

AN ARCADIAN LEAGUE IN THE EARLIER FIFTH CENTURY B.C.?

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FOR THE POSSIBLE EXISTENCE OF an Arcadian League in the earlier fifth century B.C. the coinage inscribed ΑΡΚΑΔΙΚΟΝ (in full or abbreviated) provides important evidence, and numismatists have contributed much to the study of the question. After early work by Weil, an important paper by Wallace in 1954 linked the coinage with Herodotus' account of the activities in Arcadia in 491 of the Spartan king Cleomenes, and of the battle at Dipaea between Sparta and all Arcadians except Mantinea; and in 1965 Williams published a full analysis of the Arkadikon-coinage together with an attempt to relate it to its historical context.¹ Williams' work now provides the most up-to-date account both of the coinage and of Arcadian history in the period. In particular his demonstration that the Arkadikon-coinage was struck in three separate mints is a major advance, since this alone makes it certain that the coinage was political in character, whereas previously it had often been described as (in some sense) religious.² Politically motivated coinage, inscribed Arkadikon, clearly suggests an Arcadian League; but such a conclusion is less easy to reconcile with our other evidence for the period than Williams suggests. Hence the present article.

The coinage may first be considered alone, in the hope of avoiding circular arguments which interpret the coinage by reference to the known historical context, and then reinterpret the history in the light of the coinage. Williams has shown that originally one mint (here called Mint A) alone struck Arkadikon-coinage; then, while Mint A continued to strike, two more mints (B and C) also struck; and finally, Mints A and B having ceased about the same time, Mint C continued to strike alone for a considerable time. We have no explicit references in our sources or on the coins for the location of these mints or the dating of the emissions.

¹R. Weil, "Arkadische Münzen," *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 9 (1882) 18-41; "Nochmals das altarkadische Gemeinwesen," *ibid.* 29 (1912) 139-146; W. P. Wallace, "Kleomenes, Marathon, the Helots, and Arkadia," *JHS* 74 (1954) 32-55 (cf. J. A. O. Larsen, *Greek federal states* [Oxford 1968] 181, for doubts on Wallace's arguments); R. T. Williams, *The confederate coinage of the Arcadians in the fifth century B.C.* (New York 1965; hereafter referred to as "Williams"; with full bibliography of earlier work). This article draws on work originally included in my Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation. I am grateful for advice and helpful criticism to my supervisor, the late Professor A. H. M. Jones, and to my examiners, Professors A. Andrewes and M. I. Finley. They are not of course responsible for any remaining deficiencies.

²Williams, 8-19.

Williams attempts to date with considerable precision on stylistic grounds,³ but it is doubtful whether such exactitude is possible on that basis. We can accept however that Mint A began to strike c.490; that Mints B and C joined it not long after the Persian Wars; that A and B ceased striking c.460; and that C continued to strike until c.420. In that case, as Williams argues, A began coining about the time Cleomenes was in Arcadia (491); and A and B may well have ceased striking in the aftermath of the battle of Dipaea, at which Sparta defeated all the Arcadians except Mantinea.⁴ If so, Mint C was most probably Mantinea, not hostile to Sparta at the time of Dipaea and so likely to retain privileges which other Arcadians lost; and moreover, as Williams suggest, the end of Mint C, dated approximately to 420, could well follow Mantinea's defeat by Sparta in 418.⁵ Mint C can thus be identified with some probability as Mantinea. The identity of the other two mints remains, however, quite uncertain. Williams himself only tentatively identifies Mint A as Cleitor, and his identification of Mint B as Tegea, because of a representation on one coin of Zeus Meilichios, has been criticised by Andrewes.⁶

Nonetheless, even if dating is imprecise and the location of mints uncertain, some deductions can be made about the coinage. The fact that Mints A and B ceased to strike, while Mint C continued alone, suggests that there was disagreement within Arcadia and that mint C, at least when coining alone, was not acting on behalf of all Arcadia (even if, by its legend *Arkadikon*, it claimed to do so).⁷ If it is accepted that Mints A and B ceased as a consequence of the Spartan victory at Dipaea and that Mint C, which continued, was Mantinea, the inescapable conclusion is that at the time of Dipaea, when all Arcadia except Mantinea opposed Sparta,⁸ *Arkadikon*-coinage was being struck simultaneously by both anti-Spartan Arcadians and by Mantinea, which was neutral if not pro-Spartan. In that case, if the legend *Arkadikon* implies an Arcadian League, there were at the time of Dipaea at least two groups each

³Williams, 1-3, 4-7, 19-20, 26-27, 29-30.

⁴Williams, 3-4 (Cleomenes), 19-26 (Dipaea). The date of Dipaea is of course itself uncertain, though probably in the 460's (*ibid.* 19-20).

⁵Williams, 14-15.

⁶Williams, 11-13; A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, K. J. Dover, *A historical commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 4 (Oxford 1970) 485. The identification of the fifth-century *Arkadikon* mints would probably be helped by a re-examination of all fifth-century Arcadian coinage. Williams has begun this with a study of Heraean coins (R. T. Williams, *ANSMusN.* 16 [1970] 1-12), but much remains to be done.

⁷It is noteworthy that from the later fourth century onwards coins were struck by Eretria in the name of a Euboean League which no longer existed: see W. P. Wallace, *The Euboean League and its coinage* (New York 1956), 1-42, esp. 4, 13-14, 33, 36, 39, 41-42.

⁸Hdt. 9. 35.

claiming to be an Arcadian League.⁹ It is therefore evident that the existence of coins bearing the legend *Arkadikon* does not suffice to prove that all Arcadia was united in a league, or that there was only one such league.

If we turn from the coinage to what is known of Arcadia's political history in this period, the first major event is Cleomenes' activity in Arcadia. In 491 the Spartan king came as an exile to Arcadia, where "he followed revolutionary aims, uniting the Arcadians against Sparta, and, in addition to binding them by other oaths to follow him wherever he led them, he was keen to bring the foremost of the Arcadians to the city of Nonacris and make them swear by the water of the Styx. . . . When the Lacedaemonians learnt that Cleomenes was doing this, they became afraid and brought him to Sparta on those terms on which he formerly ruled."¹⁰ The natural interpretation of Herodotus' account is that, when Cleomenes was recalled to Sparta, he had not completed his work of uniting the Arcadians; he had not yet, it seems, gathered the leading Arcadians at Nonacris as he wanted to do. Dickins and, following him, Wallace have suggested that Cleomenes sought to make trouble for Sparta not only in Arcadia but also in Messenia, where a revolt about 490 is supposed. Nothing however links what was then happening in Arcadia with the evidence suggesting a Messenian revolt about 490, unless one attributes to this period, as Hejnic does, the career of King Aristocrates of Arcadian Orchomenus, who reputedly helped the Messenians in a war against Sparta, then betrayed them, and was finally stoned by his own people. Arcadian troops led to Messenia in the 490's by a king of Orchomenus would be a considerable embarrassment to our picture of Arcadia at that time reconstructed from Herodotus; and on other grounds also it is better to suppose that Aristocrates, if historical, belongs in the Second Messenian War.¹¹ Linking a Messenian episode to Cleomenes' activities in Arcadia in 491 tells us nothing about the prevailing state of affairs in Arcadia. Cleomenes' attempt to unite and use the Arcadians presupposed a strong sense of common nationality among the Arcadians, and some of them may even have been already politically united; but there can have been no political union of all Arcadia, since Cleomenes found it necessary to try to create one. He did not however have time to complete this task before being restored to Sparta.

⁹Cf. the split into two rival factions, each claiming to be an Arcadian League, of the Arcadian League which arose after 371 : See, e.g., J. A. O. Larsen, *op. cit.* (above, n. 1) 193.

¹⁰Hdt. 6. 74-75.

¹¹G. Dickins, *JHS* 32 (1912) 31-32; W. P. Wallace, *JHS* 74 (1954) 32-35; J. Hejnic, *Pausanias the Perieget and the archaic history of Arcadia* (Prague 1961) 89-92, cf. 67-68. Cf. F. Kiechle, *Messenische Studien* (Kallmünz-Opf 1959) 15-31 (on Aristocrates), 106-130 (on a Messenian revolt in the early fifth century).

After this episode for about ten years the state of affairs in Arcadia is unknown to us. It is true that the seer Hegesistratus, still active in 480, had previously escaped from Sparta to Tegea at some time when there was tension between these two states; but this can be dated only within the adult life of a man still active in 480.¹² How the Arcadians reacted to Darius' invasion of Greece we do not know. Thanks to Herodotus, however, we have more knowledge of how the Arcadians responded, in 480 and 479, to Xerxes' invasion. In 480 troops from all Arcadian states were present at Thermopylae, and, when Thermopylae fell, all Arcadians joined the Spartans and other Peloponnesians in preparing to defend the Isthmus. In 479 all Arcadians again joined in the defence of the Isthmus.¹³ Up to that point all Arcadian states pursued the same policy, but it is clear from what followed that at least some Arcadian states were taking their own individual decisions and not acting as members of an Arcadian League. In 479 the question arose as to whether the Peloponnesians should join the Athenians in resisting the Persians north of the Isthmus. The matter was first debated at Sparta, where Chileus, a Tegean influential at Sparta, played a major part in persuading the Spartans to send troops beyond the Isthmus.¹⁴ When the Spartan forces reached the Isthmus, the forces of their allies already there decided whether or not to march on with them.¹⁵ In the event the Tegeans and Orchomenians marched with the Spartans and fought at Plataea; the Mantineans, having at first remained at the Isthmus, then changed their minds and followed the Spartans but arrived too late for the battle of Plataea; and the other Arcadians remained at the Isthmus.¹⁶ It seems clear that the Tegeans, Orchomenians, and Mantineans each decided for themselves what to do, and this is borne out by the fact that the Mantinean leaders were afterwards held responsible for their troops' late arrival at Plataea;¹⁷ the other Arcadians may or may not have taken a common decision. At this time relations between Sparta and Tegea were friendly; this is seen not only from the influence which the Tegean Chileus had at Sparta, but also from the place which the Spartans gave the Tegeans in the battle-line at Plataea. It is true that the Spartans gave the post of honour on the left wing, which the Tegeans wanted, to the Athenians, but instead the Tegeans received, as a mark of honour, the position next to the Spartans themselves.¹⁸

¹²Hdt. 9. 37.

¹³Hdt. 7. 202; 8. 71-72; 9.9, cf. 15.

¹⁴Hdt. 9.6-11; Plut. *Them.* 6.3, cf. *Mor.* 871F-872A; Polyaeus 5.30.

¹⁵Hdt. 9. 19.

¹⁶Hdt. 9. 28, 77.

¹⁷Hdt. 9. 77. Why the Mantineans were not included on the Serpent Column (*Syl.*³ 31), although the Eleans were after behaving similarly, is obscure.

¹⁸Hdt. 9. 26-28. It has been suggested (e.g., by Williams, 3-4) that the Tegeans' position at Plataea was a mark of Spartan disfavour.

In the years following the Persian Wars the main known events are the victories which Sparta won over the Tegeans and the Argives at Tegea, and over all the Arcadians except Mantinea at Dipaea.¹⁹ It appears that Tegea passed from friendship with Sparta in 479 to determined and continuing hostility, though we do not know why. There is no evidence of Mantinean hostility to Sparta in these years. The Mantineans certainly chose initially not to follow Sparta's march across the Isthmus in 479, but that was not an act of hostility, and in any case the Mantineans quickly changed their mind. It has been argued that Mantinea was synoecised in this period; but the date of Mantinea's synoecism is wholly uncertain, and moreover, though it was done with Argive help, the synoecism need not have been anti-Spartan.²⁰ It is certain that Mantinea helped Sparta during the Messenian revolt, and was the only Arcadian state not to oppose Sparta at Dipaea.²¹ For the attitudes of other Arcadian states before Dipaea we have no evidence. Wilamowitz suggested that in Pindar's ode to be recited at Stymphalus in 468 for the Iamid Agesias an apparently irrelevant allusion to Laconia was in honour of the greatest living Iamid, Teisamenus, to whom Sparta owed victories, and so was an attempt to conciliate Sparta on Stymphalus' behalf; but the passage can be taken as a straightforward compliment, written at a time when Stymphalus was friendly to Sparta.²² Nothing can be deduced about the policies of Phigalia from the activities of an individual Phigalian seer at Tiryns.²³ Finally we simply do not know what part, if any, Themistocles played in Arcadian politics during his stay in Argos.²⁴ The little we know of the Arcadian states' relations with Sparta in these years can therefore be summarised thus: Mantinea, despite a temporary difference over

¹⁹Hdt. 9. 35. See Williams, 16 (with references to earlier work).

²⁰Synoecism with Argive help, Strabo 8.3.2 (337). The synoecised community was split in 384 (Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.7). Since the synoecism is not mentioned in the Spartan complaints of 385 (Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.1-2) nor in the fairly full information on Mantinea in 423-418 in Thuc. 4 and 5, it probably occurred before 423, but no further precision is possible: see Williams, 13, for a list of suggested dates. A. Andrewes, *Phoenix* 6 (1952) 2-3, suggests that it was a democratic and anti-Spartan action in the late 470's, but there seems no inherent reason why synoecism should be democratic; and as for the fact that it took place with Argive help, Argos and Sparta may have been fairly friendly for part of this period (see W. G. Forrest, *CQ* n.s. 10 [1960] 226-229); but above all there is no reason to date the synoecism in this period.

²¹Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.3; Hdt. 9.35.

²²Pindar, *Ol.* 6.22-28; U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Isyllos von Epidaurus* (Berlin 1886) 178-183; see also A. Andrewes, *Phoenix* 6 (1952) 1-2.

²³Hdt. 6.83; cf. W. G. Forrest, *op. cit.* (above, n. 20) 230.

²⁴Conjectures are offered by A. Andrewes, *art. cit.*, 2-3, and W. G. Forrest, *art. cit.*, 229.

strategy to be followed in 479, is not known to have done anything hostile to Sparta and was friendly during the Messenian revolt; Tegea, friendly in 479, was hostile both at the battle of Tegea and at that of Dipaea; and of the other states Orchomenus agreed with Sparta's strategy in 479 while the rest remained at the Isthmus, then all refrained from joining Tegea against Sparta at Tegea, but finally all did fight with Tegea against Sparta at Dipaea. Much remains obscure; but it is highly unlikely that Tegea, Orchomenus, and Mantinea acted as members of an Arcadian League in 479, or that Tegea was united with other Arcadian states when it fought Sparta with only Argive support at Tegea, or that Mantinea was united with other Arcadian states at the time of the Messenian revolt and Dipaea.²⁵

Of Arcadian history in these years other than relations with Sparta little is known, but one striking feature is a series of dedications of spoils from war. The Cleitorians dedicated at Olympia the spoils from "many cities," probably c.500; this no doubt represents an early stage in Cleitorian expansion by conquest of small neighbouring communities, since it is difficult to see otherwise how Cleitor could overcome "many cities".²⁶ A spear-butt, inscribed in Arcadian dialect and script of the early fifth century, was dedicated to the Dioscuri from a victory over Heraea. Its provenance is unknown, but the two Arcadian communities with known cults of the Dioscuri are Cleitor and Mantinea;²⁷ if either was at war with Heraea, which lies at some distance from both, there was considerable disturbance in Arcadia. At Olympia Mantinea dedicated a victory-offering from an unspecified war in the period c.500-450.²⁸ Also at Olympia Psophis dedicated a shield from war-booty not later than the early fifth century.²⁹ Both Gortys and Caphyae made dedications of booty at Delphi in the first half of the fifth century.³⁰ These scraps of surviving evidence suggest that in the period roughly from 500 to 450

²⁵Several of these points were already made by R. Weil, *op. cit.* (above, n. 1) 22-23, and partly repeated by J. A. O. Larsen, *op. cit.* (above, n. 1), but seem to need to be repeated in view of recent theories. It is especially difficult to believe that, in these years, "we may perhaps equate Tegea with the Arkadian League" (W. P. Wallace, *op. cit.* [above, n. 1] 34 note 22, accepted by W. G. Forrest, *op. cit.* [above, n. 20] 229).

²⁶Paus. 5.23.7; G. M. A. Richter, *AJA* 43 (1939) 200.

²⁷G. M. A. Richter, 194-201; L. H. Jeffery, *The local scripts of archaic Greece* (Oxford 1961) 210.

²⁸Paus. 5.26.6; the offering is dated by its sculptor Calamis (F. Bölte, *RE* 14.1319).

²⁹E. Kunze, *Olympiabericht* 8 (Berlin 1967) 97-98. Cf. the undated Psophidian dedication seen by Pausanias at Olympia (Paus. 5.24.2).

³⁰*Syll.*³ 49; *Fouilles de Delphes*, 3.4.91. There were also at Olympia a dedication by Pheneos from this period, not necessarily from a war (Paus. 5.27.8), and an undated dedication by Cynaetha (Paus. 5.22.1).

Arcadia saw considerable internal warfare,³¹ and that in turn argues for Arcadian disunity, rather than unity, in the period.

Such evidence does not argue against a strong sense of common nationality among Arcadians of the earlier fifth century. Cleomenes evidently sought to exploit such sentiments by uniting the Arcadians against Sparta, and further indications of these feelings may be found in the wording of the dedication at Olympia in this period by "the Arcadians from Pheneos",³² and in the statue-group of Zeus, Callisto, and Elatus dedicated at Delphi.³³ The Arkadikon-coinage itself proclaims this common nationality. But awareness of common nationality as Arcadians need not have led the Arcadians to common political action, still less to a federal organisation. The problem is whether such an organisation arose.

Cleomenes did not complete his proposed unification of Arcadia, and for the following years from 491 to 480 we have no evidence. We can however be reasonably sure that from 480 to the battle of Dipaea all Arcadia was never united. Moreover the later stages of the Arkadikon-coinage itself, when two mints closed and only the third continued, suggest disagreement within Arcadia. Nonetheless the Arkadikon-coinage, struck in three separate mints, must surely have a political character; it must, in other words, be the coinage of some sort of Arcadian League or Leagues. Any such league in this period could include only part of Arcadia; and the opening of fresh mints is more likely to indicate the emergence of rival groups, also claiming to be an Arcadian League, than to show the growth of the original league. On our available evidence it is impossible to identify likely members of any such an organisation, other than Mantinea. It almost certainly did not belong to the original league, since it continued to strike its own coins well after the Arkadikon issues had begun;³⁴ but it can plausibly be identified with Mint C, in which case it must eventually have been striking Arkadikon coins in the name of an Arcadian League of which it was in fact the only member. Heraea too coined in its own name after the beginning of the Arkadikon issues, and so probably did not belong to the original league.³⁵ Otherwise all is conjecture. Tegea may have had a mint, as Williams has suggested, but it had no Arcadian support against Sparta at the battle of Tegea, and, if it was then coining, was the only member of the Arcadian League its coins pro-

³¹Despite the suggestion of J. Hejnic, *op. cit.* (above, n. 11) 90–91, it is difficult to believe that all or most of these dedications belong to one phase of warfare among the Azanians (northern Arcadians).

³²Paus. 5.27.8.

³³*Fouilles de Delphes*, 3.4.142–144 (cf. 145–146) with notes *ad loc.* It is there suggested that the dedication may be Elatean, but an Arcadian origin seems equally possible (cf. Paus. 8.4.2–6 and *Fouilles de Delphes*, 3.1.3–11).

³⁴Williams, 15.

³⁵Williams, 8–10; *art. cit.* (above, n. 6).

claimed. Another mint may have been at Cleitor or elsewhere in northern Arcadia, as Williams has suggested;³⁶ but that was, to judge by dedications of spoils in this period, an unsettled area, and likely to support only a weak federal organisation. Weakness is in fact the one thing we can be sure of in the Arcadian League, or more probably Leagues, of this period. The one known common action of the Arcadians was the battle of Dipaea; even then Mantinea held aloof; and the battle, fought against a seriously weakened Sparta,³⁷ resulted in defeat for the Arcadians. This reassertion of Spartan authority made any effective federation in Arcadia for the time being impossible.

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³⁶Williams, 9-10, 12-13.

³⁷Isocrates, *Archidamus* 99.