

FROM THERMOPYLAE TO STALINGRAD:  
THE MYTH OF LEONIDAS  
IN GERMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

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ὦ ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις, ὅτι τῆδε  
κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι.

Foreigner, go tell the Lacedaemonians  
that we lie here obedient to their commands.

We all, of course, know this famous epitaph which has been attributed to the poet Simonides and which glorifies the futile battle at Thermopylae fought in 480 BC by Leonidas and his brave comrades against the Persian host.<sup>1</sup>

The historical setting of the notorious episode is easy to outline. In order to punish the city-states of the Greek mainland which had assisted the Ionian Revolt, the king of Persia ventured upon two expeditions. The first attack was shipwrecked in the storm-swept Aegean Sea; the second reached Marathon in 490 where the Athenian hoplites and their allies from Plataea, fighting with the courage of despair, decisively defeated the invasion-force although it was superior in number. Ten years later, another attempt was made to discipline the insubordinate *poleis* on the edge of the world. Now nothing was left to chance. In spring 480 the time had come. The Persians approached Greece by land and sea. There the issue was raised where the invader should be met. Three natural positions of defence were considered. First the Tempe defile in north-eastern Thessaly, then the Thermopylae pass separating northern and central Greece, and finally the Isthmus joining central Greece and the Peloponnese. The first line was abandoned without a fight; in consequence the Thessalian aristocracy who had supported the defensive strategy changed sides. It was then decided to send a Peloponnesian force under the command of the Spartan king Leonidas to Thermopylae to defend the pass against the Persian ground troops; at the same time the fleet moved into position at the promontory of Artemisium. After two days of fighting Thermopylae was turned through the treachery of

a local Greek. When Leonidas learnt of the Persian approach he told the allies to go. The king and his 300 Spartans, with some hundred Thespians and Thebans, decided to stay and fought to the last.

It is not my intention here to discuss the reasons why the Spartan king decided to stand on the hillock, and to die. They are still subject to scholarly dispute.<sup>2</sup> Rather, I want to present 'one of the most famous days in the history of warfare'<sup>3</sup> as a paradigm of the 'Spartan tradition' in German historiography.<sup>4</sup> Leonidas' obedience to the decrees has again and again been celebrated as duty of the highest order,<sup>5</sup> from Cicero, who gives a Latin translation of the epigram in *Tusculan Disputations*,<sup>6</sup> to R. Glover in the eighteenth century,<sup>7</sup> who, like so many others, let the king die for the salvation of his native land; from Origen, who believed that the devotion of Leonidas helps Christians to understand that of Jesus,<sup>8</sup> to the *citoyens* of the French town Saint-Marcellin, who abandoned their Christian faith in 1793, and adopted the name 'Thermopyles' for their community.<sup>9</sup>

In the following pages, I shall concentrate on certain aspects of the Leonidas-myth in German historiography. After a short introduction on the perception of Sparta in the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries (i), I shall analyse the accounts of the battle of Thermopylae in German scholarship first from about 1850 to 1918 (ii) and then in the period up to 1945 (iii). The popular glorification and political manipulation of the 'three hundred' in the educational system of Nazi Germany will then be examined (iv). In this context, it seems necessary to compare contemporary German studies with interpretations of Leonidas' last stand in other European countries (v). I shall end with a glance at the presentation of Leonidas' death in German historiography after the Second World War (vi). Since some Austrian and Swiss scholars are cited, it should also be said that I do not maintain a national concept of German historiography, either *großdeutsch* or *kleindeutsch*, but have scrutinized their respective works since their authors considered themselves as belonging to a culturally or politically defined German nation.

### (i) 1750 to 1850

In the second half of the eighteenth century, idealization of the hellenic world brought with it the gradual emergence of a positive picture of Sparta. Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Schiller, though criticizing the Lycurgan constitution as objectionable and praising the enlightened citizenship of Athens, nevertheless admired the 'principle of Thermopylae', i.e., the political virtue and patriotism of the Spartans.<sup>10</sup> To Schiller we owe the well-known German translation of Simonides' epitaph quoted above:

*Wanderer, kommst du nach Sparta, verkündige dorten, du habest  
Uns hier liegen gesehn, wie das Gesetz es befahl.*<sup>11</sup>

In Herder's view, Athens and Sparta represented the two eternal poles of human development, i.e. enlightenment and patriotism. This polarized classification also characterizes Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's approach, according to whom Athens is far superior to Sparta. In Athens – at least in the fifth century BC – democracy, expressing an objective will, guaranteed individual freedom, strong community feeling and the active pursuit of beauty and truth, or in Hegel's words: *freie Individualität* and *Sittlichkeit*. In Sparta, a forced equality destroyed liberty, while an over-powerful state suffocated civil responsibility and intellectual life. So it is not surprising that Hegel dedicates only a marginal note to Leonidas and Thermopylae when describing the Persian War as a battle of Asiatic despotism versus Greek culture and individuality.<sup>12</sup>

Hegel's dialectic rendering of the two Greek *poleis* is also to be read as a reaction to a new understanding of the Spartans proposed by Friedrich Schlegel and, above all, by Karl Otfried Müller. This tradition, which later became most influential in German political theory and classical scholarship, perceived the Dorian tribe as the most authentic of all the Greeks. Sparta was the model for reconstructing the institutions and customs of the older and purer hellenic past. Hence the Spartans were converted into the Dorians *par excellence*. In Leonidas' sacrifice Schlegel recognizes not a patriotic deed, but a symbol of the Dorian obedience to law. 'Their holy death was the pinnacle of all joy', he exults.<sup>13</sup> Müller, on the other hand, mentions the battle of Thermopylae only *en passant*, but he defines Dorian Sparta as a Greek model state, praises the subjection of the individual to the community, and emphasizes the conservative orientation of Sparta's institutions. His romantic idealization was successful in the first place because he integrated some of the new political feelings of his age into his work, and also because he combined mythology and religion, archaeology and geography, philosophy and philology, political and institutional history.<sup>14</sup>

Although the Spartans, especially through Müller's *Dorier*, won some popularity, we should not forget that, as Elizabeth Rawson has observed, in Germany 'even in philhellenic literature, of which there was a flood, Leonidas is a great deal harder to find than he was in France and England'.<sup>15</sup> In the first modern, one may say 'critical', history of Sparta by J.C.F. Manso, a Prussian schoolteacher and patriot, the battle of Thermopylae is described without solemn overtones.<sup>16</sup> Leonidas' great time was yet to come.

## (ii) 1850 to 1918

Leonidas was a new discovery in the period of historicism and nationalism. Classical scholarship received an unparalleled impetus in the nineteenth century. The first systematic archaeological campaigns and an intensified

*Quellenforschung* gradually transformed the picture of Sparta. A long series of 'Histories of Greece' tried to put back together again the fragments generated by ever more specialized academic research. The historical interpretation of the battle of Thermopylae was based upon the most detailed source criticism, topographical reconstruction, military exegesis and discussion of the different reasons why Leonidas fought to the last. In those days, scholars asked the same questions that we still do.<sup>17</sup> Why did Sparta send fewer of its citizens against the Persian invaders than did Corinth? Is Herodotus' account convincing that Sparta planned to send a full contingent when the Karneia festival was over? Was Sparta pursuing a narrow, Peloponnesian policy in sending an inadequate force to Thermopylae? Why did Leonidas and his 300 Spartans take their stand on the hillock? Did they simply refuse to contemplate retreat? Or was there a strategic advantage? Was there really a prophecy that either Sparta would be destroyed or would lose a king? Were the 300 Thebans kept back as hostages? Did the 700 Thespians volunteer to stay? Can Herodotus' account be reconciled with that of Diodorus?

There were, of course, different shades and emphases. Military historians, for instance, like Hermann Köchly and Friedrich Rüstow, discussed possible tactical reasons why the king stayed. They thought that he wanted to protect the retreat of the remaining army.<sup>18</sup> According to Hans Delbrück, the defence of Thermopylae was, in military terms, '*ein Fehler, eine Halbheit*' ('a mistake, a half measure') since the king's position could be outflanked by the enemy;<sup>19</sup> nevertheless, Leonidas' heroic death remained 'a moral postulate' and was of immense value, since 'the barbarians were not allowed to enter real Hellas without a fight'.<sup>20</sup> Often the Spartan's civil duty and obedience to law was underlined.<sup>21</sup> Leopold von Ranke, for example, adopted this view in his *Weltgeschichte*.<sup>22</sup> Robert von Pöhlmann, the author of the 'Greek History' for the *Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, said that Leonidas had to stand, otherwise he would have violated Spartan martial law: 'The splendid heroic death of the fighters at Thermopylae strengthened rather than weakened the confidence of the Greeks and was thus not futile for the national cause.'<sup>23</sup> Other scholars complained about the missing support of the Spartan authorities and their narrow-minded policy; among these are to be found Ernst Curtius,<sup>24</sup> Adolf Holm<sup>25</sup> and Georg Busolt.<sup>26</sup>

Not only the tactical, but also the moral importance of the battle was stressed. Thermopylae was now understood in the context of the national movement. Already in 1812, the poet Theodor Körner praised the 'bloody valley of Thermopylae' (*das blutige Tal der Thermopylen*) to encourage his compatriots in their fight against Napoleon.<sup>27</sup> In scholarship too the dead were transformed into the embodiment of self-sacrificing courage, their

tomb was, according to Ernst Curtius, 'an everlasting monument of heroic civic virtue' (*ein unvergängliches Denkmal heldenmüthiger Bürgertugend*).<sup>28</sup>

Certainly, there were also critical voices. Jakob Burckhardt, in his *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*, accused the Spartans of blind egoism in the Persian War: they had deliberately sacrificed Leonidas so that Sparta could retain her honour and protect the main force of her army from being defeated.<sup>29</sup> In accordance with Plato's political philosophy, Sparta appeared to Burckhardt as the perfect Greek *polis* and he deeply admired the ephorate. On the other hand, he did not ignore the oppressive nature of Spartan institutions, the exploitation of the helots and was full of distaste for the educational system.

Others showed no sympathy whatever with the action of the 'Kamikaze squadron'<sup>30</sup> led by Leonidas. Barthold Georg Niebuhr, in his 'Lectures on Ancient History', vigorously defended a pro-Athenian perspective. Hostile to the *polis* of the Eurotas, he argued that later generations have honoured Leonidas and his Spartans but ignored the helots and the 700 Thespians, who were also killed in the battle.<sup>31</sup> According to Nikolaus Wecklein, it was 'a fruitless bloodshed';<sup>32</sup> and Franz Rühl, a leftist, complained that Leonidas gave his life for an obsolete sense of martial honour deriving from his boyhood education.<sup>33</sup> Some years earlier he had simply called the disaster 'quixotic'.<sup>34</sup> The most prominent of all critics was Karl Julius Beloch, an ardent nonconformist and *bête noire* of the academic establishment,<sup>35</sup> who made a clean sweep of the legend. His de-mystification resulted in the conclusion: 'The catastrophe at Thermopylae had only one advantage for the Greek case: it liberated the federal army from an incompetent commander.'<sup>36</sup>

That hurt. Most of Beloch's colleagues were indignant. Eduard Meyer, for example, who since 1902 had held the Chair of Ancient History at Berlin,<sup>37</sup> refused any serious discussion of Beloch's position. Instead, he celebrated *ex cathedra* Leonidas' heroic death, which was 'a shining example showing the nation the way it had to go; this example made men realize more deeply and more vividly than any words that the only choice was to gain victory or to die with honour'.<sup>38</sup> That the battle of Thermopylae was of tactical as well as moral significance was also argued by Max Duncker. He rejected modern critics of Leonidas' death in battle, on the grounds that such statements showed only that their authors had no idea of the moral powers which also rule war.<sup>39</sup> These quotations are typical of the interpretations proposed during this period. Only a minority of outsiders criticized Leonidas' action; the overwhelming majority of professional historians celebrated the Spartan king as a shining example of patriotism and heroism. Leonidas had become a paragon of nationalism.

(iii) 1918 to 1945

The military break-down of the German *Kaiserreich* and the democratic revolution in November 1918 had deep consequences for the subsequent political, social and intellectual development of Germany. The old system had collapsed, a new one was to be built up. In this time of crisis, historians and classicists categorically demanded a prominent position for their subjects as leading disciplines (*Leitdisziplinen*) to give guidance and orientation to the masses. It is well-known that the majority of university teachers did not identify with the Republic of Weimar but advocated an anti-parliamentary, autocratic system and glorified the good old days of the Empire. Specialized positivist research, though struck by the severe economic problems at the beginning of the twenties, was carried on; but at the same time a historical and classical education was presented as the ideal means of mastering the present and the future.<sup>40</sup> In this context, Sparta became one of the most popular patterns of classical antiquity, and not only among professional historians. Expressionist German authors often referred to Sparta as an example of Doric manhood and homosexual, antifeminist elitism. I mention only Theodor Däubler's essay on Sparta, written in 1923, which praises the homoerotic couples killed at Thermopylae for the sake of their country,<sup>41</sup> and Gottfried Benn's article on the 'Doric World' of 1934. According to the latter, the Dorian's 'dream is reproduction and ever-lasting youth, equality with the gods, great will, strongest aristocratic belief in the race, care for the entire tribe', and 'Doric is pederasty...Doric is love of fighting, such couples stood like a wall and fell'.<sup>42</sup>

But not only poets adored the *Soldatenstaat* and the *Männerlager* on the Eurotas. Sparta seems to have been a model for a whole generation of academics who were shaped by the terrible experience of the trenches in the First World War and could not accept the military defeat of Germany. They propagated instead the myth of the 'stab in the back'. At Langemarck in Flanders, where in the autumn of 1914 thousands of badly-trained and poorly-equipped young German soldiers were sent to their slaughter, the perished regiments were celebrated with the following inscription:

*Wanderer kommst Du nach Deutschland, verkündige dorten Du habest  
Uns hier liegen gesehen, wie das Gesetz es befahl.*<sup>43</sup>

Tell them in Germany, passer-by:  
Obedient to the orders, here we lie.

In scholarship, however, the discussions of the preceding decades continued, though it is striking that criticism of Leonidas' action slowly but steadily subsided. Carl Friedrich Lehmann-Haupt<sup>44</sup> and Thomas Lenschau, the author of the article 'Leonidas' in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realencyclopädie der*

*classischen Altertumswissenschaft*,<sup>45</sup> defended the king's glory considering him to have remained on the hillock to act as a rearguard for the Greek allies. Whereas Johannes Kromayer and Georg Veith presented an exhaustive analysis of the topography of Thermopylae and the battle, and interpreted the sacrifice as successful cover for the retreat of the Greek army,<sup>46</sup> Ulrich Wilcken emphasized in his popular 'Greek History', first published in 1924 and often reprinted, that Leonidas, as soldier and general, carried out duty of the highest order and defined the slaughter as a moral victory. He concluded: 'Leonidas and his followers shall forever remain an example and an object of adoration for our youth.'<sup>47</sup> This passage is also to be found in the revised editions of 1951, 1957, 1962 and 1973 and disturbed some students of Greek history, at least at Leiden University in the late fifties and early sixties. They wanted the book removed from their reading list.<sup>48</sup> Franz Miltner at Innsbruck considered a defence of Leonidas necessary in 1935 and tried to prove that the Spartan king had won not only a moral, but also a strategic victory which saved the Greek fleet at Artemisium from destruction.<sup>49</sup>

Yet the scholarly and public discourse about Sparta in the twenties and thirties was mainly influenced by the accounts of two ancient historians, namely Victor Ehrenberg and Helmut Berve. Ehrenberg, a liberal Jew, who in 1939 had to emigrate to England, was attracted by the manly community of the Spartiates. In his *PW*-article on Sparta he wrote:

The one-sidedness of this race indicates its greatness. Never again has the ideal of disciplined manhood been set down in such purity. But the greatest achievement is that this masculine and soldierly society devotes itself to unrestricted service of the *Nomos*, which as incarnation of their state, their religious belief, their customs and tradition is their only sovereign. Only thus was this society able to sacrifice almost entirely its individual existence to the state.<sup>50</sup>

One can hardly imagine a better place for such a statement than Pauly-Wissowa's *Realencyclopädie*. It may be added that only five years later Ehrenberg sang the palinode of his colourful picture of a 'totalitarian' state in antiquity.<sup>51</sup>

Ehrenberg's famous theory of a single Spartan legislator, who in the sixth century BC refounded the *polis* and attributed his reforms to the mythical statesman Lycurgus,<sup>52</sup> met the immediate disapproval of Helmut Berve: 'The strange *kosmos* and the Spartan spirit...were not made, but grew from the ultimate, timeless depths of a collective soul (*Volksseele*)...' <sup>53</sup> Berve formulated his concept of Sparta already in the twenties<sup>54</sup> and popularized it in his *Greek History*, the first volume of which appeared in 1931. There one could read that

the Spartans sacrificed themselves deliberately, not only out of strategic necessity but for the law of Doric manhood. With good reason they are

considered as the true fighters at Thermopylae. They were the ones in whom autonomous Greek man consciously opposed fate, they were prepared to be defeated but were not prepared to submit themselves to their fate.<sup>55</sup>

Berve's view of Sparta depended on the idealizing tradition which derived from Schlegel and Müller and thus advocated a strict dichotomy between Dorians and Ionians.<sup>56</sup>

Although some Nazis may have had personal reservations about Berve's political loyalty, he identified himself entirely with the 'national revolution' of 1933 and strongly influenced the academic development and profile of his discipline in the Third Reich.<sup>57</sup> He became *rector magnificus* at the university of Leipzig and *Kriegsbeauftragter der deutschen Altertumswissenschaft* ('war representative of German classics').<sup>58</sup> It is therefore not surprising that Richard Walther Darré's blood-and-soil mysticism and his confusing interpretation of Sparta as an ideal peasant society (*Bauernstaat*)<sup>59</sup> did not meet the taste and ideology of an academically trained public, but Helmut Berve's concept of the Lacedaemonian *polis* did.<sup>60</sup> Berve, who had warmly welcomed the Nationalsocialist re-evaluation of history, did not hesitate to criticize<sup>61</sup> the eccentric theories of Darré's epigoni and other ignorant zealots.<sup>62</sup> At the same time he, like Fritz Schachermeyr, Hans Oppermann, Joseph Vogt and others, adopted racist categories, developed, for example, by Hans F.K. Günther,<sup>63</sup> to interpret ancient history.<sup>64</sup> The Greek city states were integrated into the concept of Nordic world history (*Nordische Weltgeschichte*) and a pseudo-scientific biologicistic approach propagated close racial relations between *Deutschtum und Hellenium*.<sup>65</sup>

In his little book on Sparta, which was aimed at a general audience and published in 1937, with reprints in 1944 and in 1966,<sup>66</sup> Berve depicted Sparta as an ideal historical model for Nationalsocialist government. He conjured up the Nordic spirit embodied in the aristocracy of Sparta and idealized the institutions and customs of the Doric polis, above all the racial laws which were consequently applied, and the elitist clanship which efficiently suppressed every individualistic notion. Consequently, he reduced the soldiers killed at Thermopylae to the 300 aristocratic Spartiates and deliberately ignored the Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*, the Thespians and the reluctant Thebans. The heroism of the 300 Spartiates was based upon the fact, 'that they, far away from their home, at a place where the command had put them, took their stand for no other reason but the command'. And Berve continued:

How could a Lacedaemonian king, how could troops of Spartiates have left their post to save a life whose highest fulfilment was to stand in battle regardless whether they won or died! Unthinkable the return of such a company! Certainly, the sacrifice was of no avail for central Greece and the



Lacedaemonians themselves, whose aristocratic troops lost one twentieth of their numbers; but he who, in this case, asks for such a shallow benefit or even bases his judgement upon it, misunderstands Spartan warfare and fails to appreciate the strength which finally enabled Hellas to gain the victory over the Persian. The greatness as well as the impact of the deed lay in its futility.<sup>67</sup>

Indeed, this lesson was about to be learned by soldiers of the *Wehrmacht*. The Nazi elite did not hesitate to refer to the supposed Spartan 'virtues' to drive army corps to their doom. In the last days of the battle of Stalingrad, the *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring reminded the troops of the hopeless fight of Leonidas and his 300 comrades, pointed to this heroic example of 'highest soldiership' and predicted a new reading of the famous epitaph:

*Kommst Du nach Deutschland, so berichte, du habest uns in Stalingrad kämpfen sehen, wie das Gesetz der Ehre und Kriegführung es für Deutschland befohlen hat.*<sup>68</sup>

If you come to Germany, tell them you have seen us fighting in Stalingrad, obedient to the law of honour and warfare.

#### (iv) Leonidas in Nationalsocialist Education

Berve, like other prominent German ancient historians, was not only a collaborator, but a 'willing executioner' of Nazi ideology, to use a phrase that has recently won some popularity. He was prepared to offer an *interpretatio fascistica* of Spartan history which corroborated the 'Aryan' or 'Nordic' view of the past and was easily adopted by schoolteachers and classicists who hastily embraced the Nationalsocialist *Weltanschauung*, ardently advocated racist theories and opportunistically emphasized the central importance of antiquity for the proper education of German '*Volksgenossen*' (fellow countrymen).<sup>69</sup> In those days pupils had to write essays on 'Xenophon in the *Anabasis* and Adolf Hitler in his struggle for and in power' or 'The heroism in the *Odyssey* and today, especially as embodied in the *Führer* of ancient and modern times'.<sup>70</sup> Contemporary curricula reflected the relevance of Sparta to Nazi Germany. The tough military aristocracy commanded respect. Sexual asceticism and the bringing up of children were praised, the laws concerning marriage were approved as an outstanding means of eugenics. Scholars pointed to the freshness and youth of an uncivilized 'barbarian' community, but homoerotic and pederastic relations were only briefly mentioned or absurdly explained and Sparta's fall was reduced to the process of denordicization (*Entnordung*).<sup>71</sup>

Already in 1934, Berve had postulated that a classical education must produce a man like Leonidas.<sup>72</sup> In the same year, a teacher at a *Humanistisches Gymnasium* interpreted Greek history as the grand fight

of the Nordic race against the aliens from Asia and Africa and praised the spirit of Leonidas and his followers:

spirit of the spirit of our youth who, at Langemarck, died for *Volk und Reich*, spirit of the spirit of the heroic souls who, in the last fifteen years, have sacrificed blood and life to the revival of the German nature.<sup>73</sup>

One year later, 1935, in an official journal, it was suggested that of all political organizations in Greece Sparta, under the aspect of racial history, must be most carefully scrutinized.<sup>74</sup>

The case of Sparta and, above all, of the fighters at Thermopylae clearly proves the influence of a Nazified classical scholarship on school teaching in the Third Reich. Berve also provided the ideological legitimation for teaching pupils the new image of ancient Sparta, since as he wrote in the preface of his little book on Sparta:

The education of youth, the spirit of community, a soldierly way of living, integration and heroic testing of the individual, tasks and values indeed which have again arisen for ourselves, seem to have been coined here in such a lucidity, to have been put into existence with such an implicitness that frankly demands us to go deeply into this unique constitutional creation.<sup>75</sup>

Hence W. Schröter, *Studienrat* at the *Altes Gymnasium* in Bremen, collected, in 1937, the most important sources for the battle of Thermopylae; the booklet, entitled 'Leonidas', was published as volume iii in the series *Führergestalten des Altertums*.<sup>76</sup> Finally in 1940 Otto Wilhelm von Vacano edited the pamphlet *Sparta: Der Lebenskampf einer nordischen Herrenschicht* ('Sparta: The struggle for life of a Nordic master race'),<sup>77</sup> which was meant to be a textbook for the Adolf-Hitler-schools and gave Leonidas' final struggle a most prominent place. His example was exploited to justify heroic self-sacrifice and to encourage last-ditch resistance. Among the contributors were Richard Harder, Franz Miltner and Helmut Berve. The latter was to deliver his last lecture on Sparta on May 2nd, 1945.<sup>78</sup>

#### (v) The European perspective

The peculiarities of the German Sparta-reception since 1918 become more evident if one views contemporary historiographical discussions about Sparta in a broader European context. First, it should be noted that the battle at Thermopylae has always been glorified and the 'equal heroism' of Leonidas and his comrades, to quote George Grote,<sup>79</sup> has been mystified right across all borders and ideologies. Leonidas has for many generations been a popular example in a political culture based upon the classical tradition and national patriotism.<sup>80</sup> So it is not surprising that the Thermopylae story was used in the American civil war to encourage bloodletting.<sup>81</sup> The Swedish

poet Hjalmar Gullberg, in his verse 'Död amazon', composed in April 1941, pointed to the courage of the small troop who recklessly fought against the far superior enemy. At the same time the *Wehrmacht* was advancing through central Greece on the ancient route and met the hopeless opposition of the inferior Greek units at Thermopylae. There is certainly no typical German approach to Sparta, and even over a racist interpretation of Greek history German scholarship cannot claim exclusive rights. I only mention Professor Wade-Gery who, in the first edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, insisted on the notion of Doric race and the racial division of the Greek tribes into Ionians and Dorians.<sup>82</sup>

This is not the place to examine in detail the numerous contributions to Greek, especially Spartan, history written in the twenties and thirties outside Germany. I will concentrate on two examples, one from England, the other from France. In the *Cambridge Ancient History* J.A.R. Munro described Xerxes' invasion of Greece and gave a straightforward account of the battle of Thermopylae, explicitly 'putting aside the retrospective interpretations imported by subsequent controversies, and endeavouring to envisage the situation as it may have presented itself to Leonidas at his last council of war'. The Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, argued that the Spartan king believed that with 2000 men he could keep the pass for one more day,

and to his eternal honour he made the gallant attempt. But at the moment it was no forlorn hope, no desperate sacrifice, but a well-calculated scheme which offered fair promise of success. The descent of Hydarnes by the Anopaea was a complete surprise.<sup>83</sup>

The French historian Pierre Roussel published a book on Sparta in 1939 in which he dealt with the history and the social and political institutions of the *polis*. On Leonidas he wrote:

Leonidas, without any doubt, was neither a blind man nor a mystic... He died with his people; a Spartan king could not act differently... He left his name and the memory of a deed that made him incarnate the ideal of a Spartiate.<sup>84</sup>

Comparing these English and French descriptions with Berve's account, the differences in style, vocabulary and argument are obvious. Roussel moreover had written his monograph also as a response to the contemporary re-enactments of the supposed 'Doric city' and thus to Berve's *Sparta*, as he stated in his last chapter on 'L'idéalisation de Sparte'. He did not criticize Berve explicitly, but he questioned the aristocratic character of the Spartiates and denied the idea of Doric race as 'singulièrement arbitraire'<sup>85</sup> and concluded: 'Et Sparte, mystérieuse et secrète, après avoir alimenté la

pensée de Platon et de Rousseau, enfante une nouvelle mystique.<sup>86</sup> Berve answered in *Gnomon*: Roussel had failed to write a convincing study on Sparta, since he lacked *die tiefere innere Anteilnahme an Lakedämon, seiner Art und seinem Geschick* ('the deeper inner sympathy for Lacedaemon, its nature and its fate').<sup>87</sup>

What do we learn? The glorification of the 300 Spartans killed at Thermopylae, when they defended their country, was a common feature of the academic *oikoumenē* of ancient historians. The halo of a patriotic fighter, or even of a Doric fighter, does certainly not constitute a German *Sonderweg*. But German historiography, after the hiatus of the First World War, exclusively transformed the *polis* on the Eurotas into a positively connotated historical model of a better state and Leonidas, the Spartan king, into the ideal representative of a *Führerstaat*. After 1933 scholars who identified themselves with the new regime defined Sparta as a quasi-Nationalsocialist institution. The former pluralism of approaches and judgements was liquidated, academic discourse was allowed only within the ideological lines of the system. Sparta and Leonidas barely mattered as historical figures, but were integrated by intellectuals into a religious system, as Arnaldo Momigliano once put it, 'che ebbe i suoi maggiori santuari a Dachau e Auschwitz (which had its major sanctuaries at Dachau and Auschwitz)'.<sup>88</sup>

#### (vi) 1945 to the present

In 1950, Heinrich Böll published a short story entitled *Wanderer kommst du nach Spa* in which the narrator sees not a bronze inscription eternalizing the heroic deed but a man with torn-off limbs, a bleeding body above whom the renowned words could be read, only a bit garbled and repeated seven times on the dirty blackboard of the 'good old Humanist gymnasium'.<sup>89</sup> This comfortless fragment crystallizes the rejection of classical education by German intellectuals and authors who after thirteen years of Nazi barbarism and the holocaust could no longer believe in the force of the traditional school training.

In German scholarship Sparta was not very popular after 1945. New themes and methods, new perceptions and ideas were now introduced to the international discourse mainly by French and English scholars. It was not until 1983 that a professional historian wrote a concise 'History of Sparta' in German.<sup>90</sup> In the years between, some older contributions<sup>91</sup> were reprinted, even translated into other European languages, and were not warmly welcomed everywhere. Momigliano for instance harshly attacked Berve in his review of the Italian version of the latter's *Greek History*.<sup>92</sup> The criticism was right, but we may ask today whether Momigliano was

the right person to criticize.<sup>93</sup> At Erlangen, where Berve taught Ancient History in the fifties and early sixties, a younger generation of academics wrote some important studies on Sparta.<sup>94</sup> The National-socialist manipulation of history led scholars back to specialized research – *Quellenkritik* and political abstinence instead of ideology and political commitment were now demanded. Leonidas and the battle of Thermopylae became less attractive objects of research. There is an article by Hans Schaefer, written immediately after the end of World War II, in which the author tries to show that Leonidas in following his mission to the bitter end and refusing to retreat sanctioned the ephorate's claim for supremacy.<sup>95</sup> Twenty years later, a classicist discussed recent interpretations of the epitaph attributed to Simonides.<sup>96</sup> In addition, the battle of Thermopylae is mentioned in the handbooks and general accounts of Greek history. A wide range of opinion underlines the restoration of academic pluralism in West Germany. Some authors just mention the battle without any assessment,<sup>97</sup> some leave the question of Leonidas' motives open,<sup>98</sup> and some discuss various hypotheses to make the Greek strategy plausible.<sup>99</sup> Alfred Heuß harshly criticized the Spartan king who had underestimated the danger of being outflanked and spoke of a military and strategic disaster.<sup>100</sup> Fritz Schachermeyr, in his erratic 'Greek History', interpreted the action as a 'voluntary self-sacrifice' (*freiwillige Selbstaufopferung*).<sup>101</sup> The most old-fashioned description is to be found in Hermann Bengtson's 'Greek History' in the *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*: 'The sacrifice was not in vain, Leonidas' deed gave a shining example of duty to the Greeks fighting for liberty.'<sup>102</sup> At least in this respect Professor Nicholas Hammond might have agreed with his German colleague: 'In the pass of Thermopylae the Spartans had shown the iron will and the undaunted courage which inspired others to follow their example.'<sup>103</sup> It goes without saying that modern Greek authors have also been ready to immortalize the glory of their illustrious ancestor.<sup>104</sup>

Even in the former German Democratic Republic, which was normally more interested in the slave-system than the military history of Greece and Rome, Leonidas was not entirely forgotten.<sup>105</sup> In the *Lexikon der Antike*, published by Johannes Irmscher, the heroic death of the Spartans is apostrophized,<sup>106</sup> on the very page where Lenin's merits for the understanding of classical antiquity are praised.

### (vii) Conclusion

After this *tour d'horizon* one may feel compelled to agree with Hignett's deep scepticism over the grounds of Leonidas' death in the battle of Thermopylai: 'In face of the breakdown of all modern explanations, the "final problem" of Thermopylai is best left as an unsolved riddle; agnosticism is preferable

to a pretence of knowledge.<sup>107</sup> Such a conclusion seems the more attractive the closer one looks at the scattered evidence provided by the sources and the political exploitation of the myth of Leonidas in Nationalsocialist Germany.

Following the end of the First World War, in German historiography the pluralist interpretation of this famous day, which had characterized earlier research, was abandoned. Certainly, a patriotic and militarist reading had also been predominant in former days. But the Sparta-maniacs were now fascinated by the idea that the people on the Rhine and on the Eurotas were racially closely connected and had a common Nordic background. The ancient Spartans liked a strong state and took care of the *Volk* as the modern Germans did. However, the new image of the battle of Thermopylae, which was popularized through a flood of racist and *völkisch* publications, was not the result of the 'national revolution' of 1933, but emerged from a complex amalgam of ideas and ideologies which were virulent long before the Nazis came into power. The image of Sparta, propagated in the Third Reich, was essentially influenced by the adaptation of obscure racial categories, the revival of the Romantic dichotomy between Dorians and Ionians, the idealization of military duty and sacrifice after the military disaster of the First World War, the yearning for a strong *Führer* instead of a 'democratic' government and the glorification of the *Volk*. Professional historians and classicists painted the new picture of Sparta as a proto-Nationalsocialist state. Thus Leonidas became the most purely Nordic leader of all Greeks.

Thermopylae, Langemarck, Stalingrad. But this story ends in Berlin. There, on April 20th, 1945, the cream of the collapsing Nazi regime met for the last time to commemorate the *Führer's* birthday. It was a sad celebration in the air-raid shelter underneath the *Reichskanzlei*, since the Red Army had crossed the Oder and nobody could stop its march on the capital. Hitler was contemplating retreat to the Alps, but then decided to stay in Berlin. 'A desperate fight will always be remembered as a worthy example', he said to Martin Bormann. 'Just think of Leonidas and his 300 Spartans.'<sup>108</sup>

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hdt. 7.228.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dascalakis 1962; Hignett 1963, 105 ff. 371 ff.; Hooker 1989; Lazenby 1993, 117 ff.; Green 1996; Hammond 1996; Flower 1998. For a new, though controversial, account of the topography of the battlefield see Szemler et al. 1996 and Szemler and Cherf 1999. For a related discussion, Clarke (this volume).

<sup>3</sup> Lazenby 1993, 142.

<sup>4</sup> Of fundamental importance for the subject are Christ 1986 and Rawson 1969; cf. also Christ 1999; Losemann 1977; Marchand 1996; MacGregor Morris 2000; Näf 1986; Nickel 1995 and Watt 1985.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ollier 1933–4 and Tigerstedt 1965–78.

<sup>6</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* 1.42.101: *Dic, hospes, Spartae nos te hic vidisse iacentes, | dum sanctis patriae legibus obsequimur.*

<sup>7</sup> R. Glover, *Leonidas. A Poem*, London, 2nd edn, 1738, 1, 1–11: ‘Rehearse, O Muse, the deeds and glorious death / Of that fam’d Spartan, who withstood the pow’r / Of Xerxes near Thermopylae, and fell / To save his country. When from Asia’s coast / With half the nations of the peopled globe / The Persian king the Hellespont had pass’d, / And now in Thrace his boundless camp was spread / Soon to the Isthmus, where th’assembled chiefs / Of Greece in anxious council long had sat / How best their menac’d liberties to guard, / The dreadful tidings reached...’ Cf. MacGregor Morris 2000, 211 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Orig. *Contra Celsum* 2.17.404; 8.6.747; 8.35.768.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Christ 1986, 8.

<sup>10</sup> J.G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* [1784–91], Darmstadt 1966; F. Schiller, ‘Die Gesetzgebung des Lykurgus und Solon’ [1790], in Christ 1986, 73–86; cf. Rawson 1969, 310 ff.

<sup>11</sup> F. Schiller, ‘Der Spaziergang’ [1795], ll. 97–8. Cf. Baumbach 2000 and Gelzer 1997.

<sup>12</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, ‘Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte’, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. xi, Stuttgart 1928, 335 f.

<sup>13</sup> F. Schlegel, ‘Studien des Klassischen Altertums’, in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, vol. i, Paderborn, München and Wien 1979, 42: ‘Ihr heiliger Tod war der Gipfel aller Freude.’

<sup>14</sup> Müller 1844, vol. ii, 78 n. 1, 391 n. 4. Cf. Calder and Schlesier 1998 and Christ 1999, 18 f.

<sup>15</sup> Rawson 1969, 320. But cf. Löbker 1998, 111 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Manso 1800–5, vol. i, 319 ff.

<sup>17</sup> Cf., e.g., Cartledge 1979, 204 f. and Lazenby 1993, 144.

<sup>18</sup> Köchly and Rüstow 1852, 61.

<sup>19</sup> Delbrück 1887, 89 f.

<sup>20</sup> Delbrück 1920, 79: ‘In sich selber hatte die Verteidigung von Thermopylä so gut wie keine Aussichten; sie war, isoliert betrachtet, ein heroischer Versuch, ohne daß man gleich das Ganze aufs Spiel setzen wollte. Formal, man könnte auch sagen, materialistisch-militärisch war es ein Fehler, aber es war ein moralisches Postulat und in seiner Erfüllung von unermeslichem Wert, daß den Barbaren

der Eintritt in das eigentliche Hellas nicht kampfflos preisgegeben wurde.' Cf. *ibid.* 81.

<sup>21</sup> Cf., e.g., Curtius 1878–80, vol. ii, 70 f. and Busolt 1893–1904, vol. ii, 686 n. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Ranke 1883, 230 f.

<sup>23</sup> Pöhlmann 1914, 127: '...dieser glänzende Heldentod der Thermopylenkämpfer [hat] das Vertrauen der Hellenen eher gesteigert, als geschwächt und [war] insoferne für die nationale Sache kein vergeblicher.'

<sup>24</sup> Curtius 1878–80, vol. ii, 828 n. 34.

<sup>25</sup> Holm 1886–94, vol. ii, 57 f.

<sup>26</sup> Busolt 1893–1904, vol. ii, 677.

<sup>27</sup> Th. Körner, *Auf dem Schlachtfelde von Aspern* [1812], ll. 54–6: 'Wandrer! sag's den kinderlosen Eltern, / daß für's Vaterland auf diesen Feldern / Spartas kühne Heldenjugend sank!'

<sup>28</sup> Curtius 1878–80, vol. ii, 70 f.

<sup>29</sup> Burckhardt 1956–57, vol. i, 114. Cf. Christ 2000 with further reading.

<sup>30</sup> Cartledge 1979, 204.

<sup>31</sup> Niebuhr 1847, 406.

<sup>32</sup> Wecklein 1876, 40.

<sup>33</sup> F. Rühl in *Jahrbücher für Klassische Philologie* 128 (1883) 746 ff.

<sup>34</sup> F. Rühl in *Literarisches Zentralblatt* 33 (1877) No. 33, 1095.

<sup>35</sup> On Karl Julius Beloch, see Christ 1972, 248–85; Christ 1999, 81 ff. and Polverini 1990.

<sup>36</sup> Beloch 1912–27 (1893–1904), vol. ii, 91–105 ('Die Legende von Leonidas'), esp. 104f.: '...Nur *einen* Vorteil hat die Katastrophe an den Thermopylen der griechischen Sache gebracht; sie hat das Bundesheer von einem unfähigen Oberfeldherrn befreit...'

<sup>37</sup> For Meyer cf. Christ 1972, 286–333 and *id.* 1999, 99–124 with further reading.

<sup>38</sup> Meyer 1939 (1901), vol. iv.1, 361: 'Der Heldentod des Leonidas und seiner Schar aber hatte vollends das Vertrauen eher gestärkt als gebrochen; in glänzendem Vorbild zeigte er der Nation den Weg, den sie zu gehen hatte, und brachte ihr, tiefer und lebendiger als alle Worte es vermocht hätten, zum Bewußtsein, daß es für sie keine Wahl gebe, als zu siegen oder in Ehren unterzugehen'. Meyer adds in n. 3: 'Auf die wirklich ganz ernsthaft geführte Diskussion einzugehen, ob Leonidas, statt den Tod zu suchen, richtiger abgezogen wäre, wird man mir hoffentlich erlassen.'

<sup>39</sup> Duncker 1882, 256.

<sup>40</sup> Cf., e.g., Flashar 1995.

<sup>41</sup> Th. Däubler, 'Sparta. Ein Versuch' [1923], in *id.*, *Dichtungen und Schriften*, München 1956, 331–46, esp. 338: 'Bei den Thermopylen fielen bloß Freundschafter, überhaupt kämpften meistens dorische Lakedämonier nur in Liebesgemeinschaft: sie schien ihnen nämlich alles, der Tod fürs Vaterland, mit dem Geliebten, heilig, ja willkommen.'

<sup>42</sup> G. Benn, 'Dorische Welt' [1934], in *id.*, *Das Hauptwerk*, vol. ii: *Essays, Reden*,



Vorträge, Wiesbaden and Munich 1980, 139–71, esp. 151: 'Ihr [sc. der Dorier] Traum ist Züchtung und ewige Jugend, Göttergleichheit, großer Wille, stärkster aristokratischer Rassenglaube, Sorge über sich hinaus für das ganze Geschlecht' and 153: 'Dorisch ist jede Art von Antifeminismus. ...Dorisch ist die Knabenliebe... die Liebe der Kriegszüge, solche Paare standen wie ein Wall und fielen.'

<sup>43</sup> Lüdemann 1939, 143. For the battle of Langemarck cf. Unruh 1986.

<sup>44</sup> Lehmann-Haupt 1923, 32.

<sup>45</sup> Lenschau 1925, 2017 f.

<sup>46</sup> Kromayer and Veith 1924–31, 21–63, esp. 61.

<sup>47</sup> Wilcken 1943, 116: 'Mögen unserer Jugend Leonidas und seine Getreuen immer ein Vorbild und ein Gegenstand der Verehrung bleiben!' On Wilcken's 'Greek History' cf. Christ 1999, 176 ff.

<sup>48</sup> Wes 1997, 219.

<sup>49</sup> Miltner 1935, 236 and 240 f.

<sup>50</sup> Ehrenberg 1929, 1383: 'Aber die Einseitigkeit dieses Menschentums ist seine Größe. Niemals wieder ist das Ideal disziplinierter Männlichkeit in solcher Reinheit aufgestellt worden. Das größte aber ist, daß diese männliche und soldatische Gesellschaft im uneingeschränkten Dienste des Nomos steht, der als Verkörperung ihres Staates, ihres religiösen Glaubens, ihrer Sitte und Tradition ihr einziger Herr ist. Nur dadurch ist es möglich gewesen, daß diese Gesellschaft ihr Eigenleben fast völlig dem Staate geopfert hat.' Ehrenberg also rejects the theory that Leonidas failed to gain stronger support of the ephorate, cf. *ibid.* 1386. On Ehrenberg cf. Christ 1999, 195 ff., 271 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Ehrenberg, 'A Totalitarian State' in *id.* 1946, 94–104.

<sup>52</sup> Ehrenberg 1925.

<sup>53</sup> H. Berve in *Gnomon* 1 (1925) 311.

<sup>54</sup> Berve 1931.

<sup>55</sup> Berve 1931–3, vol. i, 248 f.: '...die Spartaner...opferten sich bewußt, nicht nur einer strategischen Notwendigkeit, sondern dem Gesetz dorischer Mannheit. Mit Recht gelten sie als die Thermopylenkämpfer schlechthin. Sie waren es, in denen der autonome griechische Mensch bewußt sich dem Schicksal entgegenstemmte, bereit, ihm zu unterliegen, aber nicht sich freiwillig ihm zu beugen.'

<sup>56</sup> Nippel 1993, 282; cf. Will 1956 and Losemann 1998.

<sup>57</sup> For Berve cf. Canfora 1995, 126–78; Christ 1990, 125–87; Christ 1999, 202 ff., 246 ff.; Losemann 1977, *passim*; Momigliano 1966, 699–708; Näf 1986, 146 ff.; Ulf 2001; Näf 2001, esp. 315 ff., 357 ff., 383 ff., 397 ff. and Rebenich 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Hausmann 2002, 143 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Darré 1929, esp. 157 ff. For Darré cf. Corni 1994; Corni and Gies 1994; D'Onofrio 1997 with further reading.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Christ 1986, 50 ff.; Losemann 1980, esp. 63 ff.; D'Onofrio 1996.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Berve in *Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* 30 (1940) 138 and *Gnomon* 17 (1941) 1–11.

<sup>62</sup> Cf., e.g., Bullemer 1938; Lüdemann 1939; Meier 1939.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Günther 1929, esp. 37 ff. and *id.* 1935.

<sup>64</sup> Berve 1934; cf. Rebenich 2001, 471 ff.

<sup>65</sup> Cf., e.g., Schachermeyr 1933.

<sup>66</sup> Berve 1966, 58–207. The collection of essays was published by Berve's pupils Edmund Buchner and Peter Robert Franke on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

<sup>67</sup> Berve 1937, 78 f.: 'Denn nicht darin, daß sie gleich den Thespiern den väterlichen Boden verteidigend fielen oder in Verzweiflung über das sichere Schicksal der Heimat lieber den Tod suchten als Versklavung und Zerstörung schauten, lag ihr Heldentum, sondern darin, daß sie fern von der Heimat, an einer Stelle, wohin der Befehl sie gestellt hatte, aushielten aus keinem anderen Grunde, als weil es so Befehl war. ... Wie hätte überhaupt ein lakedämonischer König, wie hätte eine Spartiatenmannschaft ihren Posten verlassen können, ein Leben zu retten, dessen höchste Erfüllung die Bewährung im Kampfe war, gleich, ob er Sieg oder Tod brachte! Undenkbar die Rückkehr einer solchen Schar! Genützt war freilich mit dem Opfer weder Mittelgriechenland noch den Lakedämoniern selbst, deren Adelstruppe fast ein Zwanzigstel ihres Bestandes verlor, aber der mißversteht spartanische Kriegführung und verkennt die Kräfte, welche letzten Endes Hellas über den Perser haben siegen lassen, der hier nach äußerem Nutzen fragen oder gar nach ihm werten wollte. Wie die Größe, so lag auch die Wirkung der Tat gerade in ihrer Nutzlosigkeit.'

<sup>68</sup> Watt 1985, 874 and Fest 1973, 909. A slightly different version is to be found in Wieder 1962, 327 f. (cited in Christ 1986, 52 n. 190): 'Kommst Du nach Deutschland, so berichte, du habest uns in Stalingrad kämpfen sehen, wie das Gesetz, das Gesetz für die Sicherheit unseres Volkes es befohlen hat.' – For the Nazi corruption and exploitation of Leonidas and his Spartans cf. also Watt 1985, 873–7; for Berve's political manipulation of Leonidas in a paper given in 1941 cf. Hausmann 2002, 150.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. *inter alia* Apel and Bittner 1994, esp. 221 ff.; Bittner 1989; Dithmar 1989; Horn 1996; Irmscher 1966; Keim 1995–7; Nickel 1970; id. 1972.

<sup>70</sup> Schlossarek 1934, 148 f. ('Xenophon in der Anabasis und Hitler in seinem Kampfe um die und in der Macht'; 'Der Heroismus in der Odyssee und in unserer Zeit, besonders verkörpert an dem antiken und dem neuzeitlichen Führer').

<sup>71</sup> Cf., e.g., Lüdemann 1939, 103 ff.

<sup>72</sup> Berve 1934, 270.

<sup>73</sup> Holtorf 1934, 270: 'Die griechische Geschichte werten wir als einen "grandiosen Kampf" der nordischen Rasse gegen die artfremden Völker Asiens und Afrikas. So verstehen wir die heldenmütigen Kämpfe gegen die Perser als einen Kampf der Rassen, als einen Kampf des Lichtes gegen die Unterwelt. In völkischer Verbundenheit vermochte Hellas den Ansturm der Asiaten aufzuhalten. Der Geist des Leonidas und seiner Getreuen gab die Kraft dazu, Geist vom Geiste unserer Jugend, die bei Langemarck in den Tod für Volk und Reich ging, Geist vom Geiste der Heldenseelen, die in den letzten fünfzehn Jahren Blut und Leben opferte für die Erneuerung der deutschen Art'.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. *Deutsche Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung. Amtsblatt des Reichsministeriums für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung und der Unter-*

*richtsverwaltung der Länder* 1 (1935) 28: 'Von den staatlichen Gebilden der Griechen verdient Sparta unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Rassengeschichte die eingehendste Betrachtung.'

<sup>75</sup> Berve 1937, 7: 'Jugenderziehung, Gemeinschaftsgeist, soldatische Lebensform, Einordnung und heldische Bewährung des einzelnen, Aufgaben und Werte also, die uns selbst neu erstanden sind, scheinen hier mit einer Klarheit gestaltet, mit einer Unbedingtheit verwirklicht, die geradezu aufruft, sich in diese einzigartige Staatsschöpfung zu vertiefen.' This preface was not reprinted in the 1966 edition (cf. above n. 66).

<sup>76</sup> Schröter 1937.

<sup>77</sup> Vacano 1940. Cf. Losemann 1998, 344 ff.

<sup>78</sup> Losemann 1977, 231 n. 173.

<sup>79</sup> Grote 1869–70, vol. iv, 440.

<sup>80</sup> Cf., e.g., Glotz and Cohen 1931, 69: 'En ce jour, les Spartiates avaient, jusqu'au sacrifice suprême, obéi 'aux lois' qui étaient pour eux les lois de l'honneur militaire.'

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Clingman 1878, 112; *Southern Historical Papers* 24 (1896) 308; Hughes 1996, 222; Jeffrey 1998, 182 with n. 69. I owe the references to the courtesy of Thomas J. Figueira.

<sup>82</sup> *CAH* vol. ii (1926), 525; *CAH* vol. iii (1929), 566. Jardé 1923, however, denied any racial implications in Greek history; cf. Corbetta 1979.

<sup>83</sup> *CAH* vol. iv (1926), 299; cf. Hdt. 7.215 ff.

<sup>84</sup> Roussel 1939, 123 f.: 'Léonidas ne fut sans doute ni un aveugle ni un mystique. ...Il périt avec les siens: un roi de Sparte ne pouvait agir autrement. ...Il a laissé son nom et le souvenir d'une action qui lui valut d'incarner le Spartiate idéal.'

<sup>85</sup> *ibid.* 25.

<sup>86</sup> *ibid.* 216.

<sup>87</sup> *Gnomon* 17 (1941) 11.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Momigliano 1966, 707 f.

<sup>89</sup> H. Böll, 'Wanderer kommst du nach Spa', Opladen 1950. On the Thermopylae tradition in post-war German writing cf. Watt 1985, 877 ff.

<sup>90</sup> Clauss 1983; cf. Christ 1999, 408 f.

<sup>91</sup> Berve's *Griechische Geschichte* [Berve 1931–33] was reprinted in 1951–52, his essay on *Sparta* [Berve 1937] is to be found in Berve 1966, 58–207. For minor changes in the revised editions cf. Momigliano 1966, 699 ff.; Näf 1986, 163 and Ulf 2001, 380 and n. 9.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Momigliano 1966, 699–708 (= *Rivista Storica Italiana* 71 [1959] 665–72) and *id.* 1980, 837–40 (= *Athenaeum* 43 [1965] 441–3).

<sup>93</sup> Documents published by Riccardo Di Donato in 1995 show that Momigliano was a member of a Fascist organization when he was a student, and later of the Fascist party itself. On the discussions about 'The politics of Arnaldo Momigliano' in Fascist Italy cf. e.g. Di Donato 1995; Fabre 1995; *id.* 2001 and in *TLS*, May–June 1996.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Christ 1986, 63 and n. 222 f.; *id.* 1999, 301 and 408.

<sup>95</sup> Schäfer 1948, 504–17 (= *id.* 1963, 153–66).

<sup>96</sup> Philipp 1968.

<sup>97</sup> Weiler 1988, 233.

<sup>98</sup> Bayer 1987, 161.

<sup>99</sup> Baltrusch 1998, 50; id. 1999, 313 f.

<sup>100</sup> Heuß 1962, 230.

<sup>101</sup> Schachermeyr 1960, 147.

<sup>102</sup> Bengtson 1977, 173: 'Das Opfer war nicht vergeblich, die Tat des Leonidas hat den Hellenen in ihrem Freiheitskampf ein leuchtendes Beispiel erfüllter Pflicht gegeben'; cf. id. 1983, 58: 'Der Widerstand der Spartaner unter dem König Leonidas und sein Untergang an den Thermopylen sind als leuchtendes Beispiel treuester Pflichterfüllung in die Annalen der Geschichte eingegangen. Wäre Leonidas nicht gewesen, so wären auch die Flotte und der ganze Krieg verloren gewesen.'

<sup>103</sup> *CAH* vol. iv (1988), 558.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. esp. Dascalakis 1962, 171 ff., esp. 184. For the use of Thermopylae to encourage support for Greek liberation at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century cf. MacGregor Morris 2000, 222 ff.

<sup>105</sup> Kreissig 1978 (1991), 140 f.

<sup>106</sup> Irmischer 1974, 316 s.v. Leonidas (H. Schulz-Falkenthal); cf. *ibid.* 553 s.v. Thermopylen (H. Schulz-Falkenthal).

<sup>107</sup> Hignett 1963, 378.

<sup>108</sup> Bormann 1981, 51: 'Ein verzweifelter Kampf behält seinen ewigen Wert als Beispiel. Man denke an Leonidas und seine dreihundert Spartaner.' And Hitler continued: 'Es paßt auf jeden Fall nicht zu unserem Stil, uns wie Schafe schlachten zu lassen. Man mag uns vielleicht ausrotten, aber man wird uns nicht zur Schlachtbank führen können.' Cf. Fest 1973, 989; Christ 1999, 244; and Demandt 2002.

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