theoretical approach to the inextricable link between warfare and politics in the Greek state.

Anthony Snodgrass lays out the chronological framework for the history of hoplite warfare. He discusses the impact the studies of Homeric warfare have had on the orthodoxy since the groundbreaking work of Latacz. Indeed there was a “hoplite reform” despite the contention of many scholars that fighting in the *Iliad* and hoplite fighting are one and the same. He considers the problems posed by the evidence of iconography and archaeology, especially the dedications of actual armor in the sanctuaries at Olympia and Delphi, and the various philological and historical approaches that scholars have applied to the literary sources. Snodgrass also notes the potential significance that Nagy’s evolutionary model for the creation of the Homeric epics has when historians use the poems to understand archaic warfare and its relation to the polis. He reaffirms his gradualist position on the hoplite reform, while he underscores the often overlooked common ground among scholars involved in the debate. The persistence of the hoplite in the Hellenistic period defies any simple reading of the phenomenon.

Most of the paper Kurt Raaflaub gave at Yale on the nature of mass fighting in the *Iliad* has already been published, but we are happy to include in this volume his ideas on early Greek infantry fighting in a Mediterranean context. Raaflaub sees the emergence of hoplite warfare as part of a long interactive process associated with the rise of the polis. The polis, its institutions and political thought, evolved from the eighth to the fifth century along with its military practices. Despite intense interaction with the states of the Near East, the Greeks of the eighth and seventh centuries developed the phalanx independent of Oriental influence. Raaflaub examines Assyrian and Persian armies, arms, and armor as well as formation and tactics to determine that there is no prior model for the equipment and style of Greek infantry. Having no Near Eastern example, the Greeks must have invented the double-grip shield for use in the already existing phalanx for which the hoplite was always intended. Therefore, Raaflaub rejects van Wees’s picture of Homeric and early hoplite fighting as open-order combat by many small and loosely organized bands of warriors. On the other hand, he is a “gradualist” in that he believes that the phalanx developed over too long a period of time and in conjunction with too many other factors to bring about a “revolution” in warfare or society.

Gregory Viggiano contests the idea that any argument put forth in recent years is reason to push down the traditional date for the origin of the polis or to reject the hoplite orthodoxy. He states the basic elements of the theory that have their beginnings in Aristotle’s *Politics*, and then tests their merit against revisionist claims. Viggiano finds unconvincing the notion that the Greeks would have invented equipment such as the double-grip shield and Corinthian helmet for a purpose that contradicted their design. The change in fighting style and tactics provides the best explanation for the transformation in Greek values from the epic poetry of Homer to the martial elegies of Tyrtaeus, as well as the rise of the early tyrants. Viggiano contests the recent claims that the evidence of survey archaeology has disproved the existence of a substantial class of middling farmers in the late eighth and seventh centuries. He argues

that, despite gaps in the evidence, a clear picture of how the polis emerged can be made without omitting or contradicting any of the evidence from the literary sources, archaeology, and inscriptions.

Peter Krentz takes aim at *The Western Way of War's* highly influential and popular conception of how hoplites fought. He critiques the orthodox view—especially the version of Hanson—concerning the actual weight of the hoplite panoply, which he argues was far lighter than the traditional estimate of about seventy pounds. Krentz proposes a different interpretation of the various stages of hoplite battle, such as the hoplite charge into battle. In his view, the evidence supports neither the picture of a mass collision between armies nor the concept of a mass pushing of troops or the account of the *othismos* as a rugby scrum. Revisionists such as van Wees deny that hoplites fought in tight formation until the phalanx of the fifth century. But instead Krentz contends that the phalanx did not consist exclusively of hoplites before Marathon. He suggests, however, that even in the fifth century hoplites never actually fought in a cohesive formation.

Adam Schwartz places the equipment of the hoplite in a very different light than Krentz. The defining elements of the hoplite were the spear and, above all, the double-grip shield. Other items of the panoply were subject to much change and innovation over the centuries, but the shield and spear remained essentially unaltered throughout the entire hoplite era. Schwartz reasons that the Greeks maintained the shield's original design—circular, concave, and about one meter in diameter—because it was preeminently suited for a specific purpose, fighting in tight formation in a phalanx. He gives a detailed analysis of the Etruscan Bomarzo shield, one of the few hoplite type shields to survive more or less intact from antiquity; and he assesses a number of key sources bearing out the burden and cumbersomeness of the hoplite shield, to conclude that its weight, shape, and sheer size in terms of surface area made the shield particularly unwieldy. Schwartz's discussion of comparable body shields used until recently by the riot squad of the Danish police adds a new dimension to the debate over tactics and the handling of shields in combat. He also points out that skeletal remains from Greek antiquity demonstrate that hoplites were significantly smaller in relation to their equipment than modern Western men, which has consequences for the tacit assumption that they are fully comparable.

John Hale disagrees with the two main theories proposed for the context within which hoplite warfare emerged. For Hale neither the leisured class of aristocrats who vied for high social and political status within the polis nor the middling citizen soldiers who defended their farmland provide the origins of archaic Greek arms and tactics. Instead he suggests looking for the first hoplites fighting as mercenaries in the service of Eastern monarchs in areas such as Syria, Egypt, and Babylon. These soldiers of fortune fought in search of gain and glory, not to defend a civic ideology or ethos. Hale finds evidence for his thesis in lyric poetry and in inscriptions, pottery, and the remains of hoplite armor discovered outside Greece. He calls mercenary service the “Main Event” of Greek military history in the seventh century, in contrast to the sporadic battles between poleis. The nearest historical parallel to the soldiers of fortune of the archaic period are the Viking armies of the ninth and tenth centuries AD. The

Greek raiders and mercenaries not only fought for hard-won riches but also created new communities around the Mediterranean world.

A major part of the debate regarding the rise of the polis turns on whether scholars believe a substantial class of small middling farmers emerged by the late eighth century. Perhaps more than any other scholar, Hanson has emphasized the rise of small independent farmers, who could afford hoplite arms and thereby serve in the phalanx and demand a greater share of political power. On the other hand, van Wees places the evolution of the phalanx and the emergence of the “middling” farmer-hoplite in the late sixth century; before that date, he argues, only members of the wealthy elite served as hoplites, and they fought alongside less well-off light infantry in open and fluid battle order. A recent approach to this question has been the study of the Greek landscape through archaeological survey, a technique that has been developing over the past thirty years. We invited Lin Foxhall to consider what site survey might reveal about the appearance of a new class of small farmers in archaic Greece. Foxhall gives a brief history of the discipline and explains the strengths and limitations of using its findings for historical analysis. Her study of eight survey projects across Greece, including Boeotia, the Argolid, Laconia, and Pylos, focuses on data for the Geometric through the Hellenistic periods. She suggests that the archaeology tells us a different story than the historical record of citizens, soldiers, and property owners. The survey data show the rise of a densely populated countryside of small-scale farmers neither in the eighth century nor, universally, in the sixth century.

Hans van Wees critiques the grand narrative of *The Other Greeks* and argues that it is wrong in important respects. Hanson presents the social and economic changes in the eighth century that took place with the rise of the independent yeoman farmer and his culture of agrarianism as the driving force behind the political and military history of Greece. But van Wees believes that something like the rise of small farmers occurred about two centuries later than Hanson relates. However, from the middle of the eighth century there was a class of elite leisured landowners that did not work the land themselves but supervised the toil of a large lower class of hired laborers and slaves. This era of gentlemen farmers who comprised the top 15–20 percent of society and competed with each other for status lasted for about two centuries. When the yeomen farmers emerged after the mid-sixth century, they joined the leisure class in the hoplite militia. Van Wees doubts that the small farmers brought about a revolution when they joined the phalanx, but, if they did effect political changes, it was in conjunction with the rise of the trireme rowers.

Victor Hanson defends the orthodoxy in light of the various attempts to revise it over the past twenty years, especially those of Krentz and van Wees. He points out the inherent difficulties in studying the origins and nature of hoplite battle since there are few prose accounts of set battles before Marathon. For example, the material the scholar must use includes Homer and lyric poetry, which makes it difficult to distinguish realistic portrayal from metaphorical expression. On the other hand, scenes painted on vases are hard to date and make it nearly impossible to depict a phalanx in proper perspective. Nevertheless, over the last two centuries of classical scholarship the “grand hoplite narrative” has emerged in most histories of Greece. Hanson suggests that the success of the

orthodoxy is due to the fact that it best reflects the evidence for phalanx fighting and the larger social, economic, and political role of the hoplite. He responds to the recent attacks on the view that hoplites formed a distinct middle class, the claims that hoplites fought in an open and fluid formation, and that the phalanx was a late development. In addition, he examines the debate over the weight of hoplite equipment and key elements of the traditional battle narrative such as the attack on the run, the shock collision, and the role of mass and density in deciding hoplite contests.

The editors of this volume do not expect the following essays to end the debate over hoplite arms, tactics, and their relationship to the rise of the polis and the larger issues of Greek culture. On the contrary, the idea behind the conference was to determine how well the orthodoxy holds up in light of recent research and criticism. Second, we wanted to challenge revisionists to clarify their position with a view to offering a coherent paradigm as a more plausible alternative, if possible. In that respect, the objective is to initiate a debate that should result in either a restatement of the traditional narrative or nothing short of rewriting the history of the early Greek polis.

Notes

1. The term Dark Age has itself become controversial, and some scholars prefer Early Iron Age instead.
2. The phrase “middle stratum” is perhaps preferable to the word “class” as in “middle class,” which has unfortunate anachronistic connotations. Nonetheless, “middle” or “middling” class is used frequently and need not cause difficulty as long as the ancient context is understood.
3. See the preface.
4. The following is a brief sketch of the history of the hoplite orthodoxy. Chapter 1 contains a much more extensive and detailed treatment of the issues debated in this volume; chapter 2 gives a discussion of the iconography.
5. Helbig in 1911 was the first historian to show and discuss the Chigi vase in connection with the phalanx.
6. Subsequent work has indicated that the lead figurines do not date to the eighth century, or even the earlier seventh century (although Nilsson and Lorimer did not know that). Boardman down-dated the complex stratigraphy of the site in 1963 (J. Boardman, 1963, “Artemis Orthia and Chronology,” *BSA* 58:1–7), and this down-dating is generally accepted. Critically, he notes that none of the lead figurines of warriors is earlier than the middle of the seventh century (Boardman 1963:7). The hoplite warriors appear in Lead I, II, and III, some found below, but most found above the sand level (probably representing a major flood on the site) dated by Boardman to 570/560 BCE (A. Wace, 1929, *The lead figurines*, pp. 249–84 in R. M. Dawkins, “The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia,” *JHS* Suppl. 5, London). This means that the vast majority of the “hoplite” figurines are probably to be dated to the sixth century BCE. Also scholars using these warriors as early evidence for hoplites should note that there are also archers (e.g., Dawkins 1929: pl. CLXXXIII.16, 17) and light armed soldiers (e.g., Dawkins 1929: pl. CLXXXIII.18, 26) among the leads, even as early as Lead I, and continuing through the whole sequence.
7. NB Sylvia Benton, 1953, *BSA* 48:340, pointed out that certain blazons on the front of a shield had to be shown one way and only one way—the right way—up, which implied an unalterable grip on the shield.