

SPARTA

Beyond the Mirage



edited by

ANTON POWELL

and

STEPHEN HODKINSON

SPARTA: BEYOND THE MIRAGE

SPARTA

Beyond the Mirage

Editors

Anton Powell

and

Stephen Hodkinson

Contributors

Nikos Birgalias, Jacqueline Christien
Michael Clarke, Andrey Eremin, Thomas J. Figueira
Michael Flower, Noreen Humble, Michael Lipka
Marcello Lupi, Nino Luraghi, Norbert Mertens
Ellen Millender, Daniel Ogden
Stefan Rebenich

The Classical Press of Wales
and
Duckworth

First published in 2002 by
Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.
61 Frith Street, London W1D 3JL
(sole distributor outside N. America)
and
The Classical Press of Wales

Distributor in the United States of America:
The David Brown Book Co.
PO Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779
Tel: (860) 945-9329
Fax: (860) 945-9468

Originated and prepared for press at
The Classical Press of Wales
15 Rosehill Terrace, Swansea SA1 6JN
Tel: 01792 458397
Fax: 01792 464067

© 2002 The contributors

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN 0 7156 31837

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Typeset by Ernest Buckley, Clunton, Shropshire
Printed and bound in the UK by Gomer Press, Llandysul, Ceredigion, Wales

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction <i>Stephen Hodkinson</i> (University of Manchester)	vii
I. REPRESENTATIONS OF SPARTA	
1. Herodotus and Spartan despotism <i>Ellen Millender</i> (Reed College)	1
2. Spartan <i>atē</i> at Thermopylai: semantics and ideology at Herodotus, <i>Histories</i> 7.234 <i>Michael Clarke</i> (National University of Ireland, Maynooth)	63
3. Was <i>sōphrosynē</i> ever a Spartan virtue? <i>Noreen Humble</i> (University College Cork)	85
4. Three evocations of the dead with Pausanias <i>Daniel Ogden</i> (University of Wales, Swansea)	111
II. INVENTION AND TRADITION	
5. Iron money and the ideology of consumption in Laconia <i>Thomas J. Figueira</i> (Rutgers University)	137
6. Iron money in Sparta: myth and history <i>Jacqueline Christien</i> (University of Paris x, Nanterre)	171
7. The invention of tradition in classical and hellenistic Sparta <i>Michael Flower</i> (Franklin and Marshall College)	191
8. Notes on the influence of the Spartan Great Rhetra on Tyrtaeus, Herodotus and Xenophon <i>Michael Lipka</i> (University of Patras)	219
III. SUBJECT POPULATIONS	
9. Helotic slavery reconsidered <i>Nino Luraghi</i> (Harvard University)	227

Contents

10. Helotage and Spartan social organization <i>Nikos Birgalias</i> (Open University of Greece)	249
11. Settlements of Spartan <i>perioikoi</i> : <i>poleis</i> or <i>kōmai</i> ? <i>Andrey Eremin</i> (Samara State University)	267
12. οὐκ ὅμοιοι, ἀγαθοὶ δέ: the <i>perioikoi</i> in the classical Lakedaimonian <i>polis</i> <i>Norbert Mertens</i> (Berlin)	285
IV. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL RECEPTION	
13. Sparta compared: ethnographic perspectives in Spartan studies <i>Marcello Lupi</i> (University of Naples)	305
14. From Thermopylae to Stalingrad: the myth of Leonidas in German historiography <i>Stefan Rebenich</i> (University of Mannheim)	323
Index	351

INTRODUCTION

Stephen Hodkinson

The papers in this volume were originally given at the meeting of the international seminar on Spartan history held in September within the first Celtic Conference in Classics at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The seminar constituted the third such meeting in a series whose first two seminars are represented by volumes on *The Shadow of Sparta* (Powell and Hodkinson 1994) and *Sparta: New perspectives* (Hodkinson and Powell 1999). The decision to hold the 2000 meeting within the broader context of a conference in Classics signals the increasing interaction between researchers on Sparta and on other aspects of antiquity. Indeed, several authors in this volume are noted for their work on a range of classical subjects and here bring their expertise from other fields to bear on the interpretation of Spartan history and society.

The Introduction to *Sparta: New perspectives* referred to ‘the notable resurgence of Spartan studies which has taken place around the world during the last generation’ (Hodkinson 1999, ix). This resurgence has gathered pace in the last few years with the publication of over twenty volumes since 1998.¹ The vitality of current Spartan scholarship has had a notable impact within Greece itself, following the recent appearance of two entire issues devoted to Sparta in the weekly historical magazine of the national daily newspaper *Eleutherotypia*.² One sign of this vitality is that eleven of the fourteen scholars represented in the present volume are new contributors to the Sparta seminar series. As in our previous volume, participation is international in character: our contributors hail originally from no fewer than nine different countries: Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Russia, the UK and the USA.

We have entitled this volume *Sparta: Beyond the Mirage*. In organizing the seminar, we did not attempt to impose a common theme upon our speakers, but gave them the freedom to select the subjects and themes they themselves judged most pressing within the present setting of Spartan research. Despite the diversity of academic backgrounds and of subject matter, however, most of the papers at the seminar revolved around issues connected with the varying images of Sparta from antiquity to the present day – a shared focus which accurately reflects the central preoccupation

of much current historical research.³ The concept of a Spartan ‘mirage’ was originated in 1933 by the French historian François Ollier, whose two-volume work, *Le Mirage spartiate*, highlighted the ongoing tradition of idealized distortions and inventions regarding the character of Spartan society in the works of non-Spartan writers in both Greek and Roman antiquity. Ollier’s initiative was extended a generation later by E.N. Tigerstedt’s massive (and often underrated) three-volume study of *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* (1965–78). Whereas Ollier’s study focused primarily upon idealizations of Sparta’s society, Tigerstedt also gave emphasis to negative portrayals of her customs and institutions. At around the same time Elizabeth Rawson’s groundbreaking study, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (1969), examined the continuing mirage of Sparta within medieval and modern thought, whose positive or negative representations typically reflected contemporary social or political concerns. More recently, partly in consequence of the borrowing from modern history of the concept of ‘the invention of tradition’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), attention has focused upon the Spartans’ own role in originating, or collaborating in the development of, many of the idealized images of her past and contemporary society.⁴

Despite this steady accumulation of insights into the diverse forms of the Spartan mirage and the different ways in which surviving accounts of her history and society are affected by distortion and invention, twentieth-century historical scholarship was somewhat slow to adopt the perspectives initiated by Ollier. As Michael Whitby (2002, 11) has recently commented, ‘After Ollier it should have been difficult to study Sparta without constantly being aware of the need to assess the distorting effects of the varying ancient perceptions’. Only within the last 15–20 years, however, has that truly been the case. Even into the 1980s, despite certain earlier notable exceptions, many historical discussions continued to treat the ancient evidence on its own terms and to combine the testimony of sources from diverse periods without serious consideration of their temporal context or the social and political influences upon their writings.⁵ Even today, there is dispute about what conclusions may legitimately be drawn from such consideration.⁶ For example, when an allegedly classical practice or institution is first mentioned in a late source, how (and by what criteria) does one judge whether it is late invention or an authentically classical phenomenon missing from the contemporary historical record due to the paucity of evidence? Similarly, when assessing the effect that the agenda of an ancient writer has had on his presentation of Sparta, how does one distinguish (to phrase the alternatives in their grossest form) between genuine information, distortion and pure invention? In navigating this contested terrain, the papers in this volume

make, as our sub-title indicates, some notable contributions to advancing our understanding of Spartan society beyond the various manifestations of the Spartan mirage outlined above.

Part I deals with representations of Sparta in a variety of historical and literary sources. The opening two papers discuss Herodotus, the 'Father of History', whose portrayal of Sparta as the 'Greek Other', 'the only Greek state that Herodotus treats in [an] ethnographic manner', has been the subject of considerable recent interest.⁷ Continuing a series of articles investigating the impact of fifth-century Athenian self-representations upon contemporary characterizations of their Spartan enemies,⁸ ELLEN MILLENDER examines how Herodotus' depiction of Sparta's hereditary kingships conforms to the image of the barbarian autocrat which runs throughout his work. Although sensitive to Athens' anti-Spartan ideology and emphasizing the Spartans' role as champions of Greek freedom, Herodotus' account of the Persian wars reflects a fundamentally Athenocentric perspective in which the Spartans' resistance to Persia, even in their 'finest hour' at the battle of Thermopylai, is ascribed to the despotism of their *nomos* (law or custom), symbolic of the autocratic nature of the Spartan *polis*. This interpretation finds echoes in MICHAEL CLARKE's paper – part of a larger project aimed at understanding the world-picture of archaic Greece through study of its language (cf. Clarke 1999) – which brings the methods of cultural and cognitive linguistics to bear on Herodotus' characterization of the three hundred Spartans who gave their lives alongside King Leonidas. The pejorative connotations of the words used to describe the Spartan warriors imply a senseless self-sacrifice dictated by obedience to the *nomos* that they must remain in the company of their king, an insight which raises interesting questions about the relationship of Spartan military ethics to those elsewhere in Greece.

NOREEN HUMBLE continues her examination of the standard assumption that *sōphrosynē* (moderation) was regarded by classical writers as a characteristically Spartan virtue. Having previously demonstrated that this association is not present in Xenophon, our main source for classical Sparta (Humble 1999), she undertakes here a broad survey of other writers from the fifth century BC to Plutarch. The association is largely limited to idealizing contexts: in the classical period to laconizing oligarchs, subsequently to pro-Spartan accounts of the third-century revolution, and from there to Plutarch's *Lykourgos*, whose influence upon modern ideas is mainly responsible for modern assumptions.

DANIEL OGDEN's paper, deriving from his general study of Greek and Roman necromancy (Ogden 2002), focuses upon three interrelated episodes involving evocations of the dead concerning another hero of the

Persian wars, the regent Pausanias. Although Thucydides is our earliest extant source for the incidents which culminated in Pausanias' death, there is reason to believe that he has purposely rationalized pre-existing accounts, omitting one episode entirely and purging the other two of their necromantic elements, which can be reconstructed with the aid of later, supposedly less reliable, sources. Quite apart from the implications for Thucydides' historical methods, Ogden's study constitutes a valuable reminder of the religious elements which frequently surrounded Spartan politics.⁹

The papers in Part II explore the complex interaction between invented and genuine Spartan traditions. The article by MICHAEL FLOWER represents the published version of an oral paper, first given in 1994, which has played an influential role in disseminating the modern historical concept of 'invented tradition' within the discourse of historians of classical Sparta.¹⁰ Yet, as he observes, although several recent studies have applied the concept to good effect, others continue to proceed without acknowledgement of this significant phenomenon. Flower himself argues for a very strong version of its impact on Spartan history and historiography. Examining the creation and subsequent representation of a range of institutions, he concludes that throughout their history the Spartans ascribed new practices to the Lykourgan past so frequently and systematically that no synthetic account of Spartan institutions is possible. Evidence in later sources can therefore be used as testimony to earlier practice only if corroborated by earlier sources.

Some scholars will no doubt prefer less radical judgements, as can be seen in this section from the articles by THOMAS FIGUEIRA and JACQUELINE CHRISTIEN, both of which encompass the controversial subject of Sparta's iron money. In the absence of earlier literary or archaeological evidence for its existence, Flower suggests that the supposedly ancestral iron money was invented by conservative Spartans during the political controversy of 404 BC as an alternative currency to the foreign coinage introduced by Lysander. Figueira too exposes the ahistorical character of certain common ancient traditions about the iron currency and he agrees that the anti-Lysandrian arguments in 404 were tapping the authority of an imagined past. He argues, however, that this currency was not simply a construct, but a historical entity introduced by the Spartan authorities (perhaps in the late sixth or early fifth century) in reaction to the regional predominance of silver coinage. He interprets the iron money, with its exclusive legitimacy and purposely reduced fiduciary value, as an anti-money largely confined to official contexts which was designed to exclude wealth in precious metals from civic transactions. Christien also

accepts some reality to ancient accounts of the iron currency. In contrast to Figueira, however, who views the currency as flat iron ingots (associated with the Lakonian dialect term *pelanor*), she connects it with iron spits dedicated at Spartan sanctuaries and also suggests a somewhat wider role within private exchange, linking it with genuine issues of iron coinage in other *poleis*. As part of her long-term survey of the history of the use of coinage at Sparta, she argues that behind the confused traditions regarding the debates in 404 lay a controversial proposal by Lysander that Sparta should start minting her own coinage.

In recent years scholars have generally abandoned older images of Sparta as a conservative, unchanging society for a more nuanced picture which, while recognizing some degree of continuity, also emphasizes that Spartan society was subject to ongoing processes of adaptation and change.¹¹ As already indicated, one difficulty for historians, especially given the paucity of surviving evidence, is accurately to distinguish genuine elements of continuity and tradition from the products of later invention. MICHAEL LIPKA's paper provides a careful demonstration of continuity linking a body of texts on Spartan politics which were written over a period of approximately three hundred years. Close similarities of content and/or syntactical construction indicate that depictions of the compact between the Spartan *polis* and its kings by Herodotus (6.56–8) in the fifth century and by Xenophon (*Lak. Pol.* 13 and 15) in the fourth derive from the seventh-century legal text commonly known as the 'Great Rhetra'. These similarities also suggest that the fragment of the Rhetra quoted in Plutarch's *Lykourgos* was originally part of a more extensive compact defining important aspects of the Spartan political order. Interestingly, when viewed within the framework of these other texts, Herodotus' description of the prerogatives of the kings takes on a constitutionalist character which differs markedly from the image of despotism produced by his overall treatment of Sparta within the *Histories*.

Over the last dozen or so years the non-Spartiate populations of Lakonia and Messenia have been the subject of increasing study,¹² a focus reflected in this volume by the set of papers on the helots and *perioikoi* in Part III. Advances in our understanding of the character of helotage during the 1990s have been based above all upon a deepened awareness of the distorting effects of certain ancient representations of helotage, including the 'globalizing' approaches of those writers who lumped helotage together with other collective servile populations, such as the Penestai of Thessaly, in order to produce a general definition of such helotic-type statuses.¹³ NINO LURAGHI's paper, which forms part of a current series of revisionist articles on the helots,¹⁴ criticizes similar globalizing approaches by those

scholars who have sought to categorize helotage in terms of modern legal or sociological definitions of serfdom.¹⁵ Such misleading definitions, he suggests, have underpinned modern perceptions of the Lakonian and Messenian helots as pre-existing homogeneous ethnic groups subjugated within their own territories. Deploying comparative evidence, he argues that the helots' condition was not significantly different from that of agrarian chattel-slaves elsewhere in Greece. Rather than outsiders conquered in an early act of mass enslavement, the helots were more probably impoverished members of the community (comparable to poor Athenians at the time of Solon) taken into servitude at a somewhat later date, in concert with the other major changes that established the classical Spartan order. NIKOS BIRGALIAS too is concerned with the interaction between helotage and Sparta's social organization. He concurs with Luraghi in casting doubt upon the existence of a pre-existing Messenian political identity and in viewing the context for the development of helotage as analogous to that of seventh-century Attica. Birgalias questions the severity of the problem posed for the *homoioi* by the helots. He suggest that ideas of class-war between them were partly a product of fifth-century Athenian-inspired ideology and of the independent Messenia of the fourth century onwards. For Birgalias the system of helotage, at its inception, was progressive and represented a pioneering form of security for poorer sections of the population.

The *perioikoi* have, with certain notable exceptions,¹⁶ often been treated as the poor relations of Spartan research, seriously understudied in comparison with the dominant Spartiate elite and the servile helot population. The recent revival of perioikic studies has been stimulated above all by three main influences: first, the systematic project of the Copenhagen Polis Centre (CPC), which has approached the position of perioikic communities as a significant case-study in its attempt to frame general propositions regarding the dependent status of most ancient Greek *poleis* (Shipley 1997; Hall 2000); secondly, the increasing application within different regions of the Greek world of the technique of intensive archaeological survey, exemplified in the case of Spartan territory by the *Laconia Survey* (Shipley 1992; Cavanagh *et al.* 1996, 2002) and the *Pylos Regional Archaeological Project* (Alcock *et al.* in preparation); thirdly, the notable interest in the position of the *perioikoi* shown by Russian ancient historians (e.g. Zaikov 1988, 1994). All three influences are evident in the papers in this volume by ANDREY EREMIN and NORBERT MERTENS, both of which address the twin questions which lie at the heart of recent historical research. In what sense, if any, did the *perioikoi* possess citizenship within the political framework of Spartan rule? And can perioikic settlements or communities be regarded as *poleis*, as they are often described by ancient writers? The two contributions

show some interesting similarities and differences.

Mertens' paper, which develops his recent Berlin MA dissertation (1999), concentrates upon the period between the Persian wars (480–79 BC) and the battle of Leuktra (371 BC). He tackles the above questions through analysis of the historical sources, focusing upon a critique of the principles and propositions put forward by scholars working under the aegis of the CPC. He concurs that the *perioikoi* were members of the citizen-body of the Lakedaimonian *polis*, which embraced both the Spartiates and the *perioikoi*, although only the former possessed full political rights. On the basis of the CPC's own criteria, however, he dissents from their proposition that the perioikic communities can be regarded as *poleis* in their own right, arguing instead that they were integrated components of the Lakedaimonian *polis*. Furthermore, he questions the general categorizations of communities employed by the project, especially that of the 'dependent *polis*', calling for appreciation of a more varied spectrum of levels of integration which would permit a more nuanced depiction of the position of perioikic communities. In contrast, Eremin's paper, which performs a valuable role in outlining the insights of recent Russian research (cf. Eremin 1993), addresses these questions through a long-term historical perspective. Arguing that the *polis* was not just a simple grouping of citizens, but a structured organization of those citizens involving specific social relations between quasi-kinship groups such as *phylai*, his study focuses upon developments in the internal organization of perioikic communities, which are examined through a combination of archaeological and literary evidence for the process of synoikism. He concludes that the relatively late dating of these synoikisms indicates that the communities in question had previously been *kōmai* not *poleis*. Furthermore, he dismisses the notion of a Lakedaimonian *polis* (and hence any idea of perioikic citizenship), given the absence of any structured organization involving constituent *phylai*. Although disagreeing on this last point, the two papers, despite their diverse methods, produce similar conclusions in other respects. Each disagrees with the conclusions of recent research that perioikic communities can be regarded as *poleis*; and they concur in disputing the proposition of the CPC that the prime test of a community's *polis* status should be the labels applied by the Greeks themselves, preferring instead to form their judgements on the basis of more objective criteria. This engagement with the ideas emerging from the Copenhagen project is a good example of the ongoing interaction between current research on Sparta and on Greek history in general.

Part IV of the volume comprises two articles dealing with the growing field of the historiographical reception of Sparta, including what might be called 'the mirage of Sparta within modern history-writing'. As Rawson was

aware, the Spartan tradition in European thought has exercised an impact not only upon social and political theorists but also upon other members of the intelligentsia, including both the early forerunners and the later professional exponents of academic scholarship.¹⁷ Building upon his recent monograph on Spartan age classes and marriage practices (2000), MARCELLO LUPI sketches what he terms ‘another chapter of the Spartan mirage’: the history of how modern historiography has attempted to interpret Spartan customs on the basis of ethnographic parallels. Following in the footsteps of early modern missionaries and travellers, who likened Spartan customs to those found among peoples of the New World, scholars in the early years of the twentieth century treated Spartan society as a fossil, ‘an authentic museum of ancient customs’ (Schurtz 1902), which could be compared to those in modern ‘primitive’ societies. From the 1920s onwards, however, comparative study fell out of favour within both classics and anthropology; and, subsequently, even scholars like Finley and Cartledge who have wished to re-open a dialogue, have argued that ethnographic parallels cannot illuminate classical Sparta but only her lost early history. Reacting against such restrictions, Lupi advocates a return to comparative study through a new method in tune with current anthropological approaches, which proceed via critical scrutiny of the categories employed in comparison. He illustrates this method through a case study in which problematizing the category of marriage permits the reconciliation of two sources (Hagnon and Plutarch) who have interpreted the same practice in the disparate terms, respectively, of pre- and post-marital sexual relations.

STEFAN REBENICH’s contribution – which forms part of a series of articles on the role of classical scholarship within the National Socialist era (e.g. Rebenich 2001a, 2001b) – returns us full-circle to the starting-place of this volume: a Spartan king and the battle of Thermopylai. His paper on the myth of Leonidas in German historiography constitutes a timely addition to recent studies both of the modern legend of Thermopylai (e.g. Macgregor Morris 2000a, 2000b) and of the role of Sparta within German politics and culture (Rawson 1969, 306–43; Christ 1986). From the mid-nineteenth century to World War I, German historical scholarship, despite some criticism, celebrated Leonidas and Thermopylai as paradigms of patriotism and heroism. Thus were the foundations laid for a more intensive development of these images under Nazi rule. Owing to the allegedly close racial connection between Spartans and Germans, and also to their supposedly common Nordic background, Sparta came to play the role of an exemplar within National Socialist education. Within this context, Leonidas was often portrayed in both academic and popular historiography as the ideal historical representative of a Führerstaat, an example which Adolf Hitler himself

invoked when resolving in 1945 to remain in Berlin to meet his end.

Acknowledgements

The editors thank the trustees of the A.G. Leventis Foundation for their support of the 2000 Sparta seminar and of the Celtic Conference in Classics of which it formed part. They also convey their gratitude to Professor David Scourfield, Head of the Department of Ancient Classics at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, for generously providing the venue for the Conference.

Notes

¹ Baltrusch 1998; Cavanagh and Walker 1998; Meier 1998; Richer 1998; Birgalias 1999; Hodkinson and Powell 1999; Koutoulas 1999; Hodkinson 2000; Hupfloher 2000; Kourinou 2000; Link 2000; Lupi 2000; Cartledge 2001a, 2001b; Cartledge and Spawforth 2001; Dreher 2001; Förtsch 2001; Koliopoulos 2001; Sommer 2001; Cavanagh *et al.* 2002; Lipka 2002; Pomeroy 2002; Whitby 2002.

² *Eleutherotypia, E Istorika*, 61, 14 December 2000; 87, 14 June 2001.

³ Cf. Whitby 2002, 11, and the title of Paul Cartledge's recent collection of essays (2001a), *Spartan Reflections*.

⁴ e.g. Kennell 1995; Cartledge and Spawforth 2001, ch. 14.

⁵ For criticism of these tendencies within modern scholarship on Spartan land-ownership, Hodkinson 1986; 2000, 65–75. The most notable earlier exception is Chester Starr's important article on 'The credibility of early Spartan history' (Starr 1965), on which see Hodkinson 1997a, 83 and Whitby 2002, 21.

⁶ Cf. the claim of Glen Bowersock that, 'A recent tendency to confine the traditions recorded by ancient witnesses to the epoch in which they wrote has produced an unbalanced, fragmented, and ultimately unpersuasive account of classical Sparta' ('Premessa' [Preface] to Lupi 2000, 5).

⁷ Cartledge 1993, 80–2 (quotation at p. 80). His perspective derives inspiration from the work of Hartog 1988 (cf. esp. 152–6, 329–30, 335–9 for his brief discussions of Herodotus and Sparta). For one subject on which Herodotus does *not* treat Spartan practice as alien to that of other Greeks, Hodkinson 2000, 19–20.

⁸ Millender 1999, 2000.

⁹ Cf. Hodkinson 1983, 273–6.

¹⁰ For an example of the influence of Flower's paper upon my own work, see Hodkinson 1997a, 84–7.

¹¹ Among older approaches, cf. Chrimes (1949, v), whose work aimed 'to trace constitutional and social survivals back to their roots in the past'. Among more recent depictions, cf. Kennell 1995; Thommen 1996.

¹² e.g. On the helots, Talbert 1989; Ducat 1990; Cartledge 1991; Hodkinson 1992; 1997b; 2000, 113–49; Singor 1993; Whitby 1994; Paradiso 1997; Figueira 1999; Lombardo 1999; Alcock 2002; Alcock and Luraghi forthcoming. On the *perioikoi*, Shipley 1992, 1997; Lotze 1993/94; Zaikov 1988, 1994; Kennell 1999; Hall 2000.

¹³ Ducat 1990; 1994, 16. Cf. also Hodkinson 1992; Whitby 1994.

¹⁴ Luraghi 2001; 2002; forthcoming.

¹⁵ e.g. the definition of helots as 'state serfs' by de Ste Croix 1981, 147, 149; Cartledge 1987, 172; 1988, 39. de Ste Croix's definition (1981, 135–6) is based upon the 1956 UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Practices similar to Slavery. For criticism of the definition of helots as serfs, Finley 1985, 65, 184–5, 221 n. 5. For a general critique of such globalizing approaches, Hodkinson forthcoming.

¹⁶ e.g. Cartledge 2001b, originally published in 1979.

¹⁷ Cf. also, recently, Hodkinson 2000, 9–17; and Humble, this volume.

Bibliography

Alcock, S.E.

- 2002 'A simple case of exploitation? The helots of Messenia', in P. Cartledge, E.E. Cohen and L. Foxhall (eds.) *Money, Labour and Land in Ancient Greece: Approaches to the economies of ancient Greece*, London and New York, 185–99.

Alcock, S.E. et al.

- in prep. 'The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project. Part IV: Historic Messenia, Geometric to late Roman', *Hesperia*.

Alcock, S.E. and Luraghi, N. (eds.)

- forthcoming *Helots and their Masters in Laconia and Messenia: Histories, ideologies, structures*.

Baltrusch, E.

- 1998 *Sparta: Geschichte, Gesellschaft, Kultur*, Munich.

Birgalias, N.

- 1999 *L'odyssée de l'éducation spartiate*, Athens.

Cartledge, P.

- 1987 *Agisilaos and the Crisis of Sparta*, London.
1988 'Serfdom in classical Greece', in L. Archer (ed.) *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour*, London, 33–41.
1991 'Richard Talbert's revision of the Spartan-helot struggle: a reply', *Historia* 40, 379–81.
1993 *The Greeks: A portrait of Self and Others*, Oxford and New York.
2001a *Spartan Reflections*, London.
2001b *Sparta and Lakonia: A regional history, 1300–362 BC*, 2nd edn, London and New York.

Cartledge, P. and Spawforth, A.

- 2001 *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: A tale of two cities*, 2nd edn, London and New York.

Cavanagh, W.G., Crouwel, J., Catling, R.W.V. and Shipley, G.

- 1996 *Continuity and Change in a Greek Rural Landscape: The Laconia Survey, II, Archaeological data*, BSA Suppl. Vol. 27, London.
2002 *Continuity and Change in a Greek Rural Landscape: The Laconia Survey, I, Results and interpretation*, BSA Suppl. Vol. 26, London.

- Cavanagh, W.G. and Walker, S.E.C. (eds.)
 1998 *Sparta in Laconia: The archaeology of a city and its countryside*, London.
- Chrimes, K.M.T.
 1949 *Ancient Sparta: A re-examination of the evidence*, Manchester. Reprinted 1999.
- Christ, K.
 1986 'Spartaforschung und Spartabild', in K. Christ (ed.) *Sparta*, Darmstadt, 1–72. Repr. in his *Griechische Geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, Historia Einzelschriften 106, Stuttgart 1996, 9–57.
- Clarke, M.
 1999 *Flesh and Spirit in the Songs of Homer*, Oxford.
- de Ste. Croix, G.E.M.
 1981 *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, London. Corrected paperback imprint, 1983.
- Dreher, M.
 2001 *Athen und Sparta*, Munich.
- Ducat, J.
 1990 *Les Hilotes*, BCH Supplément XX, Paris.
 1994 *Les Pénestes de Thessalie*, Paris.
- Eremin, A.
 1993 'The problems of ancient Spartan history in post-war British and American historiography', Synopsis of candidate thesis [in Russian], Kazan State University.
- Figueira, T.J.
 1999 'The evolution of the Messenian identity', in Hodkinson and Powell (eds.) *Sparta: New perspectives*, 211–44.
- Finley, M.I.
 1985 *The Ancient Economy*, 2nd edn, London.
- Förtsch, R.
 2001 *Kunstverwendung und Kunstlegitimation im archaischen und frühklassischen Sparta*, Mainz am Rhein.
- Hall, J.M.
 2000 'Sparta, Lakadaimon and the nature of perioikic dependency', in P. Flensted-Jensen (ed.) *Further Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, Stuttgart, 73–89.
- Hartog, F.
 1988 *The Mirror of Herodotus: The representation of the Other in the writing of history*, Berkeley. English trans. of French original, Paris 1980; rev. and augmented edn 1992.
- Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds.)
 1983 *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge.
- Hodkinson, S.
 1983 'Social order and the conflict of values in classical Sparta', *Chiron* 13, 239–81.
 1986 'Land tenure and inheritance in classical Sparta', *CQ* n.s. 36, 378–406.
 1992 'Sharecropping and Sparta's economic exploitation of the helots', in Sanders *Philolakôn*, 123–34.

- 1997a 'The development of Spartan society and institutions in the archaic period', in L.G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (eds.) *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece*, London and New York, 83–102.
- 1997b 'Servile and free dependants of the Spartan *oikos*', in Moggi and Cordiano (eds.) *Schiavi e Dipendenti*, 45–71.
- 1999 'Introduction', in Hodkinson and Powell (eds.) *Sparta: New perspectives*, ix–xxvi.
- 2000 *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*, London.
- forthcoming 'Spartiates, helots and the direction of the agrarian economy: towards an understanding of helotage in comparative perspective', in Alcock and Luraghi (eds.) *Helots and their Masters*.
- Hodkinson, S. and Powell, A. (eds.)
- 1999 *Sparta: New perspectives*, London.
- Humble, N.
- 1999 'Sôphrosynê and the Spartans', in Hodkinson and Powell (eds.) *Sparta: New perspectives*, 339–53.
- Hupfloher, A.
- 2000 *Kulte im kaiserzeitlichen Sparta: eine Rekonstruktion anhand der Priesterämter*, Berlin.
- Kennell, N.M.
- 1995 *The Gymnasium of Virtue: Education and culture in ancient Sparta*, Chapel Hill and London.
- 1999 'From *perioikoi* to *poleis*: the Laconian cities in the late hellenistic period', in Hodkinson and Powell (eds.) *Sparta: New Perspectives*, 189–210.
- Koliopoulos, K.
- 2001 *E Ypsêlê Stratêgikê tês Archaïas Spartês (750–192 p.Ch.)*, Athens.
- Kourinou, E.
- 2000 *Spartê: Symbolê stê mnêmeiakê topographia tês*, Athens.
- Koutoulas, D.
- 1999 *Archaia Spartê*. Thessalonike.
- Link, S.
- 2000 *Das frühe Sparta: Untersuchungen zur spartanischen Staatsbildung im 7. und 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, St Katharinen.
- Lipka, M.
- 2002 *Xenophon's Spartan Constitution: Introduction, text, commentary*, Berlin and New York.
- Lombardo, M.
- 1999 'Le donne degli Ilioti', in F. Reduzzi Merola and A. Storchi Marino (eds.) *Femmes-esclaves: Modèles d'interprétation anthropologique, économique, juridique*, Naples, 129–43.
- Lotze, D.
- 1993/94 'Bürger zweiter Klasse: Spartas Periöken. Ihre Stellung und Funktion im Staat der Lakedaimonier', *Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Erfurt. Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse* 2, 37–51.
- Lupi, M.
- 2000 *L'Ordine Delle Generazioni: Classi di età e costumi matrimoniali nell'antica Sparta*, Bari.

- Luraghi, N.
 2001 'Der Erdbebenaufstand und die Entstehung der messenischen Identität', in D. Papenfuss and V.-M. Strocka (eds.) *Gab es das griechische Wunder? Griechenland zwischen dem Ende des 6. und der Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.*, Mainz, 279–301.
 2002 'Becoming Messenian', *JHS* 122.
 forthcoming 'The imaginary conquest of the helots', in Alcock and Luraghi (eds.) *Helots and their Masters*.
- Macgregor Morris, I.
 2000a 'To make a new Thermopylae: hellenism, Greek liberation, and the battle of Thermopylae', *Greece and Rome* 47, 211–30.
 2000b 'The Age of Leonidas: the legend of Thermopylae in British political culture, 1737–1821', PhD diss., University of Manchester.
- Meier, M.
 1998 *Aristokraten und Damoden. Untersuchungen zur inneren Entwicklung Spartas im 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr. und zur politischen Funktion der Dichtung des Tyrtaios*, Stuttgart.
- Mertens, N.
 1999 'Die periöken Spartas', MA diss., Freie Universität Berlin.
- Millender, E.G.
 1999 'Athenian ideology and the empowered Spartan woman', in Hodkinson and Powell (eds.) *Sparta: New perspectives*, 355–91.
 2000 'Spartan literacy revisited', *Classical Antiquity* 20, 121–64.
- Moggi, M. and Cordiano, G. (eds.)
 1997 *Schiavi e Dipendenti nell'Ambito dell'Oikos e della Familia*, XXII Colloquio GIREA, Pisa,
- Ogden, D.
 2002 *Greek and Roman Necromancy*, Princeton.
- Ollier, F.
 1933–43 *Le Mirage Spartiate: Étude sur l'idéalisation de Sparte dans l'antiquité grecque*, 2 vols., Lyon and Paris.
- Paradiso, A.
 1997 'Gli iloti e l'oikos', in Moggi and Cordiano (eds.) *Schiavi e Dipendenti*, 73–90.
- Pomeroy, S.B.
 2002 *Spartan Women*, New York.
- Powell, A. and Hodkinson, S. (eds.)
 1994 *The Shadow of Sparta*, London and New York.
- Rawson, E.
 1969 *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought*, Oxford.
- Rebenich, S.
 2001a 'Alte Geschichte in Demokratie und Diktatur: Der Fall Helmut Berve', *Chiron* 31, 457–96.
 2001b 'Zwischen Anpassung und Widerstand? Die Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften von 1933 bis 1945', in B. Näf and T. Kammassch (eds.) *Antike und Altertumswissenschaft in der Zeit von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus*, Mandelbachtal and Cambridge, 203–44.

Richer, N.

- 1998 *Les Éphores: Études sur l'histoire et sur l'image de Sparte (VIII^e–III^e siècles avant Jésus-Christ)*, Paris.

Sanders, J.M. (ed.)

- 1992 *Philolakôn: Lakonian Studies in honour of Hector Catling*, London.

Schurtz, H.

- 1902 *Alterklassen und Männerbünde*, Berlin.

Shipley, G.

- 1992 'Perioikos: the discovery of classical Lakonia', in Sanders (ed.), *Philolakôn*, 211–26.

- 1997 "'The other Lakedaimonians': the dependent perioikic *poleis* of Laconia and Messenia', in M.H. Hansen (ed.) *The Polis as an Urban Centre and as a Political Community*, Acts of the Copenhagen Polis Centre, vol. 4, Copenhagen, 189–281.

Singor, H.W.

- 1993 'Spartan land lots and helot rents', in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg *et al.* (eds.) *De Agricultura: In memoriam Pieter Willem de Neeve*, Amsterdam, 31–60.

Sommer, S.

- 2001 *Das Ephorat. Garant des spartanischen Kosmos*, St Katharinen.

Starr, C.G.

- 1965 'The credibility of early Spartan history', *Historia* 14, 257–72. Reprinted in his *Essays in Ancient History*, eds. A. Ferrill and T. Kelly, Leiden 1979, 145–59; and in Whitby 2002, 26–42.

Talbert, R.J.A.

- 1989 'The role of the helots in the class struggle at Sparta', *Historia* 38, 22–40.

Thommen, L.

- 1996 *Lakedaimonion Politeia: Die Entstehung der spartanischen Verfassung*, Historia Einzelschriften 103, Stuttgart.

Tigerstedt, E.N.

- 1965–78 *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity*, 3 vols., Stockholm, Göteborg and Uppsala.

Whitby, M.

- 1994 'Two shadows: images of Spartans and helots', in Powell and Hodkinson, *The Shadow of Sparta*, 87–126.

Whitby, M. (ed.)

- 2002 *Sparta*, Edinburgh.

Zaikov, A.V.

- 1988 'Perioikoi in the structure of the Spartan polis' [in Russian], *Antichnaya Drevnost' I Sredniye Veka*, Sverdlovsk, 19–29.

- 1994 'Poleis of the Spartan perioikoi' [in Russian], in *Antichnyj I Srednevekovyj Gorod*, Ekaterinburg and Sevastopol, 63–6.

HERODOTUS AND SPARTAN DESPOTISM

Ellen Millender

Scholars have long recognized that autocratic government plays a central role in Herodotus' organization of his *Histories*, in which the polarization of Greek and barbarian operates around the factor of political difference.¹ Tales of hybriatic Eastern monarchs figure at both the beginning and the end of this work, which recounts the affairs of numerous autocrats throughout its entirety and concentrates on the triumph of Greek freedom over barbarian despotism in Books 7–9. Although Herodotus occasionally recounts positive aspects of various autocratic regimes, as in the case of Peisistratus (1.59),² he more often than not presents autocratic rule as inferior to Greek self-government in general and democratic constitutionality in particular.³ Herodotus repeatedly contrasts absolute rule with the blessings of freedom or self-government, and his account includes two vehement attacks on one-man rule.⁴ The first occurs in the Persian Otanes' speech in the constitutional debate (3.80.2–5), and the Corinthian Socles offers the second example in his vivid description of the Cypselid tyranny (5.92).⁵ Together with the *Histories'* numerous damning portraits of kings and tyrants, these speeches reveal Herodotus' belief that the power of any individual over a community is arbitrary, prone to become tyrannical, and inimical to freedom.⁶

When one considers how central the opposition between constitutional government and autocracy is to Herodotus' account of the Persian Wars, the role of the Spartan kings in the *Histories* poses an interesting problem: where do the Spartan dyarchs belong in Herodotus' political framework? The Spartan dyarchy occupies a special position in the *Histories* as a rare example of the survival of kingship in the Greek world. Herodotus' work also includes accounts of the hereditary kingships of Macedon and Cyrene, but these societies possess a marginal position in relation to the rest of Greece and play far less important roles in the *Histories* than Sparta.⁷ The Spartan kingship, consequently, offers a unique opportunity to evaluate the effect of Herodotus' anti-autocratic bias on his depiction of a Greek

kingship, one, moreover, that was constitutionally limited by other organs of government.

This paper argues that Herodotus' portrait of Sparta's hereditary dyarchy in many respects conforms to the pattern of the tyrant that runs through the *Histories*. I suggest that the explanation lies not in Herodotus' ignorance of Sparta's constitutional structure but rather in the strong influence that Athenian democratic practice and ideology exerted on his account of the victory of Greek constitutional government over barbarian tyranny. Against the standard of a Hellas politically defined by fifth-century Athenian democracy, the Spartan kingship in Herodotus' hands not only becomes the antithesis of Athenian constitutional government but also operates as an indicator of Spartan political otherness. In his characterization of the Spartan dyarchy, Herodotus repeatedly uses the same ideologically charged nexus of terms, themes, and symbols with which both he and several contemporary Athenian-based authors conceptualized barbarian autocracy. In the first two sections of this paper, I examine this construction of Spartan despotism in Herodotus' account of the dyarchs' prerogatives and burial rites (6.56–60) and his individual portraits of Spartan personal rule. The third section analyzes the ideological framework underpinning Herodotus' representation of all forms of autocracy, especially the Lacedaemonians' hereditary kingship.

I. Herodotus and the Spartan royal funeral

Most of the disparate information on Sparta included in the *Histories* clusters around the figures of the Spartan kings and renders Herodotus' portrait of Sparta essentially a series of royal biographical sketches. For example, he constructs the bulk of his narrative of Spartan internal history around the stories of the birth and rivalry of Cleomenes I and his half-brother Dorieus (5.39–48), the conflict between Cleomenes and Demaratus (6.50–1, 61–70), and Cleomenes' madness and demise (6.74–84). He similarly situates several accounts of Sparta's external affairs in the context of his extended treatment of Cleomenes, including the tyrant Aristagoras' visit to Sparta (5.38, 49–51), Sparta's conflict with the young Athenian democracy (5.70, 72–6), and Sparta's early-fifth-century war with Argos (6.76–81).

In contrast with his detailed treatment of the Spartan kings, Herodotus' presentation of the other governmental bodies that constituted Sparta's 'mixed' constitution – the gerousia, the ephorate, and the ecclesia – appears rather sparse. The disparity in Herodotus' treatment of the other organs of government, however, implies neither a lack of interest in, nor ignorance of, Sparta's constitutional structure. Herodotus does not provide a detailed analysis of the various components of the Spartan system, but comments

scattered throughout the text reveal his basic understanding of the organs of Spartan government, along with their respective prerogatives and duties.⁸ In addition to his reference to the political structures reputedly established by Lycurgus (1.65.5), Herodotus occasionally alludes to the powers that the ephors exercised,⁹ including their reception and expulsion of foreign visitors (3.148.2; 9.7.1–10.1),¹⁰ their guardianship of the hereditary succession of the two Spartan royal dynasties (5.39.2, 40.1, 41.2), their judicial role in the trial of Cleomenes I after the battle of Sepeia c. 494 (6.82.1), their authority to order out a levy and appoint its commander (9.10.1), and their possible accompaniment of kings (or, in this case, a regent) on campaign (9.76.3).¹¹ Although Herodotus gives far less attention to the gerousia, he reveals his knowledge of their joint deliberations with the dyarchs (6.57.5) and their role in the protection of the hereditary succession (5.40.1).¹² His information concerning the Spartan assembly is similarly minimal, but he twice refers specifically to the assembly's meetings (6.58.3; 7.134.2). Herodotus also describes various activities of 'the Spartans' or 'the Lacedaemonians', from which one can infer the numerous constitutional responsibilities and duties of the ecclesia.¹³

Herodotus' focus on the Spartan kings to the detriment of the other elements of Spartan government and society may be a consequence of his biographical approach to history, which probably reflects both the oral nature of his sources and the interests of his audience.¹⁴ The structure of the Spartan constitution also probably contributed to this imbalance, especially when one compares the relatively long reigns of the kings and the annual tenure of the ephorate. The more conspicuous duties and activities of the kings may likewise have provided more material for a historian than the less sensational and, perhaps, less accessible functions of the other officers of state.

However, Herodotus' description of the prerogatives and burial rites of Sparta's hereditary kings, the Agiads and the Eurypontids (6.56–60), suggests that his interest in the Spartan dyarchy has more complex roots. While scholars have tended to attribute Herodotus' treatment of these Spartan *nomoi* to his general interest in anthropological topics and fascination with Spartan customs in particular,¹⁵ this explanation fails to account for the unique position that Herodotus' digression on Lacedaemonian royal customs occupies in the *Histories*. Sparta is the only Greek *polis* given an ethnography by Herodotus, an anomaly that is even more striking when one considers the important function that ethnography performs in the *Histories*.¹⁶ Ethnography provided Herodotus with a useful methodological tool with which to encounter and make sense of his world. It enabled him to come to terms with foreignness present in the cultures he was

investigating by providing a discourse through which he could decipher and, in turn, interpret differences he detected between non-Greek societies and Hellas.¹⁷ More importantly, as François Hartog has shown, Herodotus used ethnographic material as a mirror to present to his Greek audience a reverse image of itself. Comparative cultural research, in other words, helped Herodotus to define, against a background of Greek knowledge, what was alien and what it meant to be Greek.¹⁸ Ethnography, moreover, allowed Herodotus 'to give historical significance to the Greek-barbarian antithesis' by making the polarity between barbarian tyranny and Greek freedom the basis of his account of Greece's victory over the East.¹⁹ By supplying an ethnography of the Spartan kingship, Herodotus, therefore, implicitly places Lacedaemon on the non-Greek end of the Greek-barbarian antithesis that structures his ethnographic discourse and treats Spartan kingship as a key signifier of Spartan political difference.

Herodotus sets the stage for his elaboration of Spartan otherness in his discussion of the Spartan dyarchy's origins (6.52–5). After relating the Spartan account (6.52), he suggests his preference for the 'Greek' version, which traces the Spartan kings back to Perseus, son of Danaë (6.53.1). Herodotus then explains that while the Dorian kings can rightly be considered Greek in nationality as far back as Perseus, their relation to his mother Danaë effectively makes them Egyptian in origin (6.53.2; cf. 2.91.5–6). By next inserting the Persians' alternative genealogy of Perseus into this analysis of Spartan royal lineage, Herodotus obliquely emphasizes another possible connection between the dyarchs and Eastern barbarians, in this case the Assyrians (6.54). The Spartan kings' relation to Perseus also links them with Perses, the eponymous founder of the Persians (cf. 7.61.3, 150.2). At the end of this section, Herodotus even more emphatically refers to the dyarchs' Egyptian extraction, when he ponders how Egyptians came to the Peloponnesus and what they did to make themselves kings in that part of Greece (6.55).²⁰ While Herodotus notes connections between other Greek peoples and non-Greeks (cf. 1.56.2, 57; 2.49.3; 5.57–61, 65.3), both the critical positioning of this passage just before his account of Spartan *nomoi* and his insistence on the 'Greek' account of the dyarchs' origins make it worthy of careful consideration.²¹

Through his discussion of the Spartan kings' Egyptian extraction, Herodotus provides an unusual variant of the more traditional account of the Spartiate dyarchy's lineage, which traces the two royal families to Heracles (cf. 6.52.1; 7.204, 220.4; 8.131.2).²² He further distances Spartan ethnicity when he claims that both the name and parents of Heracles, the traditional forefather of the Spartan kings, are Egyptian in origin as well (2.43.2). Herodotus' choice of Egypt as the Spartan dyarchy's source

assumes even greater significance when one considers the position that Egypt occupies in the *Histories*. Before commencing his treatment of Egyptian customs, Herodotus sets up a polarity between the Egyptians and the rest of mankind, or, more particularly, the Greeks (2.35.2).²³ By linking the Spartan kings with the Egyptians, Herodotus thus effects a significant distinction between the Spartans and the other Greeks.

Herodotus' affirmation of the Spartan kings' foreign origins appropriately introduces his extended treatment of Spartan *nomoi* at 6.56–60, which opens with a description of the prerogatives (γέρεα) that the Spartans accorded their kings during their lifetime (6.56–7). He then examines the kings' funeral honors in a striking passage that stresses Spartan otherness, given that elsewhere it is only the burial and mourning customs of non-Greek peoples that arouse his interest (6.58):²⁴

The kings have received these prerogatives from the Spartan commonwealth during their lifetime, and when they die they receive the following honors. Horsemen carry news of the death throughout Laconia, and women go about the city beating cauldrons. When this has been accomplished, two free people from each house, one man and one woman, are compelled to put on mourning or incur heavy penalties if they fail to do so. The Lacedaemonians observe the same custom at the deaths of their kings as the barbarians of Asia, for most of the barbarians observe the same custom upon their kings' deaths. For, whenever a king of the Lacedaemonians dies, not only the Spartiates, but also a certain number of the perioeci from all over Lacedaemon, are obligated to attend the funeral. When the perioeci, the helots, and the Spartiates themselves have been assembled in the same place to the number of many thousands, mingled with the women, they zealously strike their foreheads and make endless lamentation, declaring that the most recently deceased king was the best king they had ever had.²⁵

Herodotus, the traveler and ethnographer, was bound to take an interest in foreign funerary rites. Varying from society to society, such practices provided him with an index of civilization as well as a basis for the comparison of the different groups included in his study. His recognition of funerary practice as a cultural discriminator appears most clearly in his account of Darius' examination of Greek and Indian attitudes toward the proper disposal of the dead (3.38.2–4). More importantly, funeral customs, similar to the other practices and rituals that Herodotus describes in the *Histories*, function in his work as an important indicator of difference between the Greek and non-Greek worlds.²⁶

Herodotus' unusual treatment of Spartan funerary *nomoi* builds upon the image of Spartan alterity, implied earlier in his discussion of the dyarchy's foreign origins, by means of an explicit analogy between the funeral honors

of the Spartan kings and the mourning procedures for non-Greek monarchs (6.58.2). In the passages immediately following his description of Lacedaemonian royal obsequies, Herodotus further situates Spartan funerary rites on the fringes of the civilized world by means of two additional analogies between Spartan customs and what he views as their homologues in the non-Greek world (6.59–60).²⁷ The first analogy continues the association Herodotus had earlier indirectly established between Sparta and Persia through yet another royal custom: just as the new Spartan king cancels all outstanding debts to himself or the commonwealth, the Persian king at the beginning of his reign forgives all cities their arrears of tribute (6.59). The second analogy links the Spartans with the Egyptians through a discussion of the inherited professions of herald, flautist, and cook that exist in both societies (6.60).²⁸ This analogy strengthens the connections that Herodotus had made earlier between the Spartans and the Egyptians in terms of their deference to the elder members of their respective societies (2.80.1), their practice of war as a hereditary calling (2.164–68),²⁹ and their especial disdain for trade and handicrafts (2.166–67).³⁰ Herodotus' association of Spartan and Egyptian professions, moreover, implicitly returns the reader to his account of the Spartan kings' Egyptian origins that introduces the Spartan ethnography at 6.53–5.

Herodotus' explanation of Spartan royal obsequies by means of such analogies with the non-Greek world further underlines Spartan difference by subverting the usual function that comparison performs in his ethnographic discourse. In the *Histories* comparison effects the domestication and translation of the exotic.³¹ Herodotus, like all ethnographers, needs to help his Greek audience make sense of the foreign cultures he treats in the *Histories*. Through comparison, and especially the related form of analogy, he makes the foreign familiar by establishing correspondences between features of the society or culture being recounted and elements of the world to which he recounts them.³² For example, when Herodotus attempts to describe the portion of Egypt lying between the ranges of mountains above Memphis, he remarks that this area must have once been a gulf of the sea, similar to (ὥσπερ) the countryside around Ilium, Teuthrania, Ephesus, and the plain of the Maeander (2.10.1). Herodotus again refers to the Maeander in order to describe the winding course of the Nile beyond Elephantine (2.29.3).

Herodotus' 'translation' of Spartan royal obsequies by means of analogies with the non-Greek world works in the opposite direction. Instead of making the foreign familiar, Herodotus' use of analogy in his description of Spartan royal funeral rites renders them foreign. Herodotus can only explain these customs by establishing correspondences with

barbarian rituals (6.58.2):

νόμος δὲ τοῖσι Λακεδαιμονίοισι κατὰ τῶν βασιλέων τοὺς θανάτους ἐστὶ
ώυτὸς καὶ τοῖσι βαρβάροισι τοῖσι ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ· τῶν γὰρ ὧν βαρβάρων οἱ
πλεῖνες τῷ νόμῳ χρέωνται κατὰ τοὺς θανάτους τῶν βασιλέων.

Through this process of defamiliarization, Herodotus highlights the otherness of these particular Spartan *nomoi* and classes them with foreign phenomena for which he fails to provide Greek analogies. Occasionally, Herodotus recounts features of the non-Greek world lacking homologues in Greece that would facilitate their presentation to his audience. Faced with this difficulty, Herodotus adduces foreign parallels to explain such foreign phenomena. This operation occurs, for example, in his description of the Nile's course through Libya, which he effects by means of an analogy with the Ister's course (2.34.2; cf. 2.33.2–4).³³ Likewise, Herodotus recounts the Libyan Nasamones' penchant for polygamy and promiscuous sexual relations by means of an analogy with Massagetan *nomoi* (4.172.2).³⁴ Herodotus' treatment of both the Nile's course and the Nasamones' sexual *mores* implies that the body of knowledge he shares with his audience is not sufficient for making sense of such phenomena. Similarly, Herodotus' treatment of Spartan royal funeral customs suggests that they, too, are not part of the matrix of common knowledge and shared cultural vocabulary that forms the basis of communication between him and his audience. Spartan royal obsequies, in other words, remain both unintelligible and untranslatable in the face of the hellenic cultural vocabulary that Herodotus has at his disposal.

In addition to Herodotus' explicit association of Spartan and barbarian funerary practices and his consequent defamiliarization of these particular Lacedaemonian *nomoi*, several other elements in his digression on the dyarchs' funeral honors enhance its portrait of Spartan alterity, especially in political terms. As Hartog has pointed out in his examination of the *Histories*' account of Scythian royal burial rites, Herodotus' very interest in the nature of royal burial in Sparta cannot help but refer the reader back to his account of Scythian obsequies (4.71–2).³⁵ A few noteworthy aspects of the Spartan ceremony further help to link Sparta not only with Scythia but also with the barbarian world in general and simultaneously separate Sparta from the rest of the classical Greek world, particularly democratic Athens.

The Spartan mourners, for example, make endless lamentation: οἰμῶγῃ διαχρέωνται ἀπλέτῳ (6.58.3), a practice that several fifth-century Athenian-based authors treat as a feature of the barbarian world.³⁶ Aeschylus' *Persae*, produced in 472, furnishes the earliest extant evidence of this characterization

through its presentation of Persian emotional abandonment following the defeat of Xerxes at Salamis. Aeschylus effects this characterization by means of a continued emphasis on Persian lamentation throughout the tragedy, which culminates in an unusually lengthy and impassioned dirge (909–1076).³⁷ In a number of fifth-century tragedies, such behavior also became a frequent characteristic of mythical non-Greek societies, which tragedy had gradually Orientalized.³⁸ This treatment is explicit in Euripides' *Hecuba* of c. 424, where the chorus of captive Trojan women perform a long lament (59–215) until the Greek Odysseus' entry temporarily halts the Trojan *thrēnos* and asserts the primacy of the Greek, male, spoken voice of rationality over the female lament sung by the barbarians.³⁹

Herodotus also locates the practice of highly emotional forms of lamentation in various parts of the non-Greek world, including Egypt, Babylonia and Persia.⁴⁰ Among the many examples he cites, three offer close parallels to the Spartans' mourning: (1) the Persians' loud and lengthy lament in response to Cambyses' impending death (3.66.1), (2) the Persians' unappeasable grief upon learning of their defeat at Salamis (8.99.2), and (3) the Persian army's endless lamentation (οἰμωγῇ τε χρεόμενοι ἀπλέτῳ) while mourning the death of Masistius, the commander of the Persian cavalry (9.24). Herodotus' specific use of the tragic term οἰμωγή to denote both Persian and Spartan lamentation once again links Sparta with Persia and situates the Spartan ritual in a non-Greek context.⁴¹ More importantly, as Hartog has noted, 'these statutory lamentations naturally stand in opposition to the legislation of other cities and in particular to the laws of Athens which, ever since Solon, had prohibited the funeral lament (*thrēnos*) or had laid down a code for its use, limiting it to women'.⁴² Thucydides reveals that the public funeral of the fifth-century democracy continued to keep lamentation to a minimum, subordinating private mourning to the public ceremony that served to celebrate and praise the dead (2.34.4, 44.1, 46.2).⁴³

As I have argued elsewhere, the Spartans' largely speechless demonstration of mourning further associates them with the barbarian world, where non-verbal communication commonly occurs through signs or tokens.⁴⁴ Through their avoidance of articulated speech and preference for brief, formulaic expressions of praise for their dead king, the Spartan mourners, more importantly, exhibit an attitude toward speech that is generally characteristic of autocratic regimes in the *Histories*.⁴⁵ Under the rule of the despot, subjects, like slaves, lack free speech and fear its consequences.⁴⁶ Such expressions of grief also distance the Lacedaemonians from democratic Athens and its burial ceremony for soldiers fallen in battle. While the Athenian civic ceremony reduced the visual spectacle to a minimum and

gave precedence to speech celebrating the *polis*, the Spartan ritual described by Herodotus reduces speech to a mere formula that celebrates the dead dyarch and, through him, the institution of the hereditary dyarchy.⁴⁷

The dyarchs' funeral ceremony underlines Spartan political alterity not only through the mourners' mode of lamentation but also through the Lacedaemonians' practice of zealously beating their foreheads while lamenting their dead king: κόπτονταί τε τὰ μέτωπα προθύμως (6.58.3). This custom even further separates Sparta from Athens, where Solon had banned such violent treatment of the body, especially on the part of women,⁴⁸ and refers the reader to the non-Greek world, where Herodotus repeatedly locates acts of disfigurement,⁴⁹ including funerary self-mutilation.⁵⁰ By striking their foreheads, the Lacedaemonians call to mind Herodotus' Scythians, who mutilate their heads in response to the news of their king's death (4.71.2), and the Carians, who beat their breasts and cut their foreheads in lamentation following the sacrifice at the festival of Isis at Busiris (2.61.2).⁵¹ The Spartans' beatings, however, particularly associate Lacedaemonian royal funeral rites with Herodotus' portrayal of autocracy, in which mutilation and disfigurement often function as an exercise of power.⁵² Throughout the *Histories* despots assert their authority, threaten, humiliate, and punish by means of physical disfigurement. Cambyses, for example, affirms his mastery over Egypt by mutilating Amasis' exhumed corpse (3.16), while Xerxes punishes the Lydian Pythius' insolent plea to exempt his eldest son from war by turning the young man's severed halves into a makeshift gateway for the Persian army (7.39.3). The role that mutilation plays in the establishment of despotic authority appears most clearly in Herodotus' account of the Persian Zopyrus' self-mutilation (3.154–60). Zopyrus shaves his head, hacks off his own nose and ears, and scourges himself, in order to make the Babylonians believe that he is a fellow victim of Darius (3.154.2). When Darius demands to know who could have perpetrated such an outrage, Zopyrus claims that only his monarch, Darius, would have the power to inflict such bodily abuse (3.155.1).⁵³

Although the mutilation that attends the Spartan royal funeral is less extreme than that practiced by these Herodotean despots and functions as a part of the ritual of lamentation,⁵⁴ it parallels the various marks of slavery that both physically and symbolically demarcate ruler and ruled in the barbarian world.⁵⁵ This delineation of power relations reveals itself throughout the Spartan ceremony, most explicitly in (1) the requirement that two free people from each household, a man and a woman, don mourning on pain of harsh penalties (6.58.1), and (2) the obligation of all Spartiates and a specified number of their subject neighbors to attend the funeral (6.58.2).⁵⁶ Together with their unarticulated expression of

lamentation and the other constraints that circumscribe the mourning process, the Spartans' ritual defilement demonstrates their subservient position in relation to the king.⁵⁷

Herodotus' description of the funeral ceremony as one of the privileges (γέρεα) that the Spartan kings could claim from the *polis* also lends a despotic flavor to the Lacedaemonians' royal funeral ceremony (6.56, 57.5; cf. 7.104.2). Instead of being a right to which all citizens are equally entitled, the funeral becomes one of the prerogatives of Sparta's hereditary kings that set them apart from the rest of the *polis*. Functioning as a γέρας, the funeral associates Sparta with several autocratically-governed societies in Herodotus' account,⁵⁸ in which both the giving and receiving of special privileges play a fundamental role.⁵⁹ In addition to the perquisites that the Spartan kings receive from their subjects, Herodotus uses the term γέρας to refer to the Persian kingship itself (3.85.1; 7.3.3) and the prerogatives of the hereditary kings of Cyrene (4.162.2, 165.1). By describing the Spartan dyarch's funeral by means of this term, Herodotus again stresses Spartan political alterity.⁶⁰

Despite the 'despotic' tenor of Herodotus' portrait of Lacedaemonian royal obsequies, scholars – with the exception of Hartog – have failed to note the unusual nature of this passage.⁶¹ Even Hartog's treatment of these rites remains incomplete, because he neither elucidates the historical principles that control Herodotus' depiction of Spartan royal funerary practices nor questions why Herodotus, who is so selective in his inclusion of Spartan material, discusses Spartan royal obsequies in such detail. The question of Herodotus' selectivity is an important one, since he chooses to describe a funeral ceremony that was an exceptional example of Spartan burial habits and fails to provide an account of the burial ritual of the average Spartiate to parallel his earlier description of the average Scythian's obsequies (4.73).⁶²

By focusing on the exceptional ritual of the Spartan royal funeral, Herodotus portrays Sparta as a society whose political structures forge a link with the non-Greek world, where autocratic government was the norm.⁶³ In political terms, the Spartan ceremony functions as an institution that reifies and supports an autocratic political structure. By honoring the city's hereditary dyarchs, Spartan royal obsequies simultaneously celebrate the very institution of kingship. Through their speechless display, self-mutilation, obligatory attendance, and compulsory externalization of their lamentation, the Lacedaemonian mourners abase themselves and establish the absolute superiority of the dead king. The symbolic death that the city undergoes through the suspension of all commercial and political activity during a prescribed ten-day period of mourning following

the funeral (6.58.3), in turn, signifies the dyarch's embodiment of the Spartan commonwealth.⁶⁴ The fact that the compulsory, despotic elements of the royal funeral emanate not from autocratic kingship but from the Spartan *polis*, which observes these rites as one of several prerogatives it bestows upon its dyarchs, adds yet another layer to this complex portrait of Spartan autocracy. By forcing themselves and their subject neighbors to recognize and honor the dyarchs' extraordinary status, the Spartiates – and their *polis* by extension – become veritable despots in their own right and further identify Sparta as a society organized on despotic principles. It is by operating as a symbol of hierarchy and despotism that the royal funeral propels the constitutional dyarchy of the Spartans across the political divide separating Greeks from non-Greeks in the *Histories* and situates it in a polarity with Greek constitutionality.

II. Herodotus' despotic dyarchs

Although Herodotus' ethnography of Spartan royal obsequies emphasizes the autocratic nature of the Spartan kingship, his scattered depictions of the dyarchs do not wholly conform to the pattern of tyranny that, in large part, structures the *Histories*. For example, Herodotus provides extensive evidence that illuminates the unique constitutional position of the Lacedaemonian dyarchs, as rulers circumscribed by both their own collegiality and Sparta's other political organs. Herodotus' account of the extended conflict between the Agiad Cleomenes I and the Eurypontid Demaratus well illustrates the restrictions that collegiality could put in the way of either king's exercise of authority (6.50–70; cf. 5.74–6). His description of Cleomenes' engineering of Demaratus' deposition (6.61–67.1), along with three other accounts of Spartan dyarchs brought into court on criminal charges (6.72, 82, 85), also demonstrates that the kings could be tried before the high court composed of the ephors and gerousia and, if found guilty, deposed. Other examples of the ephors' and elders' ability to modify kingly behavior run through the *Histories*, including their intervention in Anaxandridas' domestic affairs to secure the Agiad succession (5.39–40).

Herodotus demonstrates his awareness of the constitutional limits of the Spartan dyarchy,⁶⁵ but he does not present the Spartan kings as either ineffectual or controlled by the other officers of state. His depiction of the dyarchy (and especially Cleomenes I), on the contrary, reveals that the Spartan kings could exercise considerable influence on Spartan politics, particularly in the realm of foreign affairs.⁶⁶ In his accounts of Cleomenes' reception of Maeandrius c. 516 (3.148) and Aristagoras in 499 (5.38.2, 49–51), Herodotus makes the Agiad king the principal, if not the only, representative of Spartan diplomacy and fully responsible for the

negotiations that took place during these visits.⁶⁷ Herodotus' description of Sparta's conflict with Athens following the deposition of the Peisistratids, in addition, presents Cleomenes as the author of Spartan foreign policy and in control of certain expeditions from their inception (5.70, 72, 74).⁶⁸ His account of Cleomenes' conduct of the war against Argos c. 494 likewise demonstrates this dyarch's full control over the expedition.⁶⁹ Herodotus suggests that Cleomenes alone was responsible for the choice of route, the conduct of the campaign, and the final decision to spare the city of Argos (6.76–82). Although Demaratus obstructed Cleomenes' attempt to punish the leading medizers in Aegina (6.50–1, 61.1), Cleomenes' activities on this island reveal a similar independence and assertion of royal authority (6.49–50, 61.1, 64, 73).⁷⁰

As Herodotus recognized, numerous factors made it possible for the Spartan dyarchs to become dynamic political leaders, especially their hereditary role as Sparta's military leaders.⁷¹ In addition to his important military role in Spartan society, the king possessed an exceptional status in relation to his fellow citizens both in life and in death, which rightly led Max Weber to describe the Spartan dyarchy as an example of 'family-charismatic' kingship.⁷² Herodotus reminds his audience several times of the dyarchy's lineal descent from the semi-divine Heracles (6.52.1; 7.204, 220.4; 8.131.2), which set the kings above their fellow Spartiates and mortal men in general. His mention of the close connection between the dyarchs and the twin Dioscuri, who accompanied them on their expeditions (5.75.2), also suggests that the kings functioned as guarantors of the divine protection of Sparta and further emphasizes the semi-divine nature of the Spartan kingship.⁷³ Similarly, the dyarchs' hereditary priest-hoods of Zeus Lacedaemonius and Zeus Uranius, together with their responsibility for conducting necessary sacrifices before setting out on expeditions (6.56.1), indicate their symbolic role as guardians of the state's continued well-being.⁷⁴

Herodotus' account of the special prerogatives of the dyarchs (6.56–8) further underlines their extraordinary position in Spartan society. Their numerous privileges at both public sacrifices and regular meals, especially their double rations (6.57.1–4), allowed them to exercise their patronage by inviting guests to dine with them on both occasions. The kings' right to appoint *proxenoi* and the Pythian messengers (6.57.2), along with their various judicial prerogatives (6.57.4), also served as important sources of patronage and potential political influence. Both kings, in addition, would have been able to exercise influence through their participation in the *gerousia* (6.57.5).⁷⁵ Finally, the elaborate funeral ceremony of the Spartan dyarchs (6.58), to quote Paul Cartledge, 'symbolized, indeed created the

honorand's posthumous status as a hero of more than merely mortal nature and thus naturally complemented and continued the charismatic status he had enjoyed in his lifetime'.⁷⁶

Herodotus' account thus presents a complex portrait of the Spartan kings, as subject to constitutional limits and yet empowered by both the charismatic nature of their position in Sparta and their many opportunities to exert personal leadership in this highly militaristic society. His depiction of the Spartan dyarchy, however, possesses yet another dimension that both counters and diminishes his treatment of the kings as constitutional rulers and leaves a far more lasting impression upon the mind of his reader. Throughout the *Histories* Herodotus provides numerous accounts of the Lacedaemonian dyarchs that build upon the vivid image of Spartan despotism created in his ethnography of the Spartan royal funeral, by constructing Sparta as a society organized around the principles of absolute kingship.⁷⁷

In his extended treatment of Cleomenes' reign, for example, Herodotus recounts several intra- and inter-dynastic struggles over the Spartan kingship's hereditary succession, which, as Moses Finley has argued, 'belong to the courts of tyrants and barbarian monarchs, not to a Greek *polis*'.⁷⁸ The first of these occurs in his account of the circumstances surrounding Cleomenes' birth and accession (5.39–48). In his description of King Anaxandridas' attempts to produce an heir, Herodotus depicts the hereditary principle of succession as both capricious and disruptive. The need to ensure the succession forces King Anaxandridas to violate Spartan custom by taking a second wife (5.40.2) and produces strife first between his two wives and later between their offspring – Cleomenes and Dorieus (5.42). The Agiads' practice of hereditary succession, more importantly, secures the throne for Cleomenes, a madman who becomes king on account of his birth rather than any manly virtue (*ἀνδραγαθίη*) he might possess (5.39.1).

Herodotus' account of the struggle between Cleomenes and Demaratus reveals similar inherent defects in the royal succession of the Eurypontid house (6.50–70). Irregular marriage again plays a central role in the story of Demaratus' path to kingship, as Herodotus recounts King Ariston's acquisition of his third wife by cruelly tricking his best friend into giving up his own wife (6.61–2). This improper marriage endangers the royal succession, since Ariston's new wife appears to give birth to the future King Demaratus before the customary 'ten' months have passed (6.63.1–2, 69.1–4) and later admits her own doubts concerning her son's paternity (6.69.4–5). Hostility between the two houses, in the form of Cleomenes' ongoing conflict with Demaratus, also puts the succession in jeopardy when Cleomenes employs the stock allegation of illegitimacy to oust Demaratus

and replace him with Leotychidas, a member of a collateral branch of the Eurypontid house (6.61–67.1).

Through the theme of the royal succession, Herodotus associates the Spartan dyarchy with several despotic regimes in which the succession appears equally arbitrary and subject to disturbances, especially the Persian monarchy. Herodotus' description of the circumstances surrounding Cyrus' (1.107–28) and Darius' (1.209–10; 3.61–87) acquisition of the γέρας of the Persian kingship demonstrates both the vicissitudes and intrigue that could similarly accompany the Persian royal succession. The parallels between the Spartans' and Persians' custom of hereditary succession become particularly clear in Herodotus' account of the exiled king Demaratus' role in securing the Persian kingdom for Xerxes (7.2–3). Darius' choice of an heir from among his seven sons produces discord between his first and second wives and their children reminiscent of that attending the succession of the Agiad Cleomenes. Like Cleomenes, Xerxes ostensibly gains the throne on the basis of his birth rather than any other consideration. His accession, however, becomes even more arbitrary through the chance involvement of the Spartan king, Demaratus. According to Herodotus, this exiled dyarch advised Xerxes to base his claim to succession on the argument that Darius was already on the Persian throne when Xerxes was born.⁷⁹

Herodotus' claim that Atossa's great power would have guaranteed Xerxes' accession to the throne with or without Demaratus' help (7.3.4) forges yet another link between Persia and Lacedaemon, where women similarly play an important political role as the wives and mothers of kings. As Herodotus' detailed treatment of the mechanics of both Persian and Spartan succession shows, women wield significant power in the context of autocracy through their ability to support or endanger the succession and thereby affect the very political structure of the state. Demaratus' mother, for example, disrupts the hereditary succession of the Eurypontids through her reputed beauty, her foreshortened pregnancy, and the rumors impugning her sexual fidelity (6.61–9). Demaratus' mother, of course, remains an essentially passive political player and does not politically intervene in the succession as directly as the Persian Atossa. However, Herodotus' portrayal of another royal mother, Argeia, suggests that Spartan queens were as capable as Atossa of actively influencing the succession. According to Herodotus, the clever mother of the twin founders of the Agiad and Eurypontid houses desired that both of her sons be made kings and was thus ultimately responsible for the foundation of the dyarchy (6.52.2–7).⁸⁰

The heavy layer of folklore surrounding Herodotus' discussion of the Spartan royal succession further locates the Lacedaemonian kingship in a particularly Eastern context. In his account of Cleomenes' irregular

succession (5.39–42.2), Herodotus employs the theme of the struggle between two wives to bear heirs and continue the blood-line of the family, which generally runs as follows: the husband takes a second wife to bear an heir when the first wife proves barren; strife occurs between the two wives in which the second wife and/or her coterie taunt and harass the first beloved wife; and the first wife soon bears children of her own, who become the favorites of their father.⁸¹ The motif of strife between the barren first wife and the fecund second wife occurs throughout Near Eastern folklore, including the biblical accounts of the conflict between Sarah and Hagar (Gen. 16, 1–6), Rachel and Leah (Gen. 30, 1–24), and Hannah and Peninah (Sam. I 1, 1–19).

Herodotus' treatment of Demaratus' birth is similarly overlaid with folklore, both in the description of Demaratus' mother's metamorphosis from an ugly child into the fairest of all Spartan women (6.61.2–5) and her account of Demaratus' possibly heroic paternity (6.69.1–4). Herodotus' use of folkloric elements and focus on the circumstances surrounding the births of these Spartan kings link them with several of the more notable autocrats in the *Histories* – Pisistratus (1.59.1–3), Cyrus (1.107–13), and Cypselus (5.92β1–82) – whose birth phenomena provide veritable forecasts of their later regimes. The bad omens presaging Pisistratus' birth serve as a warning against his later introduction of tyranny into Athens, just as Astyages' dreams of the water and vine issuing from his daughter and covering all of Asia predict Cyrus' later sovereignty over that region (1.130.3). Similarly, the prophecies that forecast the birth of a rolling rock and lion to Eetion and Labda appropriately describe the later Cypselus, who murders, exiles, and despoils many of his fellow Corinthians (5.92ε2).⁸² The peculiar circumstances attending Cleomenes' and Demaratus' births likewise provide clues concerning their later reigns, particularly Cleomenes' supposed madness and lack of manly merit (5.39.1, 42.1) and Demaratus' association with rape and illegitimacy (6.62–3).

The central position of these and other folkloric motifs in Herodotus' depictions of the Lacedaemonian dyarchs reveals the extent to which Herodotus' portrait of the Spartan kingship conforms to a model of absolute rule that was developing throughout much of the fifth century. The influence of conventional notions of tyranny on Herodotus' treatment of the Spartan dyarchs becomes clear in the many parallels that the *Histories* establish between the Lacedaemonian kings and the Persian Otanes' portrait of autocracy in his speech in favor of popular government in the constitutional debate (3.80.2–5).⁸³ After recalling the most recent examples of untrammelled rule under the Achaemenid Cambyses and the Magus (3.80.2), Otanes launches into a generalized diatribe against one-man

rule.⁸⁴ The organizing principle of his portrait of autocracy is *hybris*, which manifests itself in the ruler's penchant for wickedness, impiety, violence, envy, and transgression (3.80.3–5):⁸⁵

How can monarchy be a well-adjusted thing, when it provides the possibility for a man to do what he wishes without being subject to any account? Monarchy would place even the best of all men holding this position of power outside of his wonted thoughts. For *hybris* arises in him as a result of the presence of good things, and envy is engendered in man from the beginning. Possessing these two tendencies, he possesses all wickedness; sated [with power] he commits many reckless deeds, some from *hybris*, some from jealousy. It is true that the tyrannical man should be free from envy, since he possesses all good things, but the opposite occurs in his dealings with his citizens. He envies the best of them merely for continuing to live, takes pleasure in the worst of the citizens, and is most disposed to listen to slander. Of all men he is the most inconsistent; if you admire him with moderation, he is vexed because he is not paid extreme attention, and if someone pays him extreme attention, he is angry at him for being a flatterer. But the worst things of all I am now going to mention: he disturbs ancestral usages, does violence to women, and kills men without trial.⁸⁶

Among the variety of hybriistic modes of behavior that tyrants characteristically exhibit, Otnes emphasizes violence against women (3.80.5).⁸⁷ His portrait of the despot receives support from numerous accounts in the *Histories* in which potentates transgress the customary bonds between the sexes by violating women, engaging in abnormal sexual relations, and displaying immoderate and often destructive forms of sexual desire.⁸⁸ Significantly, this very theme of excessive and unnatural desire (ἔρως) brackets Herodotus' narrative of the rise and fall of various Eastern empires. The *Histories* opens with the tragic story of the Lydian Candaules, whose ἔρως for his wife is so overpowering that he violates Lydian custom concerning modesty and eventually brings about his own death and Gyges' usurpation of his throne (1.8–12). Near the conclusion of his work, Herodotus recounts the Persian Xerxes' similarly destructive ἔρως for his sister- and daughter-in-law (9.108–13).⁸⁹ In between these two tales, Herodotus provides examples of equally abnormal and violent sexual relations, including Cambyses' illegitimate relations with his sisters (3.31–2) and the tyrant Periander's uxoricide and necrophilia (3.50.1; 5.92η3).⁹⁰

At several points in the *Histories*, Herodotus also locates irregular marriages, aberrant sexual relations, and excessive forms of ἔρως in the Spartan royal houses.⁹¹ King Anaxandridas' strong attachment to his wife, who has failed to produce an heir, not only jeopardizes the hereditary succession of the Agiad dynasty but also ultimately forces him to violate Spartan custom by taking a second wife (5.40.2).⁹² Mad Cleomenes, the issue of