ON THE ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ OF A SPARTAN KING

After his discussion of the rights and prerogatives of the Spartan kings, Herodotus, in describing the funeral of a Spartan king, says at 6.58.2-3:

ἐπεάν γὰρ ἀποθάνη βασιλεὺς Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐκ πάσης δὲι Λακεδαιμονίων, χωρὶς Σπαρτητέων, ἀρίθμῳ τῶν περιοίκων ἀναγκαστούς ἐς τὸ κηδεῖα ἵναι· τούτων ὡν καὶ τῶν εἰλιστέων καὶ αὐτῶν Σπαρτητέων ἐπεὰν συλλεχθέωσι ἐς τώπῳ πολλαὶ χιλιάδες, σύμμηγα τῇ γυναιξι κάποτον τα τὰ μέτωπα προθύμως καὶ οἴμωγι διαχρέονται ἀπλέτωρ, φάμενοι τὸν υἱόντον αἰεὶ ἀπογενόμενον τῶν βασιλέων, τούτον δὲ γενέσθαι ἄριστον. δὲ δ᾽ ἐν ἐν πολέμῳ τῶν βασιλέων ἀποθάνῃ, τούτῳ δὲ εἰδωλον σκεύασαντες ἐν κλίνῃ εὐ ἐστρομμένη ἐκφέρονσι. ἔπεαν δὲ θάψοντας, ἀγορὴ δέκα ἡμερῶν σὺχ ἱσταται σφι οὖθ᾽ ἀρχαιοσεὶ συνίζει, ἄλλα πενθέουσι ταύτας τὰς ἡμέρας.¹

It is the consensus of scholars that the εἰδωλον, which Herodotus says was used in the funeral whenever a king fell in battle, was actually present only in those cases where the body of the king was unavailable for the funeral, for whatever reason. Hans Schaefer provided the most thorough analysis of this passage on the Spartan royal funeral, and he concluded that the loss of the body of Leonidas at Thermopylae forced the Apella to pass a decree authorizing the use of an εἰδωλον in the funeral in order to avoid the potential evil consequences for the community if the proper burial rites for the king were neglected. This supposed decree then set the precedent for any future situations in which the body of a king was not available for the royal ceremony, and Schaefer believed that Herodotus’ statement about the εἰδωλον being present in the funeral of any king who died in battle was simply a misleading

generalization based on the special case of Leonidas\textsuperscript{2}. Obviously the case of Leonidas would have presented problems for the Spartans and their elaborate funeral: his body was mutilated by the Persians after his death at Thermopylæ and his bones were only returned to Sparta forty years after the battle\textsuperscript{3}. But Schaefer’s thesis that the εἰδωλὸν of a king was present in the royal funeral only when the corpse had not been recovered from battle depends on the premise that the εἰδωλὸν served only the practical function of allowing the ceremony to occur without a corpse. When Herodotus’ statement is considered in relation to other evidence for Spartan treatment of religious figures who had died in battle, it becomes clear that there is good reason to think that the εἰδωλὸν had important symbolic value in the royal funeral, and we should not ignore the significance of Herodotus’ statement by simply dismissing it as a description of a special procedure which only occurred in those cases when the body of the king was unavailable for the funeral ceremony.

First of all, the loss of the body of a Spartan king in battle could not have been a frequent occurrence, and we know of only one other Spartan king besides Leonidas whose body was not recovered from battle\textsuperscript{4}. In fact, the loss of any corpse was not likely to have been frequent in standard Greek hoplite battle, since strict conventions were observed about the return and burial of the dead by both sides\textsuperscript{5}. More important in this context is the fact that it was the Spartan custom always to bring home the bodies of their kings who had died abroad, whether in battle or not, and they


\textsuperscript{3} Hdt. 7.238.1 and Pausanias 3.14.1; on the problems of the text of Pausanias, cf. Connor (above, n. 2).

\textsuperscript{4} According to Theopompus, FGrHist 115 F 232 (= Athen. 12.536D), the Tarentines in 338 refused to return the body of Archidamos III even though the Spartans offered large sums of money, an incident which serves to emphasize the importance that the Spartans placed on recovering the body for their royal funeral; cf. W. K. Pritchett, The Greek State at War IV (Berkeley – Los Angeles 1985) 226. At Leuctra, a Homeric battle took place over the body of king Kleombrotos, cf. Xen. Hell. 6.4.13 and Diod. Sic. 15.54–56.3.

were the only members of the community to receive such treatment (Plut. Ages. 40). Herodotus could not have been unaware of these factors and it becomes even more difficult then to accept the idea that his statement about the εἴδωλον was a misleading generalization, especially since we know Herodotus was quite capable of describing a single incident which then led to a law or precedent regarding the Spartan kings (cf. 5.75.2). But in this passage the historian simply says that an εἴδωλον was present in the funeral of any Spartan king who had died in battle, without any stipulation as to the availability of the corpse, and there seems to be no reason to read more into his statement than what he says. Once we free ourselves of the rationalizing assumption that the purpose of the είδωλον was simply to take the place of the lost body of the king, ample comparative evidence concerning the role of effigies in the royal funerals of other societies demonstrates that the εἴδωλον of a Spartan king must have had important symbolic significance.

The death of a king or chief in a rigidly hierarchical society is traumatizing for the whole community because the social order loses the embodiment of the authority of its hierarchy. His death constitutes a threat to the political stability of the community, and during the period of transition of royal power, a period of extreme vulnerability for the social order, the royal funeral – which often exceeds in pomp and display the coronation of the new king – serves the important function of focusing the attention of the community on a ceremony which asserts the continuity of the political order despite the loss of the mortal embodiment of that order. The depiction provided by Herodotus of widespread and enforced mourning throughout Laconia, of suspension of normal community business for a prolonged period, and the pomp and circumstance of a sumptuous funeral, are all standard characteristics of the elaborate funerals for chiefs or kings in traditional societies. Such funerary extravagance is often maintained even by societies in which the king has ceased to have any real judicial, military, or political power, a fact which demonstrates that even when the king himself ceases to have true authority in the community, the sym-

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bol of his person and office in death remains highly significant for the community.

A frequent feature of royal funerals are life-size effigies of the dead king. Far from serving as a substitute for the absent body of the king, the effigy plays an important role in the royal funeral by providing a symbolic representation of the permanence of the political order as formerly embodied in the person of the king. This idealized representation deliberately contrasts with the corpse itself, now in the process of change and decay. While in life the king embodied the authority of the hierarchy, in death and during the funeral – a most sensitive point in the transition of power – the effigy serves as the representation of the body politic. In some communities the effigy even serves as the repository of the kingship during the period of transition, and in all royal funerals the effigy is the manifestation of the other, undying ‘body’ of the king which is crucial to the continuity of the political order. In specific relation to the statement of Herodotus about the Spartan eîðòλον, it is important to note that in all the royal funerals in which an effigy is present, the availability of the king’s corpse is not usually a relevant factor, although in the vast majority of cases the corpse is also present in the ceremony. The effigy does not replace the corpse in the funeral; it may draw attention away from it, and the corpse itself may not be directly displayed, but the body of the king is present at the funeral and is an integral part of the ceremony.

Sparta was not the only society in classical antiquity to engage in elaborate funerals with effigies. Effigies began to appear in Roman funerals at the very end of the Republic, just as that society was coming under the rule of a hereditary dynasty. A wax image of Julius Caesar, complete with the twenty-three wounds dealt him by his assassins, was displayed at his funeral and it caused the mob to riot (Appian, BC 2.147); at the funeral of Augustus no less than three life-size images, one of which was gold, were displayed in the procession while the corpse itself was out of sight in a coffin (Dio

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56.34.1); after these funerals it seems the practice became institutionalized, and a wax effigy was regularly displayed in the funerals of Roman emperors (Tacitus, Ann. 3.5 and Herodian 4.2). It is obvious that the social and symbolic purposes of royal funerals in general and of effigies in particular would well apply in the case of the funeral of a Roman emperor. Because all our evidence for the ἔιδωλον in the Spartan royal funeral is derived from the one statement in Herodotus, we can only surmise that it served a function similar to that in other royal funerals. And, of course, the comparative evidence can only usefully be applied in terms of the general characteristics of the symbolism of effigies in royal funerals. But in the same way that the whole ceremony of the Spartan royal funeral has clear parallels in its character and purpose with royal funerals of other societies, so the role of the ἔιδωλον itself can best be understood in this same comparative context.

Schaefer states that the use of the ἔιδωλον did not go back to earliest times of Spartan history. While there is no evidence to confirm this, there is some comparative evidence which supports the idea that the use of an ἔιδωλον would have been introduced into the Spartan funeral ceremony due to unusual circumstances having to do with the availability or appearance of the corpse, and that once the precedent was set, the ἔιδωλον began to accrue symbolic meaning which established its role in the funeral of any Spartan king slain in battle. The most obvious case would have been the death of Leonidas, as Schaefer recognized. But we know that Sparta’s enemies realised the significance the Spartans attached to the recovery of a royal corpse from battle, and Homeric battles were fought over their bodies or they were refused ransom in some cases (cf. instances in n. 4). In light of this, it is not improbable that there were kings before Leonidas whose bodies were lost in battle and so the use of an ἔιδωλον in the royal funeral may have originated in an era much earlier than the 5th century. Whenever it first happened that a king’s body was not recovered from battle, something out of the ordinary would had to have been done at his funeral, and an effigy must have been the obvious solution. But, again, comparative evidence indicates that the precedent would not then have been restricted only to funerals in which the body of the king was unavailable for the ceremony. The more likely scenario was that the precedent would have applied in the funeral of any Spartan king slain in battle, just as Herodotus says.  

10) For example, a peculiar set of circumstances required the use of an effigy
There seems no good reason to dismiss or distort what Herodotus says about the Spartan royal effigy, but it does lead to a more complicated question: if the εἴδωλον served important symbolic and ideological purposes in the royal funeral, why was it used only in the relatively rare case for a king who had died in battle? The answer seems to lie in a conjunction of pragmatic and symbolic factors.

The very use of an εἴδωλον in some royal funerals implies that the body of the Spartan king would normally have been displayed during both the πρόθεσις and the funeral procession itself, and so the appearance of the corpse would have been an important consideration in staging the funeral. A corpse badly disfigured by mortal wounds or in an advanced state of decomposition after many days of transport in the heat of a Mediterranean summer from a far-off battlefield would certainly have introduced complications that only an effigy could resolve.

The symbolic importance of the effigy for a king slain in battle is more complicated and seems to relate to a larger issue in Spartan religion. Two other disputed and amended passages—neither of which has ever been considered in relation to Herodotus’ statement on the Spartan royal funeral—provide evidence that the Spartans attached special significance to the death in battle of a religious figure and such a death was signified by a special funeral rite or memorial.

At 9.85.1–2, Herodotus says that after the battle of Plataea the Spartans buried the ίδες, the other Spartiates, and the helots in separate burials:

in the funeral of the English king, Edward II, in 1327. But after this precedent, effigies regularly appeared in English royal funerals; cf. Kantorowicz (above, n.9) 420–21. “Royal customs such as the use of an effigy in a funeral, often begin in response to chance circumstances and practical considerations but once performed, any part of a royal funeral ritual sets a precedent that is repeated at the next kingly death. Once present in the ritual, an element accumulates meanings the way a ship accumulates barnacles.” (Metcalf & Huntington [above, n.8] 166.)


12) The Spartans practised a rudimentary form of embalming with honey or wax in order to retard decomposition during the transportation back to Sparta; cf. Xen. Hell. 5.3.19, Diod. Sic. 15.93.6, Nepos, Ages. 8.7 and Plut. Ages. 40. One can be reasonably suspicious of the success of such treatment.
Almost all modern editions of Herodotus accept the emendations ἱρένας and ἱρένες for ἱρέας and ἱρέες, emendations that were suggested tentatively by Valckenaer in the eighteenth century. Valckenaer was bothered by the fact that he knew of no evidence for Spartan priests dying in battle and, furthermore, an ancient lexicographical list to Herodotus mentioned εἰσίνην as word that occurred in his history, but could be found nowhere in his work. The acceptance of Valckenaer’s emendations has persisted, despite the penetrating analysis by W. Den Boer, who showed both that Valckenaer himself was not completely convinced of their validity and that the reasons he gave for them were weak. Nevertheless, despite Den Boer’s persuasive arguments, Valckenaer’s emendations have remained the accepted reading among scholars, and Den Boer’s objections have generally been misunderstood or ignored.

In light of what we know about Spartan religious figures, which is even less than the little we know of Spartan religion, to say that there is no evidence other than Herodotus about the death in battle and burial of Spartan priests and then to use that as a basis on which to reject the manuscript reading of Herodotus is hardly an argument. Since the one statement in Herodotus essentially constitutes our only evidence on the issue, the lack of other evidence can be used neither to affirm nor deny the reading in his text. Valckenaer’s other reason to emend the manuscript, that the word εἰσίνην appears in a lexicographical list to Herodotus, is more substantial and might seem, on first consideration, to provide sufficient reason for correcting the text. But as Stein demonstrated

13) Legrand in the Budé, series (Paris 1932–1954) retained the manuscript readings of ἱρέας and ἱρέες, but bracketed the sentence which provided the names of the four individuals. Rosén in his recent Teubner text of Herodotus (Leipzig 1987) retains Valckenaer’s emendations. For a comprehensive discussion of the issues relating to the emendations, cf. W. Den Boer, Laconian Studies (Amsterdam 1954) 288–98.

14) Valckenaer was indecisive and thought a reading of ἵππες would also be plausible; cf. also R. F. Willetts, Herodotus IX 85, 1–2, Mnem. 33 (1980) 273–74.

15) D. H. Kelly, Thucydides and Herodotus on the Pitanate Lochos, GRBS 22 (1981) 33–36 rejected Den Boer’s argument but he seems to misunderstand a crucial point since he thinks that the text of Plut. Lyc. 27.3, on which Den Boer bases part of his argument, is an emendation when it is in fact the reading of the best manuscript for that Vita. Pritchett (above, n. 4) 174 only cites Kelly on the issue and J. Lazenby, The Spartan Army (Warminster 1985) 48–50, ignores Den Boer’s discussion. Parker (above, n. 7) 163 n. 4, and D. M. MacDowell, Spartan Law (Edinburgh 1986) 121–22 are rightly more cautious, although in the end both accept Valckenaer’s emendations. M. B. Wallace, Notes on Early Greek Grave Epigrams, Phoenix 24 (1970) 99 n. 11 and A. R. Burn, CR n.s. 30 (1980) 137–38, accept Den Boer’s conclusion that the manuscript readings ought to be retained.
over one hundred years ago this list, containing as it does numerous words that are not in Herodotus and some of which are clearly from Sophocles' *Electra*, can have no legitimacy as the sole evidence on which to introduce words into the text of Herodotus

Even more troubling than Valckenaer's reasons for emending the text are the impossible implications that result if we accept his emendations. It is generally agreed that not all four of the men whom Herodotus names (Poseidon, Amompharetos, Philokyon, and Kallikrates) could have been **εἰςφενεῖς**, i.e. men between the ages of about twenty and (at most) thirty. Herodotus says at 9.53.2 that Amompharetos was the leader of a **λόχος**, which in the Spartan army at the time of Plataea may have contained one thousand men, a fifth of the Spartiate force there. Amompharetos obstinately refused a direct order of Pausanias, the Spartan commander of the Greek army, to perform a tactical withdrawal (9.53–57), an act of disobedience hardly conceivable for an **εἰςφην** in charge of a small force of his peers (cf. Plut. Lyc. 17.3). Furthermore, Kallikrates is described by Herodotus as the most handsome man of all the Greeks at Plataea. If we are to accept that the Spartans (and presumably Herodotus, if he was using such a

16) H. Stein, *Herodoti Historiae II* (Berlin 1871) 462–82; on the accuracy of this list cf. esp. 443 and 471–74; cf. also Den Boer (above, n. 13) 291. It is interesting to note that H. B. Rosen in his *Eine Laut- und Formenlehre der herodotischen Sprachform* (Heidelberg 1962) does not list **εἰςφην** in his register of Herodotus' vocabulary.

17) The maximum age of thirty is deduced from a statement in Plut. Lyc. 25.1, which says that of **νεότεροι** of Sparta could not enter an **άγορά** before the age of thirty. Whether the age of thirty can then be made the upper limit for an **εἰςφην** is open to question; cf. Den Boer (above, n. 13) 257–58 (who argues that Spartans ceased to be **εἰςφενεῖς** at the age of twenty-one) and Lazenby (above, n. 15) 48–49. MacDowell (above, n. 15) 164–66, has recently restated the case for an upper limit of thirty.

These four names are not a complete list. Obviously Herodotus names the four because they have occurred previously in his account of the battle at 9.71 and 72. H. Diels' idea, mentioned in a letter to M. Nilsson (cf. Nilsson, *Opuscula Selecta II* [Lund 1952] 870 [= Klio 13 (1913) 9–10]), that the reading of the manuscript be emended to **ἐπίσης** or **προσφέρεις**, presumably in recognition of these men as those who fought best among the Spartans (cf. 9.71, where Herodotus mentions only Poseidon, Amompharetos, and Philokyon), cannot be correct because Kallikrates was wounded by an arrow before the battle and did not participate in the fighting (cf. 9.72).

18) On the size of the Spartan contingent at Plataea cf. Hdt. 9.10.1 and 28.2. On the number of men in a **λόχος**, cf. R. W. Macan, *Herodotus, The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Books* (London 1908) on 9.53. Lazenby (above, n. 15) 48, is emphatic: “If there is one thing that is certain about the Spartan army it is that no twenty year-old or twenty-one year-old ever commanded a fifth of it.”
specific term as εἰωην) made a clear distinction between ἀνής and εἰωην (cf. Xen. Rep. Lac. 2.11), then this is still more evidence of the improbability of these four men having been εἰωενες. It is also not unreasonable to think that if Herodotus had used the very specific Spartan term εἰωην in describing a special burial, he would have provided some sort of explanation as to who the εἰωενες were. Such an obscure term referring to an age-class in the Spartan ἀγωγη would not have been obvious to all his readers in the way that the term 'helot' or 'Spartiate' was. Finally, one must ask why Spartan εἰωενες would have been buried separately from the Spartiates themselves. The purpose of the Spartan ἀγωγη was to produce warriors who would welcome death in battle before retreat or defeat. It seems hardly likely that the Spartans would have maintained the hierarchy of age classification and separated in burial, simply because of their age, young men who through death in battle had certainly proved themselves worthy of full Spartiate status. The only interpretation of a separate burial for εἰωενες as opposed to those for the Spartiates and the helots can be that they were superior to the latter but not worthy of inclusion with the former. This runs counter to all we know of burial of the war-dead among the Greeks, where death in battle had the tendency to remove even quite severe social distinctions by incorporating all the dead in a common πολυνάδικον. It seems inconceivable that the Spartans would have segregated in burial rites, simply because of their age, young citizens who had fallen in battle.

19) Scholars who accept the emendations of Valckenaer are aware of these problems but have offered no solutions to them. Kelly (above, n. 15) 36 and Lazenby (above, n. 15) 49, in a curious twist of logic, accept the emendation and then blame Herodotus for his "mistake" in calling Ἀμομφαρητος an εἰωην. MacDowell (above, n. 15) 165-66, suggests that Ἀμομφαρητος was a young "star" in the Spartan army, who at an age just under thirty had risen to his high command because of Spartan losses suffered at Thermopylae. But this can only be special pleading.

20) This same objection applies to Willetts' suggestion (Mnem. 33 [1980] 276-77) of (σφρα)τρές and (σφρα)τρές as a solution to the problem. Herodotus could hardly have designated such "ballplayers" as honored with a separate burial at Plataea without explaining who they were and why they received such treatment.


22) At Marathon, slaves were buried in the same mound as the dead Plataeans (Paus. 1.32.3); the names of slaves and foreigners occur on the casualty lists of the πολυνάδικον in the δημόσιον σήμα at Athens, cf. C. Clairmont, Patrios Nomos: Public Burial in Athens During the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.: The Archaeological, Epigraphic-Literary and Historical Evidence, BAR International Series 161 (Oxford 1983) no. 18 and Loraux (above, n. 1) 35-36.
When we eliminate the dubious evidence of the lexicographical list, the only justification for Valckenaer’s emendations is the argument that there is no other evidence that Spartans buried ίεθείς on the battlefield separately from the other dead. As stated above, this is hardly a sufficient basis on which to emend a text, given the paucity of our evidence concerning Spartan priests and ίεθείς. Furthermore, it is not clear that there is no other evidence to lend confirmation to the reading of the manuscripts of Herodotus.

In his *Lycurgus* (27.1–4) Plutarch provides the following description of Spartan burial customs:

KAI μην ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΑΣ ΤΑΡΑΣ ΑΡΙΣΤΑ ΔΙΕΧΩΣΗΜΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ. ΠΡΩΤΟΝ 
ΜΕΝ ΓΑΡ ΑΝΕΛΟΝ ΔΕΙΣΙΔΑΜΟΝΙΑΝ ἈΠΑΣΑΝ, ἘΝ Τῇ ΠΟΛΕΙ ΒΛΑΣΤΕΙΝ ΤΟΥΣ 
ΝΕΚΡΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΛΗΡΟΝ ἘΧΕΙΝ ΤΑ ΜΗΜΑΤΑ ΤΟΝ ἸΕΡΟΝ ΟΥΧ ἘΚΩΛΥΣΩ. 
ΣΥΝΤΡΟΦΟΙ ΠΟΙΩΝ ΤΑΣ ΤΟΙΧΙΑΤΙΣ ΔΥΣΕΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΗΣΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΝΕΟΥΣ, 
ὩΣΤΕ ΜΗ ΤΑΡΑΣΘΑΘΑΙ ΜΗΔ’ ὉΡΘΗΕΙΝ ΤΟΝ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΝ, ὍΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΝΤΑ 
ΤΟΥΣ ἈΨΡΕΥΟΝΟΥΣ ΝΕΚΡΟΥ ΟΘΟΜΑΣΟ ΧΙ ΔΙΑ ΤΑΡΩΝ ΔΙΕΛΘΟΝΤΑΣ. ἘΠΕΙΤΑ 
ΣΥΝΝΑΠΤΕΙΝ ΟΥΔΕΝ ΕΙΣΑΓΕΙΝ, ΑΛΛ’ ἐΝ ΦΟΙΝΙΚΙΔΙ ΚΑΙ ΦΥΛΛΟΙΣ ΕΛΑΙΑΣ ΘΕΝ 
ΤΕΣ ΤΟ ΣΩΜΑ ΠΕΡΙΣΤΕΛΛΟΝ. ἘΠΙΓΡΑΦΑΙ ΔΕ ΤΟΥΝΟΜΑ ΘΑΨΑΝΤΑΣ ΟΥΧ 
ΞΕΘΥΝΤΟΥ ΤΟΝ ΝΕΚΡΟΥ, ΠΛΗΝ ἈΝΔΡΟΣ ἘΝ ΠΟΛΕΜΩ ΚΑΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΟΣ ΤΟΝ ἸΕΡΟΝ 
ἈΠΟΘΑΝΟΝΤΩΝ. ΧΡΟΝΟΝ ΔΕ ΠΕΝΘΟΥΣ ΟΛΙΓΟΝ ΠΡΟΣΩΦΙΣΕΝ, ἩΜΕΡΑΣ ἘΝ 
ΔΕΚΑΤΗ Τῇ ΔΕ ΔΟΒΕΧΑΤΗ ΘΥΣΑΝΤΑΣ ἝΔΕΙ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙ ΛΥΕΙΝ ΤΟ ΠΕΝΘΟΣ.

It is the confused reading of the final clause of the fourth sentence that is of concern here: ἐπιγράφαι δε τούνομα θάσιντας οὐχ ξεθυν 
τον νεκρου, πλην ἀνδρος ἐν πολεμω και γυναικος τον ιερων ἀπο 
θανοντων. This is the reading of the Codex Seitenstettensis, the 
best manuscript for the Vita of Lycurgus, and where ιερων is 
found with σ written above the ν; that the phrase των ιερων (vel 
ιερω) ἀποθανοντων is troubled is obvious. It is not clear who these 
ιερων might have been or what it meant for a person to die ιερως. 
Furthermore, in the way the Greek is arranged it is ambiguous 
whether the participle phrase applies only to the woman or to 
both the woman and the man slain in war. The difficult nature of 
the passage can be estimated both from the number of attempts at 
correction presented in the apparatus criticus of the Teubner 
edition of Lindskog and Ziegler.

In light of these difficulties it is not surprising that a radical 
emendation, attributed to Kurt Latte by Ziegler, has now gained 
almost universal acceptance: πλην ἀνδρος ἐν πολεμῳ καὶ γυναικος 
[των] λεχοις ἀποθανοντων. Latte’s suggestion is attractive by virtue 
of providing a neat logical, if not grammatical, balance with ἐν

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πολέμω, and to support his conjecture there are two inscriptions from Laconia in which the letters ΛΕΧΟΙ appear (IG 5.1.713–14). In this way a confusing passage was rendered intelligible and attested: with Latte’s emendation men received the honor of an epitaph for dying in defense of the community while women who died in the act of replenishing the supply of manpower were also memorialized – a chain of reasoning which would seem to be in accord with the Spartan militaristic ethos. Given the latitude and vagueness in the interpretation of the manuscript reading, it is not surprising that Latte’s suggestion has gained wide acceptance.

Unlike the text of Herodotus 9.85, the state of the text of Plutarch seems to call for some kind of correction, but it is not clear that so radical a conjecture as that of Latte is necessary or justified. The primary evidence in support of his introduction of ΛΕΧΟΙ into Plutarch’s text is found in two inscriptions, only one of which is complete (IG 5.1.714: ΑΓΙΠΠΙΑ ΛΕΧΟΙ; IG 5.1.713 has part of what might have been the word ΛΕΧΟΙ), and the exact meaning of neither of which is clear. It is generally agreed that they are sepulchral and that the dative ΛΕΧΟΙ refers to the manner of death, i.e. of women in bed during childbirth, but this is by no means certain. There are a number of other Laconian inscriptions (IG 5.1.701–713) which contain the formula ΕΝ ΠΟΛΕΜΟΙ, which ought to be considered sepulchral in nature and which, when combined with the evidence of the two inscriptions cited above, would seem to lend confirmation to Latte’s proposed reading of Plutarch. But even more frequent than ΛΕΧΟΙ in Laconian


26) Cf. the comments at IG 5.1.713, where various possibilities of the meaning of these two inscriptions are mentioned.
inscriptions is the term ΙΕΡΕΥΣ. It is no more clear that these inscriptions are sepulchral than in the case of the ΛΕΧΩΙ inscriptions, and, like the inscriptions with ΛΕΧΩΙ, these inscriptions are difficult to date. Nevertheless, they demonstrate that the epigraphic evidence clearly cannot be decisive in determining the manuscript reading of the passage in Plutarch.

As with the passage in Herodotus about the burials at Plataea, the emendation of Plutarch also introduces problems which are sometimes too easily forgotten in the effort to find a neat and satisfactory resolution for the difficult manuscript reading and its implications. Den Boer noted two significant objections to Latte’s emendation which still stand. First, that the word λεχώ occurs only one other time in the large corpus of Plutarch, and then only in a quotation of the philosopher Chrysippus (Mor. 1044F22), and so Latte’s emendation introduces a word into Plutarch’s text which otherwise does not seem to have been part of his normal vocabulary; second, that there can be no convincing paleographical explanation for how ιεφών or ιεφώς came to be read for λεχώς. Finally, one might add that, as in most pre-modern societies, death in childbirth must have been a leading cause of death for Spartan females in their child-bearing years. Why such a relatively common occurrence would have been recognised with an epitaph, and, more importantly, why so few epitaphs, relatively speaking, have survived, are very difficult to explain if such epitaphs were considered a special honor for women in Sparta.

A possible solution to the problem of the text of the Lycurgus might be found in the fact that Plutarch is here describing the traditional Spartan battlefield burial. Plutarch says that the purpose of the Lycurgan burial procedure was to alleviate among the young men (οί νεώτε) the fear and superstition (δεισιδαμονία) related to death, obviously for the purpose of making them better warriors. He then goes on to describe a simple, primitive burial, in which the corpse is put in the ground without a coffin, on a bed of leaves, and wrapped in a φωνικές, the characteristic, red Spartan military cloak. The military significance of this burial is clear from the φωνικές as the only item that can be put in the grave, and

27) IG 5.1.1329, 1338, 1367 and SEG 11.951; cf. also C. Le Roy, ΛΑΚΩΝΙΚΑ, BCH 85 (1961) 228–32, Wallace (above, n. 15) 99 n. 11 and Parker (above, n. 7) 163 n. 4.
28) Den Boer (above, n. 13) 296; also MacDowell (above, n. 15) 122.
the simple manner of interment, with no grave goods or coffin, well reflects what a Spartan battlefield burial would have been like. We know that the Spartans always inhumed their war-dead, and that they always buried their dead on the battlefield (cf. Plut. Ages. 40.3). That the description in Plutarch is of a military burial is confirmed by a passage from Aelian (VH 6.6), which says that a Spartan was buried in branches and leaves if he died fighting well and in a φοινικίς if he had performed some especially noteworthy deed in battle:

It is clear that the first three sentences of Plutarch’s description of Spartan burial describe practices which were instituted to familiarize young Spartan males with death and its representations in order to allow them to face the possibility of death in battle without trepidation. Suddenly in the next sentence the whole thrust of the passage changes with the reference to an epitaph for a woman if she was a “holy woman” or had died ἐφές. It is not likely that the burial in a φοινικίς could have applied in the case of women, and there seems to be good reason to suspect the phrase καὶ γυναικός as the real problem with the text. If these words are removed, the theme of the passage remains uninterrupted and the resulting Greek, ἔτι ηγοντο ἐν τοίν πολέμῳ τῶν ἐφέων ἀποθανόντως καὶ φοινικίδος αὐτοῖς ἐπιβληθείσῃς ἐνδόους ἐθαμπότονο. There is some support for removing

Tübingen and Freiburg 1898) 192 n.61; on the φοινικίς cf. Xen. Rep. Lac. 11.3.1 and Aristotle F 542 [Rose].

30) MacDowell (above, n.15) 121, who accepts Latte’s emendation with a bit of reservation, recognizes this problem, as does Nafissi (above, n. 24) 295 n. 77. I am grateful to Michael Flower for originally directing my attention to this problem of the phrase καὶ γυναικός in this passage.

31) In suggesting the elimination of καὶ γυναικός I do not pretend to have solved the problem of the original form of Plutarch’s sentence. My purpose here is simply to show wherein the problem lies when the clause is considered both in the specific context of Plutarch’s description in this passage and in the larger context of the evidence from Herodotus. Certainly the conservative elimination of this phrase is as plausible as the radical emendation of Latte, and the resulting locution ἐφές ... τῶν ... has ample precedent in the Greek of Plutarch: e.g. Thes. 26.3, Cic. 6.3, Rom. 28.1, Arist. 27.5, Ant. 64.2, Ages. 16.4.
the reference to women in this passage in Mor. 238D, a passage which says the same thing about Spartan burial as that in Lyc. 27.1 except that there is no reference to women in the comparable sentence: ἀνέτειλε καὶ τὰς ἑπιγραφὰς τὰς ἐπὶ τῶν μνημείων, πάλιν τῶν ἐν πολέμῳ τελευτησάντων. Obviously this passage cannot be decisive for the issue since there is no reference here to ἰεροῖ, but it does provide some confirmation that the exclusion of καὶ γυναικὸς from the passage in the Lycurgus seems to be the proper way to emend the text.

One can only speculate as to how καὶ γυναικὸς came into the text. The most likely possibility is that it was originally a gloss meant to correspond to ἀνδρὸς ἐν πολέμῳ in the text, and such a gloss could well have read something like the emendation suggested by Latte. But it does appear clear from the type of burial described by Plutarch and from the evidence of other passages in Plutarch and Herodotus that it ought not to be in the text.

The general acceptance of the exclusion of the terms ἰερεῖς and ἰεροῖ from the texts of both Herodotus and Plutarch ultimately stems from the fact that we have so little evidence at all for religious figures in Sparta. But both texts do point to the fact that the death in battle of an important religious figure was marked by special funeral ritual or memorial and it is in this intersection of the religious with the military that we might find the answer to the puzzle of why an effigy appeared only in the funeral of a king who had fallen in battle.

Aristotle (Pol. 1285b) described the Spartan kingship as a hereditary generalship. But in addition to being the chief military officer in the state, the Spartan kings were also the most important religious figures: they were descended directly from the gods (Xen. Rep. Lac. 15.2), acted as intermediaries with them in Spartan society (Arist. Pol. 1285a), and the majority of their rights and prerogatives were in the religious sphere (Hdt. 6.56–57). The death of a king in battle, like the deaths of priests or the mysterious “ἱεροῖ” in the same context, called for a special burial, one in which an idealizing εἰδωλὸν in his funeral procession marked the supreme achievement by the leader of the army and symbolized that by such a glorious death the king had overcome death itself. Therefore, when considered in the wider context of the symbolism of effigies in other royal funerals and in relation to the evidence for Spartan treatment of the war-dead, there seems no reason to doubt

32) Parker (above, n. 7) 143–44 and 152–54.
the precise meaning of Herodotus when he says that an εἰδωλον was used in the royal funeral whenever the king had died in battle. Specific circumstances, such as those surrounding the death of Leonidas or some earlier king, might well have introduced the practice, but once in place, practical and ideological reasons coordinate with the Spartan ethos would have assured the maintenance of the custom.\textsuperscript{33}

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ERKENNTNIS UND HANDLUNG
IM OIDIPUS TYRANNOS DES SOPHOKLES

Wenn wir versuchen, einige Hauptpunkte der Aristotelischen Handlungstheorie und Poetik auf eine Tragödie des Sophokles, den Oidipus Tyrannos, anzuwenden und für deren Erklärung zu nutzen, so müssen wir uns nicht nur des zeitlichen Abstands der beiden Autoren bewußt sein\textsuperscript{1}, sondern auch des Übergangs in eine

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