

# HERODOTUS 9.85 AND SPARTIATE BURIAL CUSTOMS

By Paul Christesen

**Summary:** At 9.85 Herodotus states that after the Battle of Plataia, the Lakedaimonians buried their dead in three separate graves: one for the ἰπῆες, one for the rest of the Spartiates, and one for helots. Taken together with 9.71, this passage suggests that all of the Spartiates decorated for bravery at Plataia were priests, which seems *prima facie* improbable. The interpretive challenges presented by 9.85 have been the subject of lively scholarly debate since the eighteenth century because this passage potentially provides important evidence for Spartiates' funerary, religious, and educational customs. With an eye to facilitating future research, this article offers a detailed conspectus of the extensive collection of relevant scholarship and, in part by drawing upon evidence from the archaeological excavations of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Kerameikos, identifies one reading, which involves athetizing part of 9.85, as the preferred interpretive approach.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

'The passage has evoked much comment'.<sup>1</sup> This terse observation from R.F. Willetts' 1980 article 'Herodotus IX 85, 1-2' is an aptly laconic description of what might justifiably be called an impressively large body

- 1 Willetts 1980. I am grateful to Paul Cartledge, who read and commented upon an earlier version of this article; to participants in the Celtic Conference in Classics held in Montreal in July, 2017, where I presented a talk based on this article; and to the editors of and reviewers for *Classica et Mediaevalia*. The helpful comments from all of those sources provided invaluable assistance in improving the argumentation that follows. Responsibility for errors and oversights is entirely my own.

of scholarship on a brief passage in the *Histories* in which Herodotus describes the tombs of the Lakedaimonians at Plataia:<sup>2</sup>

Οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνες, ὡς ἐν Πλαταιῆσι τὴν ληϊήν διείλοντο, ἔθαπτον τοὺς ἔωυτῶν χωρὶς ἕκαστοι. Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν τριζᾶς ἐποιήσαντο θήκας· ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ Ἀμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης· ἐν μὲν δὴ ἐνὶ τῶν τάφων ἦσαν οἱ ἱρέες, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἑτέρῳ οἱ ἄλλοι Σπαρτιῆται, ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ οἱ εἰλωτες.<sup>3</sup>

The Greeks at Plataia, when they had divided up the spoils, buried their own dead, each people separately. The Lakedaimonians made three separate burial places. In one they buried the ἱρέες, and among them Poseidonios and Amompharetos and Philokyon and Kallikrates. So the ἱρέες were in one grave, and in another the rest of the Spartiates, and in a third the helots. (9.85, trans. D. Grene, modified)

- 2 The ancient terminology pertaining to the city of Sparta and the geographical region and political unit that encompassed the city of Sparta was complex and evolved over the course of time. It is common practice in the present day to use Sparta in a broad sense and hence, for example, to write about the ‘Spartan state’ or ‘Spartan warriors’. This usage is in many ways convenient, but it is also vague and potentially misleading, not least because it implicitly equates the entire state with the city of Sparta and the relatively small group of full citizens, Spartiates, that for the most part lived in the city of Sparta. In the interests of clarity, Sparta is here given a more restricted meaning as the designation of an urban center, rather than a state or ethnicity; the geographical region in which Sparta was located is here called Lakonia; the political unit in which Sparta was located (a political unit that encompassed the regions of Lakonia and of Messenia) is here called Lakedaimon. This system of nomenclature is relatively straightforward, but it does not do justice to the full complexity of the ancient terminology, on which see Cartledge 2002: 4-5; Shipley 2004: 570-71. The precise nature of the Lakedaimonian state (whether, for instance, it can be properly classified as a *polis*) continues to be a subject of debate. The relevant issues are well treated in Ducat 2008. (See Ducat 2010 for an abridged version of the same article in English translation.) Greek words and names have here been transliterated in such a way as to be as faithful as possible to original spellings while taking into account established usages for well-known individuals and places. BCE/CE are specified only in instances where the epoch in question is not immediately evident from context.
- 3 The Greek text of the passages from Herodotus here and below is taken from Flower & Marincola 2002.

The most obvious (but, as will become apparent, by no means the only possible) translation of ἱεεῖς is ‘priests’, the specific form being understood as an Ionic dialectal variant of ἱερεῖς.

The text of Herodotus 9.85 as transmitted presents two serious difficulties.<sup>4</sup> First, Herodotus mentions the names of four occupants of the grave of the ἱεεῖς (Poseidonios, Amompharetos, Philokyon, and Kallikrates), and three of those men are characterized by Herodotus as the Spartiates who most distinguished themselves in the fighting:

καὶ ἄριστος ἐγένετο μακρῶ Ἀριστόδημος κατὰ γνώμας τὰς ἡμετέρας, ὃς ἐκ Θερμοπυλέων μούνος τῶν τριηκοσίων σωθεὶς εἶχε ὄνειδος καὶ ἀτιμίην· μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον ἠρίστευσαν Ποσειδώνιος τε καὶ Φιλοκῦων καὶ Ἀμομφάρετος Σπαρτιῆται. καίτοι, γενομένης λέσχης ὃς γένοιτο αὐτῶν ἄριστος, ἔγνωσαν οἱ παραγενόμενοι Σπαρτιητέων Ἀριστόδημον μὲν βουλόμενον φανερώς ἀποθανεῖν ἐκ τῆς παρεούσης οἱ αἰτίας, λυσσῶντά τε καὶ ἐκλείποντα τὴν τάξιν ἔργα ἀποδέξασθαι μεγάλα, Ποσειδώνιον δὲ οὐ βουλόμενον ἀποθνήσκειν ἄνδρα γενέσθαι ἀγαθόν· τοσοῦτῳ τοῦτον εἶναι ἀμείνω. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν καὶ φθόνῳ ἂν εἴποιεν· οὔτοι δὲ τοὺς κατέλεξα πάντες, πλὴν Ἀριστοδήμου, τῶν ἀποθανόντων ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ μάχῃ τίμιοι ἐγένοντο, Ἀριστόδημος δὲ βουλόμενος ἀποθανεῖν διὰ τὴν προειρημένην αἰτίην οὐκ ἐτιμήθη.

Far the best of the Lakedaimonians was Aristodemus, in my judgment, who, because he alone of the Three Hundred survived [Thermopylai], had been shamed and dishonored. After him the bravest were the Spartiates Poseidonios and Philokyon and Amompharetos. When there was some dispute about who was actually the bravest, those Spartiates who were present gave as their judgment that Aristodemus was but that he had openly wanted to die to redress the dishonor that lay on him, and that the great deeds he did that day were those of a man crazy and leaving his rank, but that Poseidonios was not seeking death in his bravery and so he was much the better man of the two. They may have urged this out of mere jealousy. All those I mentioned

4 Flower & Marincola 2002: 255.

were killed in the fight, and were decorated for honor, except Aristodemus. But Aristodemus, because he wanted to die, for the reason just stated, was not honored. (9.71, trans. D. Grene, modified)

The information provided by Herodotus, with ἱεῖες translated as ‘priests’, can be graphically represented in the form of a Venn diagram as seen in Figure 1.

Very little is known about priesthoods in Sparta prior to Roman times, during which period the rich epigraphic record attests to the existence of 28 hereditary priesthoods (some held by women) and a much smaller number of non-hereditary priesthoods.<sup>5</sup> There is no obvious reason to think that the number of priesthoods in Classical Sparta was significantly higher or that there were large numbers of Spartan priests at Plataia.<sup>6</sup> There were also Spartan *manteis* (Xen. *Lac.* 13.7; Plut. *Lyc.* 9.3), a hereditary caste of *mageiroi* (Hdt. 6.60) who played

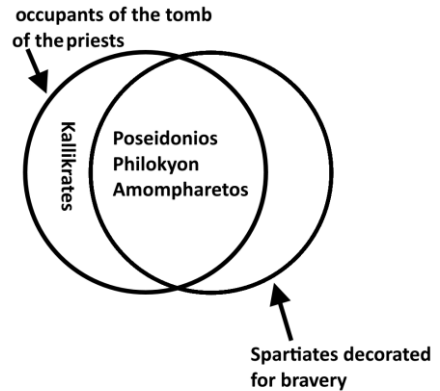


Figure 1: Venn diagram of the information supplied by Herodotus about the occupants of the tomb of the ἱεῖες and about the Spartiates decorated for bravery.

5 Spawforth 1992: 230-33. For more detail, see Hupfloher 2000: 31-211.

6 Parker 1989: 143-44 and Richer 2012: 27-28 point out that there are only two priest-hoods known in Classical Sparta, both of which were hereditary positions held by the kings. Rahe has argued that ‘Classical Sparta had a wealthy, landed aristocracy, and that aristocracy appears to have been constituted as a caste of priests’ (Rahe 1980: 386). The only evidence Rahe cites to defend that statement is Herodotus 9.85 and den Boer’s reading of that passage (on which see below). If Spartan elites were indeed a ‘priestly caste’, it is possible that significant numbers of Spartiates held a religious office of one kind or another, but if so, that practice has left surprisingly little trace in the literary and epigraphic evidence. Antony Spawforth has also posited the existence of a priestly aristocracy in Classical Sparta (Cartledge & Spawforth 2002: 152), but only in the sense that certain priesthoods were, as in Athens, hereditary within families. Kennell 1995: 14 specifically rejects the existence of a priestly aristocracy of any kind in Sparta.

a role at public sacrifices, and four *Pythioi* (Hdt. 6.57) who helped maintain Lakedaimon's close relationship with Delphi.<sup>7</sup> The individuals filling these positions may have come under the heading of ἱερείς for the purposes of battlefield burial.<sup>8</sup>

Given the evidence at our disposal, it seems unlikely that there were more than fifty priesthoods in Sparta at the time of Plataia or that there were more than fifty Spartiates present at Plataia who were priests or who could be counted under that heading when it came time to bury the dead.<sup>9</sup> It would, therefore, be a nearly unbelievable coincidence that all three of the men decorated for bravery (Poseidonios, Philokyon, Amompharetos) happened to be priests (as would naturally follow from the fact that they were buried in the tomb of the ἱερείς, with ἱερείς translated as 'priests').<sup>10</sup> The improbability of such an overlap is perhaps more obvious when represented graphically; in Figure 2 the size of each circle

7 For more detail, see Richer 2012: 253–66.

8 Lupi 2006: 193 has argued that 'had Herodotus simply wished to say that the soldiers buried in the first tomb were not really priests, but more generically "holy" men ... he would have used the term ἱποί, as he does elsewhere in his *Histories*'. However, it is entirely possible that Herodotus did in fact mean to say that the men buried in the first tomb were priests. Moreover, Herodotus seems in some instances to use the terms ἱερεύς and ἱός (as a substantive) interchangeably. See, for example, 2.54.1 and 2.56.1.

9 Some of those fifty priesthoods will have been held by women and so, by definition, not everyone holding a priesthood in Sparta could conceivably have been present in the Spartiate ranks at Plataia. Moreover, Herodotus' Demaratos states that there were 8,000 Spartiates in his time (7.234.2), and Herodotus puts Spartiate strength at Plataia at 5,000, and hence at a little less than two-thirds of their total number. We might assume, therefore, there was a maximum of fifty Spartiates at Plataia who could have been construed as ἱερείς even if that group included religious officials other than priests.

10 The problem is neatly stated in Parker 1989: 163 n. 4.

represents each of the groups in proportion to their actual numbers. How, one might wonder, could it be that a group representing (at most) 1% of the total number of the Spartiates at Plataia produced 100% of the Spartiates decorated for bravery?

A second difficulty is the absence of any mention of a grave for the *perioikoi*. The basic sociopolitical groupings within Lakedaimonian society were Spartiates, *perioikoi*, and helots. Herodotus (9.10-11, 28) states that there were 10,000 Lakedaimonian hoplites at Plataia, 5,000 Spartiates and 5,000 *perioikoi*, and that each Spartiate brought with him seven helots, who served as light-armed auxiliaries. The Lakedaimonian forces engaged in a desperate battle with a numerically superior enemy and suffered casualties, though Herodotus supplies specific numbers only for the Spartiates. (He states that 91 Spartiates were killed.<sup>11</sup>) One would, therefore, expect that if the Lakedaimonians made three graves, then the Spartiates, *perioikoi*, and helots would each have had a grave of their own.<sup>12</sup> But, according to Herodotus, two graves were

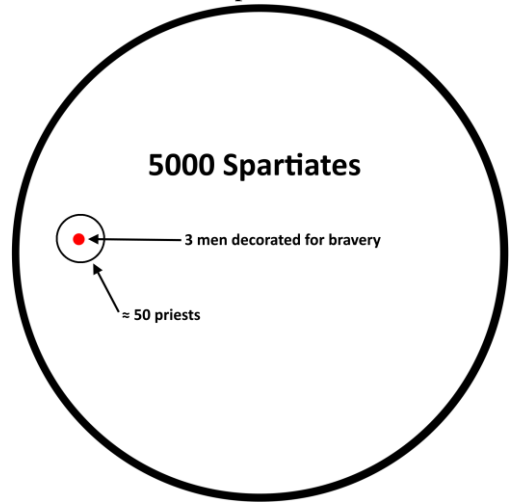


Figure 2: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates at Plataia according to Herodotus 9.85 (with ἱεῖες translated as ‘priests’).

11 9.70, reading Λακεδαιμονίων δὲ τῶν ἐκ Σπάρτης as Spartiates. Richer (1994: 66; 2012: 171-72) suggests an alternative reading of this phrase, namely that it anticipates 9.85 and describes Spartiates and *perioikoi* as a group that was buried in a single tomb. That is, however, difficult to reconcile with ἐκ Σπάρτης. On the Lakedaimonian casualties at Plataia, see Flower & Marincola 2002: 230-31. The figure of 10,000 Greek casualties given in Diodorus 11.33.1 is part and parcel of the wildly inflated numbers that Diodorus assigns to all aspects of the battle (e.g. 400,000 men from the Persian forces fleeing with Artabazos, 11.33.1).

12 See, for instance, Richer 1994: 64-6; 2012: 170-71. Herodotus himself was certainly aware of the *perioikoi* and their status. See, for example, 6.58, 7.234.

dedicated to Spartiates and one to helots, leaving the *perioikoi* unaccounted for.

An important piece of information to keep in mind is that the manuscripts of Herodotus' work fall into two families, both of which begin with manuscripts from the tenth century CE.<sup>13</sup> The variation among the two families is not great, and all of the manuscripts provide a text of 9.85 that differs only in minute details from one exemplar to the next.<sup>14</sup> The difficulties with 9.85 cannot, as a result, be resolved by adopting a reading provided by one manuscript but not another.

Some sort of scholarly exegesis is therefore required in order to make sense of 9.85, and, as Willetts observed, scholars have written prolifically about this passage, starting in the middle of the eighteenth century and continuing through the present day.<sup>15</sup> The proposed interpretations include, but are not limited to, assigning to ἰρέες the meaning of 'men who fought heroically' and emending ἰρέες to either ἰρένες (an age-class of young men in the Spartiate educational system) or ἰππέες (members of an elite Spartiate infantry unit). For obvious reasons, the varied approaches to interpreting 9.85 result in very different readings of the passage and equally divergent understandings of its significance.

This is a good moment to reconsider 9.85 on a holistic basis because it is now possible to bring into the discussion much more fully than before archaeological evidence for Spartiate burial practice. Numerous sources show that, starting in the mid-sixth century at the latest, Lakedaimonian

13 For brief overviews of the manuscripts, see Flower & Marincola 2002: 48-49; Wilson 2015b: vol. 1, ix-x. For more detailed discussion, see McNeal 1983; Rosén 1987-97: vol. 1, xxiv-lxvii. Although a certain number of relevant papyrus fragments have been published, none has as yet appeared for Book 9 (though some are expected to be published soon) (Flower & Marincola 2002: 48; Wilson 2015b: vol. 1, ix; cf. the cautionary note at West 2011: 71). None of the few published *scholia* for Book 9 (which can be found in Asheri, Vannicelli, Corcella & Fraschetti 2006: 165-67) pertain to 9.85.

14 The most complete *apparatus criticus* can be found in Rosén's Teubner from 1987-1997.

15 The relevant secondary literature cited here ranges from Wesseling's 1763 edition of Herodotus to a book of textual studies published by Wilson in 2015. 9.85 was certainly commented upon prior to 1763, but I have not made an effort to trace the earlier scholarship because it has left no discernible traces in subsequent interpretations of 9.85, whereas Wesseling's edition suggests an emendation of 9.85 that is found in Rosén's Teubner edition from 1997.

soldiers who had been killed in battle were buried in *polyandria* either on the battlefield itself or in the territory of a nearby friendly community.<sup>16</sup> Other than 9.85, however, none of those sources has anything to say about the nature of those *polyandria*. The only known and excavated Lakedaimonian *polyandria* – the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Athenian Kerameikos – was built for Lakedaimonian soldiers who were killed while on duty in Athens in 403. That tomb was first excavated in 1915 and then again in the 1930s.<sup>17</sup> However, due to World War I and II, many of the relevant records and finds were lost, and the results of the excavations were incompletely published. With that in mind, a team from the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut at Athens carefully re-examined the tomb starting in 2002, and a preliminary report of the results appeared in 2006. That report substantially revises earlier understandings of the tomb, and we are now much better equipped than before to bring 9.85 and this tomb into a productive dialog with each other.

The precise meaning of 9.85 has also taken on new importance due to the major strides that have recently been made in our understanding of burial practice in the city of Sparta. Up through the year 1995 there were less than a dozen known graves from the city of Sparta for the entire span of time starting in the Protogeometric period and going down through the end of the Classical period, and not a single organized cemetery from that time span had been found in Sparta. As a result, our knowledge of burial practice in Sparta came almost entirely from a few, brief passages in the literary sources.

All that changed with a series of rescue excavations undertaken in Sparta since 1995, which turned up not only numerous graves, but also the first known organized cemetery that was in use in the post-Mycenaean / pre-Hellenistic period. It is now clear that during the Archaic and Classical periods the inhabitants of Sparta buried their dead both in organized cemeteries located on the periphery of the city and in small plots located in the densely inhabited portion of the urban core. The practice of burying individuals, many of whom seem to have been adults, both in liminal cemeteries and in the heart of the city of Sparta raises the

16 See Section 2 for further discussion.

17 See Section 2 for further details and citation of the relevant sources.



question of who was being buried in different parts of the city. The archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Sparta, at least at present, provide no immediate answer to that question. That, in turn, makes us reliant on literary sources.<sup>18</sup>

One possible interpretation of 9.85 is that Spartiate priests who died in combat were buried separately from other Spartiate casualties so that the Lakedaimonians killed in any given battle were placed in at least two distinct battlefield graves. That possibility is perhaps reinforced by a passage from Plutarch's *Lycurgus* (27.1-2), which sketches the restrictions placed on burials in Sparta and which includes the claim that only men who died in war and ἱεραὶ had the right to an inscribed grave marker. The meaning of ἱεραὶ has been the subject of much discussion; recent scholarship has interpreted ἱεραὶ to be female religious officials of some kind.<sup>19</sup>

As a result, one possible interpretation of Herodotus 9.85, taken together with *Lycurgus* 27.1-2, may indicate that the male and female Spartiate religious officials received special forms of burial. That in turn suggests that it was members of that group who were buried within the settled area of the city of Sparta. This would represent a major and previously unknown divergence between burial practice in Sparta and the rest of the Greek world and would provide important new information about Spartiate society. On the other hand, if the Spartiates buried in a separate grave at Plataia were men who had fought heroically, young men, or members of an elite Spartiate infantry unit (all interpretations that have been proposed and that are discussed below), then a different range of possibilities must be considered with respect to the identity of the individuals buried in the heart of Sparta's urban fabric. The interpretation of 9.85 thus has potentially significant ramifications for our understanding of Spartiate burial practices, both on battlefields and in Sparta itself.

Herodotus 9.85 is also a *locus classicus* for treatments of the Spartiate educational system. A proposed emendation from ἰπέεξ to ἰπένεξ would

18 On the literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence for Spartiate burial practices, see Hodkinson 2000: 237-70; Cartledge 2012. Neither of those sources discuss the results from the new excavations in Sparta, which are treated in Tsouli 2013; 2016; and Christesen 2019.

19 See Section 3.1 for further discussion.

make 9.85 the earliest reference to age-classes in the Spartiate educational system. That emendation has been widely accepted (see Section 3.3), and, as a result, 9.85 – and the question of whether the emendation in question should be accepted – have been important components of scholarly work on Spartiate education. Those issues are, for example, explored in detail in Kennell and Ducat’s recent monographs.<sup>20</sup>

Other bodies of scholarship have also made regular use of 9.85. For instance, if the ἱερείς were indeed priests, then 9.85 becomes one of the very few pieces of evidence for the number and status of Spartiate priests in the Classical period. It has, therefore, been regularly cited in discussions of Spartiate religion.<sup>21</sup> In a very different vein, 9.85 is featured in an article published by Cotter in 1992 that attempts to supply an etymology for εἴρων.<sup>22</sup>

9.85 thus stands at the intersection of several heavily-traveled scholarly pathways. Despite the efforts invested in interpreting it, this part of the *Histories* has resisted definitive exegesis, and over the course of decades and centuries, a thoroughly confusing thicket of scholarly literature has grown up around it. To extend the metaphor, the trees have multiplied to the point of obscuring the forest.

It has, as a result, become challenging for anyone interested in 9.85 to make sense of the relevant scholarship without investing a great deal of time and effort. Most of that scholarship presents a particular reading of the passage oriented toward a specific subject (e.g., Spartiate age-classes), and to the extent that overviews exist, they are distinctly incomplete in their coverage.<sup>23</sup> For someone encountering the interpretive challenges of 9.85 for the first time, the corpus of secondary literature is daunting and can, because it is replete with mutually exclusive hypotheses, produce more disorientation than enlightenment.

The primary purpose of this article is, so to speak, to offer a map of the forest. More specifically, the aim is to provide a wide-ranging review of the various readings of 9.85 that have been suggested and of the strengths and weaknesses of each of those readings. Though the text that

20 Kennell 1995: 14-16; Ducat 2006: 94-95.

21 See, for instance, Parker 1989: 163 n. 4; Toher 1999: 118-26.

22 Cotter 1992.

23 Willetts 1980 is the most relevant example, but see also Gilula 2003 and Makres 2009.

follows grew out of my own research on Spartiate burial practices, it is non-denominational in the sense that it is not oriented toward any specific subject.

It is important to emphasize that I make no claim to offering a new reading of 9.85 or to identifying any particular pre-existing reading as definitively preferable. Rather, the goal of this article is to streamline as much as possible the task of comprehending what has been said to date about 9.85 and, in the process, to facilitate the work of scholars interested in this part of the *Histories*. A more aspirational goal is to catalyze new research that finally cuts what has so far proved to be an interpretive Gordian knot. That said, I do, at the end of the article, highlight what I consider to be the most likely solutions to the two primary difficulties with 9.85: (1) the overlap between Herodotus' list of the bravest Spartiates and his list of the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες, and (2) the absence of any mention of a grave for the *perioikoi*. I suggest that the phrase ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ Ἀμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης should be athetized and that the *perioikoi* were placed in the same tomb that held the Spartiate casualties who were not ἱρέες.

## 2. THE RELIABILITY OF HERODOTUS' ACCOUNT OF THE LAKEDAEMONIAN GRAVES AT PLATAIA

Exegesis of 9.85 is hindered by the near-total absence of other sources of information about precisely how the Lakedaimonians buried their dead on battlefields. As mentioned above, there are a sufficient number of references to show that it was habitual Lakedaimonian practice, starting in the middle of the sixth century at the latest, to bury casualties on the battlefields where they had been killed, or in the territory of a nearby friendly community.<sup>24</sup> (This stood in obvious contrast to the Athenian practice, starting in the early years of the fifth century, of bringing home soldiers' remains for burial in the Demosion Sema.<sup>25</sup>) However, literary

24 Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 4, 241-46.

25 For the dating of the beginning of burials in the Demosion Sema and the related funerary practices, see Arrington 2010.

sources other than Herodotus have little to say about the details of Lakedaimonian battlefield burials. Pausanias, for example, describes the tombs at Plataia as follows:

Just at the entrance into Plataia are the graves of the men who fought against the Medes. There are separate graves for the Lacedaemonians and Athenians who fell, and elegies of Simonides are carved upon them. The rest of the Greeks are buried in a common tomb.<sup>26</sup> (9.2.5, trans. J. Frazer)

The relevant archaeological evidence consists solely of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in Athens (discussed in detail below). None of the tombs Herodotus mentions at Plataia have been found,<sup>27</sup> and none of the other known *polyandria* for Lakedaimonian soldiers killed in battle have been excavated. The result is that we cannot rapidly resolve the two aforementioned problems (the overlap between those decorated for bravery and the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες, the absence of a tomb for the *perioikoi*) by reading 9.85 against a collection of other textual or archaeological evidence that would provide immediate insight into how Lakedaimonians were buried on battlefields.

One immediate possibility is that the two aforementioned problems with 9.85 are related in the sense that Herodotus may have simply been misinformed about the nature of the Lakedaimonian graves at Plataia and that all the Spartiates were buried in a single grave, the *perioikoi* in a second grave, the helots in a third. Within the bounds of that scenario, the listing of Poseidonios, Philokyon, Amompharetos, and Kallikrates as the occupants of the grave of the ἱρέες is easily understood. These four Spartiates are discussed in some detail in 9.71-72, indicating that Herodotus had a special interest in them. In listing the occupants of the grave

26 On the other ancient references to the tombs at Plataia (none of which is informative for the issues under consideration here), see Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 4, 174-75; Asheri, Vannicelli, Corcella & Frascchetti 2006: 290. For a full conspectus of the ancient literary sources for the Plataia campaign as a whole, see Wright 1904: 119-43. The major addition to the list of sources provided by Wright is the New Simonides, on which see Section 3.5.

27 Asheri, Vannicelli, Corcella & Frascchetti 2006: 291.

of the ἱρέες, which was (in this scenario) really a common grave for all Spartiates, he simply repeated the names of four Spartiates who had died in the battle and in whom he had a special interest. As for assigning one of the three graves solely to Spartiate ἱρέες, it is entirely possible that one or more of the 91 Spartiate casualties were priests. Herodotus' two Spartiate graves would thus be a thoroughly confused description of a single grave for all Spartiate casualties that included, but was not limited to, one or more Spartiate ἱρέες.<sup>28</sup>

The question then becomes whether there is reason to believe that Herodotus' account of the Lakedaimonian graves at Plataia is, at least in general terms, reliable. It would in fact be rather surprising if Herodotus went awry on this point. The entire narrative trajectory of the *Histories* finds its culmination in the Greek victory at Plataia, and the Lakedaimonians play a central role in Herodotus' description of the battle. Herodotus had every reason, therefore, to take considerable care with the details of everything pertaining to Plataia in general and the Lakedaimonians at Plataia in particular. The continuing importance of the graves of the Greek soldiers who died and were buried at Plataia is apparent in the speech Thucydides gives to the Plataians pleading for mercy from the Lakedaimonians in 427. In that speech the Plataians emphasize the regular offerings they made at the Lakedaimonian tombs (3.58.4). Moreover, Herodotus was researching and writing at a time when many of the Greek soldiers who fought at Plataia were still alive, and it seems *prima facie* unlikely that an erroneous description of the Lakedaimonian graves there could have gone unnoticed and uncorrected.

There are, nonetheless, several discrepancies between the information provided by Herodotus about the graves at Plataia and that found in other, later sources. Herodotus (9.85) lists eight distinct graves (three for the Lakedaimonians; one each for the Tegeans, Athenians, Megarians, and Phliasians; and a later cenotaph for the Aeginetans) and says that there were other cenotaphs. Thucydides (2.34.5) states that Athenian casualties were always buried in Athens except in the case of Marathon.

28 I have not seen this argument laid out in the way it is articulated here, but Macan (1908: vol 1.2, 770) reaches a roughly similar conclusion with slightly different reasoning.

Pausanias (9.2.5) mentions only three graves (Lakedaimonians, Athenians, the rest of the Greeks). Plutarch in his biography of Aristides (10-21) gives an account of Plataia that differs from that of Herodotus in a number of respects, and in his *On the Malice of Herodotus* (*Mor.* 871e-873d)<sup>29</sup> directly contradicts Herodotus' claim about cenotaphs at Plataia.<sup>30</sup>

These discrepancies do not, either individually or collectively, present compelling reason to doubt the accuracy of Herodotus' description of the graves of the Lakedaimonians at Plataia. Thucydides' statement occurs in a passage that introduces Pericles' *epitaphios*, and, in the course of doing so, he cites Marathon as the exception to the rule that Athenians buried their war dead in the Kerameikos. Modern commentators have consistently, and reasonably, presumed that Thucydides cites the most obvious exception but makes no pretense of supplying a complete list of exceptions.<sup>31</sup> Pausanias visited Plataia six centuries after the battle was fought, and, as Michael Flower and John Marincola point out, 'Paus[anias]'s statements cannot be used to correct H[erodotus], and whatever Paus[anias] saw, it was not likely the same thing that stood there 600 years before'.<sup>32</sup>

Marincola has argued persuasively that the divergences between the account of Plataia and its aftermath supplied by Herodotus on one hand and by Plutarch on the other can be attributed in large part to Plutarch's

29 *On the Malice of Herodotus* is currently, contrary to past practice, taken to be a genuine work of Plutarch. See Bowen 1992: 2-3; Marincola 2016: 103 and n. 9. For a text and English translation, see Bowen 1992.

30 Plutarch argues that what Herodotus called cenotaphs were actual graves for casualties suffered by the forces of various cities that Herodotus disliked and hence sought to denigrate by effacing their role in the victory at Plataia. The most likely explanation of the situation is that some Greek communities buried their dead at Plataia, whereas others repatriated the remains of the casualties for burial at home. As Plataia developed into something of a national shrine, the absence of a grave there became a problem for communities that had sent forces to Plataia and that had repatriated their dead. The solution to that problem was to erect a cenotaph at the site; Aegina, for example, built a cenotaph for its Plataia dead ten years after the battle. See further the discussion in Bowen 1992: 146.

31 Hornblower 1991-2008: vol. 1, 294.

32 Flower & Marincola 2002: 254.

desire to make Plataia into a triumph of a culturally harmonious Panhellenic army over a non-Greek invader.<sup>33</sup> Herodotus' description of the graves at Plataia was a problem for Plutarch in that they were overt signs that the victory was due to the efforts of just a handful of Greek communities with different burial customs.

It is also important to note that Herodotus' description of the Lakedaimonian graves at Plataia is consonant with what we now know about the tomb in the Athenian Kerameikos for the men killed during King Pausanias' expedition to Athens in 403. Xenophon describes the casualties from Pausanias' expedition as follows:

And there died Chairon and Thibrachos, both polemarchs [high-ranking officers], and Lakrates the Olympic victor and other Lakedaimonians who lie buried in front of the city gates in the Kerameikos. (*Hell.* 2.4.33, trans. S. Hodkinson)

The tomb described by Xenophon has been identified with a high degree of certainty. It is located in the Kerameikos, about 100 meters north of the Dipylon Gate, alongside the western edge of the road leading from the Dipylon Gate to the Academy.<sup>34</sup> The finds from the excavations of the tomb include a number of red-figure vases produced in Lakonia (such vases are very rarely found outside of Lakedaimon<sup>35</sup>). In addition, a 2.2 meter-long block (see Figure 3) with the following inscription, written retrograde and in the Lakonian alphabet,<sup>36</sup> was found 4.5 m to the east of the tomb, built into a Roman foundation wall:

33 Marincola 2016.

34 For the location of the tomb, see the useful plans of the area provided in Arrington 2010: 512, figures 2-4. The tomb is not mentioned by Pausanias in his description of the area (1.29), but it is referenced by Lysias (2.63).

35 McPhee 1986: 158 n. 37; Stroszeck 2014b: 138-40, 141 n. 17.

36 On the reasons why the inscription is retrograde, see van Hook 1932. The block with the inscription is Hymettian marble (Peek 1941: 40).

*litteris singulis inter nomina scriptis*  
 Λ|α|[[κεδαίμονιοι]  
 col. I.1 Θίβρακος  
 πολέμαρχος  
 col. II.1 Χαίρον  
 πολέμαρχος  
 col. III.1 — — —



Figure 3: Drawing of inscribed block from the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Athenian Kerameikos (IG II<sup>2</sup> 11678).

The large lambda and alpha are plausibly restored as the beginning of Λακεδαίμονιοι, and there can be no doubt about the names Chairon and Thibrakos.<sup>37</sup> There has been continuing discussion as to whether a letter that begins the next casualty name is visible on the left margin of the stone and whether that letter is a lambda or mu.<sup>38</sup> This was the first of several blocks (the inscription in its original form would have been c. 12 m long) that ran to the left of the sole extant piece of the inscription.

The tomb was discovered in 1914 and excavated in 1915 and the 1930s. Publication of the results of those excavations remained incomplete due

37 The letters are in the Lakonian rather than Ionic alphabet, hence there is what might seem to be a psi at the beginning of Chairon's name. Xenophon spells Thibrachos with a chi, whereas the inscription uses a kappa. An alternate restoration of Λάκωνες (instead of Λακεδαίμονιοι) was originally suggested and has recently been raised again in Kienlin 2003: 121.

38 On this inscription, see Peek 1941: 40-41; Matthaïou 2006; Ruggeri, Siewert & Steffelbauer 2007: 182-84. On the question of the letter on the left margin of the stone, see van Hook 1932: 291; Peek 1941: 41; Willemsen 1977: 136 (all of whom argue for a mu) as well as Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 4, 134 n. 123 (who seems inclined to read a lambda). Kienlin (2003: 116-18, 121) argues that the inscription belonged to some other monument because it was too long to fit on the tomb in question. Stroszeck, however, explicitly connects the inscription with the tomb in question ('An der korrekten Zuweisung der Inschrift zu diesem Grabbau kann kein ernsthafter Zweifel bestehen', Stroszeck 2006: 102), and the reasoning behind Kienlin's suggestion is refuted in Arrington's recent study of the Demosion Sema (Arrington 2010: 512 n. 85).



to the loss of materials (both records and finds) during World Wars I and II. The tomb was re-examined in 1961 to record the extant remains, which had been damaged since the last round of excavations and for which detailed plans were not available; the results were published in brief reports in the years that followed.<sup>39</sup> In 2002 a team, led by Jutta Stroszeck from the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut at Athens, began a new series of excavations, and preliminary reports of the results began appearing in print in 2006. A final, full report has not yet been published.<sup>40</sup>

The Tomb of the Lakedaimonians forms part of a series of tombs that are distinct from each other, but still physically proximate or actually physically connected. There has been, therefore, some discussion as to where the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians begins and ends. This task has been complicated by the facts that the tomb was built in multiple phases and that the area saw a great deal of later activity.

Stroszeck argues persuasively that the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians is the structure that, in its finished form, held the skeletons numbered 1-17 and 19-24 in Figure 4.<sup>41</sup> She disassociates Skeletons 18 and 25 from the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians on the grounds that those burials are situated at a higher level and show significant differences in the disposition of remains (most obviously, the skeletons are aligned parallel to the street).<sup>42</sup> That conclusion is reinforced by disparities in construction.

39 Ohly 1961-62; 1965: 314-22.

40 The discussion provided here is based primarily on Stroszeck 2006; Stroszeck & Pitsios 2008; and Stroszeck 2014a: 254-65, though see also Kienlin 2003; Pitt 2010: 6-7; and Marchiandi 2014. See Marchiandi 2014: 1331 for a listing of earlier bibliography.

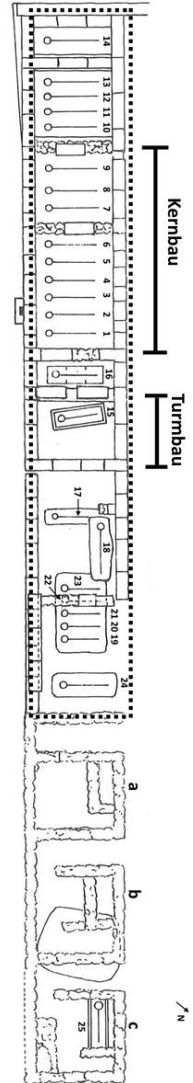
41 Kienlin 2003 decisively refutes the mooted connection between the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians and the monumental tomb, labeled by the German excavators as Staatsgrab am dritten Horos, just to the north. In some sections of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians, multiple corpses were interred in a single pit (e.g. Skeletons 1-6) and hence it is more precise, in discussing certain sections of the tomb, to talk about particular skeletons rather than particular burials.

42 Skeleton 18 seems to be a later intrusion. The structures labeled a-c in Figure 4 all seem to have been used as spaces for making offerings for the dead. Structure c was built around a pre-existing sarcophagus burial (Willemsen 1977: 137; Stroszeck 2014a: 261-62).

Figure 4: Arrangement of burials in the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Athenian Kerameikos – the edges of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians are indicated by dotted lines (based on Stroszeck 2006: 102 figure 1).

The structure around Skeletons 1-24 is built from poros ashlar blocks, whereas the structures labeled a-c in Figure 4 are built from mud brick.<sup>43</sup>

It is now evident, as a result of the new excavations, that the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians was built in multiple construction phases, all of which seem to have been carried out within a relatively short space of time. In the first phase, two burial pits were made, one for Skeletons 1-6 and another for Skeletons 7-9; a mud-brick funerary structure was erected over Skeletons 1-6 and a low tumulus was raised over Skeletons 7-9. In a second phase, the mud-brick funerary structure and the low tumulus were removed, and two separate tombs were built, one for Skeletons 1-9 (the Kernbau) and one for Skeleton 15 (the Turmbau). The Kernbau was then extended to the south and the north, in order to accommodate Skeletons 10-14 and 16. (As a result, the originally separate Kernbau and Turmbau were connected.) Finally, the Turmbau was extended to the north for Skeletons 17 and 19-24. The aforementioned inscription was positioned either over the Kernbau, or over both the Kernbau and the section of the tomb holding Skeletons 10-14.<sup>44</sup> In the third quarter of the fourth century, a boundary stone for the



43 Kienlin 2003: 113-14.

44 The reason why the burials were made episodically but over a short period of time remains unclear. Stroszeck suggests that some men died from their wounds or that further skirmishes were fought in which the Lakedaimonian detachment suffered casualties. It is noteworthy that Skeleton 14 is situated at a higher level than Skeletons 10-13, likely because the individual that became Skeleton 14 died while the

Kerameikos was erected in the middle of the tomb's façade.

The tomb originally consisted of five courses of limestone ashlar blocks (many of which had been used in an earlier, unknown structure).<sup>45</sup> The topmost course of masonry was slightly set back, giving the tomb a stepped façade. The Turmbau had additional courses of masonry so that it was slightly higher than the rest of the structure (see Figure 5). The interior of the tomb was filled with earth; there is no evidence that it had a built covering of any kind. In its finished form the tomb measured 3.77 m wide, c. 24 m long, and c. 2.5 m high.



Figure 5: Schematic Reconstruction of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Athenian Kerameikos (by Michael Christesen, based on Stroszeck 2014a: 259 figure 74.12). The Tomb of the Lakedaimonians is the structure built from ashlar blocks on the left side of the drawing; the structure on the right side of the drawing (mudbrick on a fieldstone foundation) encompassed the structures marked as a-c in Figure 4. The boundary stone placed in front of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the fourth century is not shown in this reconstruction.

All of the 23 individuals interred in the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians are male, and all of the burials are inhumations; the bodies were placed in an extended supine position with their heads facing roughly east. The

tomb surrounding Skeletons 10-13 was under construction (Pitt 2010: 6-7). This suggests a compressed timeframe in which the Lakedaimonians continued to suffer casualties.

45 The area in which the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians stood had previously been occupied by the northern wing of a bathhouse and part of a pottery workshop. Those structures were destroyed shortly before the tomb was built, presumably in the course of events during the Peloponnesian War.

bodies seem to have been wrapped tightly in cloth at the time of burial, which is in accord with later literary sources stating that Spartiate soldiers were buried in their *phoinikides*.<sup>46</sup> The only grave good is an alabaster alabastron found alongside Skeleton 15. (A considerable amount of pottery, the remnants of sacrifices carried out during the burial process, was found in the upper levels of the tomb, but was not associated with any particular skeleton(s).)

In the present context it is particularly salient that the burials in the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians display a considerable degree of differentiation. In the initial phase, two separate burial pits were dug, and each burial pit received its own, distinct marker. In the second phase, two separate structures were built (the Kernbau and the Turmbau), one of which (the Turmbau) held a single individual who was provided with the only grave good found in the tomb as a whole and who, unlike all of the other interred individuals, was buried in a sarcophagus. Furthermore, the Kernbau was subdivided into two sections (one holding Skeletons 1-6 and the other for Skeletons 7-9) by an interior cross wall. Skeletons 7-9 were further distinguished by the fact that two stones were placed under the head of each corpse, whereas Skeletons 1-6 received just one stone each.<sup>47</sup> In addition, a large stone was placed on the north side of Skeleton 8 so that Skeletons 8-9 were separated from Skeleton 7. In the same vein, Skeletons 17 and 19-24 were interred at the same time, but Skeletons 17 and 24 were given spatially distinct graves, whereas Skeletons 19-23 shared a single section of the tomb.

The design of the inscription, with names of individuals interspersed among the letters spelling *Λακεδαιμόνιοι*, would naturally accommodate the listing of up to 15 casualties (presuming that one casualty name was listed on each side of each letter in *Λακεδαιμόνιοι*) and could, therefore, have included the names of all the individuals buried in the southern part of the tomb, over which the inscription was positioned, as well as

46 Ael. *VH* 6.6; Plut. *Lyc.* 27.1-2, *Mor.* 238d; though see also the cautionary comments at van Wees 2018: 221. A number of the skeletons include remains of the weapons that were the cause of death. On those weapons, see Baitinger 1999. On the *phoinikis*, see Xen. *Lac.* 11.3.

47 The stones in question probably originally supported a pillow made from perishable materials.

the name of the individual buried in the Turmbau. Even so, it is noteworthy that the names supplied at the beginning of the inscription are those of the two commanders, whose rank is clearly specified. Stroszeck suggests that Skeletons 8 and 9 (the remains of individuals who were approximately 33 years old and 50 years old, respectively, at their time of death) are the bodies of the polemarchs Chairon and Thibrakos and that Skeleton 7 (approximately 20 years old at time of death) is the body of the Olympic victor Lakrates.<sup>48</sup>

Some caution is in order when using this tomb to help interpret 9.85. Insofar as it was built in an urban center and in an area of that urban center previously used for burials, it was sited differently from most other *polyandria* for Lakedaimonian casualties. In addition, it was built in an openly hostile community that may have imposed restrictions of various kinds on the Lakedaimonians. Finally, this tomb was constructed nearly 80 years after those in Plataia, and it is entirely possible that there was a significant element of diachronic change with respect to how Lakedaimonians buried their casualties, change of which we are unaware due to the lack of detail in the relevant sources.

On the other hand, many features of the tomb are emphatically Lakedaimonian. This is most immediately evident in the use of the Lakonian alphabet in the inscription, and the presence in the tomb of ceramics that were made in Lakonia and rarely exported.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the inscription on the tomb, which stretched for more than 10 meters and faced a road leading out from a busy city gate, boldly proclaimed Λακεδαιμόνιοι in large letters. There is, therefore, good reason to believe that the tomb reflects Lakedaimonian preferences and practices.

48 Spartiate Olympic victors enjoyed considerable prestige and were given the privilege of being stationed alongside the king in the Lakedaimonian phalanx (Christesen 2010; 2012: 228). Willemsen 1977 argued that Lakrates was neither a Spartiate nor buried in this tomb but rather an Athenian cavalryman who fought on the side of the Lakedaimonians. This suggestion was rejected by Moretti in the context of his magisterial research on Olympic victors (Moretti 1987: 119; cf. Moretti 1957: 109) and more recently in Kienlin 2003.

49 The vases in question came to Athens either as the personal property of the soldiers in the Lakedaimonian army unit stationed in Athens or were specially commissioned from Lakonian potters for the burial. See the discussion in Stroszeck 2006: 108-15.

A potentially relevant factor with respect to diachronic change is that the Lakedaimonian army seems to have undergone some sort of structural reform in the latter part of the fifth century (and hence between the time of Plataia and the construction of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Kerameikos). The relevant sources offer piecemeal and contradictory information that remains difficult to assemble into an entirely satisfactory whole. In general terms, however, it would appear that an important part of the army reform was the closer integration of *perioikoi* and Spartiates within Lakedaimonian military units.<sup>50</sup> That reform is germane to the issues under discussion here because it is possible that the shift in the organization of army units was accompanied by changes in burial practices. More specifically, the greater integration of *perioikoi* and Spartiates could have brought with it a convergence in how members of those two groups who had been killed in battle were buried. One might, for example, speculate that whereas Herodotus makes no explicit mention of burial arrangements for the *perioikoi* at Plataia, the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in Athens may have held both *perioikoi* and Spartiates.

It is, however, important to bear in mind that the Lakedaimonian soldiers buried in Athens were separated into multiple tombs with certain individuals being buried with special care, evidently on the basis of military rank (the polemarchs) or social status (the Olympic victor). For present purposes, whether the tomb in Athens held only Spartiates or both Spartiates and *perioikoi* is not a primary consideration. Rather, the key point is that the Lakedaimonians, when burying their casualties, initially built distinct tombs for different groups of individuals and treated the corpses buried in those tombs differently.

Hence the design and internal arrangements of the only excavated Lakedaimonian *polyandrion* resonate strongly with Herodotus' description of the Lakedaimonian tombs at Plataia. In both cases we encounter multiple, distinct graves for Lakedaimonian casualties from a single military engagement. That lends considerable credibility to Herodotus' claim that there were two graves for Spartiates at Plataia, one of which held a group that he (probably) designates as ἱπῆες.

50 See the discussions in Anderson 1970: 225-51; Cartledge 2002: 217-20; and Lipka 2002: 255-64. Cf. Lazenby 1985: 13-20, who argues that the *perioikoi* were always only marginally important in the Lakedaimonian army.

There is, therefore, good reason to believe that Herodotus' account of the Lakedaimonian tombs at Plataia is, at least in general terms, reliable. That in turn means that the difficulties with 9.85 cannot be dismissed as the result of Herodotus being badly informed. A different explanation is necessary.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS SCHOLARLY WORK ON HERODOTUS 9.85

Most of the scholarly discussion of 9.85 has focused on one of the two problems with the passage: the striking overlap between Herodotus' list of Lakedaimonians decorated for bravery and his list of the occupants of the grave of the ἱρέες. This can, as a convenient shorthand, be called the overlap problem.<sup>51</sup>

Six basic solutions, or minor variants thereon, have been proposed for the overlap problem.<sup>52</sup>

- (1) Herodotus' list of the men decorated for bravery is incomplete.
- (2) Herodotus' list of the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες is incomplete.
- (3) ἱρέες should be emended to ἱρένες.
- (4) ἱρέες should be emended to ἱππέες.
- (5) ἱρέες should be translated as 'men who fought heroically' rather than as 'priests'.
- (6) the phrase ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδῶνιος καὶ Ἄμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης should be athetized.

51 The importance of Herodotus' work and the regularity with which it has been read and commented upon have resulted in a massive volume of scholarship. It is, as a result, impossible in the present context to provide exhaustive bibliography on every point. I have made a particular effort to cite the earliest source I could discover for any given interpretation as well as scholarship from the past two decades.

52 Other solutions have been proposed but were so problematic as to receive little attention or support. For example, Willetts 1980: 276-77 suggested an emendation to σφαιρέας/σφαιρέες, but that term is known only from much later sources and would be out of place in Herodotus' text.

As we will see, solutions (1), (2), and (3) are almost certainly untenable. The remaining three solutions are all tenable; the one that appears last in the list given above has some claim to being the most probable.

### 3.1 HERODOTUS' LIST OF THE MEN DECORATED FOR BRAVERY IS INCOMPLETE

The solutions listed above resolve the overlap problem by expanding one of the two groups mentioned in 9.85 (the men decorated for bravery or the men buried in the grave of the *ἱεῖες*), by making the two groups identical, or removing the link between the two groups. The first solution we will consider takes the approach of expanding the group of men decorated for bravery.

In the 1950s Willem den Boer argued that Herodotus' list of soldiers who distinguished themselves at Plataia is incomplete and that the Lakedaimonian army decorated many more men for bravery than the three listed by Herodotus.<sup>53</sup> This resolves the overlap problem because, if significantly more than three men were decorated for bravery, then the fact that three of those decorated for bravery were *ἱεῖες* becomes less problematic.

In support of this argument Den Boer pointed to Plutarch *Lycurgus* 27.1-2, which reads as follows:

Καὶ μὴν καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς ταφὰς ἄριστα διεκόσμησεν αὐτοῖς. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἀνελὼν δεισιδαιμονίαν ἅπασαν ἐν τῇ πόλει θάπτειν τοὺς νεκροὺς, καὶ πλησίον ἔχειν τὰ μνήματα τῶν ἱερῶν οὐκ ἐκώλυσε, συντρόφους ποιῶν ταῖς τοιαύταις ὄψεσι καὶ συνήθεις τοὺς νέους, ὥστε μὴ ταράττεσθαι μηδ' ὀρρωδεῖν τὸν θάνατον ὡς μαινόντα τοὺς ἀψαμένους νεκροῦ σώματος ἢ διὰ τάφων διελθόντας. ἔπειτα συνθάπτειν οὐδὲν εἶασεν, ἀλλὰ ἐν φοινικίδι καὶ φύλλοις ἐλαίας θέντες τὸ σῶμα περιέστελλον. ἐπιγράψαι δὲ τοῦνομα θάψαντας οὐκ ἔξῃην τοῦ νεκροῦ, πλὴν ἀνδρὸς ἐν πολέμῳ καὶ γυναικὸς τῶν ἱερῶν

53 Den Boer 1954: 293-98.



ἀποθανόντων. χρόνον δὲ πένθους ὀλίγον προσώρισεν, ἡμέρας ἔνδεκα τῇ δὲ δωδεκάτῃ θύσαντας ἔδει Δήμητρι λύειν τὸ πάθος.

Furthermore, Lycurgus made excellent arrangements for their burials. First, removing all superstition, he did not prevent them from burying the dead within the *polis* and having the *mnemata* near the sacred places, thus making the youth familiar with such sights and accustomed to them, so that they were not disturbed by them and had no horror of deaths as polluting those who touched a corpse or walked among graves. Next, he allowed them to bury nothing with the body; instead they enfolded it in a *phoinikis* and olive leaves when they laid it away. When they buried it, it was not permitted to inscribe the name of the deceased, except for a man who died in war and γυναικὸς τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποθανόντων. He fixed a short period of mourning, eleven days; on the twelfth day they had to sacrifice to Demeter and end their grieving. (trans. S. Hodkinson, slightly modified)

Precisely what Plutarch meant by γυναικὸς τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποθανόντων is unclear, and various readings and emendations have been proposed.<sup>54</sup>

Den Boer made the case that Plutarch was saying that only *hieroi* (whom den Boer took to be priests) who died in battle and *hierai* (whom den Boer took to be priestesses) had the right to an inscribed epitaph. (This requires reading Plutarch's πλὴν ἀνδρὸς ἐν πολέμῳ καὶ γυναικὸς τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποθανόντων in such a way that both ἀνδρὸς and γυναικὸς depend upon ἱερῶν.) If one accepts that only priests who died in battle received an epitaph, then only one of the three Lakedaimonian graves at Plataia, the one for the ἱεεῖς, would have had a monument listing the names of the individuals interred therein. Den Boer is vague as to whether he thinks the grave of the ἱεεῖς held just the four named occupants or whether there were others whose names Herodotus does not mention.<sup>55</sup> In either case, the overlap between those named for distinguishing themselves in battle and those named as being buried in the

54 See the discussions in Hodkinson 2000: 243-46, 260-62; Brulé & Piolot 2004; Dillon 2007.

55 Kelly 1981: 33 takes den Boer to be saying the grave had just four occupants, but den Boer never explicitly makes that claim. It is conceivable that the grave of the ἱεεῖς

grave of the ἱπῆες becomes more readily understandable: Herodotus read the names of the ἱπῆες on the grave marker at Plataia and hence remembered them and put those names into his account of the battle, while omitting any mention of the names of the many other Spartiates who were decorated for bravery (including possibly Spartiates who were not killed in the fighting) but who were not ἱπῆες and thus whose names were not listed on the grave marker at Plataia. That would explain why Herodotus mentions Kallikrates, who was not decorated for bravery but who was, according to den Boer, a priest and hence had his name on a grave marker at Plataia.

Den Boer thus concludes that ‘there is, therefore, no question of an improbable coincidence that the four men mentioned were also priests’.<sup>56</sup> To return to one of our starting points, one of the two major problems with Herodotus’ account of Plataia is that it implies that a group representing (at most) 1% of the total number of Spartiates produced 100% of the Spartiates decorated for bravery. This can be represented graphically as seen in Figures 1 and 2. Den Boer’s solution – which resolves the problem by significantly expanding the number of Spartiates decorated for bravery – can be represented graphically as seen in Figures 6a-b.

held more than four individuals, all of whose names were listed on a marker over that grave, but that Herodotus chose to mention only Poseidonios, Philokyon, Amompharetos, and Kallikrates, because they were remarkable in some fashion, having distinguished themselves in battle (Poseidonios, Philokyon, Amompharetos) or standing out because of their physical beauty and untimely death (Kallikrates).

56 Den Boer 1954: 297.

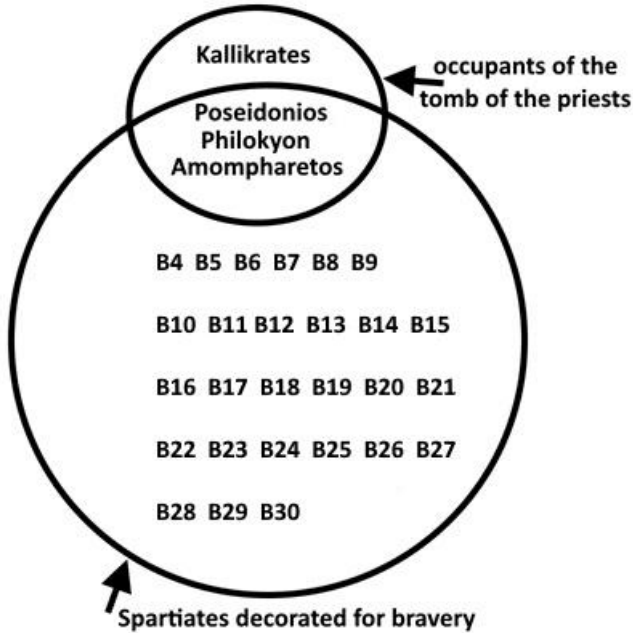


Figure 6a: Venn diagram of den Boer's description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.<sup>57</sup>

In Figure 6a, B4-30 stand for Spartiates decorated for bravery but not named by Herodotus. The assumption that there were twenty-seven such men is made purely for the sake of illustration.<sup>58</sup> If thirty Spartiates were decorated for bravery, then it would not be inherently improbable

57 The relative size of the circles in this diagram are notional (i.e. not directly proportional to specific number of individuals in each group) because den Boer maintains simply that many more Spartiates were decorated for bravery than the three individuals named by Herodotus. He specifies neither the number of Spartiates he believes was decorated for bravery nor the number of occupants of the tomb of the ἱεῖες.

58 Den Boer's argument requires that the group of men decorated for bravery be large enough to explain how it included three priests, and it seems highly improbable that dozens of Spartiates were decorated for bravery, so the number of thirty is roughly in the range that works with den Boer's views on 9.85.

that three of those men, representing 10% of the total number decorated for bravery, were priests. According to den Boer, only Poseidonios, Philokyon, and Amompharetos, because they were priests, had inscribed epitaphs at Plataia, whereas the other  $\approx$  twenty-seven men decorated for bravery (who were not priests) had no such epitaph, and, as a result, Herodotus mentions only Poseidonios, Philokyon, and Amompharetos. This solves the overlap problem because only a relatively small percentage of the men decorated for bravery are priests (see Figure 6b).<sup>59</sup>

59 Herodotus discusses Poseidonios, Philokyon, and Amompharetos at 9.71 and Kallikrates at 9.72 but nowhere mentions that any of them were priests. Den Boer says that ‘This is not surprising because nowhere in Greece, including Sparta, was the priesthood of central importance...’ (den Boer 1954: 297). This would appear to be at odds with the idea that holding a priesthood in and of itself made individuals sufficiently important to receive special burial at Plataia, and it is perhaps better to argue that Herodotus’ focus at 9.71 is the bravery with which the individuals in question fought and hence other biographical information was excluded.

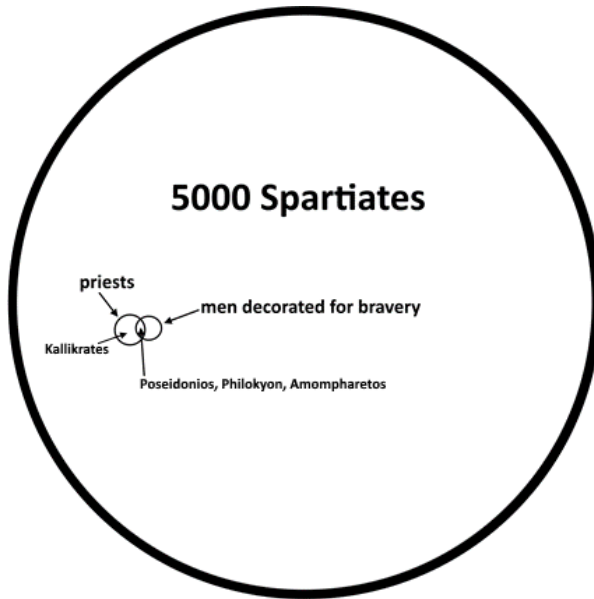


Figure 6b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates at Plataia according to den Boer.<sup>60</sup>

However, den Boer's reading of the Plutarch passage has not found wide acceptance.<sup>61</sup> One immediate problem is that there have to date been found in Lakedaimon 25 inscribed epitaphs for soldiers who died in

60 The circles representing the 5,000 Spartiates at Plataia, the number of priests, and the number of men decorated for bravery are proportional to the number of individuals involved. The circles representing the number of priests and the number of men decorated for bravery are based on the assumption that there were fifty and thirty such individuals, respectively.

61 Though see Burn 1984: 541 n. 78.

war, ranging in date from the fifth century BCE through the Roman period.<sup>62</sup> None of those inscriptions (the only certain Lakedaimonian inscriptions for men who died in battle) identifies the deceased as a priest.<sup>63</sup>

Another difficulty has to do with the changes Plutarch made in his source material. *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 closely echoes a passage in the *Moralia*:

Τῶν δὲ ταφῶν ἀνεῖλε τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν ἅπασαν ὁ Λυκοῦργος, ἐν τῇ πόλει θάπτειν τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ πλησίον ἔχειν τὰ μνημεῖα τῶν ἱερῶν συγχωρήσας. περιεῖλε δὲ καὶ τοὺς μiasmους, συνθάπτειν δ' οὐδὲν ἐπέτρεψεν, ἀλλ' ἐν φοινικίδι καὶ φύλλοις ἐλαίας θέντας τὸ σῶμα περιστέλλειν κατ' ἴσον ἅπαντας. ἀνεῖλε καὶ τὰς ἐπιγραφὰς τὰς ἐπὶ τῶν μνημείων, πλὴν τῶν ἐν πολέμῳ τελευτησάντων, καὶ τὰ πένθη καὶ τοὺς ὄδυρμούς.

Lycurgus removed all superstition concerning burials, granting the right to bury the dead in the *polis* and to have the *mnemeia* near the sacred places. He also abolished pollutions. He permitted them to bury nothing with the body; but, all treating it alike, to enfold it in a *phoinikis* and olive leaves. He did away with inscriptions on *mnemeia*, except for those who had died in war, and also with mourning and lamentations. (238d, trans. S. Hodkinson)

This passage comes from the *Instituta Laconica*, an episodic description of certain Lakedaimonian institutions and practices, which is now widely understood to consist of working notes that Plutarch used in writing biographies such as that of Lycurgus. Those notes drew heavily on a Hellenistic compilation of material on Lakedaimon, a compilation that was in turn based upon an earlier, unknown treatise on the Lakedaimonian

62 A nearly complete list can be found in Tsouli 2013: 152 and n. 10. The function of these epitaphs (and more particularly, whether they marked graves or served as commemorative monuments) has been much debated. See Hodkinson 2000: 250-56.

63 It is interesting to note, in light of what is known about the Olympic victor Lakrates and his possibly special treatment in the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in Athens, that one of those inscriptions, *IG* V.1.708, dating to the third century BCE, identifies the individual being commemorated as an Olympic victor.

*politeia*.<sup>64</sup> The similarity between the two passages leaves little doubt that Plutarch reworked the passage from the *Instituta* while writing his life of Lycurgus. In so doing he introduced several changes.

The passage from the *Moralia*, on which the passage from the *Lycurgus* is based, mentions only men who died in war. The phrase καὶ γυναικὸς τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποθανόντων was added by Plutarch himself and presumably applies only to γυναικός.<sup>65</sup> Plutarch thus is saying that all soldiers who died in battle had the right to an epitaph, not just priests, which vitiates den Boer's entire argument. Also, in *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 Plutarch seems to be discussing burial practices for individuals in Sparta itself, and there is no immediate warrant for extending Plutarch's comments to battlefield *polyandria*. There is, therefore, no compelling reason to accept that Spartan priests who died in battle were buried in a special grave that included an epitaph with their names.

A final problem is that den Boer's solution requires that the Spartiates decorated quite a large number of men for bravery.<sup>66</sup> This is not impossible, but the standard practice for Greek armies seems to have been to award special recognition for valor to a handful of individuals at most.<sup>67</sup>

The difficulties with den Boer's solution are, both separately and collectively, sufficiently large as to indicate that it is untenable.

### 3.2 HERODOTUS' LIST OF THE OCCUPANTS OF THE TOMB OF THE ΙΠΕΕΣ IS INCOMPLETE

A different solution to the overlap problem is to expand not the number of men decorated for bravery but rather the size of the other group – the men buried in the grave of the ἱπέες. This solution involves arguing that Herodotus' list of the occupants of the tomb of the ἱπέες is incomplete. The argumentation here is relatively straightforward in the sense that

64 Hodkinson 2000: 37-43, 249-55.

65 Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 4, 244 n. 430.

66 Further reasons for rejecting den Boer's interpretation can be found in Willetts 1980: 273-75.

67 For a good overview of the relevant evidence, including a full list of relevant passages in Herodotus, see Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 2: 276-90.

τῶν in the phrase ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ Ἄμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης can easily be understood as beginning a partitive genitive. This solution has not, to my knowledge, been argued in detail but it is implicit in many translations of Herodotus. Hence, simply *exempli gratia*, Tom Holland and Paul Cartledge render Herodotus' Greek as 'The Lacedaemonians raised three tombs. In one they buried the priests, including Poseidonius, Amompharetus, Philocyon, and Callicrates'.<sup>68</sup> This solution can be represented graphically as seen in Figures 7a-b.

In Figure 7a, P5-30 stand for priests buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες but not named by Herodotus. The assumption that there were twenty-six such men is made purely for the sake of illustration.<sup>69</sup> If thirty Spartiate priests were killed in battle, then it would not be inherently improbable that three of those men, representing 10% of the total number of priests killed in battle, were decorated for bravery. This approach is, in some sense, the opposite of den Boer's: whereas den Boer resolved the overlap problem by expanding the number of men decorated for bravery, this

68 Holland & Cartledge 2013: 624.

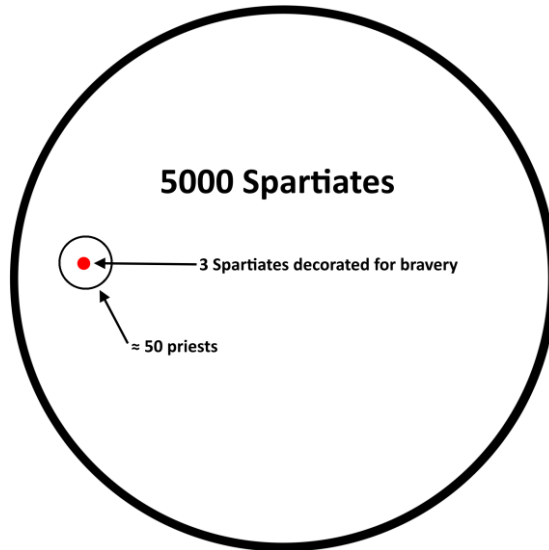
69 For the argument in question to work, the group of priests killed in battle needs to be sizeable, but it cannot exceed the total possible number of priests (c. fifty), so a total hypothetical figure of thirty priests is the appropriate range.



approach resolves the overlap by expanding the number of the occupants of the grave of the ἰπέεζ.

Figure 7a: Venn diagram of Holland and Cartledge's (implicit) description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.<sup>70</sup>

However, this solution to the overlap problem has two fatal flaws.



First, it creates the need to explain why priests would have suffered casualties at a staggeringly higher rate than the rest of the Spartiates at Plataia. More specifically, the assumption that there were approximately thirty priests buried in the tomb of the ἰπέεζ means that priests, representing at most 1% of the total number of Spartiates, suffered 33% of the total Spartan casualties (which Herodotus puts at 91).<sup>71</sup>

70 The size of the circle representing each of the groups is in proportion to their actual numbers, based upon the presumption that there were thirty occupants of the tomb of the ἰπέεζ. (Holland and Cartledge maintain simply there were more occupants of the tomb of the ἰπέεζ than the four individuals named by Herodotus and do not specify the number of Spartiates they believe was in the tomb.)

71 This problem could be ameliorated by reducing the hypothetical number of priests buried in the tomb of the ἰπέεζ, but every such reduction correspondingly brings us

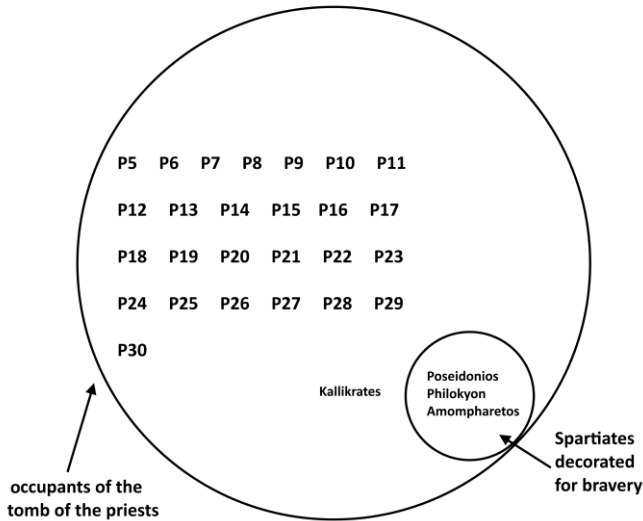


Figure 7b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates according to Holland and Cartledge.<sup>72</sup>

Second, unlike den Boer’s approach, in this scenario, all of the men decorated for bravery are priests, and hence this reading of Herodotus’ Greek does not resolve the question of how priests, a group representing (at most) 1% of the total number of Spartiates, could have produced 100% of the Spartiates decorated for bravery.<sup>73</sup>

back to the original problem of the overlap between Herodotus’ list of Lakedaimonians decorated for bravery and his list of the occupants of the grave of the ἱπῆες. One could, of course, argue that Herodotus’ casualty figures are not trustworthy, but to reject one detail of Herodotus’ account in order to resolve a problem with another detail surely falls under the heading of special pleading.

72 The size of the circle representing each of the groups is in proportion to their actual numbers.

73 Burn 1984: 541 attempted to resolve both of these problems by arguing that Spartiate priests at Plataia performed sacrifices under a rain of Persian arrows, suffered very high casualties, and were, as a result, decorated in some numbers for bravery. This suggestion is not inherently impossible, but Herodotus characterizes Aristodemos, Poseidonios, and Philokyon as distinguishing themselves in the fighting (note the

In the absence of satisfactory resolutions to these problems, resolutions which have not been forthcoming, it is difficult to accept this solution to the overlap problem as tenable.

### 3.3 ΙΠΕΕΣ SHOULD BE EMENDED TO ΙΠΕΝΕΣ

Yet another solution, like the solution discussed in Section 3.2, involves expanding the group of men buried in what the text of 9.85 as transmitted labels the tomb of the *ἰπέες*. This solution expands that group not by translation, but rather by emendation. In the mid-eighteenth century Lodewijk Caspar Valckenaer suggested emending *ἰπέας* and *ἰπέες* in 9.85 to read *ἰπένας* and *ἰπένες*, respectively.<sup>74</sup> The emended words are taken to be Ionic forms of *εἰρήν*, a term for an age group in the Spartiate educational system that encompassed males in their late teens or some or all of their twenties.<sup>75</sup> It can be represented graphically as seen in Figures 8a-b.

Valckenaer's proposal to emend *ἰπέας* and *ἰπέες* to *ἰπένας* and *ἰπένες* met with wide acceptance for a long period of time.<sup>76</sup> The emendation is

contrast with Kallikrates articulated in 9.72), and hence it is improbable at best that they died while conducting sacrifices.

74 Valckenaer was motivated to emend 9.85 because he was troubled by the absence of explicit mentions, in any extant literary source other than 9.85, of Spartiate priests serving in the Lakedaimonian army. That objection carries less weight in the present day due to the discovery of inscriptions (see, for example, *SEG* 29.361, a casualty list from Argos dating to c. 400) that document the presence of priests and seers among the casualties from battles fought during the Classical period. Valckenaer's emendation and the reasoning behind it are reported in Wesseling's edition of Herodotus Book IX (Wesseling & Valckenaer 1763; see den Boer 1954: 289-90 and Makres 2009: 187 n. 5).

75 There are variant opinions on the years covered by the *εἰρήν* age-grade; see below for further discussion.

76 See, for instance, Abicht 1869-73: vol. 2, 175; Stein 1901: vol. 5, 196; Macan 1908: vol. 1.2, 770; How & Wells 1912: vol. 2, 327; Shuckburgh 1916: 53, 141; Hude 1927: vol. 2, ad loc.; Masaracchia 1978: 102. The emendation to *ἰπένες* is maintained in Rosén's Teubner edition from 1997 (which edition has not been met with universal warmth; see, for instance, the review in Renehan 1990). See also Cotter 1992; Lupi 2000: 47-49; 2006: 190-95.

palaeographically defensible, and Valckenaer found apparent confirmation for the emendation in the fact that a Byzantine glossary of unusual words in Herodotus includes an entry for εἰρήν, which does not appear anywhere in the text of the *Histories*.<sup>77</sup> He argued that the passage in question is the most logical place in the *Histories* where *eiren* would have appeared.

The logic behind Valckenaer's solution to the overlap problem is sufficiently complicated as to merit careful mapping. The starting place is the straightforward observation that, if what Herodotus calls the tomb of the ἱπέες was actually devoted to individuals belonging to a group with a substantial number of members, the claim that three members of that group were decorated for bravery becomes less problematic. Hence a first criterion for this approach to resolving the problems with 9.85 is identifying a group with a substantial number of members.

However, the group in question has to meet further criteria beyond having sufficient numbers. A second criterion is that the group needs to be sufficiently coherent and well-established that the Lakedaimonians could be expected to have buried its members as a special collectivity. A third and final criterion is that, because all three of the men identified by Herodotus as having been decorated for bravery came from that group, there must be some reason to believe that the members of the group were in a special position to distinguish themselves in the fighting at Plataia.

77 For the text of the entire lexicon, see, Stein 1869-71: vol. 2: 441-82, reprinted as Stein 1965. The Greek text of just the entry for εἰρήν can be found in den Boer 1954: 249; Gilula 2003: 83 supplies an English translation. On this lexicon, see Rosén 1962: 221-31; Asheri, Vannicelli, Corcella & Fraschetti 2006: 169-70. Stein (1869-71: vol. 2, 475) suggested that the entry in question derived from the work of Aristophanes of Byzantium and hence dated to the third or second century.

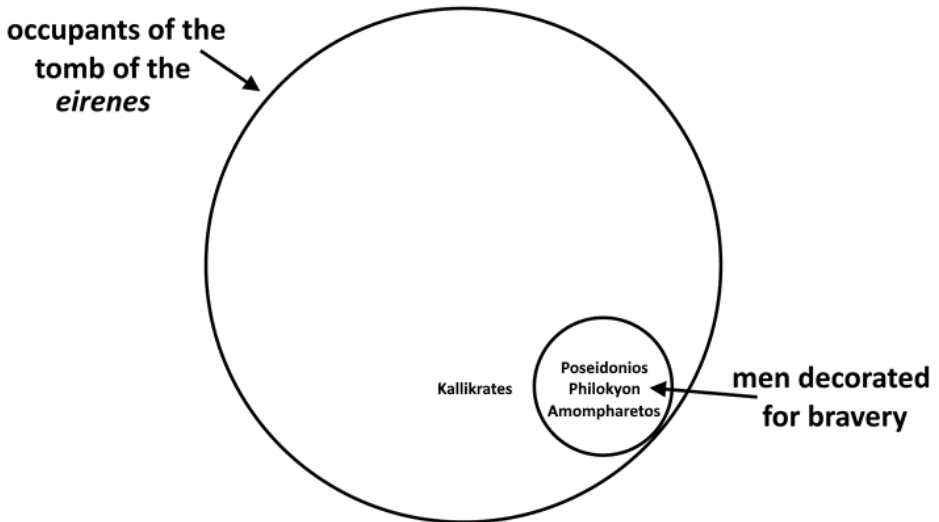


Figure 8a: Venn diagram of Valckenaer's description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.<sup>78</sup>

The major advantages of Valckenaer's emendation include the fact that it is not only palaeographically defensible and (ostensibly at least) supported by the ancient glossary entry for εἰρήνη, but also that the *eirenes* meet all three of the criteria specified above. They were potentially numerous enough that it would not be inherently improbable that three of them were decorated for bravery,<sup>79</sup> and, insofar as all Spartiates participated in the highly developed educational system of which the *eirenes* formed part, it is not implausible that *eirenes* might have been buried as a group.

78 The relative sizes of the circles in this diagram are notional (i.e. not directly proportional to specific number of individuals in each group) because Valckenaer's solution for the overlap problem is agnostic about the number of the individuals buried in what he would label the tomb of the *eirenes*.

79 One might note in this regard that at Herodotus 9.12, an Argive messenger to Mar-donios announces that the Lakedaimonian army is on the march by stating that 'ἐκ Λακεδαίμονος ἐξελίλυθε ἡ νεότης'.

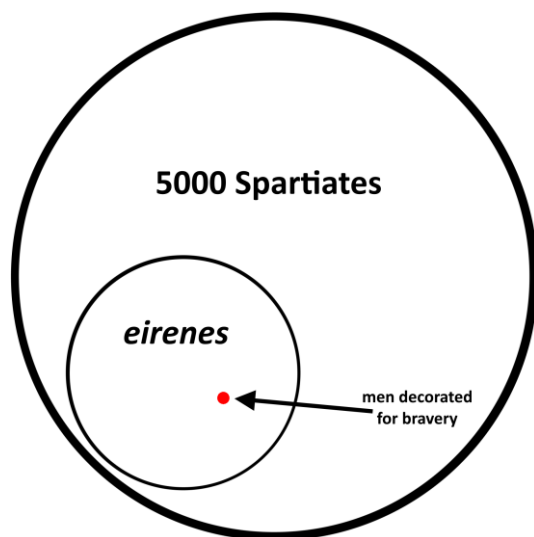


Figure 8b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates according to Valckenaer.<sup>80</sup>

With respect to the third criterion (being in a particularly good position to distinguish themselves on the battlefield), Ulrich Kahrstedt argued that Spartan *eirenes* were stationed in the front ranks of Lakedaimonian armies because they were the fastest runners and could make rapid sallies.<sup>81</sup> That would, in turn, mean that the *eirenes* would have had special opportunities to distinguish themselves at Plataia.<sup>82</sup> It would,

80 The relative sizes of the circles in this diagram are proportional to the number of individuals in each group, but only roughly so in that it is impossible to know the precise number of *eirenes* that could conceivably have seen service at Plataia. If in fact all male Spartiates between the ages of 20 and 29 were *eirenes*, one might assume that they comprised approximately one-third of the Spartiates at Plataia, and the diagram above reflects that assumption. Greater precision than that is impossible because the age-range of the Spartiates designated as *eirenes* is unclear (see below for further discussion), because the age-range of the Spartiates called into service for Plataia is unknown, and because *eirenes* may have been either over-represented among the Spartiates at Plataia (because they were the youngest and most energetic soldiers) or under-represented (due to concerns about ensuring that each Spartiate produced at least one male heir; see, for example, Hdt. 7.205).

81 Kahrstedt 1922: 307-8.

82 Makres 2009: 191-92.

therefore, not be entirely surprising that all three Spartiates decorated for conspicuous bravery at Plataia were *eirenes*.<sup>83</sup>

Despite its numerous charms, the emendation to ἰρένας/ἰρένες has been largely rejected in more recent scholarship.<sup>84</sup> There are five substantive objections to this emendation. First, one might expect that if Herodotus used a technical term from the Spartiate educational system, he would have provided some sort of definition for his readers. This is Herodotus' practice elsewhere in his work. For instance, at 1.67 he discusses the actions of the Spartiate Lichas, whom he identifies as one of the Spartiate *agathoergoi*. He then immediately explains the meaning of the specialized term *agathoergoi*.<sup>85</sup>

Second, unless a young Spartiate was an *eiren* for an extended period of time, the group of *eirenes* would not have been large enough to fulfill the first criterion listed above. Many scholars have in the past claimed that the Spartiates were *eirenes* for ten years, which would make the *eirenes* into quite a large group.<sup>86</sup> Both of the recent major studies of the Spartiate educational system have, however, rejected that claim. Ducat has argued that in Herodotus' time Spartiates were *eirenes* for a single year. Kennell has made the case that there was no such age group within the Spartiate educational system in the Archaic or Classical periods.<sup>87</sup>

83 Other evidence has been cited in support of Valckenaer's emendation. For example, Lupi 2006: 194 argues that the legends on fourth-century Samnite coins that seem to refer to the Spartan village of Pitane and to Samnite border guards, who were typically young men, indicate that the unit commanded by Amompharetos, the Pitanate *lochos*, was made up of young men.

84 See, for example, Richer 1994: 66; Kennell 1995: 14-16; Toher 1999: 118-26; Hodkinson 2000: 258; Flower & Marincola 2002: 255; Gilula 2003: 82-6; Asheri, Vannicelli, Corcella & Frascchetti 2006: 291-93; Ducat 2006: 94-95; Dillon 2007: 158-59; Richer 2012: 172 as well as the discussion in Brulé & Piolot 2004: 156-57 with the accompanying notes.

85 Oliver 2017: 40-86 has argued that Herodotus' account of the Battle of Plataia is based directly on an oral version Herodotus presented in Athens. If this is true, it strengthens the expectation that Herodotus would have offered a definition of ἰρένας/ἰρένες.

86 See, for example, Tazelaar 1967: 141-43.

87 Ducat 2006: 100; Kennell 1995: 14-17.

Third, the glossary of Herodotean words, to which Valckenaer pointed for confirmation of the emendation, includes words found in authors such as Sophocles that are not found in Herodotus,<sup>88</sup> and a gloss from the fourteenth or fifteenth century found in a manuscript of Strabo contains comments on the word εἰρήν that closely echo the entry for εἰρήν in the Herodotean glossary.<sup>89</sup> This suggests that the entry for εἰρήν in the Herodotean glossary was a later insertion that had no necessary connection with Herodotus.<sup>90</sup>

Fourth, Herodotus' account of the Battle of Plataia portrays Amompheratos, one of the four men buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες, as a senior commander in a position to argue vehemently and at length with

88 Stein 1869-71: vol. 2, 471-75. There are also issues of potential importance having to do with the fact that the lexicon in question consists of two word lists, one arranged by order of appearance in the text of the *Histories* and one arranged alphabetically. (Stein called these lists Recensio A and B, respectively.) The lists occur separately in two distinct sets of manuscripts (i.e., no manuscript contains both lists). Stein (1869-71: vol. 2, 443) argued that both lists were at some point separately copied from a lexicon that included both lists and that the extant manuscripts (four for Recensio A, nine for Recensio B) descend from those two separate, original copies. The key issue here is that the entry for εἰρήν appears only in the alphabetical list, which, unlike the order-of-appearance list, contains some extraneous entries in the sense that they pertain to words that appear not in Herodotus but in other authors. As Gilula 2003: 84 has pointed out, because the entry for εἰρήν does not form part of the order-of-appearance list, it is impossible to connect that entry securely to Book 9. Rosén 1962: 221-31 went a step farther and excluded the entry for εἰρήν from a catalog of what he considered to be genuine entries from the original version of the lexicon because it is not included in the order-of-appearance list. Nafissi, however, points out that the manuscripts with the order-of-appearance lists are incomplete in the sense that they are missing any entries for Book 9. (Presumably the original source of Recensio A was copied from a manuscript that was damaged and missing the end of the order-of-appearance list.) It is, therefore, possible that the entry for εἰρήν was originally included in the order-of-appearance list, which in turn means that the entry for εἰρήν cannot be excluded from a catalog of genuine entries from the original version of the lexicon on the grounds that it is not included in the order-of-appearance list (Nafissi 1991: 302 n. 108, followed by Lupi 2000: 48 n. 2).

89 Diller 1941.

90 Gilula 2003: 84.



Pausanias the Regent (9.53-4). It is, therefore, unlikely that Amompheros could have been of an age to be classified as an εἰρήν.<sup>91</sup>

Finally, Kahrstedt's claim that Spartiate *eirenes* formed a distinct group that regularly occupied the front ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx is manifestly problematic. Some passages from authors such as Thucydides and Xenophon show that, in certain circumstances, men from younger age classes were positioned in the front ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx so that they could make sallies from the phalanx, but the men in question are not described as *eirenes*. Xenophon, who was well acquainted with the technical vocabulary of the Spartiate educational system and army, describes these men as τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἥβης ('the first ten year-classes'; *Hell.* 2.4.33, 3.4.23; *Ages.* 1.31), which is compatible with the view that the *eirenes* were Spartiates from age 20-29. But Xenophon also writes that, in a battle fought during the Corinthian War, the commander of a Lakedaimonian unit first ordered a charge by τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἥβης and then, when that was not effective, ordered a charge by τὰ πεντεκαίδεκα ἀφ' ἥβης.<sup>92</sup> Not only is the word *eirenes* conspicuous by its absence, but it is impossible that the τὰ πεντεκαίδεκα ἀφ' ἥβης could be the same as the *eirenes* and that, in turn, suggests that τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἥβης and τὰ πεντεκαίδεκα ἀφ' ἥβης were ad hoc formations based on the number of years of service and hence age (since all Spartiates entered the army at the same age) rather than a pre-existing group.

Moreover, the claim that the Spartiate *eirenes* regularly occupied the front ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx is not compatible with the claim that they formed a distinct unit within the Lakedaimonian army (and hence were likely to be buried as a group in a separate tomb). Thucydides (5.68.2-3) states that at the Battle of Mantinea in 418 each of the smallest units (*enomotiai*) in the Lakedaimonian army was, with some exceptions, arrayed in four files with eight men in each file. (Hence each

91 Den Boer 1954: 292; Toher 1999: 119-20; Dillon 2007: 159 (among others) *pace* Chrimes 1949: 318; MacDowell 1986: 165-66; Makres 2009: 191. Den Boer raises the further objection that Kallikrates is described as an ἀνὴρ κάλλιστος and that *Xen. Lac.* 2.11 shows *andres* to be 'rigorously distinct' from *eirenes*. That may place too much emphasis on Herodotus' choice of words. Lazenby 1985: 49 raises and rightly dismisses the possibility that there were two different Lakedaimonian soldiers with the name Amompheros ('surely too much of a coincidence').

92 *Hell.* 4.5.14, 16. On these passages, see Billheimer 1946.

unit had four men in the front ranks of the phalanx.) If the *eirenes* formed a large, distinct unit within the Lakedaimonian army, then they would have been divided into smaller units, each of which consisted entirely of *eirenes* and each of which provided four complete files that stretched from the front of the phalanx to the back. The logical consequence is that if the *eirenes* served in a distinct unit and were tasked with sallying forth as a group, their departure would have suddenly and markedly reduced the width of the Lakedaimonian phalanx. That would have rendered the entire army vulnerable, and hence it is far more likely that younger Spartiates did not serve as a distinct group but rather were distributed roughly evenly among the individual *enomotiai*.<sup>93</sup>

It is conceivable that the *eirenes* within each of the smaller units in the Lakedaimonian army were frequently stationed in the front ranks of the units to which they belonged and that, because this was the case at Plataia, they distinguished themselves in battle. If one assumes that the *eirenes* existed as a distinct age-class in fifth-century Sparta (as one must in this scenario), then they could well have been buried as a distinct group that included most if not all of the Spartiates who had been decorated for bravery. However, Xenophon specifically states that the front ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx consisted entirely of officers (*Lac.* 11.5; cf. *Thuc.* 5.66.4; *Asclepiodotus, Tactica* 2.2-3; *Ael., Tactica* 5.1-5; *Arr. Tact.* 5.4-6.6; Wheeler 1991: 147). This arrangement reflected the fact that the soldiers stationed in the front rows of the phalanx played a key role in the outcome of a hoplite battle, and it would have been exceedingly

93 Lupi 2006: 190-93 takes up an argument found in earlier scholarship (listed by Lupi in n. 19 on pg. 209) that Amompharetos commanded a rearguard. Lupi also argues that the rearguard in question, the Pitanate *lochos*, was in fact the 100 *hippeis* who served as bodyguards for the king and that they were, therefore, all young men who were in a position to distinguish themselves in battle. However, the argumentation that Lupi deploys to equate the Pitanate *lochos* with the king's bodyguard is implausible. For example, Lupi sees Herodotus' information about the existence of a Pitanate *lochos* as a reflection of a general understanding of the Lakedaimonian army and hence not particularly reliable. That, in turn, implies that Thucydides' flat denial (1.20.3) of the existence of a Pitanate *lochos* should be taken seriously, but Lupi goes on to argue that there was a *de facto* Pitanate *lochos*, in the form of the 100 *hippeis* who served as the king's bodyguard. In Lupi's view, all of those men came from the tribe of Hylleis, which was localized in Pitane.

odd if the commanders of the Lakedaimonian army at Plataia, faced with the existential threat posed by the Persian army, would have chosen to put the youngest and most inexperienced Spartiates (particularly if *eirenes*, as most scholars now agree, included just those Spartiates who were 20 years old) in the front rank of their phalanx.

That said, it is not impossible that (a) *eirenes* were Spartiates between the ages of 20-29, (b) at Plataia soldiers in the first ten age-classes (and hence all *eirenes*) were called upon to carry out some especially dangerous duty, and (c) the *eirenes* suffered disproportionately large casualties and made up most of the Spartiates decorated for bravery. Even if that were true, there remains the difficulty of explaining why the Spartiates would have provided a special battlefield tomb for the *eirenes* while lumping together all of the other Spartiates. As J.F. Lazenby pointed out, there is no evidence that the *eirenes* ever represented a distinct unit within the Lakedaimonian army.<sup>94</sup> The absence of such evidence is noteworthy because, if *eirenes* represented all male Spartiates aged 20-29 and did serve as a unit in the Lakedaimonian army, they would have represented more than a quarter of the total number of Spartiates and hence might well be expected to make some appearance in the many references to the Lakedaimonian army in action.<sup>95</sup> Insofar as the *eirenes* do not seem to have habitually occupied the front ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx or to have represented a distinct unit with the Lakedaimonian army, it is not obvious why they would get a special tomb. Even if they did distinguish themselves at Plataia, it is difficult to believe that the Spartiates would have altered their normal burial practices in response to the ad hoc dispositions made at a specific battle and given only the *eirenes* their own special grave while burying all of the other Spartan casualties in a separate grave.

Each of the difficulties with Valckenaer's emendation to ἰρένες can perhaps be explained with some special pleading. So, for example, it is possible that Amompharetos was not an *eiren* but rather a senior commander in charge of a unit made up entirely of *eirenes* and hence was

94 Lazenby 1985: 50.

95 This presumes that Spartiates were liable for military service between ages 20-60 and takes into account the fact that some Spartiates would have died between the ages of 30-60.

buried with them.<sup>96</sup> That, however, requires two assumptions: (1) Spartiates were *eirenes* for 10 years (otherwise they would not have been numerous enough to explain their postulated role at Plataia) and (2) the *eirenes* were a stable, distinct unit within the Lakedaimonian army (otherwise it is not clear why they would have been buried together at Plataia). Those assumptions are not impossible, but, as we have seen, the most recent scholarship on the Spartiate educational system runs directly counter to the idea that Spartiates were *eirenes* for 10 years in Herodotus' time, and there is no evidence that there ever was a distinct unit of *eirenes* in the Lakedaimonian army.

The remaining difficulties with Valckenaer's emendation could be resolved with similarly complicated argumentation, but at a certain point the accumulated weight of the requisite special pleading becomes simply unmanageable. And of course one must bear in mind that the text being defended by means of elaborate mental gymnastics is not the text as transmitted but an emendation. If a proposed emendation can be justified only with great difficulty and other, less problematic readings are available (as will become clear below), the rational course of action is surely to abandon that emendation. It seems reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the emendation to ἰρένες should be put to the side as untenable.

96 As argued in Kelly 1981 and Nafissi 1991: 301-3. Makres 2009 has recently defended the emendation to ἰρένες by re-iterating pre-existing arguments of why the text as transmitted is not tenable and by adding one new reason to the collection of pre-existing arguments in favor of the emendation. Makres makes the case that the story of Amompharetos arguing vehemently with Pausanias is an exaggerated tale and hence Amompharetos could well have been a young man. The claim that Herodotus' story about Amompharetos is an exaggerated tale is possible but requires revisiting one of the most basic features of Herodotus' account of the Battle of Plataia, namely that the Lakedaimonians fought the Persians largely on their own because they failed to take part in a planned retreat during the night before the battle. Herodotus explains the Lakedaimonians' behavior by attributing it to Amompharetos' refusal to move his unit from its position. If Amompharetos was, as Makres suggests, a young man of no great influence, then some other explanation for the somewhat odd actions of the Lakedaimonian army must be supplied. (Makres also supplies some other, largely speculative reasons to believe that Amompharetos was a young man.)

### 3.4 ΙΠΕΕΣ SHOULD BE EMEDED TO ΙΠΠΕΕΣ

We now turn our attention to the three tenable solutions to the overlap problem in 9.85. The first of those solutions, like that discussed in Section 3.3, involves expanding, by means of emendation, the group of men buried in what the text of 9.85, as transmitted, labels the tomb of the ἱπέες. Valckenaer proposed more than one emendation to 9.85. He also suggested that ἱπέας / ἱπέες could be emended to ἱππέας / ἱππέες. This solution can be graphically represented as seen in Figures 9a-b. Ironically,

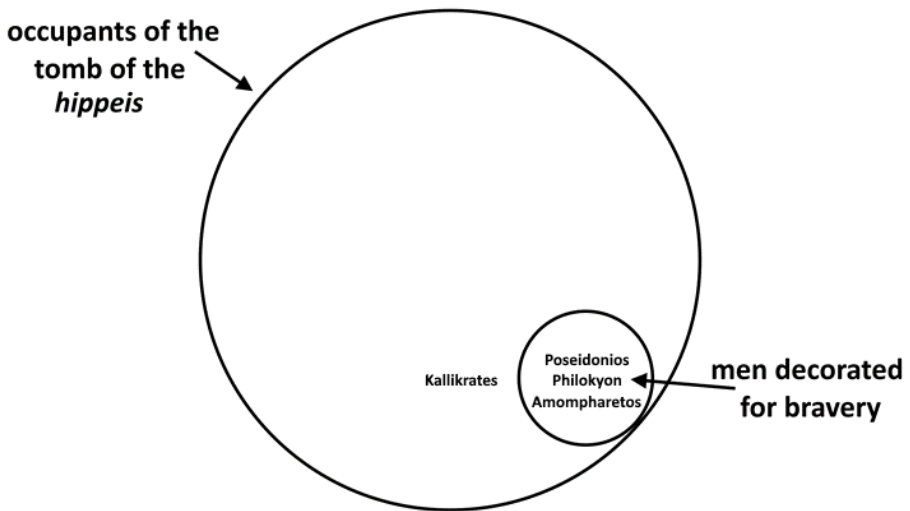


Figure 9a: Venn diagram of Valckenaer's alternative description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.<sup>97</sup>

this emendation was never widely adopted, but is in fact much more promising than Valckenaer's other proposed emendation.<sup>98</sup>

97 The relative sizes of the circles in this diagram are notional (i.e. not directly proportional to the specific number of individuals in each group) because Valckenaer's (alternative) solution for the overlap problem is agnostic about the number of the individuals buried in what he would label the tomb of the *hippeis*.

98 Valckenaer's emendation to ἱππέας is discussed in Willetts 1980: 274. This emendation has not been widely accepted, though it is adopted by Jeanmaire 1939: 546 and Lazenby 1985: 181 n. 16. Kelly 1981 and Nafissi 1991: 301-3 accept the emendation

In assessing this emendation, it is helpful to bear in mind the criteria specified in Section 3.3. In order for the proposed emendation to be feasible, the individuals buried in what the extant manuscripts call the tomb of the ἰπέες would need to come from a relatively large, well-defined group, the members of which had special opportunities to distinguish themselves in the fighting at Plataia. The *hippeis* neatly fulfill all of those criteria. They were a distinct and elite unit of three hundred Spartiates within the Lakedaimonian army and were thus numerous enough that it would not be inherently improbable that three of them were decorated for bravery.<sup>99</sup> They can also be plausibly identified as a group that was sufficiently coherent and well-established that the Lakedaimonians could be expected to have buried its members as a special collectivity. And, as an elite unit, the *hippeis* might well have been assigned hazardous duty at Plataia. The *hippeis* were divided into three groups of 100 men, each with its own commanding officer, and at least one such group served as the bodyguard of the king or force commander during Lakedaimonian military expeditions (Hdt. 6.5.6). Given the strong expectation that Greek commanders would be personally involved in combat, it is probable that the Spartiate *hippeis* at Plataia were in the thick of the fighting, as we know them to have been at other battles (Thuc. 5.72.4).<sup>100</sup> It would, as a result, not be entirely surprising if the three men Herodotus mentions as being decorated for bravery were all *hippeis*.

to ἰπέες and argue that Herodotus used this term to refer to the *hippeis*, the members of which were young adult males (Xen. *Lac.* 4.1-4). Kelly and Nafissi take Amompharetos to be the most senior of the three officers (*hippagretai*) in charge of the *hippeis* and hence an older man and an influential commander in a position to argue with Pausanias. They concede that Amompharetos was thus not, technically speaking, one of the ἰπέες, but make the case that Herodotus could have described the *hippeis*, including their commander, collectively as ἰπέες. This is a bit difficult to accept, however, since Herodotus himself (1.67.5, 8.124.3) uses the term ἰππείες to refer to the *hippeis*.

99 On the *hippeis*, see Figueira 2006. The evidence pertaining to the *hippeis*, particularly with respect to the role as the kings' bodyguards, is at least *prima facie* not free from contradictions. For a reading of that evidence that differs from that given by Figueira, see Anderson 1970: 245-49.

100 One might note in this regard that, according to Diodorus 11.33.1, the Greek army awarded the prize for valor to the Lakedaimonians collectively and to Pausanias individually.

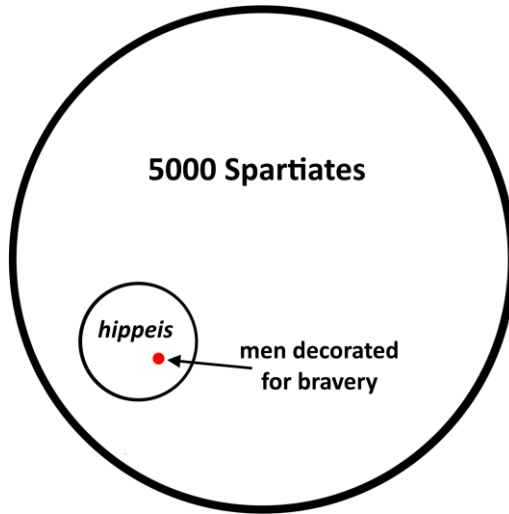


Figure 9b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates according to Valckenaer.<sup>101</sup>

Emending ἰρένας / ἰρένες to ἰπέας / ἰπέες is among the more elegant suggested approaches to reading 9.85. One difficulty is that a change from ἰρέας / ἰρέες to ἰπέας / ἰπέες is perhaps less palaeographically probable than a change to ἰρένας / ἰρένες. In addition, there is the important methodological principle that emendations not needed to make a passage grammatically sound should not be adopted unless there is no plausible way to make sense of the text as transmitted. Neither of those objections is inherently fatal.

### 3.5 ΙΠΕΕΣ SHOULD BE TRANSLATED AS ‘MEN WHO FOUGHT HEROICALLY’ RATHER THAN AS ‘PRIESTS’

Another tenable solution involves a different approach than any of the four discussed to this point. Rather than expanding either the group of men decorated for bravery or the group of men buried in what the extant

101 The relative sizes of the circles in this diagram are proportional to the number of individuals in each group.

manuscripts call the tomb of the ἱρέες, this solution proposes a meaning for ἱρέες that makes the two groups identical. More specifically, this solution involves identifying ἱρέες as individuals who had been singled out for fighting heroically on the battlefield. This solution has its roots in the views of Hermann Diels from the early part of the twentieth century, but it has been further developed by Nicolas Richer.<sup>102</sup> The logic here is straightforward: the overlap between Herodotus' list of the bravest Spartiates and his list of the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες exists because the ἱρέες were not priests but individuals who had been recognized for fighting heroically. The tomb of the ἱρέες thus inevitably held the bodies of the three Spartiates decorated for bravery, all three of whom, Herodotus notes, were killed in the fighting (9.71). (The fourth Spartiate whose bravery Herodotus highlights, Aristodemos, might have been excluded because he, in a suicidal frenzy, left his position in the phalanx and was not, in the event, decorated for bravery.) This resolves the overlap problem because, from this perspective, the group of individuals buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες was, by definition, coterminous with the group of individuals decorated for bravery. This is apparent in the graphic representation found in Figures 10a-b.

In articulating this solution, Richer lays out evidence to support the idea that some Spartiate soldiers received special funerary treatment. One relevant source is the following excerpt from a passage from Aelian's *Varia Historia* that provides a list of Spartiate customs:

οἱ δὲ καλῶς ἀγωνισάμενοι καὶ ἀποθανόντες θαλλοῖς ἀνεδοῦντο καὶ κλάδοις ἑτέροις, καὶ δι' ἐπαίνων ἤγοντο· οἱ δὲ τελέως ἀριστεύσαντες καὶ φοινικίδος αὐτοῖς ἐπιβληθείσης ἐνδόξως ἐθάπτοντο.

Those fighting nobly and dying are crowned [or, bound] with olive and other branches and carried [off] with praises; those who were supremely brave were wrapped in their *phoinikis* and buried with special honors. (6.6, trans. S. Hodkinson)

102 Richer 1994: 63-70; 2012: 165-78, followed by Hodkinson 2000: 258. Diels articulated his views in a letter to Martin Nilsson and that letter was published with an explanatory note by Nilsson in *Klio* (Nilsson 1913). It was subsequently republished in Nilsson's collected works (Nilsson 1951-60: vol. 2, 369-71).



The 25 inscribed epitaphs for Spartiate soldiers who died in war as well as Plutarch *Moralia* 238d and *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 (see Section 3.1) are also relevant insofar as they show that Spartiate soldiers who died in battle were accorded a special privilege in the form of the right to erect a commemorative monument in Sparta.<sup>103</sup>

Richer suggests that the ἱεῖες were identified in an assembly held in the aftermath of each battle. The key piece of evidence in the present context is Herodotus' account of what happened after the fighting at Plataia had ended: 'When there was some dispute about who was actually the bravest, those Spartiates who were present gave as their judgment ...' (γενομένης λέσχης ὃς γένοιτο αὐτῶν ἄριστος, ἔγνωσαν οἱ παραγεγόμενοι Σπαρτητέων, 9.71). This is in accord with other passages indicating that it was customary for Greek armies to identify formally and honor those who had particularly distinguished themselves.<sup>104</sup>

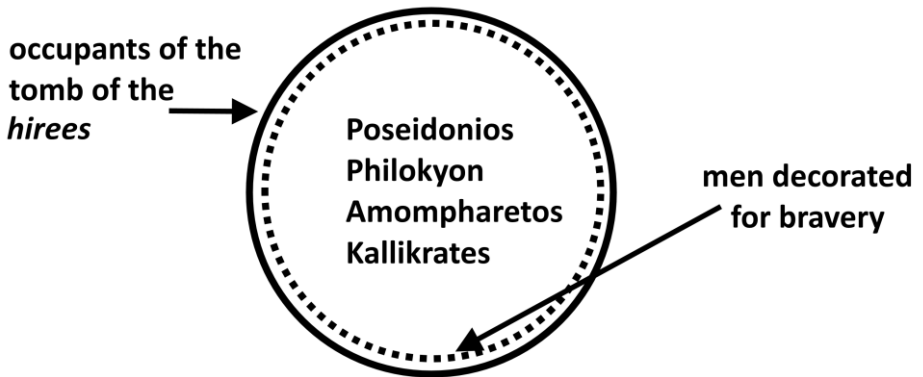


Figure 10a: Venn diagram of Richer's description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.

103 Richer also points to the Spartiates who fought at Thermopylai. The vast majority of the Spartiates who fought at Thermopylai were killed, and they were understood as having fought heroically. They received a special honor in the form of a collective epitaph that was erected either at Thermopylai or in Sparta. Insofar as all of those who died at Thermopylai were seen as having shown surpassing bravery, they were given a privilege that set them apart.

104 See, for instance, Hdt. 8.123. On this process, see Pritchett 1974-91: vol. 2, 276-90.

This solution is not, however, without its difficulties. To begin with, this interpretation requires some sort of explanation for the inclusion of the fourth named occupant of the tomb of the ἰπέες, Kallikrates, who was killed by an arrow before the Lakedaimonian army attacked the Persians (9.72) and hence not, unlike the other three named occupants of the tomb, decorated for bravery. Richer argues that Kallikrates, who is described by Herodotus as the most beautiful of the Greeks at Plataia, had distinguished himself in an earlier battle and hence merited inclusion among the ἰπέες.<sup>105</sup> This is certainly possible, particularly since Herodotus, after describing the exploits of Poseidonios, Philokyon, Amompharetos, and Aristodemos, states that:

these were the men who at Plataia were the most renowned. Kallikrates might be another but that he died outside the battle itself ... He took his death very ill and said ... that he did not mind dying ... what he minded was that he had done no actual fighting ... (9.72, trans. D. Greene)

This might be taken to mean that, based on past experience, there was reason to expect great things from Kallikrates and that he thus merited inclusion in the tomb of the ἰπέες.

A further difficulty is that Aelian is not necessarily the most reliable source for Spartiate burial customs.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the remains from the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Kerameikos (see Section 2) suggest that all of the corpses were wrapped in *phoinikides*. This is in accord with the description of Spartiate funerary practice given in *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 and directly contradicts Aelian's claim that only those fighting with supreme bravery received that privilege.

Moreover, Aelian simply states that Spartiates who had died fighting with unusual bravery received special honors, not that they were buried in a separate, special tomb. The 25 inscribed epitaphs from Lakedaimon and *Moralia* 238d and *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 pertain to burial practices in Sparta itself, not on the battlefield, and also do not provide any evidence that

105 Richer 1994: 67; 2012: 173-74.

106 Hodkinson 2000: 247-48, 254.

those who had died in battle and had been decorated for bravery were buried on the battlefield in a separate tomb.

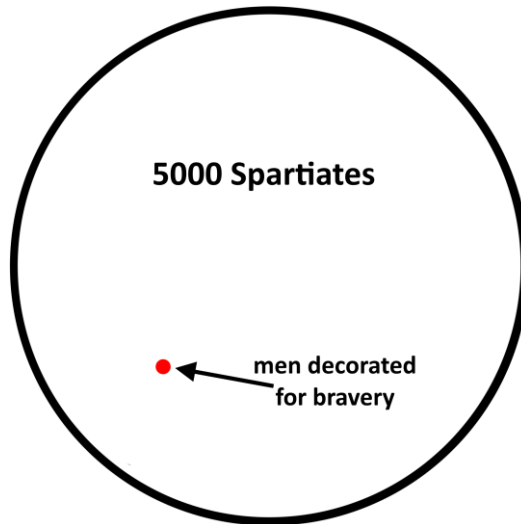


Figure 10b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates according to Richer.<sup>107</sup>

It is also not immediately evident that the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Kerameikos supports Richer's interpretation. As noted above, the inscription on that tomb begins with the names of the two polemarchs, Chairon and Thibrachos, and the next name was possibly that of Lakrates, the Olympic victor. If those are indeed the three individuals who received more careful burials in a separate tomb chamber, the most likely interpretation is that such treatment was granted on the basis of

107 The relative sizes of the circles in this diagram are proportional to the number of individuals in each group.

pre-existing military rank (the polemarchs) or social standing (the Olympic victor),<sup>108</sup> not on the basis of performance on the battlefield.<sup>109</sup>

Finally and most importantly, translating ἱρέες as ‘men who fought heroically on the battlefield’ requires assigning to ἱρέες a meaning that is not entirely obvious. In his examination of the meaning of ἱρέες, Richer writes, ‘Il faudrait peut-être comprendre qu’il s’agit de “héros”’.<sup>110</sup> Richer does not bring forward any evidence to justify this translation, but he does cite the work of Diels, who first proposed translating Herodotus’ ἱρέες as ‘heroes’. Diels read ἱρέες as ἠρέες, interpreted ἠρης/ἠρεύς as a Lakonian form of ἠρωϛ, and argued that the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες were individuals who received *Heroenehren*. They were, therefore, literally (posthumous) heroes in the sense of being objects of worship, and it comes as no surprise that Diels says that the ἱρέες were the kings and other high-ranking Spartiates. Similarly, Arnold Toynbee, who suggested emending ἱρέες to ἠρωες (and arrived at the same point as Diels without any intermediate steps), translated the emendation as ‘canonized dead mortals’.<sup>111</sup>

Richer diverges from Diels and Toynbee in that he takes the ἱρέες to be Spartiates who had accomplished some sort of feat that elevated their social standing above that of their peers without in any way becoming

108 Spartiate Olympic victors seem to have had what Figueira, drawing on Plut. *Lyc.* 22.4 and *Mor.* 639e, describes as a ‘presumptive claim’ to join the *hippeis* (Figueira 2006: 64; see also Hodkinson 1999: 169-70). If Lakrates did indeed receive special burial, it is conceivable that his status derived from his service among the *hippeis* and hence among the men serving as King Pausanias’ bodyguard rather than his Olympic victory. However, Xenophon describes Lakrates solely as an Olympic victor, so it seems probable that his athletic achievements were his primary claim to fame.

109 In his 2012 book, which appeared after the publication of the preliminary report on the new excavations, Richer concedes that the tomb seems to show that the polemarchs and Lakrates received special burial because of their pre-existing status rather than their performance on the battlefield. He goes on to suggest that, ‘si ces trois hommes n’étaient pas nécessairement des ἱρέες, ils étaient considérés d’une façon qui les rapprochait d’hommes d’une telle qualité’ (Richer 2012: 175). This is perhaps not an entirely satisfactory resolution to the difficulties for his interpretation of 9.85 raised by the details of the tomb.

110 Richer 1994: 66.

111 Toynbee 1969: 319 n. 4.

recipients of cultic honors. This is apparent from the facts that Richer sees Kallikrates as having become one of the *ἱεεες* before Plataia and that he puts the three individuals who received special treatment in the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians in the Kerameikos among the same group. It would stretch the boundaries of the imagination to believe that Kallikrates was worshipped as a hero while still alive, and there is no evidence that any of the Lakedaimonian dead in the Kerameikos were the objects of cult (nor does Richer claim that they were).

Richer's interpretation of 9.85 thus requires two separate assumptions: that *ἱεεες* = *ἥρης* and that *ἥρης* as used in 9.85 can be assigned a metaphorical rather than literal meaning. Both assumptions are not inherently impossible but are open to question. The equivalency Diels made between *ἱεεες* and *ἥρης* is entirely conjectural.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, it is not immediately apparent that *ἥρης*, in the time that Herodotus was writing, was likely to have been used to describe an individual who had fought bravely. The term *ἥρωες* appears repeatedly in the Homeric poems as a sort of honorary title without any necessary religious valence, but, by the late sixth century, *ἥρωες* was used to designate divine entities that were closely linked with but also differentiated from Olympian deities.<sup>113</sup> It is theoretically possible that the term *ἱεεες* was indeed the Lakonian equivalent of *ἥρης* and that it retained its Homeric meaning among Spartiates, but that is entirely a matter of speculation. On the other hand, it is surely noteworthy that throughout the Classical period the men who died in the Persian Wars, though held up as models of virtue, are never described using the word *ἥρωες*. Indeed, fifth- and fourth-century authors seem to have made an effort to avoid using that word to describe the casualties from the Persian War.<sup>114</sup>

112 Brugmann 1916.

113 Bremmer 2006: 17-19.

114 Welwei 1991: 61-62; Boehringer 1996: 50; Flashar 1996: 73. One suspects that the slippage from hero in its literal sense of an object of worship to the much more metaphorical sense found in Richer's work is facilitated by the ambiguity of the relevant terms in English and French. On that ambiguity, see Loraux 1986: 364 n. 159.

It would, therefore, seem unlikely that Herodotus' ἱρέες can, as Richer would have it, be taken to mean 'men who fought heroically'. The problems involved in Richer's approach are not new ones. When Karl Brugmann in 1916 proposed very much the same thing as Richer in arguing that 'ἱρεύς sei der lakonische Ausdruck für ἀριστεύς', his conjecture met with considerable skepticism from Johann Sitzler.<sup>115</sup>

Two possible variants upon Richer's line of argumentation merit further consideration. The first variant is that the ἱρέες need not be linked to ἥρης at all and that it simply meant what Richer takes it to mean. While that is not out of the question, there is not a single clear instance of such a usage anywhere in the corpus of extant Greek texts. Moreover, ἱρέες is derived from ἱερός, and, as Pierre Chantraine notes in the entry for ἱερός in his etymological dictionary, 'le sens general est "sacré"'.<sup>116</sup> It thus requires a great deal of stretching and bending to get ἱρέες to mean 'men who fought heroically' without the initial transformation suggested by Diels.

A second possibility is that Diels and Toynbee were correct in thinking that some Spartiates were literally heroized after Plataia and that those individuals, called ἱρέες, were buried in a special tomb. That approach has the advantage of avoiding the complications that come with taking the ἱρέες to be metaphorically heroic. It also meshes well with the argument put forth by Deborah Boedeker and others that all of the casualties at Plataia became the object of cult almost immediately after the fighting ended.<sup>117</sup> Boedeker's work was stimulated by the publication in 1992 of lengthy fragments from an elegiac poem written by Simonides about Plataia, in which poem the soldiers who fought at Plataia are directly connected with the figures, described as *hemitheoi*, who fought at Troy. Boedeker took that connection to be a sign that the casualties at Plataia were also treated as *hemitheoi*, and, in support of that position, pointed to evidence that the tombs at Plataia were carefully tended and received annual offerings from the Plataians and that the Eleutheria, a festival

115 Brugmann 1916: 21; Sitzler 1923: 10.

116 Chantraine 1968: 457. Beekes 2010: vol. 1, 580-81 supplies a similar definition.

117 Boedeker 2001; see also Boehringer 1996: 50. For scholarship prior to 1992 that adopted a position similar to that of Boedeker, see the listing in Welwei 1991: 67 n. 9.

held in honor of the casualties at Plataia, might already have been in existence in the first half of the fifth century.<sup>118</sup>

One might also mention that certain individuals and groups killed in the Persian Wars received special honors in Sparta. In his tour of Sparta, Pausanias (3.12.9, 14.1) saw the tombs of Leonidas and (the regent) Pausanias as well as a shrine to Maron and Alpheios (brothers who had died at Thermopylai and whom Pausanias describes as ‘next to Leonidas himself are thought to have fought best of all the Lakedaimonians who marched to Thermopylai’) and a *stele* listing the names of all three hundred men who were killed at Thermopylai. Leonidas was also honored with a festival bearing his name.<sup>119</sup> All of this could be taken as support for the idea that a limited number of Spartiates were singled out for their bravery at Plataia, labeled ἱεῖες and venerated as (literal) heroes, and buried in a special tomb (bearing in mind that it is unclear when the tomb, shrine, *stele*, and festival in question came into being).

Boedeker’s arguments have, however, been rejected in much of the more recent scholarship.<sup>120</sup> The emergent consensus follows Robert Parker, who takes the position that Greek cities in the Classical period buried their war dead in a fashion that resonated with the treatment accorded to heroes, ‘since no sharp divide separated funerary from heroic cult’, without making the war dead an object of cult. With the passage of centuries and the emergence of new religious practices and beliefs, those war dead eventually came, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, to be

118 There is an immediate difficulty in that Boedeker is making the case that all of the Greeks buried at Plataia were honored as heroes, whereas reading Herodotus’ ἱεῖες as designating men who received heroic honors would mean that the Lakedaimonians identified only a small subset of their number as worthy of such treatment. It is possible that two separate decision-making processes took place, one in the immediate aftermath of the battle in which the Lakedaimonians decided how to treat their own casualties, and a second one not long thereafter in which the Plataians or perhaps the members of the anti-Persian alliance as a whole decided how to honor all of the casualties.

119 The relevant evidence is reviewed in detail in Pavlides 2011: 104-16.

120 For a particularly full discussion, see Bremmer 2006, which echoes earlier scholarship including, but not limited to, Welwei 1991 and Flashar 1996: 73.

treated literally as heroes.<sup>121</sup> From that perspective, the evidence Pausanias supplies for the special treatment of figures such as Maron and Alpheios cannot be read back into the Classical period and the connection that Simonides makes between the *hemitheoi* of the Trojan War and the casualties at Plataia is intended solely to glorify the latter by associating them with the former.<sup>122</sup>

All of this goes to say that there are non-trivial difficulties in translating Herodotus' ἱρέες either as 'men who fought heroically' or as 'men who were accorded heroic honors'. That is a crucial issue because the approaches to reading 9.85 outlined by Richer on one hand and Diels and Toynbee on the other are not tenable unless one or the other translation is valid. There is, however, a sufficient degree of uncertainty in everything pertaining to the translation of ἱρέες and to the treatment of the casualties at Plataia that the ideas of Richer, Diels, and Toynbee remain tenable.

### 3.6 THE PHRASE ΕΝΘΑ ΜΕΝ ΤΟΥΣ ΙΡΕΑΣ ΕΘΑΨΑΝ, ΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΣΕΙΔΩΝΙΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΜΟΜΦΑΡΕΤΟΣ ΗΣΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΟΚΥΩΝ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΛΙΚΡΑΤΗΣ SHOULD BE ATHETIZED

The last of the three tenable solutions to the overlap problem does not involve expanding either the group of men decorated for bravery (Section 3.1) or the group of men buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες (Sections 3.2-4), nor does it involve making the group of Spartiates decorated for bravery coterminous with the group of those buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες (Section 3.5). Instead this solution, by means of athetization, removes the link between the two groups. More specifically, Joseph Blakesley, in his edition of Herodotus from 1854, proposed athetizing the phrase ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ

121 Parker 1996: 136-37.

122 The exception in this regard is likely to be Spartiate kings, who in all periods enjoyed a special standing and who seem to have been routinely heroized after their death. See Cartledge 1987: 331-43; 1988. For a different reading of the relevant evidence, see Parker 1988; 1989: 152-54, 169-70 nn. 51-57.



Ἄμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης.<sup>123</sup> This solution can be graphically represented as seen in Figures 11a-b.

The structure of the passage as transmitted is undeniably odd. Herodotus states that there were three graves, identifies the category of individuals buried in the first grave and names four occupants of that grave, and then goes on to list the categories of individuals buried in each of the three graves:

Οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνες, ὡς ἐν Πλαταιῆσι τὴν λήϊν διείλοντο, ἔθαπτον τοὺς ἐωυτῶν χωρὶς ἕκαστοι. Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν τριζὰς ἐποιήσαντο θήκας [ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ Ἄμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης] ἐν μὲν δὴ ἐνὶ τῶν τάφων ἦσαν οἱ ἱρέες, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἑτέρῳ οἱ ἄλλοι Σπαρτιῆται, ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ οἱ εἴλωτες. (9.85.2)

The third sentence, which begins with an awkwardly placed ἔνθα, seems out of place – if it belongs in the passage at all, it seems like it should follow the sentence ending with ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ οἱ εἴλωτες, since it is only at that point that the reader is made aware that there was a grave specifically for the ἱρέες.

As Nigel Wilson (the editor of the latest Oxford Classical Text edition of the *Histories*) observes in his recent series of studies on the text of Herodotus:

The sentence beginning ἔνθα is one of the most difficult in the whole work; it is awkwardly placed between what precedes and what follows, and there is much uncertainty about the category of persons referred to in the first clause. Sitzler ... found the difficulty so great that

123 Blakesley 1852-54: vol. 4, 474: 'I should almost be inclined to suspect that the whole clause, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος ... ἦσαν οἱ ἱρέες, is an addition of later times, when perhaps the additional feature of being in the bloom of youth had been added to the personal qualities of the Spartan hero'.

he wished to delete the whole sentence, and Legrand followed him.<sup>124</sup> In support of this view it may be argued that an interpolator could have gathered the four names from chs. 71-2 and copied from the next sentence the word indicating the category of citizens in question. And if the sentence is genuine, ἔνθα needs explanation.<sup>125</sup>

One might, therefore, suspect that the third sentence in this part of 9.85 should be athetized as a later and confused scholiast's note that was interpolated into the text. That would result in the following text:

Οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνες, ὡς ἐν Πλαταιῆσι τὴν ληϊὴν διείλοντο, ἔθαπτον τοὺς ἑωυτῶν χωρὶς ἕκαστοι. Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν τριζᾶς ἐποίησαντο θήκας ἐν μὲν δὴ ἐνὶ τῶν τάφων ἦσαν οἱ ἱρέες, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἑτέρῳ οἱ ἄλλοι Σπαρτιῆται, ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ οἱ εἰλωτες.

The Greeks at Plataia, when they had divided up the spoils, buried their own dead, each people separately. The Lakedaimonians made three separate burial places. The *hirees* were in one grave, and in another the rest of the Spartiates, and in a third the helots.

124 Sitzler 1923: 10. Legrand edited the edition of Herodotus for the Budé series; the volume containing Book 9 was published in 1954. More specifically, Legrand bracketed the text in question but did include it in the French translation.

125 Wilson 2015a: 186-87. Wilson then goes on to argue that 'The more serious problem here arises from the MSS reading ἱρέας ... ἱρέες. That is unlikely to be right. There is no mention of priests in the narrative, and no hint that the four men named were priests. In any case it was seers, not priests, who accompanied armies'. He rejects the emendations to either ἱρένες or ἱππέες, the latter because the *hippeis* were 'an elite force of Spartan cavalry' and because 'the narrative suggests that at least Callicrates and Amompharetos did not belong to the cavalry' (187). The idea that seers, not priests, accompanied armies is refuted decisively by SEG 29.361 (an Argive casualty of list from c. 400 that includes a μάντις and an ἱαρεύς), and it is likely that some Lakedaimonians who fought at Plataia were present as part of their military duties but were also priests. The *hippeis* were indeed an elite force, but they were, at least in the period under consideration here, almost certainly infantrymen, not cavalrymen. On that point (which has also been the subject of much discussion), see Figueira 2006: 67-74 and the sources cited therein.

Insofar as there is no longer a list of the occupants of the grave of the ἱρέες, there is no longer an overlap between the list of the bravest Spartiates and the list occupants of the grave of the ἱρέες. The overlap problem is thus neatly resolved, as is apparent in Figures 11a-b.

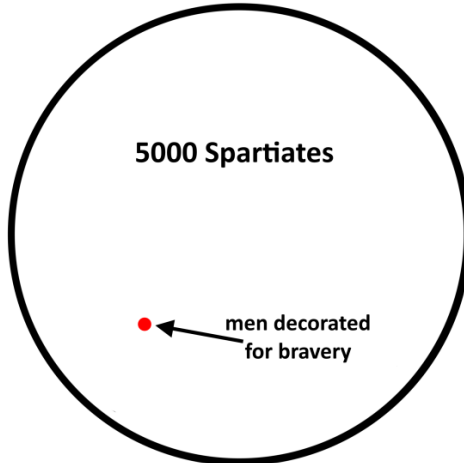


Figure 11a: Venn diagram of Blakesley's (implicit) description of the dead and decorated at Plataia.<sup>126</sup>

If one maintains the translation of ἱρέες as 'priests', this solution requires assuming that one or more priests were among the Spartan casualties at Plataia. For reasons that do not require further discussion (see Section 1), it is unlikely that there were a significant number of priests among the 91 Spartan casualties, and it might seem surprising that the Spartiates would construct a special tomb to hold perhaps no more than one or two individuals. However, the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians at Athens shows that Lakedaimonians divided their dead into numerous groups, some of which were quite small (see Section 2). The first phase of the Tomb of the Lakedaimonians at Athens held ten individuals, one of whom was buried in a separate tomb and the other nine of whom were

126 The size of the circles representing each group is notional because Blakesley's reading is agonistic as to the number of individuals buried in the tomb of the *hīrees*. Blakesley's reading does not rule out the possibility that one or more individuals decorated for bravery (other than Poseidonios, Philokyon, and Amompharetos) were buried in the tomb of the ἱρέες.

separated into two distinct groups. It is, therefore, entirely plausible that one of the three Lakedaimonian tombs at Plataia held a small number of priests.

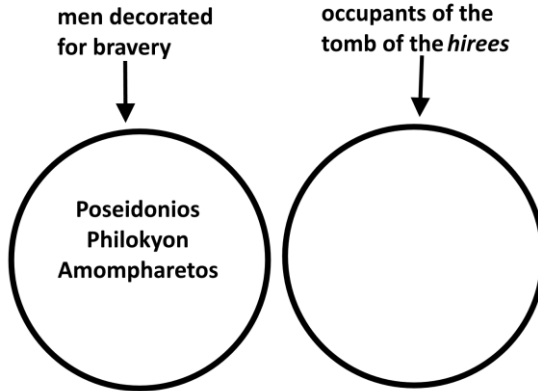


Figure 11b: The pattern of decoration for bravery among Spartiates according to Blakesley.<sup>127</sup>

This solution also requires another, perhaps more problematic assumption, namely that a somewhat clumsy gloss was interpolated into the text at a sufficiently early date and was sufficiently widely adopted as to appear in all of the extant manuscripts. However, there are numerous passages in the text of the *Histories* as known to us that have been identified as interpolations coming from hands other than that of Herodotus.<sup>128</sup> For example, David Asheri, Alan Lloyd, and Aldo Corcella, in their commentary on Book 1 of the *Histories*, identify a sentence (on Gyges being mentioned in the iambic trimeter verses of Archilochus) as virtually certainly an interpolation, ‘a gloss by a reader,’ in part because the terminology used (ἐν ἰάμβῳ τριμέτρῳ) ‘is ... a technical expression of a

127 The size of the circles representing each group in this diagram is notional because Blakesley’s reading is agonistic as to the number of individuals buried in the tomb of the *hirees*.

128 There is good reason to believe that Herodotus himself made insertions into what were largely finished sections of text and hence that there are what have been called interpolations that came from Herodotus’ hand. See, for example, Hornblower & Pelling 2017: 267.

period later than Herodotus'.<sup>129</sup> In a similar vein, Wilson, who is in general quite cautious about athetizing passages from our text of the *Histories*, follows J.E. Powell in identifying the second and third sentences in 8.113.3 as interpolations based on a scholiast's note.<sup>130</sup>

There is, moreover, reason to believe that already by the second century CE at least two distinct texts of the *Histories* were in circulation and that the version that has come down to us represents the less accurate of the two.<sup>131</sup> The presence of an interpolated *scholion* in the manuscript tradition available to us would not, therefore, be entirely surprising. The end result is that here again we have a tenable but not irrefutable solution.

#### 4. THE PROBLEM OF THE VANISHING PERIOIKOI

As mentioned in the introduction to this essay, there are two difficulties with 9.85: (1) the overlap problem and (2) the absence of any mention of a grave for the Lakedaimonian *perioikoi*. The former has been treated in detail in the preceding discussion, the latter remains to be explored.

Potentially relevant here is the reform of the Lakedaimonian army discussed in Section 2. The presumably looser integration of Spartiates and *perioikoi* in the Lakedaimonian army at Plataia, as opposed to the better documented versions of that army known from later sources such as Xenophon, could conceivably have affected both the number of casualties suffered by the *perioikoi* at Plataia and how those casualties were treated.

We can proceed quickly here because just four, relatively straightforward solutions have been proposed.<sup>132</sup> First, the *perioikoi* may not have

129 Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 84.

130 Wilson 2015a: 169.

131 Mirończuk 2011. Stephanie West has argued, on the basis of finds of portions of the *Histories* on papyri from Oxyrhynchus, that 'our texts had already suffered significant corruption before the Hellenistic period ...' (West 2011: 70).

132 It is theoretically possible that the *perioikoi* were buried with the helots, but no scholar has, to my knowledge, made that case. Indeed, it would be difficult to believe that the *perioikoi*, free men who served as hoplites in the Lakedaimonian army, would have countenanced their dead comrades being buried with the helots.

suffered any casualties and hence had no need for a tomb. Flower and Marincola point out that Herodotus makes no mention of the *perioikoi* in his detailed account of the battle and conclude that ‘It must remain an open question ... whether perioeci participated in the battle, and, if so, whether a sufficient number died to warrant burial with the Λακεδαιμόνιοι’.<sup>133</sup> One might in this vein argue that in the Lakedaimonian army as it existed at Plataia the *perioikoi* were not tightly integrated with the Spartiates and that they were, as a result, positioned in the rear ranks of the Lakedaimonian phalanx or in an entirely separate formation well in back of a purely Spartan phalanx.<sup>134</sup> This, however, presumes that fully half of the Lakedaimonian hoplites present at a pitched battle had virtually no contact with a very sizable enemy force. It is, therefore, not surprising that Lazenby characterizes the idea that the *perioikoi*, because they were in the rear of the Lakedaimonian phalanx, suffered no casualties as ‘far-fetched’.<sup>135</sup>

Second, it is possible that Herodotus was wrong on the facts and that there was in reality one grave each at Plataia for Spartiates, *perioikoi*, and

For further discussion, see Richer 2012: 171. One might, however, note, that Pausanias 1.32.3 states that the graves at Marathon included one that held both the Plataian allies of Athens and slaves. Pausanias 7.15.7 strongly implies that the dead slaves in question had been freed before the battle, so the parallel is not exact. For further discussion, see Branscome 2013: 163 n. 16 and the sources cited therein. In addition, Hunt 1997 has argued that at Plataia the Spartiates formed only the first rank of the phalanx, with the other seven ranks consisting entirely of helots. That would give the helots a major role in the Greek victory and hence perhaps a powerful claim to burial in the same grave as the *perioikoi* (both groups representing, on this occasion, important but subordinate allies of the Spartiates).

133 Flower & Marincola 2002: 255, following Cawkwell 1983: 387. See also pg. 231, where Flower and Marincola argue that Herodotus does not mention casualties among the *perioikoi* because few if any of them were killed, due to the fact that they were stationed in the rear of the Lakedaimonian phalanx.

134 Herodotus provides minimal details of the disposition of the Lakedaimonian soldiers at Plataia. He writes only that, ‘The right wing was held by ten thousand Lacedaemonians. Of these, five thousand were Spartiates, and they were guarded by thirty-five thousand helots – light-armed troops – seven of them arranged in the ranks for each Spartan’ (9.28, trans. D. Grene). The later sources for the battle offer no further relevant information.

135 Lazenby 1985: 181 n. 16. See also the doubts expressed in Richer 2012: 171 n. 204.

helots. Most scholars who have adopted this position have accepted Valckenaer's emendation to ἱρένες and argued that the majority of the casualties were ἱρένες; hence Herodotus was somewhat misinformed or was, somewhat clumsily, trying to say that the first grave contained all of the Spartiate casualties, most of whom were ἱρένες.<sup>136</sup>

Third, the *perioikoi* may have been buried in the same grave as the Spartiates who were not ἱρέες.<sup>137</sup> This, however, runs counter to the wording of the passage, in which the occupants of the second grave are described as Σπαρτιῆται. Herodotus' preferred term for all things Lakedaimonian is in fact Λακεδαιμόνιοι; for instance, even kings such as Kleomenes and Leonidas are characterized as Lakedaimonian rather than Spartan (5.54, 8.65). Σπαρτιῆται is, therefore, quite specific, though it may be significant that Herodotus begins the description of the Lakedaimonian tombs at Plataia by writing 'Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν τριζὰς ἐποίησαντο θήκας'.

Finally, Σπαρτιῆται may need to be emended to read Λακεδαιμόνιοι, so that the occupants of the second tomb were 'the rest of the Lakedaimonians', which would include the *perioikoi*.<sup>138</sup> That suggestion, however, defies palaeographic probability.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The fact that 9.85 has been the subject of discussion for more than two and a half centuries and that no scholarly consensus has emerged in that time is a reflection of the interpretive difficulties this passage presents. It would be exceedingly bold – Herodotus might even say hubristic – to suggest a definitive resolution here. That said, it may be helpful to identify what seem to me to be the most likely solutions to both of the problems with 9.85.

136 See, for example, Stein 1901: vol. 5, 196; Macan 1908: vol. 1.2, 770; How & Wells 1912: vol. 2, 327.

137 See, for example, Legrand 1932-54: vol. 2, 68 n. 3; Richer 1994: 66; 2012: 171-72.

138 Van Groningen 1959: vol. 2, 196.

With respect to the overlap problem, I am inclined to athetize the phrase ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας ἔθαψαν, τῶν καὶ Ποσειδώνιος καὶ Ἀμομφάρετος ἦσαν καὶ Φιλοκύων τε καὶ Καλλικράτης. This is not a modest intervention in the text, but the wording of the middle section of the passage does seem to indicate the need for emendation of some kind. With respect to the problem of where the fallen *perioikoi* were buried, I am inclined to believe that they were placed in the same tomb as the Spartiates who were not ἱεῖες.

As has been the case throughout, only the former problem requires extended discussion. Athetizing the phrase starting with ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας has a claim to being the best solution to the overlap problem because it is the only solution in which the occupants of what Herodotus calls the tomb of the ἱεῖες are priests. The other two tenable solutions make the occupants either *hippeis* or individuals who had been singled out for bravery (and hence almost certainly not priests).

That is an important issue because the most obvious translation of ἱεῖες is ‘priests’, and there is independent literary and epigraphic evidence for religious officials in Lakedaimon receiving special treatment with respect to their burial. As we have seen (see Section 3.1), Plutarch *Lycurgus* 27.1-2 indicates that female religious officials were one of just two groups of Spartiates that had a right to an inscribed epitaph. In addition, there are five known inscriptions that are certain or likely to be epitaphs, all from Lakedaimon *ex* Sparta, in which women are identified as *hiera* or *hiara* (*IG* V.1.1127, 1129, 1221, 1283 and *SEG* 22.306); the earliest of these inscriptions seems to date to the Hellenistic period.<sup>139</sup> *Hieroi* are also known from six inscriptions that are certain or likely to be epitaphs, all from Lakedaimon *ex* Sparta (*IG* V.1.1214, 1223, 1338, 1356, 1367 and *SEG* 11.951); the earliest of these inscriptions seems to date to the fifth century.<sup>140</sup> One might add to that list *IG* V.1.711, an inscription on a small

139 Brulé & Piolot 2004: 168 n. 20, drawing on Le Roy 1961: 228-34.

140 Also relevant is *IG* V.1.1329, which appears to be an epitaph, from Leuktra in Lakonia, for a *hiera*εύς. This inscription, for which the *IG* does not supply a date, has been placed in the sixth (Dillon 2007: 161 and n. 49) or fifth century (Wallace 1970: 99 n. 11). Parker 1989: 163 n. 4 expresses some doubt that it is an epitaph. See also *IG* V.1.1511 (from Kalyvia tis Sochas) and *SEG* 11.923 (from Gytheion), both of which are regulations concerning cult activity and both of which date to the Roman period.



Doric epistyle block. This inscription, which reads [ὁ δεῖνα] ἱερεὺς, is dated to the second century CE on letter forms but might be a copy of an earlier text.<sup>141</sup> Some caution is needed in using this collection of evidence for Spartiate burial practices because it comes from Lakedaimon *ex* Sparta. However, given the striking paucity of inscribed epitaphs from Lakedaimon as a whole,<sup>142</sup> the existence of nearly a dozen epitaphs for Lakedaimonian religious officials seems to be significant.

There is, therefore, good evidence that Spartiate religious officials, both male and female, received special treatment when they were interred, which aligns neatly with the reading of 9.85 that results from athetizing the phrase starting with ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας.<sup>143</sup> One might add that the inscription on and internal arrangements of the tomb of the Lakedaimonians in Athens indicate that the clear differentiation among the burials in Lakedaimonian *polyandria* was based on pre-existing status. And of course Spartiates were renowned for their piety (see, for example, Hdt. 1.65-70; 5.42-46, 62-75, 90-3; 6.52-86, 105-7, 120). It would, therefore, not be surprising if Spartiate priests received separate burial in battlefield *polyandria*.<sup>144</sup>

If the overlap problem is resolved by athetizing the phrase starting with ἔνθα μὲν τοὺς ἱρέας, some interesting conclusions follow. To begin with, rejecting Valckenaer's emendation to ἱρένες makes Xenophon's *Lakedaimonian Politeia* the earliest source for Spartiate age-classes.<sup>145</sup> That might have important ramifications for our understanding of the history

141 Brulé & Piolot 2004: 155 with n. 20, 158-59. It is possible, but by no means certain, that IG V.1.711 may have been brought to Mistra from Sparta as building material.

142 Christesen 2019: 348-52.

143 Kennell 1995: 14-16 makes the case that the creation of a special grave for ἱρέες, understood as priests, is plausible because it reflects a situation in which the three tombs at Plataia correspond to the Indo-European tripartite division into warriors, priests, and farmers.

144 One might add, on a speculative note, that the name of one of the occupants of the tomb of the ἱρέες, Poseidonios, could be taken to suggest that he had a special connection of some kind with Poseidon, perhaps as a priest. On the worship of Poseidon in Lakedaimon, see Richer 2012: 41-42, 268-69, 459-60, 630-31.

145 Kennell 1995: 14-16; Ducat 2006: 94-95. Lupi 2000 has argued (in more detail than Kennell) that the occurrences of *eirenes* in the standard texts of the *Lakedaimonion Politeia* should be expunged, which would eliminate any evidence for *eirenes* as an age-class in pre-Hellenistic Sparta.

of the Spartiate educational system. Furthermore, Spartiate priests emerge as a distinct and quite prestigious group within Spartiate society, and one might well suspect that Flower and Marincola were correct in speculating that, as was the case in Rome, Spartiates held elected or hereditary priesthoods concurrently with military commands.<sup>146</sup> Finally, the provision of a separate grave for priests at Plataia might suggest that the individuals buried within the urban fabric of Sparta in the Archaic and Classical periods were priests.

All of those conclusions must remain tentative in the absence of definitive evidence for how to read 9.85. One might hope that the publication of papyri fragments of Book 9 will definitively resolve the issue, and, as stated at the outset, the aspirational goal of this essay remains catalyzing new research that cuts once and for all this particular interpretive Gordian knot.

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146 Flower & Marincola 2002: 255-56.

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