

The Spartan *Diata*:
Reconstructing The Truth of the Quotidian
Experience of the Average Classical Era Spartan Citizen
Beyond the Spartan Mirage

Dean Mathew Farley.

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Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Cultures.

School of Languages, Cultures, and Societies.

Department of Classics.

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Declaration of Academic Integrity

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Abstract

The legend of ancient Sparta has built cumulatively since antiquity, creating an image of Spartan society that is more of an abstract than a concretely attestable historical reality. From the 20th century onwards, there has been a concerted drive within scholarship to understand how this mirage has obfuscated understandings of Sparta and to present a more realistic view of Spartan society. While this drive has taken great steps towards demystifying ancient Sparta, there is to date only a limited amount of scholarship focussing on the everyday social and cultural experiences of ordinary Spartans, which restricts the extent to which Spartan institutions and practices can be contextualised within their wider socio-political setting. This thesis addresses this gap in Spartan historiography by reconstructing the lived experience of the ordinary Spartiate from a sociological and psychological perspective, aiming in the process to prove how this methodological approach can benefit Spartan scholarship by expanding upon, and contextualising, the research of other scholars.

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Introduction

This thesis explores an element of Spartan history that has not yet received the scholarly attention it deserves, the quotidian experience of the average Spartiate. By presenting a plausible, non-moralising, reconstruction of a hypothetical average Classical Spartan's life from birth to death, I will demonstrate that our understandings of Spartan institutions and cultural practices can be expanded by contextualising them through the prism of their psychological impact on ordinary people. The focus will be on the middle Classical period as this is the period that was most closely documented by both contemporary and later sources, and the period that has received the most scholarly attention, but to prevent potentially vital information being excluded, material and sources from the 8th century BC to the Roman Imperial era will be utilised to facilitate a diachronic exploration of the quotidian Spartan experience. I will present a simplified reconstructive model that seeks to eschew contradictions while trying to account for what I believe are the most likely scenarios characterising the average Spartan life. However, due to the dearth of data on the fundamental precepts of the Spartan *Diaita*, this model will play out in admittance that the average Spartan's life could take a plenitude of different directions, and in awareness that a thesis of this size can not account for every possibility. Additionally, despite the unquestionable importance to the Spartan *Kosmos* of Spartan women, Helots, Inferiors and *Perioikoi*, this thesis cannot explore their experiences comprehensively due to the confines of space, but as these social classes play vital roles in the average Spartan experience, they will be explored through the prism of their interactions with my hypothetical average Spartiate.

The evidentiary challenges presented by the perpetuation and survival of the Spartan Mirage into modernity have created serious methodological issues for Spartan historiography. Despite the considerable increase in archaeological data over the last 130 years, the literary sources still form the bulk of the extant evidence, the problems with which have been so well documented that they do not need restating in full here. The truth of Classical Spartan society and culture has been distorted since antiquity by the state's deft manipulation of tradition to

legitimise Spartan rule and *nomoi*, resulting in a collection of contradictory inherited traditions perpetuated to keep the people in line and present a coherent, yet propagandistic state sanctioned image to the world. The state's notoriously unwelcoming attitude to foreigners means that Spartan history has been pieced together from both rumor and autopsy by outsiders who projected their own ideals, agendas, and presuppositions onto the evidence, obfuscating the difference between the image of the lives led by Spartans, and the reality. Even Xenophon did not actually live in Sparta itself and was not writing from the perspective of unrestricted access to life on the ground, but through the prism of the Sparta presented to him by his friend and social benefactor King Agesilaus, and the elite social circles he introduced him to. Xenophon and the other literary accounts have been used in the admittance that they most likely reflect a top-down perspective and may not always be reflective of the average Spartiate's experiences¹. The sources' strong implications of Spartan homogeneity, general lack of clear chronological differentiation, and tendency to approach Sparta as a collective political entity, have resulted in an erroneous timelessness that minimises the complexity and diversity of Sparta, especially when it comes to the differences in individual experience. This thesis will build upon the precedent for taking a quasi-biographical approach to Spartan history established by Cartledge's *Agesilaus and The Crisis of Sparta* (1987), but will take methodological inspiration from the clinical approach to understanding the similarities between trauma responses in modern and Classical soldiers taken by Crowley in *Psychology of the Athenian Hoplite* (2012), and *Beyond the Universal Soldier: Combat Trauma in Classical Antiquity*

¹ It is from Xenophon's non-Spartan focussed works, particularly the *Anabasis*, that the most illuminative information regarding ordinary Spartans is found. The actions and personalities of Dracontius and Clearchus, whose experiences this thesis has been unable to explore, due to concerns of space, depth, and the focus on the average quotidian Spartan experience, provide a unique opportunity for comparing Xenophon's depiction of Spartans at home with those divorced from their societal bonds. Dracontius' ascetic personality presents evidence for how the behavioral expectations placed upon Spartans at different stages in their educational development influenced their sense of ipseity, particularly when it came to how they presented themselves to outsiders. The ambitions of the war hardened Clearchus, his method of achieving them, and his harsh nature, created conflicts with the state, presenting a case study for how ineffective the Spartan cultural and educational systems were at preparing men for the traumas of long-term warfare, and for creating a homogenous citizenry that upheld the state's ideals when beyond the state's ability to force compliance.

(2014), by Meineck and Konstan in *Combat Trauma and the Ancient Greeks* (2014), and by Tritle in *From Melos to My Lai: War and Survival* (2001)². As Spartan society held reputational prestige to be an important social currency, the historiographic evidence will be contextualised by using studies on the correlation between social affiliation and conformity surveyed by Crisp and Turner in 2014's *Essential Social Psychology* as well as the 2018 paper *No Guts, No Glory: The Influence of Risk-taking on Adolescent Popularity* (Rebellion et al), which explores the social desires and anxieties of youths during formative stages of their physical and mental development. This approach will expand our understanding by exploring the experiential perspective of the ordinary man through commonalities between Classical Spartans and modern men, bringing a bottom-up perspective to what the experience of life within Spartan society³.

The prevailing literary presentation of Sparta as exceptional has resulted in a preponderance of material asserting Spartan uniqueness and a skewed depiction of Sparta that has been inherited by modern historiography, completely minimising the points of similarity between Sparta and other Greek *poleis*. The dearth of evidence on basic information on the fundamentals of daily Spartan life has made conjecturing from practices in other *poleis* intellectually dangerous, but not entirely inappropriate. Hodkinson's use of the Cretan law codes in Gortyn in both his 1986

² The movement to understand the ancient experience through utilising modern insights into human psychology began with Shay's 1994 *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*, which utilised Shay's background in clinical psychiatry to explore similarities in the psychological response to battlefield trauma between ancient heroes and Vietnam veterans. Tritle's 2001 *From Melos to My Lai: War and Survival* expanded Shay's study from Homer's mythic literary characters to the personalities of historical accounts of the Classical period, using Xenophon's depiction of Clearchus as someone whom years of combat have made psychologically detached from his society, destroying his social bonds and making him a harsh and mistrustful, only capable of finding purpose in conflict (*Anabasis*, 2.6.6-13), to compellingly demonstrate that while the intricacies of warfare change, the kinds of trauma men experience, and the range of human psychological responses do not vary significantly. While this thesis will not approach the quotidian experience of the average Spartiate through the prism of combat trauma, the precedent set by this approach, grounded in clinical understandings of the human psyche, has provided a solid methodological grounding for this thesis to build upon by demonstrating the efficacy of examining commonalities in human experience throughout time to understand the experience of the Classical man.

³ Goffman's 1963 study, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, as a comprehensive exploration of the impact that societal acceptance and exclusion had on the psyche in both collectivist and non-collectivist honour-based societies, has also been an invaluable resource for assessing the impact Spartan *nomoi* had on the psychological development of youths during their formative years.

paper *Land Tenure and Inheritance in Classical Sparta*, and his 2000 book *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*, to analysis Spartan inheritance practices shows it is possible to use practices evident in other *poleis* to fill in the gaps in our understandings, and consequently, demonstrate that Sparta was not as unique as has previously been believed. This thesis has used the literary sources in the knowledge that no source was apolitical or amoral, that the information being asserted must be evaluated in terms of who was asserting it and when. The sources with a significant temporal distance from the Classical period, particularly Plutarch who was writing when Sparta had become a perverse tourist attraction, face issues of chronological differentiation that make it difficult to know how reflective the later evidence is of Classical practices. Fortunately for this study, beginning with Barrows' 1967 book *Plutarch and His Times*, serious efforts have been undertaken to understand how Plutarch's methodology, use of sources, and moralizing agenda have affected his historical reliability⁴, allowing for his corpus to be properly contextualized. Despite Plutarch's *Lives* and *Moralia* being written several centuries after the chronological period this thesis focusses on, Plutarch's concern with elucidating the moral vices and virtues of his subjects has resulted in wealth of anecdotes that are more revelatory regarding the personalities and characters of the Classical Spartans than the more geo-politically focused accounts. A fastidious scholar, Plutarch's refers to specific authors and texts, providing in some cases the only extant evidence of these texts' existence, and furnishing modern scholarship with additional sources that can be used to confirm the information supplied by the more contemporary authors and, more interestingly, provide alternate accounts of events⁵. The very existence of such alternate accounts potentially speaking volumes regarding how effective and pervasive Sparta's control over information truly was, as well as calling into question just how much access contemporary Classical authors such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon had to the truth of Spartan

⁴ This has culminated in the 2023 *Cambridge Companion to Plutarch*, edited by Tichener and Zadorojnyi.

⁵ *Moralia* 306A-B is a perfect example of this, quoting the lost *Peloponnesian History* of Chrysermus, Plutarch offers a more sinister account of the 545 BC Battle of Champions than that detailed by Herodotus (1.82), depicting Orthryades as a devious Spartan who saves his own skin by hiding amongst the bodies of the slain, erecting a trophy using his own blood when the Argives had departed the field instead of the epitome of the obedient Spartiate refusing to abandon his post.

life on the ground. There is one other major author whose chronological distance means his work must be handled with caution, Pausanias, whose autopsy and analysis is firmly rooted in his own era. Despite this, his *Description of Greece* has repeatedly proven its worth, providing a crucial link between archaeology, mythology, and history that has facilitated the archaeological campaigns of the British School at Athens and the Laconia Survey. Pausanias' work also shows that some of the most illuminative evidence on Spartan society comes from passing remarks and incidental references, which has inspired this thesis to actively seek out fragmentary and incidental references to Sparta in more ancillary sources, particularly those attributed to the few authors that can reliably be asserted to be Spartan or Laconian, such as Sosibius and Pollux.

Spartan history has been mythologised from the earliest accounts into modernity, particularly in modern receptions, which in not being held to the same historiographic standards as academic scholarship, can humanise the Spartans as a people in ways traditional scholarship cannot. Nuanced attitudes in receptions are uncommon, ranging from the outright hostile 1988 *The Shield of Talos* by Manfredi, to uncritically laudatory 1962 film *The 300 Spartans*, however in the last few decades some receptions have taken a similar approach to understanding the truth of Spartan society as that which is evident in recent scholarship. This shift in attitude, as Fotheringham has extensively documented in her 2012 chapter, *The Positive Portrayal of Sparta in Late-Twentieth-Century Fiction*, has been slow to acknowledge the morally problematic elements of Spartan Society, Miller's *300* (1998) has been argued by Cole to be a prime culprit in this regard⁶, however Cole's argument fails to acknowledge that *300* was never intended to be historically accurate⁷. There are two receptions that have approached Spartan culture from a multi-layered perspective, attempting in fictional form to achieve the same aims as this thesis, plausibly reconstruct Spartan life on the ground. Gillen's 2013-2014 graphic novel *Three* directly responds to the glorification of Sparta in *300* by

⁶ 2021, p.20

⁷ Miller's text is most appropriately assessed through the conventions of the anglophone comic book, which prevailing focusses on the heroization of men mired in corruption, driven to great deeds by dire needs.

attempting to present a credible approximation of a society where life was tough for everyone. With Professor Stephen Hodkinson serving as consultant, *Three* has a historical credibility most receptions lack, and by demonstrating how receptions and traditional scholarship can work in concert, represents an important step in Spartan historiography, but despite *Three's* importance, it is Pressfield's 1998 novel *Gates of Fire* that truly demonstrates the kind of insight into the average Spartan's experience that receptions can bring. Using Pressfield's own experiences as a soldier to bring a psychological understanding rooted in the commonality of the soldier's experience across time, Pressfield attempts to understand the effect of Sparta's ascetic systems on the individual in the same manner that Shay, Crowley, Meineck, and Konstan have, from the perspective of the ordinary man's experience, showing that while receptions must be used cautiously, they can plausibly reconstruct Spartan life in a historically creditable manner.

Scholarship has since the beginning of the 20th century demonstrated a desire to uncover the truth of Spartan history by adopting an increasingly diverse range of investigative perspectives. This arguably began with Ollier's *Le Mirage Spartiate* (1933-43), which concluded that Sparta was a philosophical fiction not a historical reality, conclusions which I believe unfairly discredited the literary sources.

Tigerstedt adopted a more nuanced approach in his three volume *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* (1965), correcting Ollier's assertion on the broad unreliability of the sources but was still unfairly dismissive of the usefulness of the literary sources. The first truly comprehensive studies came in Rawson's 1969 *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* and Finley's 1975 *The Use and Abuse of History*, who between them thoroughly explored the dangers of generalising from, or about the sources, and accounted for how modern perceptions of Sparta have been influenced cumulatively by past attitudes and receptions. The desire to address the manipulation and misappropriation of Spartan history has only gotten stronger since the 1980s with Hodkinson's 1983 paper *Social Order and the Conflict of Values in Classical Sparta*, being particularly important to this thesis. By challenging the view that the collective always outweighed the personal and demonstrating the importance of familial and social relationships in influencing

individual behaviour and social access, Hodkinson inspired an array of multi-disciplinary approaches to understanding the effects of Spartan *nomoi* on individual experience. French's 1997 *The Spartan Family and the Spartan Decline; Changes in Child-Rearing Practices and Failure to Reform*, took an anthropological and sociological perspective on how socio-cultural and political changes altered Spartan family dynamics, while Daszuta's 2013 *The Family as The Internal Enemy of The Spartan State*, expanded upon Hodkinson's conclusions to demonstrate that the family and the home were fundamentally private affairs. This thesis takes the research of these scholars a step further, using Golden's *Children and Childhood in Classical Athens* (2015), and other non-Spartan specific material on childhood in the Classical period, as well as modern scholarly studies on children's early development, to reconstruct a Spartan family dynamic analogous to that found elsewhere in Hellas. Ducat's 2006 *Spartan Education* has made a monumental contribution to the study of the formative years of Spartan life, building upon Kennell's fastidious approach to studying each piece of evidence on its own merits in the 1995 *Gymnasium of Ancient Virtue*, to compelling argue that Spartan education was fundamentally similar to that in other *poleis*, including a significant amount of familial involvement. Ducat's template for Sparta's age class society has provided the framework for this thesis to utilise sociological and psychological scholarship on the effect of social peer acceptance, stigmatization, shame culture, and parental involvement has on personal development during formative developmental stages to contextualise the Spartan education system in terms of personal experience. In combining this contextualisation with an anthropological approach to studying the impact of Spartan cultural practices on the development of personal and collective identity, this thesis will humanise the Spartans as a people with recognisable social concerns and anxieties.

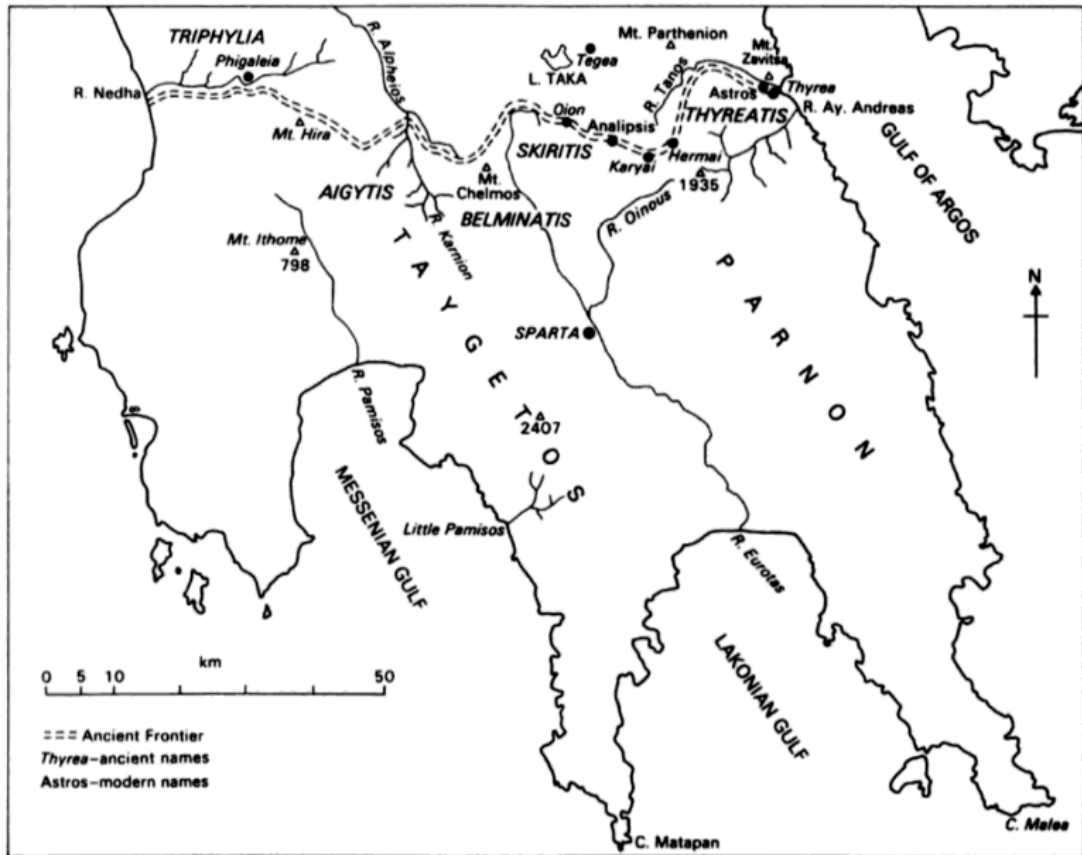
The scholarly drive to unravel the Spartan mirage in the 21st century has been led largely by Hodkinson, Powell, and the CSPS at the University of Nottingham under Chrysanthi Gallou, who have brought together leading researchers from across the world to transform scholarly views on Sparta. Hodkinson's sophisticated exploration of the functional reality of economic life in 2000's *Property and Wealth in Classical*

Sparta and the multi-pronged approach of the 2018 *Companion to Sparta*, edited by Powell, have exposed Spartan society as being highly prone to individual differentiation in experience resulting from a multitude of social, economic and political factors. The comprehensive approach taken by the contributors to the *Companion to Sparta*, investigating from both a historical and socio-political perspective, placing Spartan customs and the Spartan's experience of them within their cultural context, and tracing their reception by outsiders throughout history, has exposed the gulf between the reality of ancient Sparta and the mirage. When utilising this impressive scholarly corpus, it is important to remain objective and balanced in our interpretation of the ancient material, as Bayliss's 2020 book *The Spartans* has compellingly argued, we should not take the normalisation of Spartan society to the extreme. The fact that Sparta was perceived in its own time as being an oddity compared to other Greek *poleis* should not be minimalised, Sparta's oddities may have been distorted and over exaggerated by our literary sources, but it is highly unlikely they completely fabricated them. It is vital to maintain a balanced view when reassessing Spartan history, one that can admit Sparta's exceptionalism in its socio-cultural practices but also concede that the *polis* bore fundamental similarities to its contemporaries, and it is to the material evidence that we must turn to find that balance. Spartan historiography has benefitted from a growing corpus of material and archaeological evidence, which has significantly improved understandings of Spartan practices, the campaigns conducted by the British School at Athens, and the tens of thousands of votive artifacts and examples of Laconian pottery with clear near Eastern and North African influences that have been unearthed, have blown wide open the myth of Spartan isolationism and *Xenelasia* in the Classical period, as well as demonstrated that Spartan cultural attitudes to artistry were far less hostile than has been traditionally asserted. The wealth of information on Spartan civic and religious ceremonies, and on how socio-civic and religious rituals altered over time, revealed by the British School at Athens have facilitated a reexamination of the literary accounts that have allowed for Spartan socio-civic rituals to be explored from the perspective of their importance in constructing individual and collective identity, exposing the quantitative differences between Spartan life as depicted by the literary sources and the reality of the lived

experience. The 1980's Laconia Survey has allowed this thesis to engage with a previously lacking body of material evidence on population changes and continuity of habitation, facilitating the situation of its hypothetical Spartiate within Sparta as a functioning physical entity.

This thesis in many ways stands upon the shoulder of giants, the decades of scholarly work on demystifying Spartan history have exposed the reality of Spartan life as being vastly disparate from the image asserted by the mirage. The inner workings of Spartan society are now well understood to be highly prone to differences in individual personal experience, establishing a solid foundation for extrapolations on what those different experiences were, but despite this, scholarship has yet to fully explore the different manifestations of Spartan life from the ground up, from the individual's perspective, which is where this thesis comes in. By presenting a historically credible reconstruction of the individual perspective this thesis will demonstrate that Spartan culture is best understood through the experiences of those who lived within it, that it is in exploring life on the ground that we gain a fuller understanding of Sparta as a collective and a political entity.

Chapter One; A Son of Lycurgus, Early Childhood in Classical Sparta



(Figure 1, The Frontiers of Sparta c.545 BC⁸)

1.1 Birth and Societal Acceptance

Reconstructing the average Spartiate's quotidian experience requires ascertaining the circumstances of their birth, where exactly were citizen children born? The two most comprehensive sources on birth and early childhood in Sparta, Xenophon and Plutarch, are unrelating regarding where children were born or the typical household situation, additionally, despite Xenophon being the only contemporary account of life within the Spartan *polis*, his treatise on the Spartan constitution does not offer any specifics on the treatment or experience of new-borns. It is not until the first century AD and Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* that any specific details of children's earliest experiences within the Spartan *Kosmos* are related, but as has already been noted above⁹, Plutarch's chronological distance makes it difficult to

⁸ Cartledge, 2001a, p.2

⁹ See Introduction, page 10.

ascertain how reflective his account is of the Classical period. Despite this, Plutarch's account is the fullest and the most comprehensive available, and as there is currently very little evidence to directly contradict his assertions, the unfortunate truth is that we either write an account of birth and early life in Sparta that heavily relies on Plutarch, or we do not write one at all. Classical Sparta controlled over 8000 sq. km, including Messenia, however the main literary clues, the daily *Syssitia* obligations for Spartiates¹⁰, and the account of Kindadon's conspiracy¹¹, indicate that Spartiates spent most of their time in and around the civic centre¹², implying that habitation sites were nearby. This implication is strengthened by the presence of pottery sherds ranging in date from the Neolithic period to the Roman Republic found during the Kouphovouno excavations¹³, 3km from the Acropolis. Additionally, the post 7th century concentration of settlements around the Eurotas¹⁴, primarily on the west bank, revealed by the Laconia Survey heavily implies that the areas surrounding the Eurotas, its tributaries, the five Spartan villages, and the nearby hinterlands, were concentrated and continual points of habitation throughout the Classical era. My research has revealed that the most plausible place citizen children were born is in the parental *oikos*, this is because Spartan marriage customs involved a ritual capturing of the bride¹⁵, which implies that brides left their parental home for their husband's when married¹⁶. These *oikoi* would need to be proximal to the messes and barracks to facilitate Spartans under 30 visiting their wives and returning before their presence was missed¹⁷. All this together makes it reasonable to suppose citizen children were usually born in their father's *oikos* within the city.

¹⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12

¹¹ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 3.3.5-11

¹² Cartledge, 1998, p.40.

¹³ Cavanagh et al., 2007.

¹⁴ Cavanagh et al., 2002. p.157

¹⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

¹⁶ Cartledge, 1981, p.90.

¹⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

1.2 Inspection and Admittance into the Household.

According to Plutarch¹⁸, children were bathed in wine and taken to the *lesche* for inspection by the elders who decided whether they were reared or exposed¹⁹, but despite the prominence of this ritual in the popular image of Sparta, there is no strongly suggestive evidence that Spartan children were exposed more frequently than children in other *poleis*²⁰. The limestone rich Laconian geology may favour the formation of caves, any of which could have been used for infant exposures, but the one identified as Plutarch's *Apothetae*, the Kaeadas cave 10km from the civic centre²¹, has been extensively excavated, finding no infant remains. This implies that infant inspections were symbolic in nature and that, barring obvious deformities²², most infants would be accepted, welcomed into the household and named²³. The prosopographical data reveals that Spartan names could be used to express political alignments, advertise socio-economic status, honour one's ancestors²⁴, and express wishes of hopefulness for children's lives. As this thesis' average family had no prestigious equestrian victories to advertise and no connections to the dyarchy they, knowing the difficulties their child faced growing

¹⁸ Plutarch's account does not distinguish between male and female children which means it is possible both sexes faced ritual inspection, however I believe that the connection between inspection and *Kleroi* assignment implies that Plutarch believed only male children were inspected.

¹⁹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16

²⁰ Rawson, 1969, p.5.

²¹ For a full account of the excavations conducted in this cave, and the human remains found therein, see Efstathiou-Manolacou, 2009, and Pitsios, 2010

²² Plutarch being the only source for any type of eugenically motivated systematic infanticide in Classical Sparta creates problems when attempting to ascertain how common the practice of inspection and infanticide were. If it was standard practice for all male children to be assessed in the manner Plutarch depicts then I find it highly perplexing that neither Herodotus nor Xenophon ever mentioned it as this is just the kind of detail that would fit well with both Herodotus's ethnographic approach and with Xenophon's desire to expound upon the *nomoi* that set Sparta apart from other *poleis*. If, as this thesis has argued, the practice was symbolic rather than eugenic, a ritualised acceptance of a new-born into the tribe and the *polis*, then its absence from the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon would be consistent with their respective desires to expound upon Sparta's societal and political idiosyncrasies, as well as making Plutarch's account thematically consistent with how Roman era Sparta mined and altered its traditions to highlight and glorify its ascetic reputation.

²³ I believe that the uncertainty of being permitted to raise a child makes it unlikely that parents would name them before inspection.

²⁴ Kyniska was christened with the feminised version of her grandfather, King Zeuxidamus' nickname Kyniskos (Poralla, no.345; Herodotus, 6.7; Pausanias, 3.7.6).

up, placed him under Apollo's protection in the hopes that Loxias would guide him through life by giving him a wolf derived name²⁵, Lykodamos, the people's wolf.

1.3 The Household

Lykodamos' childhood home was, according to the literary sources, simple and unadorned, the result of limitations on tools for construction²⁶, a visible declaration of frugality in resources and character²⁷. While Plutarch implied that this outer asceticism reflected a matching inner asceticism²⁸, it is not evident that Spartan austerity ever extended to household luxuries, nor is it evident that luxuries were completely prohibited. The discovery of lavish household items in Spartiate *oikoi* during the 370 BC Theban invasion²⁹, and the lack of compunctions against luxury items demonstrated by the elites³⁰, all testify to household austerity being skin deep, but it is impossible to make concrete assertions on how luxurious the average household interior would be using the available evidence. For families like Lykodamos', it is unlikely that precious resources would be wasted on superfluous luxuries. The make-up of the *oikos* is difficult to know for certain as sources on ancient households are sparse³¹, Greek *oikoi* commonly altering over time in response to socio-economic and political factors³², but typically comprising an extended family with up to three generations and several married pairs, plus slaves³³. While it is possible Spartan *oikoi* followed this formula, the removal of boys for education, restricted living arrangements for Spartiate's and the social imperative to marry, implies two generation households were routine. The use of Helot domestic labour³⁴ means average Spartan *oikoi* likely contained several types

²⁵ Richer, 2006, p.13

²⁶ There was supposedly a Lycurgan law limiting the tools for household construction to an axe and a saw (Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 13.3). The issue with this is that Plutarch presupposes that this automatically limited the elaborateness of household construction, ignoring the fact that skilled artisans can create highly lavish items with very clumsy tools, modern ice sculpting with chainsaws being a fine example.

²⁷ Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 8.7

²⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 13.3–4; *Moralia*, 189e, 227c

²⁹ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 6.5.27

³⁰ Kleomenes received gold and silver drinking cups from Maeandrius of Samos (Herodotus, 3.148). Wealthy Spartans hiding wealth (Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 9.4, 10.3)

³¹ Gallant, 1991, p.15

³² Gallant, 1991, p.11

³³ Gallant, 1991, p.22

³⁴ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1

of domestic slaves, including maids³⁵, and the Spartiate's Helot battle attendant in addition to the family unit.

1.4 Familial Bonds, Parents and Siblings

According to the Mirage, Lykodamos was common property of the state, the result of his father being disjointed from the household by his civic duties³⁶, wife sharing, the communalisation of fatherly authority³⁷, and the shame heaped upon his father if he was caught entering or leaving Lykodamos' mother's quarters³⁸. *Prima facie*, it seems that there was a state sponsored separation of the family unit, however, it is not evident that the private sphere of familial bonds was always extensively restricted. Despite Lykodamos' mother being removed from her traditional household role by Helot labour and the freedom to go about the city as she wished³⁹, not cohabitating with Lykodamos' father until he was 30 meant she ruled the house and would be intimately involved in overseeing his care. As much as Spartan mothers are depicted as unmaternal⁴⁰, it would be disingenuous to assert they were all harsh and unfeeling⁴¹, Spartan households clearly had a strong sense of female authority⁴², as can be seen by how influential the personalities of Agis IV's mother and grandmother are in Agis' socio-political decisions⁴³. Lykodamos' mother would be his most consistent and present parental figure, and, as the state did not take an active role in children's education until they reached 7 years old, she would also be the main guiding influence for his socialisation and education during his early formative years⁴⁴, the arbiter of the cultural standards he needed to adhere to⁴⁵. While Lykodamos' father had civic obligations to attend to and was not yet

³⁵ Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 3.1

³⁶ Daszuta, 2013, p.16

³⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 6.1-2

³⁸ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.5

³⁹ Daszuta, 2013, p.14-15

⁴⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1269b12-70a15

Pellerin, 2021, p.216

⁴¹ Pellerin, 2021, p.210

⁴² Millender, 2018, p.755

⁴³ Plutarch, *Agis*, 7.4

⁴⁴ Gallant, 1991, p.12; Ducat, 1999, p.43, 45; Hodkinson, 2018, p.89

⁴⁵ Cartledge, 2006b, p.69; Scott, 2017, p.38; Pomeroy, 2002, p.58

Spartan mothers are reported as disowning their sons for deserting their posts (Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apoththegmata* 241A1), and even killing them for surviving where their comrades fell (Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apoththegmata*, 241B5).

residing at home, which would have limited the time he could spend with Lykodamos, he did have plenty of free time and would still have played an important role in Lykodamos' upbringing⁴⁶. If King Agesilaus, a man with far greater demands on his time than average, found the time to play with his children⁴⁷, it is reasonable to assume that ordinary Spartans were similarly involved in their children's early lives⁴⁸. As Lykodamos' conduct reflected on his family⁴⁹, it behoved both his mother and father to prepare him for the dictates of acceptable adult conduct by educating him in the core behavioural expectations of the upbringing⁵⁰. As a young child he could not be held to the same standard as older children⁵¹, or corrected through severe physical punishments⁵², but he could be taught basic lessons that would serve him throughout life, independence, sensitisation to public opinion⁵³, and ascetism in want/need, no small task as most parents will attest, and a solid indication that Spartan parents invested time, effort and patience in their children.

There were, at least in the fourth century⁵⁴, a plurality of Spartan *nomoi* intended to increase child production by removing any immorality surrounding adultery or wife sharing which encouraged the production of legitimate and illegitimate

Gorgo steps in to ensure her father Kleomenes does not accept Aristagoras' bribe (Herodotus, 5.51.2).

Diodorus reports that it was the regent Pausanias' mother who said to wall him up inside the temple of Athena *Chalkioikos* for his supposed medism (11.45.6). I am inclined to believe the account despite its absence from Thucydides' narrative, I find it very likely that Pausanias' mother, seeing how the powerful men in the city had turned against Pausanias, chose to ingratiate herself with them and save her own life.

⁴⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 24

⁴⁷ Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 25.5

⁴⁸ In Plato's *Lysis* (219D) Socrates speaks of how common it is for fathers to love their sons above all other things.

⁴⁹ French, 1997, p.246

⁵⁰ French, 1997, p.249-50; Crowley, 2012, p.10

⁵¹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 12B

⁵² French, 1997, p.252

⁵³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.2

⁵⁴ There is a continuing scholarly debate as to when these *nomoi* were introduced, MacDowell believed they were archaic (1986, p.76), Cartledge believes they were a response to Helot troubles in 490 BC (2001, p.265), and Flower posited a *terminus post quem* of the late 5th century (2002, p.207). The absence of these *nomoi* in Herodotus' account strikes me as strange as they are just the kind of cultural practice that would fit with his ethnographic approach to Sparta. From this I believe that they were most likely instituted in the 4th century when Sparta was experiencing a serious *oliganthropia*, and that consequently Flower's dating is the most accurate.

*nothoi*⁵⁵. This means that multi-children households would be common in Sparta with legitimate children, acknowledged *nothoi*, *mothakes* and *syntrophoi* growing up alongside each other. Most *nothoi* seem to have resulted from extra-marital liaisons of Helots and Spartiates, who could choose to acknowledge their *nothoi*⁵⁶, as they could the sons resulting from the encouragement for older Spartiates to allow their wives to couple with upstanding younger men⁵⁷, and raise them amongst their legitimate issue. It is possible Spartan women also produced *nothoi* with lower social orders, but beyond the dubious tradition surrounding the founding of Taras, and the royal court intrigues surrounding the supposed illegitimacy of Leotyichidas and Demaratus, there is no strongly suggestive evidence either way. Acknowledged *nothoi* and legitimate siblings would form a child's first social peer group, with whom he shared and fought over his simple wooden toys, played knucklebones and dice with⁵⁸, fought with, cried with, and with whom he played the popular Spartan ball games⁵⁹. Sibling bonds formed the bedrock that Lykodomos built his future societal, religious, and political relationships on, aiding his socialisation⁶⁰, his ability to understand emotions, and the sense of familial identity. They would also accustom him to policing his behavior to maintain good relationships and socio-metric popularity, highly important skills to learn in a society heavily focused on community solidarity.

1.5 Pets and Other Domesticated Animals

The presence of domestic animals in Sparta is not easily attested to, but the evidence of Spartan sacrificial practices indicates that all but the poorest households could own domestic animals. Of the chickens, pigs and goats/sheep reared for sacrifices, chickens and goats would not significantly drain Lykodomos'

⁵⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.6-7

⁵⁶ I assert that, as Sparta had manpower issues not woman power issues, it is likely that only male *nothoi* would be acknowledged and raised, at least in the late Classical period, even if simply as a measure to prevent the family lands being swallowed up by rich families marrying the daughters of poor Spartans to increase their own land holdings.

⁵⁷ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.7; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.7

⁵⁸ Lysander's mention of tricking children with dice tells us that dice were common in Sparta (Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 229B4).

A bronze die was also found at the sanctuary of Artemis *Limniatis* (Koursoumis, 2014, p. 111).

⁵⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 9.5

⁶⁰ Howe et al., 2023.

family resources, chickens require little space and can be fed on grain husks, and goats can survive quite easily on marginal land. Owning hunting dogs may have been the preserve of the rich, available to the poor only by loan⁶¹, but there were no restrictions on housedogs, whose presence is indicated by Plutarch's recounting of an anecdote where Lycurgus uses the training of dogs as a metaphor for the effect that training has on men⁶². Housedogs would not strain household resources like hunting dogs, did not require dedicated training and could be fed on table scraps. Given how important dogs were in Spartan culture, there is no reason to suspect that domestic dogs were uncommon in average households.

1.6 The Slave and the Valued Attendant

If Lykodamos' mother truly was distant, leaving him alone to accustom him to being unfussy, unafraid of the dark or solitude⁶³, then his Helot nurse, the woman who breastfed him, and supervised him at the festival of Artemis *Korythalia*⁶⁴, would be his main maternal influence. The wetnurse's important role in the *oikos* put her in a position of trust, entitling her to better treatment than field Helots. This might initially seem strange considering how the Spartan/Helot dynamic is almost universally asserted to be one of enmity⁶⁵, however I do not believe this was always the case. The annual declaration of war upon the Helots and the existence of the *Krypteia* imply a culture of brutality⁶⁶, but there is inarguable evidence of Helot cooperation with the state⁶⁷, the *Brasideioi* were exceptionally loyal⁶⁸, Helots smuggled supplies to Sphacteria⁶⁹, and Helots armed by the state showed little indication of disloyalty in battle⁷⁰, all of which testifies to a less hostile dynamic

⁶¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 6.3–4; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1263a30–9

⁶² Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 225F1; *Moralia*, 225F-226A

⁶³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16.4

⁶⁴ Athenaeus, 4.139

⁶⁵ Talbert, 1989, p.22; Cartledge, 1987, p.13; Chambers, 1978, p.271

Both Aristotle (*Politics*, 1269a37-39; 1272b19), and Plato (*Laws*, 777), thought of Helots as a fifth column waiting for its chance to revolt, while Thucydides believed Sparta designed its institutions specifically for security against the Helots (4.80.3).

⁶⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 28

⁶⁷ Chambers, 1978, p.274

⁶⁸ Chambers, 1978, p.293

⁶⁹ Thucydides, 4.26

⁷⁰ Herodotus, 6.80-81, 7.229, 8.25; Thucydides, 4.16, 5.34, 5.57, 5.64, 5.67, 7.19, 7.58, 8.5; Xenophon, *Agésilas*, 1.7; *Hellenika*, 3.1.4, 3.4.2-3, 3.4.20, 4.3.15, 6.5.23-29; Plutarch, *Agésilas*, 6

than usually asserted. Additionally, the most famous wetnurse in Greek mythic history, Eurykleia, was highly respected and honoured by three generations of rulers, Laertes, Odysseus, and Telemachus, as well as the Spartan Princess, and Queen of Ithaka, Penelope⁷¹, indicating that respectful treatment of wetnurses was not culturally unusual. Wetnurses took great concern over their charges⁷², and despite Spartan children being culturally encouraged to adopt an attitude of hostility, I believe they, just like Odysseus, would bear some affection for their wetnurse. This ideological separation of household Helots from others in Lykodamos' mind would also apply to his father's battle attendant⁷³, who carried his father's arms, fitted his corselet, fixed his meals on campaign, helped oil his body before exercise⁷⁴, shared the dangers of combat, and pulled him to safety when he was injured, engendering a mutual trust created by the bonds of shared hardship⁷⁵. Witnessing the congenial dynamic his father had with his Helot squire would cause Lykodamos to equate the squire with his wetnurse, as a slave worthy of respect.

1.7 Civic Experiences in Early Childhood

While Lykodamos' upbringing was harsh by modern standards, it should not be seen as being so brutal that the Spartans themselves were irrational in maintaining their lifestyle⁷⁶, the Spartans enjoyed comic pursuits, such as the imitation of stealing⁷⁷, as well as festivals, choral poetry and song⁷⁸; they even embraced many foreign poets⁷⁹, contrary to the idea that Spartans stringently practiced *Xenelasia*. *Mousike* was as important as combat training and was a crucial aspect of the social

⁷¹ Homer, *Odyssey*, 19.308-360

⁷² Herodotus reports a story of a wetnurse repeatedly taking an uncomely Spartan girl to the sanctuary of Helen to pray for her (6.61–2).

⁷³ Slave battle attendants at Sphacteria (Thucydides, 4.89, 4.16.1, 7.75.8).

⁷⁴ Spartans used cane reed scrapers when oiling themselves for exercise (Plutarch, *Instituta Laconica*, 32), a task that requires aid in order to ensure that the whole body is properly oiled.

⁷⁵ Hunt, 1998, p.137; Crowley, 2014, p.117

⁷⁶ Powell, 1988, p.99; Pellerin, 2021, p.201

⁷⁷ Sosibius (Jacoby, FGrHist, 595 F7)

⁷⁸ The Spartan attitude to musical practice was more intense than in other cities (Athenaeus, 14.632f–633).

⁷⁹ Including Terpanndros of Lesbos, Thaletas of Gortyn, Xenodamos of Kythera, Xenokritos of Lokroi, Polymnestos of Kolophon, and Sakadas of Argos (Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 4.66)

education of all young boys and girls⁸⁰. There were many Laconian festivals paying honour to the local pantheon through gymnastic competitions⁸¹, equestrian competitions, poetry and musical competitions⁸². In the chorus, Lykodamos was truly equal with his elders and peers, everyone, even royalty, dancing in their assigned places⁸³. Festivals were intense communal experiences⁸⁴, drastic departures from ordinary life that had significant impact on Lykodamos, proudly watching his family members display their prowess and he himself dancing the *Pyrriche* from the age of five⁸⁵, leaping and evading with spear and shield, in his first taste of the hierarchical group coordination needed as an adult hoplite⁸⁶. Participating in the chorus, singing songs rooted in the mythical history of the city⁸⁷, were vitally important acts of political and civic involvement for Lykodamos that affirmed his social position and helped to integrate him into his role in the community⁸⁸.

⁸⁰ Calame, 2018, p.269

'Dances, music, and exuberant joy flourished alongside councils of old men and the spears of young men' (Pindar, Fr.199, Snell)

⁸¹ *IG* v.1.213 lists almost a dozen different festivals with gymnastic competitions.

⁸² Calame, 2018, p.269

⁸³ As a child Agesilaus was relegated to what he believed was an inconspicuous position in the chorus and had no choice but to accept this (Xenophon, *Agesilaus*, 2.17; Plutarch. *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 208D-E)

⁸⁴ Flower, 2018, p.648

⁸⁵ Athenaeus, 630e-631a; Philostratus, *Gymnasticus*, 19; Plato, *Laws*, 796c, 803e, 813e Christesen, 2012, p.217; Ducat, 2006c, p.132

⁸⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.6

⁸⁷ Calame, 2018, p.295

⁸⁸ Calame, 2018, p.278; Richer, 2018, p.780

Chapter Two; The Road to Societal Inclusion

2.1 The Upbringing, Sparta's Compulsory Education System.

Around age 7 Lykodamos became the state's responsibility and was enrolled into the Spartan education system, sometimes referred to as the *Agoge*⁸⁹, and was placed in one of the *Agelai*, alongside the other Spartan boys with whom he would eat, sleep, and train in athletics and *mousike* alongside for the next 11 to 13 years. Exactly how and when children were enrolled is unclear, as there were no birth certificates or demographic records the state was unlikely to know the exact ages of citizen children⁹⁰. All children born in the same calendar year were likely enrolled together⁹¹, and considering the logistical difficulties of gathering children together from Sparta's vast territory, this would happen at one of the major civic events that brought the whole citizenry together, possibly the *Gymnopaïdai* as this was a religious affirmation of Sparta's age class society. For Lykodamos' family this would be an emotional day, especially for his mother as his main parental figure. For all their hopeful pride they would also be highly anxious, they could no longer shield him from danger or temptation⁹², it was up to Lykodamos to claim his citizenship through his adherence to Spartan values and behavioural standards⁹³.

2.2 Public Education, Private Enterprise

The Spartan education system being compulsory for all citizens⁹⁴, and its curricula being state mandated, has led to claims it was publicly funded⁹⁵, however neither Plutarch nor Xenophon ever claimed this, additionally, Xenophon's sons' participation as *trophimoi* implies fiscal responsibility lay with the *oikos*, not the

⁸⁹ While the term '*Agoge*' is commonly used, the term is not used by Xenophon, who instead uses the term *paideia* (*Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.1, 2.12-14). With this fact in mind this thesis will use the terms "upbringing" and "education system" from this point forward.

⁹⁰ Richer, 2018, p.773

⁹¹ Golden, 2015, p.58

⁹² McClelland, 1995, p.177

⁹³ French, 1997, p.255; Christesen, 2012, p.199

Plutarch, *Moralia*, 238E; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonian Politeia*, 3.3, 10.7

⁹⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, 4.1294b

Mintz, 2018, p.105; Arnheim, 1977, p.98

⁹⁵ Christesen, 2018a, p.797

state⁹⁶. The encouragement for wealthy families to sponsor *trophimoi*, as well as the children of poorer peers⁹⁷, *mothakes* and *syntrophoi*, as foster brothers/stepbrothers for their sons⁹⁸, also in my view indicates that Spartan education was privately funded. This meant that, as boys resided at home until around 12⁹⁹, richer children whose families had land for animal husbandry could supplement their diets in ways Lykodamos could not, the higher quality protein increasing their bone density and lean muscle mass¹⁰⁰. Lykodamos was entitled to take a companion through the education to share his training¹⁰¹, but considering this would double his family's financial burdens, it is possible that they declined to save their resources.

2.3 *Didaskalia Paides*; The Curricula From 7-12

Lykodamos' education was for the state's benefit more than his¹⁰², an institution designed to tame him into societal conformity¹⁰³, obedience, civic excellence¹⁰⁴, and into subordinating himself to the state as his primary loyalty¹⁰⁵, but what exactly this involved on a daily basis is impossible to concretely reconstruct using the current evidence. Xenophon's first-hand experience of Sparta makes him the most fundamental source¹⁰⁶, however his brief narrative rarely differentiates between the *paides* and the *paidiskoi*. Plutarch, the fullest source¹⁰⁷, follows Xenophon closely but is heavily coloured by the attempted 3rd century restoration of the Spartan upbringing and by Sparta's mining of its history and traditions to

⁹⁶ On the suggestion of King Agesilaus, Xenophon's two sons, Gryllus and Diodorus, were educated in Sparta (Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 20; Diodorus, 2.54; Diogenes Laertius, 2.52)

This invitation by Agesilaus heavily suggests that Agesilaus was their sponsor and was fiscally responsible.

⁹⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15-16; Athenaeus, 271e-f; Aelian, *Varia Historia*, 12.43

⁹⁸ Plutarch, *Kleomenes*, 8

⁹⁹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16

¹⁰⁰ Pasiakos, 2015

¹⁰¹ Phylarchos, 81F 43

¹⁰² Plato, *Laws*, 1.643e, 7.88d—789e, 804e-805b, 806a, 813e-814a

¹⁰³ Xenophon, *Agesilaus*, 1

Ducat, 1999, p.43; Cartledge, 2003a p.197

¹⁰⁴ Epps, 1933, p.14; van Wees, 1992, p.97.

¹⁰⁵ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1260b; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 7; Xenophon, *Agesilaus*, 37.6 'Lacedaemonians assign the chief place in their ideas of honour to the interests of their country'.

Cartledge, 2003a, p.29

¹⁰⁶ Ducat, 2006c, p.21

¹⁰⁷ Kennell, 1995, p.23

entertain Roman tourists¹⁰⁸. The Classical education system was seen as the beginning of a lifetime of militarily motivated training¹⁰⁹, however *paides* were educated similarly to the private education of children in other *poleis*, focussing on literacy, oral expression, *mousike* and gymnastics¹¹⁰, important cultural pursuits that give the education a character beyond that of an austere military academy.

2.4 Literacy, Oral Expression and Brachylogy

In the upbringing Lykodamos' education was directed by the *Paidonomos* who administered rewards and punishments¹¹¹. He was taught to be as literate as necessary, but what exactly this means is unclear, the mirage that Spartans were unsophisticated men who rejected scholarly pursuits was widely enough accepted for Thucydides to believably present Brasidas as unusually intelligent¹¹², but one of the aims of the upbringing was teaching Lykodamos the skills and virtues essential to Spartan life¹¹³, including being literate enough to function within society¹¹⁴. This means that plausibly estimating Lykodamos' literacy requires knowing how important literacy was to his day to day needs. He needed to be able to communicate with the state when serving abroad as a *Strategos* using the *skytale*¹¹⁵, the traditional Spartan method of communication¹¹⁶, and while it is possible only elites were appointed as *Stratego*i, the high possibility of a *Strategos* and his two deputies being KIA means that if the state wanted to maintain contact with its forces all Spartiates needed to have been educated to a minimum standard of literacy¹¹⁷. Additionally, if Lykodamos wanted to serve as an Ephor he needed to be highly literate, as despite the assertion that Spartan laws were unwritten¹¹⁸, it is

¹⁰⁸ Pomeroy, 2002, p.27-28

¹⁰⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1324b7-9; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 7.1.8; Thucydides, 2.39

¹¹⁰ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.1; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16.4

Mishurin, 2021, p.110; Cartledge, 2002, p.85; Kennell, 2013, p.47

¹¹¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16-17

¹¹² Powell, 1988, p.96,

Thucydides, 4.84

Brasidas' depiction may be reflective of reality, but I think it is equally possible that Thucydides was attempting to justify his defeat at Brasidas' hands by portraying him as an exceptional individual.

¹¹³ Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 224D3

¹¹⁴ Pomeroy, 2002, p.4-5

¹¹⁵ Millender, 2001, p.143

¹¹⁶ Thucydides, 1.131; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 3.3.8-9; 5.2.34, 37; Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 38

¹¹⁷ Millender, 2001, p. 145

¹¹⁸ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 227B

very clear from the available evidence that Spartan state administration involved a highly complex literary bureaucracy¹¹⁹, that at least according to the 4th century Athenian point of view¹²⁰, involved operating according to long standing written laws. The epigraphic and literary evidence also shows that the Classical Spartan state used public documents¹²¹, including inscriptions chronicling contributions to the Spartan war fund¹²², contracts¹²³, and treaties¹²⁴, as well as rudimentary record archives¹²⁵. To serve as an Ephor, Lykodamos would need to be literate enough to interpret and respond to this wide range of documents, meaning that the upbringing had to furnish him with a higher standard of literacy than the prevailing stereotype indicates.

Spartans had a well-established reputation for witty rejoinders and aphorisms¹²⁶, many of which are collected in Plutarch's corpus, these might be historically questionable, but the widespread consistency of Sparta's reputation for brachylogy across chronologically differing sources and the praise it received¹²⁷, indicates the truth of Spartan oral skill. Because Spartans disliked long winded speeches¹²⁸,

¹¹⁹ Millender, 2001, p.123

¹²⁰ Plato, *Laws*, 891a

¹²¹ Millender, 2001, p.127. IG V.I 543, 544, 560 all praise benefactors of the upbringing.

¹²² IG v.1.1

¹²³ IG V.2.159 found in Tegea but identified as Laconian in origin.

Millender, 2001, p.140.

Inscriptiones Graecae, V.1: Laconia and Messenia, 2.159

¹²⁴ Thucydides, 5.18.10, 5.19.1–2, 23.5, 24.1

¹²⁵ IG V.i.20

Plutarch used archives to discover the names of Agesilaus' wife and daughter (*Agesilaus*, 19).

Herodotus' Agiad and Eurypontid King lists (7.204, 8.131.2) were likely compiled from these archives.

Thucydides (2.2.1), and Xenophon (*Hellenika*, 2.3.9–10) likely compiled their lists of eponymous Ephors from archives. The Spartan kings also kept repositories of Delphic oracles (Ephorus, *FGrH*, 70 F 118; Strabo, 8.5.5; Herodotus, 6.57.2, 6.57.4)

¹²⁶ Stuttard, 2014, p.88

Menelaus was characterised as a man of few but concise words (Homer, *Iliad*, 3.214), which might mean that Laconic brevity was a long-standing attribute of Spartans from the archaic period onwards.

¹²⁷ 'the ability to deliver such words is the deed of none but the most perfectly educated man' (Plato, *Protagoras*, 342 D, 342e).

¹²⁸ The Spartans told the Samian exiles that their speech was so long that they had forgotten how it started and consequently did not understand its meaning (Herodotus, 3.46). This was also arguably a clever way of insulting someone, like how Socrates' statement that he tends to forget what people are talking about when they talk too long, insinuated that Protagoras was uninteresting and unmotivating (Plato, *Protagoras*, 3.46). A very Spartan way of saying you talk much but say little.

valuing simplicity over prolixity¹²⁹, Lykodamos was taught how and when to speak from a young age¹³⁰, taught to be direct, to develop his critical cognition and cutting verbal dexterity by being quizzed on the virtues and vices of adult Spartiates and expected to give reasoned answers he defended rationally¹³¹, teaching him the importance of critical judgement.

2.5 Athletics and Physical Training

In the upbringing Lykodamos' experience of athletics changed from being the arena of innocent childhood games to a serious pursuit and a platform for social recognition¹³². Lykodamos' athletic training enhanced his soldierly ability by accustoming him to violent contention and building the small group cohesion that Spartan military success was built upon¹³³. While in wider Hellas only those of high socio-economic status had the time and resources to devote to athletic training¹³⁴, the Spartan education system gave both rich and poor the chance to attain high levels of physical perfection¹³⁵. The level of athletic success Lykodamos achieved could seriously impact his future by publicising his merits and influencing his access to future administrative and leadership positions¹³⁶. Lykodamos' athletic training introduced him for the first time to the gymnasium, the place where free men competed in strength and beauty. Thucydides famous assertion that Sparta had no grand buildings implies the gymnasium was a simple affair¹³⁷, however Plutarch's account of the 464 BC earthquake implies that it was built up space, large enough for its collapse to cause significant casualties¹³⁸. Inside would be a *dromos* (running

¹²⁹ Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 216F2, 218B2, 232E3

¹³⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 19.1; *Moralia*, 506C; *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 218B2

¹³¹ 'a brief and pithy utterance, one worthy of account, just like a terrific javelin thrower' (Plato, *Protagoras*, 342d-e)
David, 1999, p.120

¹³² Christesen, 2012, p.193

¹³³ Christesen, 2012, p.235-236; Fields, 2007, p.32; Hodkinson, 1999, p.149

Tyrtaeus extols how athletic attributes such as speed and strength were most properly utilised in the warrior, in the phalanx (F12, 1-14; Fr 11, 16-17 21-2).

¹³⁴ Xenophon's Ischomachos with the leisure to train himself for manly pursuits like war and agriculture (*Oikonomikos*, 6.10).

Christesen, 2019, p.102

¹³⁵ Christesen, 2012, p.227

¹³⁶ Golden, 2015, p.67; Hodkinson, 1999, p.151; Ducat, 1999, p.54

¹³⁷ Thucydides, 1.10.2.

¹³⁸ Plutarch, *Kimón*, 16.5

track), a small *palestra* for wrestling and an area for practicing the discus and javelin¹³⁹, additionally, despite Plutarch's assertion that Lycurgus had prohibited boxing or *pankration* to prevent Spartans becoming accustomed to asking for quarter¹⁴⁰, there would also have been a boxing ground as the sport had religious significance, sacramentally connecting Spartans to one of their most important deities, the famous boxer Pollux¹⁴¹. The gymnasium would have been a sensory overload for Lykodamos the first time he entered its grounds, the air thick with the smell of sweat and oil, small dust clouds rising over the *dromos* and *palestra*, and bursts of noise rippling as men competed. The gymnastic competitions held as part of the state's celebrations of its gods, in the *Temenos* of Poseidon *Gaiaochos*, at the *Athanaia* honouring Athena *Poliouchos*¹⁴², at the festival of *Ariontia*, in the *Lithesia* Games, the *Parparonia* Games, and in dozens of other Laconian festivals, gave victorious boys a powerful sense of communal identity¹⁴³, as well as the chance to build reputational prestige that could be traded on for future civic advancement.

In athletically training all *paides*, Sparta created a society where in theory prestige was to be earned meritocratically, not bought¹⁴⁴, in practice however, the multiple victories accrued by some youths in different events across several years imply that wealthy families were able to utilise their impressive resources to contravene this athletic meritocracy by paying for their children to receive specialised training. The Classical Greeks knew that high athletic prowess takes sustained training under proper tuition¹⁴⁵, and in this regard Lykodamos was disadvantaged compared to

¹³⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.4; Plutarch, *Agessilaus*, 21.3; *Lycurgus*, 14.3; *Moralia*, 227D; Pausanias, 3.13.7

¹⁴⁰ Plutarch, *Moralia* 189E, 228d; *Lycurgus* 19.4; Philostratos, *Gymnastikos*, 9.58.

Chilon's son was a victor in the boxing at Olympia (Diogenes Laertius, 1.3. 72-73), so if there is any truth to Spartans being banned from competing in the boxing then this ban must have been implemented after this victory.

Hostility to these types of contests was not unique to Spartan culture, Alexander the Great purportedly despised boxers and pankriatists (Plutarch, *Alexander*, 4.6).

¹⁴¹ Homer, *Iliad*, 3.237.

It was even posited by Philostratos that Pollux had invented boxing (*Gymnastikos*, 9)

¹⁴² IG V.I 222 and IG V. I 296

Athena *Poliouchos* was also known as Athena *Chalkioikos*, 'of the bronze house' (Pausanias, 3.17.2-3)

¹⁴³ Golden, 2015, p.57

¹⁴⁴ Christesen, 2012, p.232-3

¹⁴⁵ Plato, *Republic*, 422 b-c; Pindar, *Olympian*, 8.54-66; *Nemean*, 4.93- 6, 6.66-9; *Isthmian*, 4.70-2

those rich enough to hire a specialist athletic trainer, a *Paidotribes*. While *Prima facie* hiring foreign trainers goes against the practice of *Xenelasia*, there is strongly suggestive evidence that elites regularly contracted foreign craftsmen, and specialists; non-Laconian artisans created Kyniska's monuments at Olympia and the statue of the Spartan Olympian Chionis¹⁴⁶. The specialised movement training a *Paidotribes* could provide¹⁴⁷, allowed richer *paides* to train their physical limits to capacities beyond Lykodamos', creating hierarchical distinctions of social prestige born from wealth not meritocratic ability¹⁴⁸. Additionally, the Damonon Stele indicates that wealthy Spartans of proven repute utilised their resources to train their children as their successors, creating athletic dynasties to enhance their reputational prestige¹⁴⁹. Damonon's stele lists and commemorates both his and his son Enymakratidas' athletic and equestrian victories in at least nine different Laconian competitions¹⁵⁰, by listing his own impressive boyhood gymnastic victories in both the *stadion* and *diaulos* in multiple annual competitions (lines 49-65), Damonon's stele indicated a clear athletic trajectory he wanted Enymakratidas to follow that emulated his own¹⁵¹. Enymakratidas' graduation from a single victory in the *stadion* (35-42), to victories in the *stadion*, *diaulos*, and *dolichos* on the same day (44-49), demonstrate an impressive multi-sport ability, and by implication a significant investment of time and resources in Enymakratidas' training. While Enymakratidas' ability implies specialised instruction by a *Paidotribes*, it is possible that Damonon, knowing the lasting prestige athletic victories brought when immortalised in public displays¹⁵², taught Enymakratidas himself, subjecting him to intense training and equally intense punishments. This helicopter parenting can seriously effect children's psychological development, limiting independence and self-regulation of behaviour¹⁵³. Considering this, Lykodamos, not having a

¹⁴⁶ Kyniska's monument (IG V.1.1564a) was made by Apelles (Pausanias, 6.1.6), and Chionis' statue was sculpted by the Athenian Myron (Pausanias, 6.13.2).

Hodkinson, 1999, p. 165

¹⁴⁷ Isocrates, *Antidosis*, 15.181- 5

¹⁴⁸ Knottnerus and Berry, 2002, p.25

¹⁴⁹ Christesen, 2019, p.50, 104 E

¹⁵⁰ IG v.1.213

¹⁵¹ Golden, 1997, p.333

¹⁵² Hodkinson, 1999, p.156

¹⁵³ Schiffrin et al., 2014.

prestigious athletic family reputation to uphold, was able to psychologically and emotionally mature in a healthier way than his richer peers. The downside was that he had no dynastic athletic reputation to trade on or publicly commemorate unlike Damonon whose commemoration of his family's achievements with a stele erected in the precinct of Brazen Athena, communicated that they were a talented bloodline wealthy enough to devote themselves across generations to agonistic endeavours¹⁵⁴, bringing a social currency inaccessible to average families like Lykodamos'.

2.6 Mousike

Mousike permeated almost every aspect of the Spartan *Diaita*, songs were sung in the messes, on campaign, in sacrificial rituals and in ceremonial choral performances. Due to the fragmentary survival of the hymns and poems Spartans sung, and the non-survival of the accompanying musical scores and dance choreography¹⁵⁵, it is currently impossible to reconstruct the choral curricula, but the evidence suggests Spartans had clearly defined views on what songs were appropriate to learn with the works of Spondon the Laconian¹⁵⁶, Thales¹⁵⁷, Alkman and Tyrteaus being suitable because they extolled values congruous with those of the Spartan *Kosmos*. As poetry survives through being repeatedly performed because the subject matter resonates with those performing it¹⁵⁸, the songs Lykodamos learned speak volumes on Spartan cultural practices, with the continued performances of Alkman's poetry from the Archaic period into the Hellenistic presenting problems for Sparta's materially austere reputation. The references in the first Partheneion (FG.1) to precious metals (51–7), prizewinning horses from distant lands (45–51, 58-9), and expensive textiles (64–9), may have been viewed as throwbacks to pre-Lycurgan times, but the continued importance of Alkmans works, especially as part of the ritual ascent of girls to womanhood¹⁵⁹,

¹⁵⁴ Hodkinson, 1999, p.153

¹⁵⁵ Flower, 2018, p.649

¹⁵⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 28.5

¹⁵⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 4.2

¹⁵⁸ Finglass, 2021, p.26

¹⁵⁹ Clay, 1991, p.47

presupposes at least an abstract familiarity with these luxuries, and the lifestyle surrounding them as being socially significant and valuable to Spartan culture¹⁶⁰.

2.7 Civic Engagement, Festivals and Community Solidarity

The Spartan *polis* was more than a physical or territorial entity, it was made up of people with common identity and shared social¹⁶¹, civic and religious bonds that were solidified through festivals and choral performances¹⁶². Community solidarity was closely linked to efficacy in war¹⁶³, and the war dances Lykodamos learned emotionally and psychologically connected him to his peers by forcing them to work harmoniously for a common purpose¹⁶⁴. Sparta's continued social stability rested upon the internalisation of shared beliefs and ideals¹⁶⁵, particularly in times of political crisis when it was important to present a sense of continuity with the past as traditions were reshaped to reflect the state's current socio-political needs¹⁶⁶. Learning the *Hyporcheme* taught Lykodamos to honour the polity¹⁶⁷, songs praising the glorious dead and damning the trembler¹⁶⁸, as well as the Tyrtaean elegies affirmed the moral rectitude of soldierly virtue¹⁶⁹, self-subordination to the state, obedience to the kings and elders¹⁷⁰. The *Promachia* promoted the integrity of Laconian society by exposing Lykodamos to the full spectrum of the polity, free, slave, Spartiate and *Perioikoi*, who were usually barred from directly participating in Spartan festivals, which the *Promachia* made up for by making the *Perioikoi* the centre of the festival¹⁷¹. *Perioikoi* came from across Laconia to witness their children processing garlanded followed by ungarlanded

¹⁶⁰ Finglass, 2021, p.19-20

¹⁶¹ Cartledge, 1998, p.40

¹⁶² Köiv, 2015, p.25, 35; Cartledge, 2002, p.19

¹⁶³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.6; Plato, *Laws*, 636a 795e-6e 832e-3a: Atheneaus, 628e, quoting Socrates 'whomever honours the gods the best with khoroi are the best in war'.

¹⁶⁴ Harley, 1934, p.139; Cartledge, 2002, p.86; Crowley, 2012, p.45, 80; Crowley, 2014, p.128

¹⁶⁵ Ducat, 1999, p.43

¹⁶⁶ Köiv, 2005, p.238

¹⁶⁷ Pindar, cited in Athenaeus, 14.631c

¹⁶⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 21.2

¹⁶⁹ Fr. 10, Fr.11 and Fr.12.15, 23-42

¹⁷⁰ Powell, 1989, p.181

¹⁷¹ Parker, 1989, p.145

youths still in education¹⁷². Garlands were of immense symbolic religious and civic importance to Spartiates, they wore them during pre-battle sacrifices¹⁷³, as they entered battle¹⁷⁴, and were buried in them¹⁷⁵, for Lykodamos processing ungarlanded behind the *Perioikic* children, this was a lesson that the *Perioikoi* were worthy of respect, and a reminder that Lykodamos had yet to earn a garland.

As a *pais*, Lykodamos took his first foray into the ceremonial initiation rites that marked his passage through Sparta's age classes by participating in the choir of youths during the *Gymnopaïdai*¹⁷⁶, a festival dedicated to Apollo that held such a socio-cultural importance that Spartans avoided leaving the city to attend¹⁷⁷. Spartan festivals were not passive civic engagements, they were highly competitive¹⁷⁸, the choruses of the *Gymnopaïdai*, divided into choirs by age, competed against each other in performing traditional boasting songs which emphasized and affirmed the communal focused virtues each age group aspired to, helping define Spartan identity multi-generationally¹⁷⁹, as well as odes of Alkman and Thaletas, and the paeans of Dionysodotos¹⁸⁰. Lykodamos was also competing against his peers for recognition and if he performed particularly well then this could lead to being chosen to lead the choir at the next *Gymnopaïdai*, and being permitted to wear the *Thyreatic* crown which would publicly declare him to be an upcoming prospect to the whole polity¹⁸¹ as well as the distinguished foreigners who came to witness the festival¹⁸². When Lykodamos and his peers competed, singing that they would be 'far mightier' than the choir of men in their prime¹⁸³, and when they wore the *Thyreatic* crowns, they were not just celebrating Sparta's conquest of the Thyreatis¹⁸⁴, they were declaring their understanding of the

¹⁷² Athenaeus, 15.674, Citing Sosibius', tragically non-surviving, *On the Sacrificial Festivals at Lacedaemon*

¹⁷³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.8; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.2

¹⁷⁴ Herodotus, 7.209, Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13

¹⁷⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 27.1

¹⁷⁶ Scanlon, 2002, p. 82–83

¹⁷⁷ Pausanias, 3.11.9; Thucydides, 5.82

¹⁷⁸ Clay, 1991, p.58

¹⁷⁹ Flower, 2018, p.653

¹⁸⁰ Athenaeus, 15.678bc, citing Sosibius'

¹⁸¹ Agesilaus was an avid watcher of choruses and contests (Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 21.7).

¹⁸² Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 29.2

¹⁸³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 21

¹⁸⁴ Sosibius, FGrH 595 F 5

valorous legacy they were beneficiaries of. How many choirs competed in this festival is the subject of considerable debate, Plutarch's assertion that Sparta had three choirs corresponding to the three major age classes, boys, men, and elders respectively¹⁸⁵, has been used by several modern commentators to assert that there is a lacuna in Athenaeus' description of the choruses, and that Sosibius' reference to the third choir has become lost over time as his *On the Sacrifices in Lakedaimon* was utilised and copied by later authors¹⁸⁶. However when assessing the propriety of this lacuna it is important to remember that Plutarch's *Lycurgus* does not refer to the *Gymnopaïdai* specifically, only to Spartan festivals generally which makes the appropriateness of utilising his account to attest to the existence of a third choir of elders at the *Gymnopaïdai* questionable. It is beyond this thesis' capacity to explore the intricacies of this debate in depth, but the evidence has been comprehensively examined by Bayliss whose analysis reveals a simple solution that avoids any major manipulation of Athenaeus' text¹⁸⁷. Bayliss's analysis, in arguing for only a minor textual amendment, takes the text back to its simplest form and shows that Sosibius' account describes the choirs of the *Gymnopaïdai* in temporal terms not spatial terms as has previously been argued, the choir of boys competing from dawn and the men's choir competing from midday. This reading presents the choral competitions of the *Gymnopaïdai* as feat of endurance under the baking sun at hottest time of year which is congruous with how Plato described the festival and Xenophon's account of the boy's and men's choruses performing at different points during the day¹⁸⁸.

The Spartan religious calendar also featured two other major festivals that were thematically important to Lykodamos' socio-religious experiences during his education, the *Karneia*, dedicated to Apollo *Karneios*, was of such immense importance to Spartan civic and religious identity that it prevented the pursuit of

¹⁸⁵ *Lycurgus*, 21.2

¹⁸⁶ Pettersson (1992, p.43), and Flower (2009, p.220), have both argued for the existence of this third choir as has Ducat who asserts it's existence on the basis of Sosibius' description of where the choruses were situated, believing that as one choir was on the left, and another was in the front, there must be a third choir for the latter to be in front of (2006c, 269).

¹⁸⁷ Bayliss, *BNJ* 595 F5

¹⁸⁸ Plato, *Laws*, 633c; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 6.4.16

military policies¹⁸⁹. As a representation in miniature of military campaigns this was Lykodamos' first taste of what soldierly life would be like, the Spartans messing in turn and conducting all activities according to the instructions of the herald/crier¹⁹⁰. The *Karneia* was not all militarily focussed however, it was a prestigious stage for foreign and domestic poets to compete¹⁹¹, and would consequently be one of the few sources of new entertainment in Lykodamos' civic experience, additionally there was a feast and a ceremonial race meant to curry Apollo's favour for the upcoming harvest. Five bachelors were chosen as *Karneatai*, one from each Spartan village¹⁹², and would chase a chosen youth in a mimetic representation of hunting, if the youth was captured then it was a good omen for the upcoming harvest. The *Hyakinthia*, held at the Amyklaion and dedicated to Apollo *Hyakinthus*, honouring both him and his heroized *eromenos Hyakinthus*¹⁹³, was another event so important that Spartans refused to march once it had begun¹⁹⁴. The festival's apotheosizing of *Hyakinthus* played out over the festival's three days¹⁹⁵, on the first, Lykodamos, his peers and the citizenry made plain sacrifices and ate sparingly, but on the second he was part of an impressive procession from the theatre to the sanctuary, with boys on horseback and girls in two horse chariots and wicker carriages/wagons (*Kannathra*)¹⁹⁶, parading in the theatre and the procession while the men sang the *paean* to Apollo¹⁹⁷. The festival's commemoration of an inversion of the natural order, the apotheosizing of the dead, was reflected in an inversion of the natural social order in Sparta, Spartiate families hosted their Helots and foreigners in a

¹⁸⁹ Spartan military expeditions were restricted by their cultural obligations to the *Karneia* in 480 BC (Herodotus, 7.206), and in 419 BC (Thucydides, 7.540)

¹⁹⁰ Athenaeus, 5.19

¹⁹¹ Cartledge, 2001, p.111

The poet Terperander of Lesbos was believed to have been the victor at the inaugural *Karneia* in 676 BC (Athenaeus, 635e; Hellenikanikos of Lesbos, *FGrH*. 4 F 85; Sosibios, *FGrH*. 595 F 3)

¹⁹² Bachelors were not always permitted at festivals as avowed bachelorism was seen as a crime against the state (Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.1-3). Their inclusion in the *Karneia* implies that they had only recently reached marriageable age and had yet to face any social sanctions for refusing to marry (see chapter 4.7 on marriage in Sparta)

¹⁹³ Pausanias, 3.19.3; Plutarch, *Numa*, 4.5

¹⁹⁴ Herodotus, 9.7

¹⁹⁵ Athenaeus, 4.139d-f, 5.17

¹⁹⁶ Athenaeus 4.139 f; Xenophon, *Agesilaus*. 8.7; Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 19.5

¹⁹⁷ The importance of this aspect is shown very clearly by Agesilaus' haste to return home to participate in the festival (Xenophon, *Hellenika*. 4.5.11; *Agesilaus*. 2.17)

Kopis, a feast, held in the god's precinct¹⁹⁸. This was a rare moment of social harmony, but Lykodamos, in not being wealthy enough to own horses, and forced to walk in the procession, his sisters forced to travel in plain wagons while the rich rode in elaborately decorated *Kannathra*, would be starkly aware of the vast gulfs between the rich and poor. The *Kopis*, paid for out of the citizens own pockets, had no restrictions on luxury foodstuffs¹⁹⁹, and Lykodamos' family table, paling in comparison to those of the rich would be a painfully public reminder the inequities rife in the Spartan *Kosmos*.

¹⁹⁸ Slaves were only very rarely admitted to cult observances (Athenaeus, 4.138F-139f; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 28.4)

¹⁹⁹ goat's meat, wheaten bread, wild vegetables, lupine, and green cheese, slices of stomach and sausages, and as snacks dried figs, white and green beans (Polemon, Fr.86)

Chapter Three; *Paidiskoi*, Adolescence in Sparta

3.1 Controlling Independence

The transition from *pais* to *paidiska*, at around age 12²⁰⁰, was marked by increasingly strict behavioural standards²⁰¹, the state dealing with the adolescent propensity for risk taking and contentiousness by directing rebellious attitudes into purposes promoting obedience²⁰², deceptive cunning²⁰³, austerity, and competitiveness. Lykodamos' education became ascetic, he was forced to shave his head²⁰⁴, was inured to pain and privation²⁰⁵, and his physicality was strictly monitored²⁰⁶. Lykodamos was permitted one cloak a year and permitted to bathe or oil his skin only on special occasions such as festivals and ceremonies, which, when combined with his shorn hair, would visually distinguish him from all other social groups in Sparta. The state manipulated the increased anxieties over social standing that characterise adolescence to negatively reinforce Lykodamos' obedience and conformity²⁰⁷, teaching him not to desire reward²⁰⁸, but to fear state reprisal and social exclusion²⁰⁹. The inclination to conform is correlated to the cohesiveness of group affiliations²¹⁰, and Lykodamos had built exceptionally cohesive bonds throughout his education²¹¹, making him highly susceptible to conforming purely from fear of reputational damage²¹², something Spartans were highly sensitive to, as can be seen in how the Ephor Sthenelaidas, during the 431 BC

²⁰⁰ Neither Xenophon nor Plutarch give a firm age range for the transition from boyhood to youth. As this transition, as detailed by Xenophon, and the increased behavioural expectations that came with it, corresponds to the changes evident in young boys during adolescence, this thesis has chosen the age of 12 as this age is considered to be a common point when boys enter a new physical and psychological developmental stage of life.

²⁰¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 3

²⁰² Plutarch, *Moralia*, 221B, 237A; *Lycurgus*, 16.10

Bradford, 2004, p.23; Ducat, 2006c, p.164; Humble, 2006, p.225; Rebellon et al, 2018, p.1464; Curry, and Youngblade, 2006.

²⁰³ Knottnerus and Berry, 2002, p.11.

²⁰⁴ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16.6

²⁰⁵ Thucydides, 2.39; Knottnerus and Berry, 2002, p.16

²⁰⁶ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4.8–9

²⁰⁷ Rebellon et al, 2018, p.1464; Coleman, 1961; Rodkin et al, 2013; Crisp and Turner, 2014, p.123, 125

²⁰⁸ Redfield, 1977, p.156

²⁰⁹ Humble, 2006, p.229

²¹⁰ Crisp and Turner, 2014, p.125-6

²¹¹ Ducat, 2006c, p.124

²¹² Crisp and Turner, 2014, p.122-123

congress at Sparta²¹³, was able to manipulate the *Apella's* fears of being seen as unmasculine and cowardly by forcing them to vote openly instead of by blind acclamation. The state policed Lykodamos' adolescent predilection for contention by forcing him to walk with his eyes down, his hands in his tunic²¹⁴, and to defer to all older Spartiates²¹⁵. From now on he was given sparing rations, and, removed from his home to live communally with his troop, could not supplement his diet at home, having to steal to make up the deficit²¹⁶. If caught he was punished, not for the theft but for being caught, the rationale for this, at least according to Plutarch, was that learning to steal without getting caught would teach young boys how to be stealthy in war, although this rationale is questionable, the circumstances where stealth was beneficial to hoplites are unclear, it would be useful for an army on the run, or for night attacks but such tactics were uncommon in hoplite engagements. In practice, the encouragement to steal taught Spartan boys that it was only dishonourable to break the rules if they did so unsuccessfully but breaking them successfully brought reputational prestige. When Lykodamos brought back the fruits of his thefts to his troop, his successful risk taking increased his sociometric popularity as a leader capable of initiative and providing for needs of the group²¹⁷. Lykodamos' exploits in the upbringing, his daring, cunning and mettle, became the subject of songs made up by Spartan girls praising him in front of the whole polity²¹⁸, meaning that it was in his interests to successfully break the rules to increase his attractiveness as a mate²¹⁹.

3.2 Sparta's Institutional Pederastic Relationships

So far, this thesis has not mentioned Spartan sexuality, partly because there exist no accounts of what Spartans thought about their sexuality and partly due to the

²¹³ Thucydides, 1.79-85

²¹⁴ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 3

²¹⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

²¹⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16-7; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.3-8; also found in Ephorus (70F 149) and quoted by Strabo (10.4)

²¹⁷ Rebellon et al, 2018, p.1464

²¹⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 14

²¹⁹ Data gathered in multiple studies conducted across six continents and from dozens of cultures has demonstrated a strong correlation between social status and female assessment of the attractiveness of prospective male mates (David, 1989).

moral difficulties of avoiding presentism or moral judgement when addressing the pederastic *erastes-eromenos* dynamic. This thesis will try and approach the subject from a clinical perspective but will do so in admittance that this may not be entirely successful.

As a *Paidiska*, Lykodamos could become a junior partner in a pederastic relationship with an older Spartiate *Hebon*, a relationship that Xenophon took great pains to stress was one of moral rectitude compared to practices in other *poleis*, Spartans associating with boys purely to educate them and not for sexual reasons²²⁰, as opposed to living together like a married couple as Xenophon relates was the Boeotian custom. His presentation was authoritative enough to be accepted by later authors, but I am not convinced²²¹, it is evident that that adult Spartiates continued to have homoerotic relationships beyond the *erastes-eromenos* dynamic especially in elite circles and there is no reason to believe these were non-sexual, morally didactic arrangements. Anaxibios and the regent Pausanias both had boyfriends²²², and in practice many Spartans would have been bisexual²²³, being married and producing issue with their wives while also having homosexual relationships. The Spartan state's limiting of the heterosexual activities of the citizenry has led Lupi to argue that Spartans were barred from heterosexual liaisons until they were 30²²⁴, only engaging in homosexual intercourse until then. This argument is incongruous with men marrying at around age 25 and clandestinely coupling with their wives until cohabitating. Lupi's argument also ignores the military obligations laid upon Spartans aged 20-30, being on active military service, serving as *Hippeis*, and being used as shock troops²²⁵. If Lupi were correct, then Sparta was risking entire breeding generations before they could produce children, hardly a practice designed to maintain their military efficacy. The transition from homosexual to heterosexual relationships was clearly difficult, as can be seen in

²²⁰ Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.4; *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.12-3

²²¹ Cicero, *Republic*, 4.4

²²² Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 4.8.38-9; Thucydides, 1.132.5-133

²²³ Agesilaus was enamoured by the beauty of Spithridates' son, the fact he had a wife did not prevent him expressing his homosexual desires (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 4.1.6)

²²⁴ Lupi, 2000

²²⁵ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.4.32, 3.4.25, 4.5.14, 5.4.40; *Agesilaus*, 1.31

how efforts were taken to masculinise newlywed women by cutting their hair short and dressing them in the clothes of male Spartan youths for the wedding night, but it is not evident that Spartans were barred from heterosexual relationships while involved in the *erastes-eromenos* dynamic, and it is for these reasons that I believe Lupi's argument fails.

There was an unusual degree of institutionalism to the *erastes-eromenos* relationship²²⁶, it was meant to be an assessment of a boy's suitability for membership in their lover's *Syssition*²²⁷, meaning *Hebontes* were to choose boys based upon their character²²⁸, or be judged poorly by their mess mates²²⁹. In theory, the upbringing meritocratically equalised the citizenry, however the educational system was replete with the same inequalities that divided Spartan society²³⁰, hereditary privilege²³¹, wealth, age and social/manly prestige²³². In practice these inequities meant that wealthy boys and those from families with a history of prestigious equestrian victories, such as Damonon's son Enymakratidas, had an advantage²³³, being highly sought after partners who brought prestige to their *erastes* and his mess by association. It is very possible that as Lykodamos was on the lower end of the economic spectrum he was not even a viable prospect, which could potentially limit his future mess applications as the more desirable messes, those filled with renowned equestrians, illustrious athletes and decorated *Strategoï*, had already chosen their preferred new messmates from the rich and prestigious youths. Fortunately for Lykodamos, he had proven his worth during his education, his daring and cunning through his exploits in stealing, his mettle through his victories in combats with his peers, and his athleticism in his youthful gymnastics, and is consequently a desirable choice as an *eromenos*. This made Lykodamos the junior partner in a vertical, but mutually beneficial²³⁴, relationship

²²⁶ Luginbill, 2009, p.49

²²⁷ Fisher, 1989, p.33; Cartledge, 1987, p.27-28

²²⁸ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.13

²²⁹ Davies, 2018, p.718

²³⁰ Figueira, 2018, p.835

²³¹ Cartledge, 1987, p. 18

²³² Cartledge, 2006b, p.74

²³³ Kennell, 2013, p.24

²³⁴ Cartledge, 1987, p.142; Ducat, 2006c, p.165-6

between superior and inferior²³⁵, becoming a glorified errand boy, securing his lover's necessities as he was barred from entering or conducting his own transactions in the *Agora*²³⁶. What these necessities is unclear, but it is possible to conjecture based on needs that would arise in the course of men living their daily lives, Lykodamos' *erastes* would need clothing, footwear, javelins, combs, and oils for his hair²³⁷. As there is no indication that the *erastes-eromenos* relationship ended when the *erastes* married at around age 25, Lykodamos would have continued performing this duty alongside his lover's new bride²³⁸, possibly becoming quite close with his lover's new and growing family. If this is true then this adds a hitherto unexplored dynamic to the Spartan household as the wider implication is that the bonds built in the *erastes-eromenoi* relationship were not limited to that relationship but potentially crossed over into the familial relationships of each partner, creating long term social connections.

3.3 The Spartan Cadets

One aspect of Lykodamos' education that is unfortunately downplayed as a historical oddity is the use of humour as an educational tool encouraging self-control and emotional stability. The ability to laugh and be laughed was an important part of Lykodamos' early experiences, not just in the upbringing, there was even a small shrine to *Gelos* (laughter) dedicated by Lycurgus showing how important it was to balance hardship with joy²³⁹. Spartans were well known for their humour and wit²⁴⁰, and there is a long-standing connection between dark humour and the hardship of military training, but the use of humour in Sparta is in my view more orientated towards promoting self-improvement and mastery of emotion. Spartans were especially sensitive to public opinion, mockery²⁴¹, and the

²³⁵ Millett, 1990, p.20

²³⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 18.8-9, 25.1

²³⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16

²³⁸ Hodkinson, 1983, p.109

²³⁹ Sosibius FGrH 595 F 19; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 25.4; *Kleomenes*, 9

²⁴⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12.4, 20.5-6

²⁴¹ David, 1989, p.16

Social and peer mockery could be highly influential in motivating Spartans, the shame being enough for Demaratus to question his own legitimacy and go into exile (Herodotus, 6.67). The mockery that Antalcidas received after a failed diplomatic mission was enough to drive him to suicide by starvation (Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, 22.6-7).

corrective power of laughter²⁴², Lykodamos' foibles and failures had been the subject of Spartan girl's songs since he was 7, and if he wanted to build an upright public reputation, he needed to use this mockery to improve himself. Mastering his emotion would allow Lykodamos to keep his cool in high stress situations, when he was being quizzed in the messes he was permitted to cry off if he felt he was being mocked or questioned too harshly²⁴³, but if he headed off his interrogation with a witty, self-deprecating remark he demonstrated his ability to handle pressure, an important skill for a soldier. Using humour to deflect personal criticism or mask insecurity was deeply entrenched in the Spartan experience, a prime example of this is when Brasidas headed off potential accusations of *Rhipsaspia* by declaring that his shield had betrayed him²⁴⁴. By using laughter to disguise his fears and to own his mistakes through self-depreciation²⁴⁵, Lykodamos was able to lessen the sting of any mockery he suffered and demonstrate his self-mastery.

3.4 Military Drill, Boy's Combats

The ancient impression of the Spartan education system was that it was a militarily motivated institution designed to forge perfect citizen soldiers, the very basis of Sparta's so called militaristic society²⁴⁶. However, it was not until Lykodamos turned 12 that he received specialised military instruction, implying that the state acknowledged how detrimental extreme physical training can be to prepubescent bodies²⁴⁷. What exactly this involved is difficult to say, beyond training in surefootedness across difficult terrain by going barefoot²⁴⁸, there are no extant accounts detailing specialised military training. Cartledge has theorised Spartans began hoplite drills at around age 20²⁴⁹, however this would be dangerously

²⁴² David, 1989, p.5

²⁴³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12.6-7

²⁴⁴ Brasidas' bravery was so impressive that instead of being shamed for losing his shield, he was honoured for not only how he reacted but for the circumstances in which he lost the shield (Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 219D2; Diodorus, 12.62.5).

²⁴⁵ Richer, 1999, p.96

²⁴⁶ Plato, *Laws*, 2.666e, 2.1271b; Aristotle. *Politics*, 2.1271b, 7.15, 1334a-b, 1270b24-25; Xenophon, *Hellenika* 7.1.8; Isocrates, *Discourses*, 11; *Busiris*, 17-18; *Archidamos*, 81

²⁴⁷ Even today it is not recommended for children under 16 to engage in serious strength and conditioning training due to the presence of still maturing growth plates.

²⁴⁸ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.3-8; Thucydides, 3.22.2; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16; also mentioned by Ephorus, as cited by Strabo (10.4)

²⁴⁹ Cartledge, 1987, p.44

inefficient as Spartans entered active military service at 20²⁵⁰. Hoplites in other Classical *poleis* did predominantly serve without specialised training, but the Spartan's skilled manoeuvrability²⁵¹, ability to march calmly without their line slanting towards the right²⁵², and their trademark counter march²⁵³, heavily imply an organised and standardised training regime that began before men started active service. The dearth of information on Spartan military training might be rooted in the Spartan practice of *Xenelasia*²⁵⁴, a *nomos* that was ostensibly meant to keep Sparta strong by preventing foreign ideas undermining the constitution²⁵⁵. However, as the *nomos* is first attested to by Thucydides²⁵⁶, it is more likely in my opinion that the practice was born out of practical military concerns, a desire to keep outsiders, especially pro-Athenian outsiders who had been made exile because of Spartan military successes like Thucydides, from knowing their true numbers or the nature of their training in detail²⁵⁷.

As the strength of the Phalanx came from solidarity and co-ordination, the majority of Lykodomos' training would have come from those educational pursuits that promoted such skills. His whole education had been an instruction in how to give and take orders²⁵⁸, but it was his choral training that had taught him mental and physical dexterity through balancing rhythmic coordination with verbal narrative, music, and complex choreography²⁵⁹. As a massed gymnastic exercise his choral experiences physically prepared him for the rigours of combat, but his combat fitness would also have been greatly influenced by his athletic training²⁶⁰.

Lykodomos had been training and competing in athletics for years, honing his skills in disciplines which sharpened his eyes/aim (the javelin/discus), his anaerobic ability (sprinting), and his ability to take physical punishment (wrestling/boxing). His

²⁵⁰ Willetts, 1980, p.276

²⁵¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.5

²⁵² Thucydides, 5.71

²⁵³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11.8-9 8

²⁵⁴ Papanikos, 2020, p.237

²⁵⁵ Becker and Smelo, 1931, p.355

Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 9.8

²⁵⁶ 1.144, 2.39

²⁵⁷ Powell, 1989, p.182-3

²⁵⁸ Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 215D, 211C; *Agesilaus*, 20.2; Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 1.3.1,

²⁵⁹ Wilson, 2003, p.164

²⁶⁰ French, 1997, p.255

experiences of hunting had also prepared him for war²⁶¹, teaching him patience, observational skills, and focus. While it is almost certain that Lykodamos underwent some type of formation drills and mock combat training, the only attested activity that comes close to this is a competitive team sport pitting *Agelai* packs against each other on a small island on the Eurotas called the *Platanistas*, a practice that may or may not have Classical pedigree²⁶². The contest involved two *Agelai* under an *Eiren* chosen to lead because he was their best fighter²⁶³, working to push the other unit into the water. By replicating the back and forth and the physical crush of opposing formations attempting to force each other to lose their integrity, this sport was fitting practice for the rigours of phalanx-on-phalanx combat. The sport put the leadership ability, tactical acumen, and ability to inspire obedience of the *Eiren* on display to the whole polity, if his team failed the responsibility fell on him, but if they succeeded then he was marked as worthy for being appointed an officer when he attained his full citizenship.

3.5 Communal Living and The Messes; Social Dynamics at Work

To accustom Lykodamos to military life he was removed from his family home to live communally with his pack mates under a hierarchy of authority analogous to that soldiers lived under on campaign²⁶⁴, the *Eiren* and the *Melleirens* were his immediate officers, above them the *Paidonomos*, who oversaw the training and conduct of all Spartan youths just like the *Strategos* oversaw the individual formations under his command, above him were the Ephors and the state, the final authority for all Spartans. Each of his peers were assigned tasks²⁶⁵, his burlier peers fetched firewood and the slighter ones stole vegetables from the gardens of nearby

²⁶¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1256b

²⁶² These battles are only explicitly referred to by Pausanias (3.4.10), but Ducat speculates that Plato was alluding to these contests (2006c, p.209), or an earlier manifestation of them in *Laws*, 1.633b7. If that is the case then these contests not only have a Classical pedigree but are one of the more enduring traditions in the Spartan *Kosmos*, the absence of any corroborating attestations in other Classical sources does however entail caution, as without independent corroboration, this thesis's assertion that these contests were a common feature of the quotidian Classical Spartan experience is admittedly speculative.

²⁶³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16.9-10; 17.4

²⁶⁴ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16

²⁶⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 17; *Moralia*, 237E

oikoi. The *Eiren* questioned Lykodamos on the virtues of the citizenry²⁶⁶, teaching him how to critically evaluate people's characters, and cementing the rectitude of maintaining a positive reputation. Answering unsatisfactorily was punished with the token gesture of being bitten on the thumb by the *Eiren*, a gentle encouragement to improve one's verbal dexterity with no tangible damage to a boy's wider social prestige in the city. While Lykodamos had visited the messes previously²⁶⁷, he became directly involved around 12, witnessing the proper way Spartan men interacted through his frequenting his lover's *Syssition*²⁶⁸. The peers questioned him on the character of various citizens, just as his *Eiren* did, but now his public reputation and suitability for joining this *Syssition* depended on his responses. The belligerence of his interrogation was policed only by the most senior mess member and was unlikely to have been egalitarian, the culture of competition encouraged jealous rivalries²⁶⁹, making it eminently plausible that a peer who had issues with his *erastes*, or one of his family took the opportunity to make Lykodamos suffer. Lykodamos' *erastes* was powerless to intercede without risking mockery by his peers, who would derisively ask him if he was going to fight his lover's battles in combat too. If Lykodamos did not stand on his own merit his suitability for future mess membership was at stake.

3.6 From Boys to Men; Graduating the Spartan Education System.

If Lykodamos successfully completed the state education system then he ascended from the ranks of the *paidiskoi* to the *Hebontes* and in recognition of his success he became part of Sparta's warrior assembly²⁷⁰, the *Apella*, he was politically enfranchised and was obligated to perform military service until he was 60 years old²⁷¹. His graduation was not marked by any formal grading but was symbolically

²⁶⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 18

²⁶⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 3

²⁶⁸ Hodkinson, 2018, p.90

²⁶⁹ Cartledge, 1987, p.284; 1988, p.232

Plutarch, *Lysander*, 21; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.4; Thucydides, 4.81.1, 4.108.7, 4.132.3; Herodotus, 6.61

²⁷⁰ Luginbill, 2009, p.30

²⁷¹ Agesilaus elects not to lead a campaign and tells the Ephorate that he has now served for more than forty years and men such as that are not bound to service (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 5.4.13)

marked by the ritual of the whips²⁷², at the Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia. The Goddess Artemis was the patroness of Spartan boys in training²⁷³, and her *hieron* was the site of contests for youths right up into the period of Roman rule. Fortuitously for modern study, the *hieron* of Artemis is one of the few sites to have been extensively excavated, during the annual campaigns of 1906 – 1910 by the British School at Athens²⁷⁴, the findings of which reveal that the cult was an important aspect of the Spartan *Kosmos* from the early Archaic period, and continued to be so into Roman Imperial rule, with over 100,000 lead votives, as well as numerous ivory and bronze dedications, being found during the excavations²⁷⁵. The site itself and the rituals performed therein provide the most securely attestable evidence that Spartan religious observances and rites were not fixed in time, the earliest temple and altar being built no earlier than 700 BC and undergoing a series of alterations and rebuilds in response to changing societal attitudes and the ravages of nature²⁷⁶. Built only a kilometre away from the Spartan civic centre on the eastern shore of the Eurotas it suffered severe flood damage and was rebuilt in the 6th century²⁷⁷, shoring up the nearby river bank and raising the level of the sanctuary through the deposition of a thick layer of sand, which in sealing the offerings and artifacts of the Archaic temple has allowed for a level of artifact survival that is unprecedented elsewhere in Sparta including Amber dedications, a rarity at any Hellenic site²⁷⁸, tentatively dated to the late 9th century, which speak to early Sparta's links to the near east and to the north in the Balkans. For a Classical *paidiska* like Lykodamos, the ritual of the whips was an ordeal assessing his internalisation of Spartan virtues and behavioural standards, a test of whether he was willing to endure pain and hardship for the ultimate reward,

²⁷² Davies, 2018, p.717; Kennell, 2013, p.1; Luginbill, 2009, p.32

²⁷³ Pausanias, 3.11.9; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 6.4.16; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 21.2; Pollux, *Omomasticon*, 4.107

²⁷⁴ Muskett, 2014, p.159; Bosanquet, 1905/1906.

²⁷⁵ Muskett, 2014, p.164

²⁷⁶ Catling, 1998, p.22-3

²⁷⁷ Bosanquet et al, 1905/1906, p.298; Dawkins et al, 1909/1910 p.61; Muskett, 2014, p.164; Dawkins et al, 1908, p.27; Johannessen, 2021, p55

Pausanias noted that the Eurotas was liable to flooding in ancient times (3.13.8).

²⁷⁸ Dawkins et al, 1907, p.73

reputational prestige and status in the eyes of the polity he was about to join²⁷⁹. Lykodamos was likely nervous as he awaited his chance to prove his worthiness for Spartiate status. The stone temple was relatively small, only 16m × 7m²⁸⁰, so it is likely that Lykodamos had to wait in the sacred precinct, listening to whips crack and the exclamations of the crowd. He was not just competing against his own self-preservation instincts, he was competing against his pack mates to steal as many cheeses as possible, the more he stole, the more he endured the whips, the greater his fighting spirit. The cheese was laid out on the altar, and lined up in front of it, a team of whip wielding *Hebontes* ready to lash him as he tested his daring²⁸¹. It behooved him to steal as many cheeses as he could, but this was not about recklessly endangering himself, he would earn no extra glory from having his back stripped raw by the lash, it was about showing his willingness to endure pain if he had to. The rite was a grand spectacle held in front of the whole citizenry, not least of all his family and his *erastes*, whose reputations in the eyes of their peers depended on Lykodamos' performance. Lykodamos' bravery proved that his *erastes* had accurately judged his character, and that his family had fulfilled their duty in producing another son of Lycurgus who would defend the state when called and strive for the good of the *polis*.

²⁷⁹ Flower, 2018, p.649

²⁸⁰ Cavanagh, 2018, p.128

²⁸¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.9

Chapter Four; *Hebontes*, Entry into Society

4.1 The Aesthetics of Equality

At around 18/20, Lykodamos became a *Hebon*, he was accepted into the polity and granted political rights but not yet considered a *homoioi*²⁸²; he would only receive full enfranchisement when he turned 30. In recognition of this transition, he was permitted to adopt the Spartan costume, the distinctive long hair²⁸³, red cloak²⁸⁴, and the shaved upper lip²⁸⁵, accoutrements that visually defined his status²⁸⁶, and aesthetically homogenised him with his peers, disguising their socio-economic inequities to prop up the veneer of socio-political equality²⁸⁷. The murex used to dye Spartan cloaks came from the Laconian gulf²⁸⁸, but richer Spartans could visually distinguish themselves through wearing more vibrantly coloured cloaks dyed with the more expensive Sardinian dye²⁸⁹, meaning that the Spartan polity were not as visually homogeneous as the adoption of a common uniform implies.

4.2 *Krypteia*

Lykodamos' education had tested his physical and mental suitability for specific duties, one of these was the *Krypteia*, the history and organisation of which has become one of the most distorted and disputed aspects of Spartan history²⁹⁰. How youth adults were chosen as *Kryptai* is unclear, it is possible that only those who had proven to be the most intelligent and resourceful were chosen as a test of their suitability for future leadership positions²⁹¹. The duties of the *Kryptai*, spying on and

²⁸² David, 1992b, p.13

²⁸³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11.3; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.1-2.

Cartledge, 1977, p.15; 2006b, p.135

²⁸⁴ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11.3

²⁸⁵ Plutarch, *Kleomenes*, 9.3

²⁸⁶ Cartledge, 2006b, p.135; David, 1992b, p.12

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1367a 26

²⁸⁷ Hunt, 1998, p.159; David, 1992, p.21

²⁸⁸ Pausanias, 3.21.6

Gallou, 2019a

²⁸⁹ An Athenian officer's Sardinian dyed tunic distinguishes him due to its exceptional brightness

(Aristophanes, *Peace*, 1172–6).

²⁹⁰ Nafissi, 2018, p.109.p.182 Ducat, 2006c, p.281

²⁹¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 28.3

Richer, 2018, p.109, 530

dispatching the strongest and most dissentious Helots²⁹², would require a concrete internalisation of the ideological separation of Spartan and Helot, free and servile, a fully committed adoption of the cultural attitude of Spartan superiority. Not every Spartan will have possessed this mindset, for many Spartans, their wetnurse, as the person who saw to their daily needs, watched over them as they played and cared for them when they were sick, was a major maternal influence during their early formative years and held a special place in their household²⁹³. If Lykodamos' fondness for his nurse had not been trained out of him during his education, then it is likely that no matter how much he had distinguished himself during his education, he would have been seen as ill-suited for the *Krypteia*. Conversely if he had fully internalised the idea of his own inherent superiority to the Helots, then the daring he had shown in his childhood exploits in thievery, and the fighting prowess he had shown against his peers, made him a strong candidate for inclusion. How Lykodamos would be recruited is not mentioned in any extant text, but the secretive nature of the organisation implies that he would be approached clandestinely, possibly by the captain of the *Krypteia*²⁹⁴. Whether or not he was permitted to decline is unknown, this type of service was not obligatory, and it is likely that there were many others who would gladly take his place if he declined. Being chosen would remove Lykodamos from active military service for his tenure as a *Kryptes*, being sent out into Laconian wilderness, with only his dagger and limited supplies, to hide by day and murder Helots by night. Being out in the wilderness forced Lykodamos to face and overcome *pathēmata*, abstracts of physical, psychological and mental states that it was his duty as a Spartan to master²⁹⁵. Some of these abstracts were even accorded sacred status, giving them a religious dimension that heightened the importance of mastering them. Lykodamos had to master *Phobos*, fear, for fear is what unmans a soldier, by mastering *Phobos*, he also went a long way to mastering *Thanatos*, Death²⁹⁶, learning that it was not

²⁹² Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 28.2-3

²⁹³ See chapter 1.6, The Slave and the Valued Attendant

²⁹⁴ In the 3rd century at least the *Krypteia* was a military unit with an appointed captain (Plutarch, *Kleomenes*, 28)

²⁹⁵ Richer, 2018, p.785

²⁹⁶ Plutarch, *Kleomenes*, 9.1; Pausanias, 3.18.1

that he died that mattered but that he faced his end manfully in the service of his state. In hiding out, living off the land, Lykodamos had to overcome *Hypnos*, sleep²⁹⁷, *Dipsa*, thirst²⁹⁸, and *Limos*, hunger²⁹⁹, to ensure that he remained hidden and undiscovered and that his actions were motivated by duty, not by being a slave to his bodily needs. Lykodamos was permitted to be accompanied by an attendant, most likely the *mothax* who had been sponsored by his family as his companion during his state education, who would, as his only frequent human contact, be a vital psychological safeguard against Lykodamos losing his mind from solitude. However as only rich families could sponsor *mothakes*, if Lykodamos was made a *Kryptes* he would have been denied such support. This might actually have been a disqualifying factor when he was considered for recruitment, and if this was the case, then the implication is that only the rich could become part of the *Krypteiai*, average Spartans not even being considered, regardless of their virtues.

4.3 *Hippeis*

As a *Hebon*, Lykodamos could be selected for service in the *Hippeis* by one of the *Hippagretai*, the three men over thirty³⁰⁰, who in recognition their own service had been selected for command by the Ephors. Each selected 100 *Hebontes* to become *Hippeis* and made their reasons for selecting these over every other *Hebon* publicly known. Although exactly what the qualifying criteria were is not related by any extant source, there were a wealth of physical qualities and character traits that it is reasonable to conjecture were influential in the selection process. Defending the king in battle meant a *Hippeus* needed to be at peak physicality³⁰¹, which Lykodamos would have proven through his combats against his *Agele* mates as well as in the gymnasium and in athletic competitions. As another primary duty was carrying out the dictates of the Ephorate, delivering dispatches³⁰², and serving as ceremonial guards for honoured guests³⁰³, Lykodamos also needed to have proven

²⁹⁷ Pausanias, 3.18.1

²⁹⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 2.1–3; *Moralia*, 232A

²⁹⁹ Callisthenes, *FGrHist*, 124; Athenaeus, 10.452B; Polyaeus, *Stratagems of War*, 2.15

³⁰⁰ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4.3

³⁰¹ Ducat, 2006c, p.18

³⁰² Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 3.3.8-9

³⁰³ Herodotus, 8.124

his fastidious obedience to the state to warrant selection. However, as there was nothing preventing any of the *Hippagretai* making selections based upon pre-existing familial, social, political or sexual connections³⁰⁴, meaning that no matter how virtuous or qualified Lykodamos was, he may never actually have had much chance at being selected. Not being selected, even if this was because of nepotism in the selection process, was an affront to Lykodamos' honour, and how he reacted to this would be a conspicuous demonstration of his strength of character and his worthiness for Spartiate status. Willingly accepting his rejection would call his character into question, just as Pedaritos' smiling demeanor did after he failed to be selected for the *Hippeis*³⁰⁵. It was only through declaring his gladness that the city had 300 better men than himself, complimenting the virtues of his peers while depreciating himself, that Pedaritos deflected the Ephor's criticism. If Lykodamos reacted similarly to his own rejection using self-depreciating humor as an adaptive ego response to cope with his anxieties, then he demonstrated his intelligence as well as his desires to use his rejection as motivation for self-improvement. Lykodamos' failure to be selected for the *Hippeis* might have been a crushing blow to his sense of self-worth and public reputation, but he would have another chance the next year when the new board of Ephors selected the new *Hippagretai*, a measure that allowed for the annual recognition of the merits of the most outstanding *Hebontes*³⁰⁶. Additionally, as *Hebontes* who had not been selected were encouraged to watch their more fortunate comrades for any indications of overeating, undertraining or lapses in moral decorum³⁰⁷, Lykodamos could replace any existing *Hippeus* found wanting, especially if he bested them in one of the fights that occurred between *Hebontes* and *Hippeis*, these fights occurred frequently and could be so intense that young Spartans could be killed³⁰⁸, to avoid this, any Spartiate who wanted could separate the combatants, and the Ephorate punished

³⁰⁴ Davies, 2018, p.721

³⁰⁵ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 231B, 191f; *Lycurgus*, 25.4

³⁰⁶ Davies, 2018, p.720

³⁰⁷ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4

³⁰⁸ Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 233F–4A, 240E–F

any man refusing to stop³⁰⁹, a reminder that young men in their position were meant to be paradigms of obedience.

4.4 Messes

Successfully completing the state education had politically enfranchised Lykodamos, however, unless he was accepted into a *Syssition* he would lose his citizen privileges³¹⁰. As acceptance was only automatic for royalty, Lykodamos had to apply for membership and be accepted by the existing mess members³¹¹, who with only a single negative ballot could deny his membership. If the *erastes-eromenos* dynamic, was an assessment a youth's suitability for joining the *Syssition* of their *erastes*, as well as their general character, so long as Lykodamos had lived up to expectations, his *Syssitia* membership was guaranteed, the voting procedure being purely symbolic. The messes being supplied by taxes exacted from all citizens as a condition of citizenship was meant to make the *Syssitia* a socially equalised egalitarian environment³¹², however the messes were microcosms of the state with the same inequities rife in wider Spartan society³¹³, joining the extra exclusive king's mess likely requiring a pre-existing social or familial connection for membership³¹⁴. Once officially accepted into a mess, his new messmates became Lykodamos' primary social group, whom he ate, trained, slept, and fought alongside³¹⁵, even after he was permitted to live with his wife³¹⁶. It is likely that once Lykodamos had been accepted into a *Syssition* that he was enrolled into a basic record of the citizenry. There are no accounts of how the Spartan state kept a track of its citizen numbers, but it is logical to assume that a basic record was kept for the state to be able to mobilise troops for combat. In Athens all newly enrolled citizens were recorded on the *lexiarchikon grammateion* that noted their *deme* and Solonic social class³¹⁷, analogously, it makes sense that a similar system was in place in Sparta,

³⁰⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4

³¹⁰ Cartledge, 2001, p.268; Cartledge, 2003a p.65

³¹¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12.5

³¹² Redfield, 1977, p.153

³¹³ Redfield, 1977, p.155; Arnheim, 1977, p.79

³¹⁴ Cartledge, 2003a p.65

³¹⁵ Plato, *Laws*, 1.625d, 1.633a

³¹⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

³¹⁷ Crowley, 2012, p.28-30

with Spartans being added to a mess list that constituted a basic record of the militarily active citizenry.

Now that he had joined a mess, Lykodamos was obligated to make monthly contributions of 1 *medimnus* of barley-meal (77 litres)³¹⁸, of the 82 his land was supposed to be fertile enough to produce³¹⁹, 8 *choes* of wine (39 litres), 5 *minas* of cheese (3 kilograms), 5 half *minas* of figs (1.5 kilograms), as well as a few coins for meat/fish. The sheer volume of these contributions sits at odds with the mirage of austere Spartans dining sparingly on plain fare such as the Laconian black broth³²⁰, the barley-meal alone being enough to feed several full-grown men very well³²¹. Additionally, the textual evidence is clear that, contrary to Sparta's supposed cultural rejection of dining luxuries, such as cakes and pastries³²², during the *epaiklon*³²³, the supplementary meal, Spartans were free to enjoy an array of foodstuffs that were not a part of their ordinary mess dues, and it is clear that no-one was in danger of going hungry at the nightly mess meal. Lykodamos had to pay his mess dues from the products of his *Kleros*³²⁴, one of the supposedly equal land tracts that he had supposedly been assigned after he had been inspected as an infant by the elders³²⁵. Ascertaining the historicity of the tradition around Lycurgus' redistribution of land has been one of the most controversial and vexing aspects of studying Spartan history since antiquity³²⁶, but regardless of the veracity and circumstances of any original equal land redistribution amongst Spartiates in the Archaic period, by the Classical period there were growing inequalities in land ownership amongst Spartan citizens, with much of the land being centralised into

³¹⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12

³¹⁹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 8

³²⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 12, a black pudding style soup made with pigs' blood and ashes.

According to Rawson, Adolf Hitler was apparently a big fan of this black broth (1969, p.343)

³²¹ one *choenix* of barley meal is nearly 3000 calories (Gallant, 1991, p.67), and Spartiates were contributing 48 *choenix* every month. When the calories consumed from the other mess contributions are factored in, it seems clear that Spartans were very well fed.

³²² Agesilaus refusal to partake in lavish sweets (Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 36; Athenaeus, 14.657b-c)

³²³ van Wees, 2017a, p.361.

³²⁴ Tyrtaeus Fr. 6W; Pausanias. 4.14.4–5; Aelian. *Historical Miscellany*, 6.1

³²⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16

³²⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 8.5-6, 16.1; *Agis*, 8.2

Aristotle conspicuously left Sparta out of his discussions on old/ancestral allotments in Greek *poleis* (*Politics*, 1266b15–24, 1319a10–11)

the hands of a small minority in the 4th century³²⁷. Partible inheritances had slowly devolved the lands of many citizens over time, including Lykodamos', and as his family had never been lucky enough to transact marriages with the upper elites, his lands, parcelled out amongst his siblings and himself, were spread out amongst marginal land barely fertile enough to pay his taxes.

The Classical *Syssitia*, if we are to believe Xenophon, suppressed intra-communal anxieties over differentiations in wealth, birth and social position by obligating men of all ages and social classes to dine together on a nightly basis, rendering the polity as homogeneous as possible, at least on the surface, all wearing the same attire³²⁸, and eating the same fare. However, far from socially enforcing restraint and abstinence, they provided avenues for the rich and talented to utilise their resources and skills to gain prestige through performing acts and social favors for their peers through providing extra contributions of game and wheaten bread³²⁹. Lykodamos could contribute meat from sacrifices, the first fruits of the harvest³³⁰, and game such as wood pigeons, geese, hen-doves, thrushes, blackbirds, and hares, however since he had to borrow hunting hounds in order to do this, some of the honour he accrued belonged to the hound's owner, a reminder of the inequities rife in his social circle.

4.5 Role Models, Teachers and Lovers

As a *Hebon*, Lykodamos became involved in the education of the next generation of *paides* and *paidiskoi*, serving as a role model of austerity, restraint³³¹, and sobriety for the youths visiting his *Syssition*³³². He was obligated to question them³³³, and having experienced these interrogations himself, he knew how important they were for controlling one's emotions in times of stress, in teaching the restraint and reserve that were the mark of a Spartan³³⁴. In addition, Lykodamos was

³²⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1271b11–15

³²⁸ Figueira, 2018, p.825; Knottnerus and Berry, 2002, p.17

³²⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 5.3-5; Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1263a
Fisher, 1989, p.39

³³⁰ Sphærus' third book of his treatise on the Lacedaemonian Constitution, cited in Athenaeus, 5.19

³³¹ David, 1989, p.15

³³² Fisher, 1989, p.26

³³³ Hodkinson, 2009a, p.196

³³⁴ Lendon, 1997, p.122

encouraged to take on one of the *paidiskoi* as his lover, becoming the senior partner in a relationship that blurred the boundaries of several usually distinct socio-personal dynamics, the older partner being a brother, teacher, lover and friend simultaneously, someone a boy could confide in. Boys could hardly confide in their peers for fear of mockery and exclusion, but their *erastes* was someone who had experienced what they were going through and could help put their anxieties into perspective, imparting practical wisdom about manoeuvring the Spartan *Kosmos*. As the relationship was an assessment of suitability for mess membership³³⁵, Lykodamos had to choose his *eromenos* carefully, his own prestige was at risk, if his *eromenos* failed to live up to expectations then Lykodamos' reputation would suffer. How much choice he had in his selection is unclear, his messmates may have applied pressure to choose someone whose conduct they already approved of, and to maintain social harmony with his peers Lykodamos may have had to follow their recommendation whether he agreed with it or not.

4.6 Marriage, Bachelors, and Husbands.

At around 25 years old, the prime of life³³⁶, Lykodamos, was granted state permission to marry, and, if we are to believe the literary accounts, was strongly coerced into doing so. Plutarch's account implies that marriage was a legal imperative³³⁷, however, except for the levying of fines from celibate Spartiates over 35³³⁸, there is no strongly suggestive evidence that Spartans were legally forced to marry, the stigmatisations they faced for remaining bachelors were all socially based. If Lykodamos refused to marry his civic freedoms were restricted, he could not be present when citizen youths were training, which excluded him from the gymnasium and choral spaces, as well as prevented him fulfilling his societal duty to oversee the education of the young³³⁹. This also put him into direct conflict

A Spartan king is also said to have told an insolent Helot that he would kill him over his insolence if he was not so angry (Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Laconia*, 213C), while the historicity of this utterance is questionable, it does demonstrate the ideal attitude towards extremes of emotion that Spartans were culturally encouraged to strive towards.

³³⁵ Fisher, 1989, p.33

³³⁶ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.6; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

³³⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

³³⁸ Plato, *Laws*, 4.721

³³⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 2.10, Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 25.2

with his peers who, to abide by the societal standard, were forced to prevent him from entering the gymnasium, leading to potentially violent altercations, especially if Lykodamos experienced this social exclusion over a protracted period. The tendency to react to social deprivation with hostility is correlated to the importance of what you are being deprived of³⁴⁰, and given how important gymnastic prowess was to a Spartan's reputation, it is likely that being deprived of access to this important avenue of status competition often led to violence. Lykodamos would also be shamed in front of the whole polity at important socio-religious events, being dragged around and whipped by Spartan women³⁴¹, the very people whose beauty and honour Lykodamos was impugning by his refusal to marry. He would be forced to parade himself in only a thin tunic in winter, singing derogatory songs about himself, making a mockery of the athletic physique Spartans spent years forging³⁴², and becoming an object of ridicule. These societal stigmatisations held more weight than legal exclusions, legal exclusion removed men from society completely, but social exclusions allowed men their political privileges while denying them the accompanying social benefits. The custom of appointing bachelors as *Karneatai* at the festival of the *Karneia* implies that Lykodamos would be given time to contract a marriage, only facing sanctions if he tarried inexcusably, but considering the importance of public reputation and inclusion in Sparta, it is likely that Lykodamos married as soon as he found a suitable partner.

Both Lykodamos and his prospective wife would be selective in choosing their partner, after all their conduct could have serious implications for each other and their family³⁴³, Lykodamos' wife was even liable to be punished by death for his misdeeds³⁴⁴. We do not know whether Spartan women had a say in their marriage

³⁴⁰ Crisp and Turner, 2014, p.306

This tendency is quite evident in the account of Kinadon. Having once been a peer, he rankles at his inferior status, a feeling of exclusion that was exacerbated by his being forced to continue serving the state whilst not enjoying the freedoms of citizen status.

³⁴¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.1-2; Athenaeus, 13.555c-d, citing Clearchus of Solis

³⁴² It is a disgrace to grow old through sheer carelessness before seeing what manner of man you may become by developing your bodily strength and beauty to their highest limit (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.7.8), attributed to Socrates.

³⁴³ Patterson, 1985, p.112

³⁴⁴ Lysanordidas, alongside Herippidas/Hermippidas and Arcesus were harmosts at Kadmeia. When the latter two Spartans surrendered the citadel, costing Sparta a valuable forward base, they were executed and Lysanordidas was fined even though he had been absent when the surrender had

contracts, it would be unusual if they did, but it is possible that the peculiar Spartan family dynamics produced fathers who were quite concerned with and indulgent of their daughters wishes³⁴⁵, this is actually heavily indicated by how much stock King Kleomenes puts in the opinion of his daughter, Gorgo, concerning Aristagoras³⁴⁶. Spartan fathers may have been concerned to ensure their daughters were being married to men who had proven themselves to be *kalos kai agathos*, good, fair and noble, both in character and in action. There were also considerations of land and resources, as Spartan girls inherited and owned their own property, a Spartan father would wish to ensure her long term security by marrying a man not at risk of subsistence failure and loss of citizenship, especially as concerns over the devolution of land grew across the Classical period. Beyond economics, there were more common qualities that influenced a man's attractiveness, Spartan maidens would be highly familiar with the vices and virtues of eligible men from the songs they had sung about them during the state education³⁴⁷, and it is possible that this familiarity entailed they had already marked out their potential suitor.

Spartan women had a well-established, if fetishized³⁴⁸, reputation for beauty and physicality³⁴⁹, but physical attractiveness would not be Lykodamos' predominant concern³⁵⁰, his bride needed to visibly possess the values and virtues appropriate to Spartan women, such as the self-denial of luxuries³⁵¹, ornamenting herself with her physicality, not with trinkets or precious metals³⁵². As Lykodamos' civic obligations kept him from regularly overseeing his *Kleros*, his wife needed to be capable of

happened. Unable to pay, he went into exile and the state decided to execute his mother Xenopeitheia and his sister Chryse (Plutarch. *Pelopidas*, 13; Diodorus, 15.27). Following this, Spartan maidens must have had this event at the forefront of their minds when they considered the suitability of their suitors.

³⁴⁵ Pellerin, 2021, p.230

³⁴⁶ Herodotus, 5.51.2

³⁴⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 14

³⁴⁸ Lampito was strong enough to throttle a bull in addition to having a superb bust (Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 80-84)

³⁴⁹ James Redfield, 1977, p.148

³⁵⁰ if Herakleides, cited by Athenaeus (13.20), was correct, physical beauty was still a significant factor in marriage arrangements, men could be fined for choosing physically unremarkable women for their riches,

³⁵¹ James Redfield, 1977, p.154

³⁵² Herakleides Lembus, *Exc. Pol.* 373.13, Dilts

taking charge when necessary³⁵³, requiring her to be self-confident, and able to speak and deal with the Helots authoritatively³⁵⁴. As Lykodamos' continued citizenship, and by extension his wife's social position³⁵⁵, were dependent on his conduct, she also needed to be outspoken and opinionated, ensuring that he lived up to the Spartan societal standards in public and at home³⁵⁶. The landed resources his wife brought to the marriage were also a significant factor, a woman's value as a marriageable commodity, especially after much of Spartan territory had come to be in female hands in the 4th century³⁵⁷, was heavily influenced by her wealth. A well-resourced wife could end any worries about subsistence failure by increasing Lykodamos' land holdings³⁵⁸, as well as connecting him to influential Spartiate families³⁵⁹. He would however need to be careful that considerations of wealth were not his primary motivations, such selfish actions, if discovered by the state could result in heavy fines³⁶⁰.

4.7 The Marriage and The Consummation

As was the custom, Lykodamos' marriage began with a symbolic rape and abduction³⁶¹, which as in almost all cases the woman would have been betrothed to her suitor and the wedding was an organised event³⁶², and it is implied by an anonymous epigram³⁶³, that soon to be married maidens prepared themselves by putting away the symbols of their youthful girlhood, dedicating them at the sanctuary of Artemis *Limnatis*³⁶⁴, this abduction was likely expected. Once abducted, Lykodamos' wife was left in his *oikos* with her bridesmaids who dressed

³⁵³ Becker, 1931, p.359

³⁵⁴ Cartledge, 2003a p.32; Cartledge, 1981, p.92; Pellerin, 2021, p.209

³⁵⁵ Millender, 2021, p.10

³⁵⁶ Ducat, 2006c, p.125-6; Redfield, 1977, p.149; Cartledge, 2006b, p.131; Figueira, 2006a, p.282

³⁵⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1270a30-2, 1270a23-5

³⁵⁸ Millender, 2021, p.104

³⁵⁹ Patterson, 1985, p.120

³⁶⁰ The suitors of Lysander's daughters were penalised after they broke off their pursuit after finding out that Lysander had died a pauper (Plutarch, *Lysander*, 30.6; *Moralia*, 230A)

³⁶¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.3-5

Pellerin, 2021, p.203

³⁶² There were exceptions to this, it was possible for a Spartan man to steal a bride that was already betrothed to another man (Herodotus, 6.63.2)

³⁶³ *Anthologia Palatina*, 6.280

³⁶⁴ 'a bronze tambourine, a ball, and a hair net, now no longer needed'.

her in a man's tunic and shaved her hair³⁶⁵, a symbol of her ritual ascension into full womanhood and a visible signifier of her marital status³⁶⁶. Lykodamos himself continued his daily business as usual, sneaking in to see her after the nightly mess meal³⁶⁷, making sure that he was not impotent through drunkenness³⁶⁸, returning to the barracks after consummating the marriage. The shame heaped upon him if he was seen entering or leaving the *oikos* was intended to prevent unrestrained sexual mores and encourage a high sexual appetite, but it is debatable how effective this was. Men still had heterosexual liaisons with slave women and homosexual relationships with both their *eromenos* and with adult boyfriends, and there is little reason to believe that Spartan women were not similarly involved in same-sex liaisons. It is more reasonable to suppose that the *nomos* of sneaking liaisons was directed towards reducing the development of matrimonial bonds³⁶⁹, a way of ensuring that Lykodamos continued to hold the state as his primary loyalty. Lykodamos' secretive liaisons continued until they cohabitated, which Plutarch thought meant Spartans begat several children before ever seeing their wives in daylight³⁷⁰, however Spartan couples had plenty of time and opportunities for liaisons, even if they could not see each other as they pleased. His time with his wife being thus limited, Lykodamos could have begat at least one *nothoi* through, most likely non-consensual, liaisons with his slaves. He was not obligated to acknowledge any such *nothoi*, and if his combined marital lands were mean or at risk of crop failure, then he most likely chose not to acknowledge his *nothoi* to prevent his legitimate children inheriting insufficient lands to supply their needs. Lykodamos' first legitimate child is a girl who is bathed in wine to test her constitution³⁷¹, but as a female is not inspected by the elders, Lykodamos and his wife deciding if she should be reared. In keeping with Spartan naming conventions

³⁶⁵ Heraclides Lembus, *Exc. Pol.* 13, Dilts

³⁶⁶ Meister, 2020, p.209; David, 1992b, p.11

³⁶⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.4–9; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.5

³⁶⁸ This *nomos* implies that it was not unusual for Spartiates to become overly intoxicated, a possible corollary of this is that Sparta had suffered low birth rates due to impotence that needed to be constitutionally addressed. If this is the case, then it is further evidence that Spartans were not as abstemious in their alcohol intake as the sources assert.

³⁶⁹ Powell, 1988, p.223

³⁷⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.5

³⁷¹ A strong indication that Spartans kept wine in the household where they were free to indulge as they wished without peer scrutiny.

where girls are given names adapted from their male relatives³⁷², the girl is named Lykodamia, placing her under Apollo's protection just as Lykodamos had been when he was born.

4.8 Military Service

Like all Spartans, Lykodamos was obligated to perform military service anytime the Ephorate called³⁷³, being on active service from age 18/20-30, and reserve service from 30 to 60³⁷⁴. Unlike in Athens this was an inescapable duty³⁷⁵, Spartiates could not be exempted from service for any reason other than having aged out of their obligations at 60 years old without becoming liable to accusations of cowardice, even being maimed was not a valid excuse³⁷⁶. Ordinarily the Ephorate levied the army by age classes³⁷⁷, however as only 101 *Hippeis*, fought alongside any one king at a time³⁷⁸, Lykodamos, as a *Hippeus* was likely mobilised on a rotational basis, roughly once every third time a king led an army out of Laconia. The army marshalling on the parade ground would have been a lively spectacle³⁷⁹, the visually unmistakable Spartans with their long hair³⁸⁰, red cloaks, sun bronzed athletic physiques, and polished bronze shield facings, the two Ephors that customarily accompanied kings on campaign observing the divinatory sacrifice³⁸¹, the *Perioikic*

³⁷² Timareta, the daughter of Timaretos (*Anthologia Palatina*, 6.280)

³⁷³ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 17.4; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11
Hanson, 2009, p.31; Crowley, 2012, p.26

³⁷⁴ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 5.4.13, 6.4.17

³⁷⁵ Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 17

³⁷⁶ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 210F 34, 217C

a lame spartan who was mocked for his lameness as he set off to war castigates his detractors 'a man needs to stand his ground in war not run away' Plutarch, *Moralia*, 234E 45

³⁷⁷ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11

Hanson, 2009, p.89

³⁷⁸ Herodotus states that 100 *Hippeis* guarded the King every time he led an army (6.56), the actual number would be 101 when the commander of the *Hippeis* is included. Prior to the factional infighting of Demaratus and Kleomenes (6.61.1-2), 202 *Hippeis* would have fought at the same time in the same force, 101 for each king, but after the fallout between the kings the law was changed so that only one king was permitted to lead an army at one time (6.75.2), although this does not preclude both kings being dispatched to lead separate armies simultaneously.

Regardless of this, the full complement of 303 *Hippeis* would rarely, if ever, be dispatched at the same time.

³⁷⁹ The *Agora* would be a perfect place for the army to marshal. Xenophon's account of Kinadon's conspiracy reveals that the 4th century *Agora* was large enough to hold over 4000 people with no trace of overcrowding (*Hellenika*, 3.3.5-7).

³⁸⁰ Powell, 1989, p.179

³⁸¹ Herodotus, 9.76; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.4; *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.5

craftsmen³⁸², and the Helots of the battle train with the pack and sacrificial animals³⁸³. The march to war was not a sombre affair, additionally to jesting and conversing to ease the tedium, the king led the men in songs and paeans³⁸⁴, which buoyed the spirits, reminding the men of their bonds with each other, and kept them in rhythm. When encamped, discipline was extreme, Lykodamos had to keep his weapons close at all times, even when exercising³⁸⁵, and if he lapsed in decorum or discipline, he was forced to stand at attention holding his *Aspis*³⁸⁶, a physically gruelling task considering the nearly 3 foot wide shield could weigh up to 7-kilogram³⁸⁷. While ordinarily Lykodamos dined with his peers³⁸⁸, as a *Hippeus* he could be invited to dine in the king's mess alongside the king's staff³⁸⁹. In the king's mess there were competitive recitations of Trytaeus with an extra portion of meat offered as prize for the victor³⁹⁰, which helped bring some normalcy to a high stress situation by replicating the entertainments Spartans enjoyed in the messes at home.

4.9 Soldiers and Ghosts

Despite how well trained or experienced Lykodamos was, no amount of training is enough to prepare for the horrors of war³⁹¹, combat is psychologically scarring and Spartans were not fearless automatons³⁹², they knew that fear had to be overcome to fulfil one's duty³⁹³. Lykodamos would have to prepare himself psychologically for the horrors he was about to face, these preparations began with the pre-battle sacrifices, Lykodamos joining with his peers and the king in precipitating the favour of the gods. After the sacrifices Lykodamos dressed his hair, beautifying himself and

³⁸² Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 11.2

³⁸³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.8; *Hellenika* 4.2.20; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22

³⁸⁴ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 21-22

³⁸⁵ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 12.5

³⁸⁶ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 3.1.9

³⁸⁷ Mitchell, 2009, p.89; van Wees, 2000, p.126

³⁸⁸ Hodkinson, 2018, p.102

³⁸⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.7

³⁹⁰ Athenaeus, 630f

³⁹¹ Tritle, 2001, p.62

³⁹² Cartledge, 2004, p.172

³⁹³ Loraux, 1997, p.75

Tyrtaeus, Fr.12.10-11 'no man ever proves himself a good man in war unless he endures to face the blood and slaughter'.

Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 4.3.17, 4.8.38, 7.1.31; Thucydides, 5.10.8

bringing a sense of normalcy to a high stress situation, before scratching his name into both ends of the Spartan's proto-dog tag, a simple stick that he snaps in half, leaving one end in camp and carrying the other with him into battle³⁹⁴. This practice had a practical purpose, it ensured that his body could be identified if it was disfigured beyond recognition, but it also had a psychological aspect that I believe is best explained by looking at Spartan receptions not historiography. In *Gates of Fire* King Leonidas brings his men together after battle and describes how when men divide their tag into two they also divide themselves, leaving the human part that loves his family and rejoices in choruses behind, taking the basest elements of himself into battle, the part that can slaughter and fight without quarter, reclaiming his humanity when he returns and fits the two halves back together³⁹⁵. While this is a dramatized account, it was written from a personal experience of soldierly life and is for that reason a plausible reconstruction of how men who are about to enter combat might have psychologically prepared themselves for combat. The practice is, in my opinion, deeply reminiscent of the interaction of the Trojan prince Hector and his son Astynax in the *Iliad*. Hector's flashing helm and crest efface his humanity, making Astynax terrified of him, when Hector removes his helm he reclaims his humanity as a loving father, and when he places it back on his head, he leaves his humanity behind and again becomes a fearsome warrior³⁹⁶.

All Spartiates were culturally bound to offer their lives for the city³⁹⁷, but as a *Hippeus*, Lykodomos laboured under an extreme standard of bravery, defending the king with one's life was the highest honour, and failure was worse than trembling³⁹⁸. Classical Spartan children grew up in the shadow of the paradigmatic example of Spartan valour³⁹⁹, the last stand at Thermopylae⁴⁰⁰, and for young Spartans in the early years of the Peloponnesian War, there were war heroes like

³⁹⁴ Polyaeus, *Stratagems of War*, 1.17; Justin, *Epitome*, 3.5

³⁹⁵ Pressfield, 1998, p171-4

³⁹⁶ Homer, *Iliad*, 6.466-470

³⁹⁷ Loraux, 1995, p.143

³⁹⁸ Isocrates, *de Pace*, 143

³⁹⁹ Loraux, 1997, p.68; Loraux, 1995, p.73 Fields, 2007, p.7

⁴⁰⁰ Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, 92; Herodotus, 7.288; Diodorus, 11.11.6.

Brasidas walking around the city⁴⁰¹. Lykodamos would be well aware of the consequences of not living up to what was expected of him, that if he was even suspected of trembling that this was enough for him to suffer *Atimia*⁴⁰², becoming a social pariah⁴⁰³, who could contract no marriage for his daughter⁴⁰⁴, could not vote or hold offices⁴⁰⁵, was denied the respect of his juniors, and was excluded from his *Syssition*⁴⁰⁶. He would be denied the legal protections his status entitled him to, could be struck by any Spartiate who desired to, had no recourse when disrespected by Helots and, in being forced to be unkempt in person, with his face half shaven and patched cloak⁴⁰⁷, was forced to advertise his dishonour to all⁴⁰⁸. His dishonour was a rejection of the bonds of brotherhood and community, and in return the community excluded and abandoned him⁴⁰⁹, they refused his company in the gymnasium⁴¹⁰, eventually leading him to no longer even try to be involved⁴¹¹. His peer's refused to speak to him⁴¹², which effectively denied him the chance to explain himself⁴¹³, and unfortunately for him his household would be no refuge from his stigmatization⁴¹⁴, his wife, forced to live with the shame of being married to a coward would no doubt be bitter and resentful of him. Faced with such wholesale ostracism as this it is no wonder that Spartans preferred an honourable death to a vile life⁴¹⁵.

⁴⁰¹ Brasidas is the holder of greatest acclaim due to his exceptional actions (Thucydides, 2.25; Diodorus, 12.62.1-2).

Plato's Alcibiades even bids us compare Brasidas to the great Achilles, high praise indeed (*Symposium*, 221c8).

⁴⁰² MacDowell, 1978, p.76, 73, 74

⁴⁰³ Balot, 2016, p.137

Thucydides, 1.144.3; Xenophon, *Cyropedia*, 2.3.4; Tyrteaus, Fr. 11.14-16

⁴⁰⁴ Herodotus, 7.231; Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 30.3

⁴⁰⁵ Thucydides, 5.34.2

⁴⁰⁶ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 9

⁴⁰⁷ Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 30.3

⁴⁰⁸ Goffman, 1963, p43, 45

⁴⁰⁹ Goffman, 1963, p.5

⁴¹⁰ Ducat, 2006a, p.27

⁴¹¹ Goffman, 1963, p.12; Ducat, 2006a, p.19.

⁴¹² Herodotus, 7.231

⁴¹³ Powell, 2017a, 71

⁴¹⁴ Goffman, 1963, p.32-33

⁴¹⁵ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 9.6

Chapter Five; *Spartiate*; Citizen and Soldier

5.1 Married Life

The nature of Spartan society and Lykodamos' civic obligations had disjointed him from his family, potentially to the extent that he was almost a stranger by the time he took up residence in his *oikos* at age 30, his wife's independence and pre-eminence being well established and her long accustomed to ruling the roost⁴¹⁶, which may have made Lykodamos feel he had no authority in his own house. It would take time for him to be able to assert his authority in a way that did not undermine his wife, and it would take a concerted effort from them both to establish trusting and meaningful reciprocal relationships. As the use of Helot labour meant that his wife was not bound to spend her time engaged in the domestic tasks⁴¹⁷, and Lykodamos himself had few strict demands on his time past age 30, they were blessed with ample opportunities to build their relationship, visiting sanctuaries, taking walks in the nearby countryside, perusing the *Agora* for toys for their daughter and necessities for the home. Such activities would also be perfect for getting to know his daughter Lykodamia, whose upbringing had fallen largely to his wife⁴¹⁸, but with whom he was now able to create a meaningful reciprocal relationship, far more so than if he had a son as, unlike male children, female children stayed in the family home throughout their education and until marriage⁴¹⁹. The practice of giving girls an education largely similar to boys meant that both Lykodamos and his wife could come together to pass on their knowledge⁴²⁰. Dance and song being as important to Spartan life as they were⁴²¹, it is likely that Lykodamos and his wife took Lykodamia's choral training very

⁴¹⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 14

Pomeroy, 2002, p.44

⁴¹⁷ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1.3

We should not assume that Spartan women never engaged in domestic activities such as this, Helen of Sparta wove her own clothes (Homer, *Odyssey*, 15.104 –105), a duty which she took on by choice. It might be most accurate to think of Spartan women as freed from the need to perform domestic but not being legally prohibited from doing so if they desired to.

⁴¹⁸ Pellerin, 2021, p.202-4

⁴¹⁹ Pellerin, 2021, p.201; Pomeroy, 2002, p.4

⁴²⁰ Ducat, 2006c, p.165

⁴²¹ Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 1242–1315

'broad dancing places' (Homer, *Odyssey*, 13.414, 15.1) famed for its choruses and festivals (Athenaeus, 633a)

seriously, helping her memorise the verses of Alkman, or practice scales on the Aulos or the Cithara in preparation for upcoming choral performances. Their musical forays would not be limited to Lykodamia's instruction, there would also be a recreational aspect, Classical Sparta had inherited an impressive 7th century poetic tradition and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Lykodamos and his wife sang songs and played music in the home. As athletic competitions in Sparta were not a purely masculine domain, Lykodamos and his wife also took a keen interest in Lykodamia's athletic instruction, but this was not some altruistic or feminist attempt at gender parity, it was to institutionally socialise girls into their eventual role as mothers⁴²², strengthening their bodies for childbirth⁴²³, and fostering compliance with socio-political norms⁴²⁴.

One important aspect of Spartan life that Lykodamos and his family could now regularly share with each other was their religious observances and expression. There were potentially 1000s of religious sanctuaries and shrines scattered across Sparta territory, ranging from small shrines to *pathēmata*⁴²⁵, to the large sanctuaries of Artemis, Athena and Apollo which were of immense civic importance⁴²⁶, but religion was not limited to large scale civic events, it was a part of everyday life. When Lykodamos went hunting he sacrificed to Artemis *Agrotera*, the goddess of the hunt⁴²⁷, his wife made offerings to Artemis goddess of childbirth, and as a family they joined the community to worship in the great festivals of the Spartans calendar. When they sacrificed, it is likely that as they were not well economically resourced, they would only rarely sacrifice live animals, needing these for their subsistence and to trade in the *Agora* if they suffered serious crop shortfalls. They would most likely dedicate votive offerings instead, which could

⁴²² Cartledge, 1981, p.93

⁴²³ Kritias F32; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 1

⁴²⁴ Christesen, 2012, p.193

⁴²⁵ Plutarch, *Kleomenes*, 9.1; Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.35; Pausanias, 3.18.1, 3.20.10-11

⁴²⁶ Flower, 2018, p.639

⁴²⁷ Artemis is consistently connected to hunting in literature from the archaic period onwards (Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13.8; *Hellenika*, 4.2.20; Homer, *Iliad*, 5.52-54, 21.470, 21.483; *Odyssey*, 6.102-105; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22).

take many different forms, lead figurines of draft animals⁴²⁸, terracotta figures⁴²⁹, and lead warrior figures⁴³⁰, most of which would have been manufactured at one of the smithies in the heart of the Spartan civic centre and around the Acropolis⁴³¹. In addition to building his relationship with his family, Lykodamos had a highly pragmatically important task to see to when he came home at 30, handling the affairs of his *Kleros*, which his civic and military duties had thus far had prevented him having much direct involvement with, the duty falling to his wife when they married. So far as is indicated by the literary accounts, Spartiates did not usually spend their time in estate management⁴³², Figueira has even suggested that if Spartans did directly manage their lands this would be at odds with the ban on the citizenry from engaging in economic activities. While I do understand the logic of this argument, Xenophon's references to Spartiates with lands near the *Agora* overseeing their estates in his account of Kinadon's conspiracy indicates that Spartans were only limited in how directly involved they could be in overseeing their lands by how distant said lands were from the civic centre⁴³³. Much of Lykodamos' *Kleros* was marginal land on the bluffs of the Taygetus mountain range, requiring careful risk management to maximize crop yields⁴³⁴, something that had become especially important as he and his wife had not been lax in fulfilling their duty to the state in producing children. Lykodamos needed to become active in resource management, not an easy task as his daily obligations made it difficult to regularly oversee his lands⁴³⁵, estate management was not one of the few acceptable excuses for missing the daily mess meal, and internal travel in Sparta was time consuming and arduous⁴³⁶. There was a basic road network that the kings were obligated to maintain⁴³⁷, but this was not built for the ease of Spartiates managing their estates, they were for facilitating the army marching out, for

⁴²⁸ Johannessen, 2021, p.99

⁴²⁹ such as those found at site Q360 during the Laconia Survey (Cavanagh, 2002, p.219)

⁴³⁰ Garstang museum collection GM C955/10-22, GM C955/2-9, GM C931/25-32, GM C919/21 (Muskett, 2014)

⁴³¹ Woodward et al., 1924-1925, p.245

⁴³² Becker and Smelo, 1931, p. 358; Figueira, 2018, p.873

⁴³³ *Hellenika*, 3.3.5

⁴³⁴ Gallant, 1991, p.8

⁴³⁵ Hunt, 1998, p.64

⁴³⁶ Christien, 2018, p.897, 899.

⁴³⁷ Herodotus, 6.57.3

maintaining easy contact with important transport hubs like Geronthrai, and possibly to facilitate the transportation of crops from the *Kleroi* to the *Syssitia*. While Lykodamos' lands are marginal, he is lucky in that they have good access to water and are well suited to growing figs which will thrive even on the Laconian mountain sides⁴³⁸. His land is also well suited to raising goats, which is fortunate as livestock was one of the most viable tradeable commodities and could be sold in the market⁴³⁹, alongside other goods that could be found either on his land or by dispatching Helots into the wilderness, walnuts, wild pears and the highly desirable Laconian cucumbers⁴⁴⁰, which could be used to barter for shortfalls in crops needed for mess contributions⁴⁴¹.

5.2 Daily Life

As Lykodamos was now fully enfranchised and no longer on active military service, he was free to spend his abundant leisure time recreating with his peers and participating in one of the popular Spartan ball games⁴⁴². These games were not just a way to pass the time, they helped foster social integrity by providing an avenue for Lykodamos to sport with his peers outside of the highly competitive athletic pursuits of the gymnasium, a pursuit that could be enjoyed simply for what it was, a rarity in a culture where almost nothing was apolitical. There were very few recreational activities in Sparta, as least as far as have been passed down by our sources, and the ball games Lykodamos played with his peers were so important to social harmony that they were off limits for any Spartans living under

⁴³⁸ Athenaeus, 3.7

⁴³⁹ Pellerin, 2021, p.206

⁴⁴⁰ There were, according to Theophrastus as cited by Pliny (*Natural History*, 19.23), and Athenaeus (3.5), three types of cucumber grown in Greece with the Laconian variety being the most desired due to its wateriness.

⁴⁴¹ Cavanagh, 2018, p.134

Barter in agricultural goods being common in Sparta's domestic economy is implied by Kleomenes asking his daughter Gorgo to pay a man for his services with grain (Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apoththegmata*, 240E2), and it was certainly Justinus' view that Sparta operated on a barter economy (*Epitome*, 3.2.11-12)

⁴⁴² Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 24; Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 9.103
Sihler, 1893, p.439; Hodkinson, 2018, p.93

the cloud of suspected, or actual, cowardice⁴⁴³, divorcing them from active membership in society and one of the foundations of Spartan social life⁴⁴⁴.

5.3 Hunting



(Figure 2, The Calydonian Hunt *Kylix*, The Naucratis Painter)

Lykodamos would also spend his free time engaged in one of the central Spartan pastimes⁴⁴⁵, hunting, one of the few acceptable activities it was permissible to miss the nightly mess meal for⁴⁴⁶. While in other *poleis*, sport hunting was the preserve of the rich⁴⁴⁷, the aristocratisation of the Spartan polity had opened the pastime up

⁴⁴³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 9.5

⁴⁴⁴ Durkheim, 2002, p.10; Ducat, 2006, p.26

⁴⁴⁵ David, 1993, p.393

⁴⁴⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 4

⁴⁴⁷ Pritchard, 2003, p.301

to less well-off citizens⁴⁴⁸, and while this helped promote harmony between the social classes, it also exposed the vast wealth inequities rife in Spartan society as Lykodamos would only be able to hunt if he could borrow hunting dogs from one of his richer peers⁴⁴⁹. Despite hunting being viewed as fine training for war⁴⁵⁰, it was not a skill set taught as part of the state education system, instead being an activity taught by fathers to sons. Lykodamos' own father had taken him on his first hunting trips as a youth, but as hunting could be incredibly dangerous⁴⁵¹, they had only hunted small prey like rabbits⁴⁵², as a mature man however, Lykodamos had graduated to hunting larger more dangerous prey such as boar⁴⁵³, the hunting of which was thematically important to the Spartan *Kosmos* as the Dioskouri had participated in the Calydonian boar hunt. It is possible that the Calydonian boar hunt is also the subject matter of the Naucratis Painter's *Kylix* above⁴⁵⁴, the depiction of one hunter as bearded and the other shaven is congruous with Castor and Pollux's depiction on the *Kypselos* chest⁴⁵⁵, however Laconian black figure depictions of boar hunts are not usually thought to be heroic scenes⁴⁵⁶, so this is likely a father taking his son on a hunt as rite of passage. Boar were highly dangerous, even with the benefit of Laconia's famous hunting hounds the Castorian, named for Castor⁴⁵⁷, and the Vulpine supposedly a crossbreed of dog and fox⁴⁵⁸. When Lykodamos and his peers hunted this deadly beast, they had to put a significant degree of trust in each other, which would help their existing affiliative bonds by proving that they could rely on each other in times of danger.

⁴⁴⁸ David, 1993, p.393-394

⁴⁴⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 6.3

⁴⁵⁰ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4.7

⁴⁵¹ The Persian king, Darius, suffered a severe ankle sprain when jumping down from his horse during a hunting trip (Herodotus, 3.129)

⁴⁵² Plutarch's account of the 464 BC earthquake tells us that rabbits were common in Sparta (*Kimon*, 16.5)

⁴⁵³ Xenophon's statement that hunting should be taken up just out of boyhood (*Cynegeticus*, 2.1), when looked at in combination with *Lacedaemonion Politeia* 3.1, might mean he meant around 12 to 14, an age when most boys have begun adolescence and the age that Spartans left boyhood and became *paidiskoi*.

⁴⁵⁴ According to Pipili, no Laconia vase can be securely attested to featuring the Dioskouri (1987, p.57)

⁴⁵⁵ Pausanias, 5.19.2

⁴⁵⁶ Pipili, 1987, p.22

⁴⁵⁷ Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 3.1

⁴⁵⁸ While this assertion is accepted by Richer (2006, p.22), dogs and foxes diverged from their common ancestor too long ago to still have the chromosomal compatibility to cross breed.

5.4 Adult Athletics and The Body Beautiful

One of the few strict obligations Lykodamos was under was to maintain his physical fitness⁴⁵⁹, but this obligation went beyond the need to keep combat fit, as Lykodamos was prohibited from adorning himself with sumptuous attire, his athletic physique was one of the few ways he could beautify himself⁴⁶⁰. Lykodamos had been encouraged throughout his upbringing to internalise the attitude that it was his duty to himself and his community to not neglect his bodily training⁴⁶¹. Additionally to beautifying his body through his athletic pursuits, there were a multitude of athletic contests and games, both in Laconia and across Hellas that Lykodamos could travel to and compete in to prove his prowess. These put him into competition with men from all across Hellas, from his fellow Spartans and *Perioikoi* in the Laconian festivals⁴⁶², to the best athletes Hellas had to offer in the most prestigious events of all, the Pan-Hellenic games held at Delphi and Olympia. Victory brought great prestige however there were also important lessons to learn from failure, Lykodamos needed to respond to failure with proper Spartan decorum, controlling his emotions so his disappointment or anger did not overtop him. This was where his years of training in *Sophrosyne* came in useful, he had been mocked in the songs of girls as a child and learned to laugh off criticisms in the messes, and now having spent years internalising the importance of self-control he was able to maintain his Spartan reserve even when bitterly disappointed.

His adult athletic endeavours provided the most prestigious arena, outside of warfare⁴⁶³, for demonstrating his manly qualities and enhancing his reputational prestige. Spartan athletics inspired a very peculiar type of *Philotimia* where Lykodamos was encouraged to seek recognition for how his deeds benefitted the state and the community⁴⁶⁴, when Lykodamos' won a prestigious victory he was

⁴⁵⁹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 5.8

⁴⁶⁰ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 7.3

⁴⁶¹ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.12

⁴⁶² Pavlides, 2018, p.297

IG V 1.213 lines 56-8; IG V 1.1120; Strabo, 8.4.11

⁴⁶³ Hunt, 1998, p.154

⁴⁶⁴ Redfield, 1977, p.157

honoured as an individual⁴⁶⁵, but his victories also created chances for personal advancement to positions where he could do great good for the polity⁴⁶⁶; his chances of election to the Ephorate could be improved through previous athletic success, just as much as they could be improved by previous military successes⁴⁶⁷, and a victory at Olympia could grant him the honour of fighting as part of the kings retinue in battle⁴⁶⁸. Victorious Spartan athletes were known to expend large sums commemorating their victories⁴⁶⁹, as well as the victories of their more laudable forebears⁴⁷⁰, with elaborate statues and stele which served as highly conspicuous advertisements of a man's prowess that could be utilised by their descendants as social currency to enhance their own prestige. The erection of commemorative stele was limited however, it took money, the Damonon stele, which at 185 cm high, 24 cm wide, and 17 cm deep⁴⁷¹, would have been highly expensive and impossible to miss, dominating its surroundings. Such a visually arresting stele would likely be beyond Lykodamos' means, an expense that he could ill afford as he needed to ensure he redirected all of his resources into maintaining his family and his *Kleros*. That Spartans with subsistence issues could ill afford to commemorate their athletic victories meant that they were unable to utilise their achievements for personal and public advancement to the same extent that the rich could. When Damonon erected his stele on the Acropolis, he was well aware what he was communicating to his audience⁴⁷², his status as a prodigiously talented athlete, a man of incredible wealth and of impressive political influence⁴⁷³. Being so centrally placed, the stele would be seen regularly by the whole polity, ensuring that

⁴⁶⁵ Wilson, 2003, p.163-4

⁴⁶⁶ Spartiate Olympic victors were evidently given the right to fight alongside the Spartan kings in battle (Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.4; *Moralia*, 639E). Whether this also meant that they became members of the *Hippeis*, or whether this was a special honour is unclear.

⁴⁶⁷ Leon, Ephor in 419/8, was a victorious Olympian as a youth (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.3.10), his son Antalkidas, Ephor in 370/69, had concluded a treaty with Persia (Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 32.1), and Brasidas was elected in 431 after his victory at Methone (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.3.10)

⁴⁶⁸ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 22.4; *Moralia*, 639E

⁴⁶⁹ Hodkinson, 1999, p.165

⁴⁷⁰ The sculpture of the 7th century runner Chionis, who also had a stele listing his victories near the tombs of the Agiad kings in Sparta (Pausanias, 3.14.3), was crafted by the Athenian Myron, who would not have taken Iron spits as payment, which indicates Spartans regularly used precious metals or the currencies of other *poleis* when transacting business with outsiders.

⁴⁷¹ Christesen, 2019, p.8

⁴⁷² Christesen, 2019, p.3

⁴⁷³ Christesen, 2019, p.3, 126

Damonon remained well regarded in the minds of his peers, making a clear statement, that this was an athlete amongst athletes, and a man superior to his peers.

5.5 A Political Animal

With Lykodamos' ascension to full status came membership in the assembly, giving him a political voice and the ability to influence the world around him, voting on important internal and external issues⁴⁷⁴, and hearing the speeches of foreign ambassadors and dignitaries⁴⁷⁵. However, for as much as his participation in the assembly made him feel that he had a controlling interest in the direction of the state, in truth he did not exercise any real power, nor is it evident that his vote really made a difference to the decisions the state made. He could not propose motions, only ascent or reject motions put forward by the state⁴⁷⁶, meaning that in most circumstances the real debates around a subject had already occurred, and Lykodamos was not a part of them. The only real political power that Lykodamos had in the assembly was voting on who was to be elected to the *Gerousia* and the Ephorate⁴⁷⁷, the latter providing a real say in the state's political direction by voting for candidates whose morals and politics he agreed with⁴⁷⁸, although as the office was elected annually, Sparta's political policies could change drastically from year to year.

At 30, Lykodamos was eligible for appointment to state offices, the most important and influential of these being the Ephorate, the board of five high magistrates that oversaw the day to day internal and external state administration. Each Ephor was only permitted to serve once⁴⁷⁹, meaning that while high class elites were

⁴⁷⁴ The *Brasideioi* were emancipated by an act of the Spartan assembly, and voted settlement at Lepreon with the *Neodamodeis* (Thucydides, 5.34.1, 5.67.1, 5.71.3) When it was decided to send two men to Susa as a blood payment for throwing Darius' messengers down a well, it was the assembly who voted on and agreed to the men selected (Herodotus, 7.134.2)

⁴⁷⁵ Herodotus, 1.69.1-2, 7.133.1; Thucydides, 1.67.3, 1.72.1, 6.88.10; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 5.2.11-12

⁴⁷⁶ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 6; Tyrtaeus, Fr.4 West.

Cartledge, 2002, p.58

⁴⁷⁷ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 6; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1270b.23ff

⁴⁷⁸ Hamilton, 1970, p.295; Rahe, 1980, p. 385

⁴⁷⁹ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.3.9-10

appointed⁴⁸⁰, the position was open to the whole citizenry⁴⁸¹. In theory the Ephorate's power was almost unchecked⁴⁸², handling treaties⁴⁸³, contract disputes⁴⁸⁴, chairing congresses of the Peloponnesian League, summoning and presiding over the assembly⁴⁸⁵, holding judiciary powers over the entire polity, admitting⁴⁸⁶, hearing, and ejecting foreign envoys⁴⁸⁷, handling contract disputes⁴⁸⁸, levying the army, appointing the *Hippagretai*, and rejecting any crooked decisions the assembly made⁴⁸⁹, which made the office highly desirable amongst the most politically ambitious⁴⁹⁰. The Ephorate being elected by the assembly meant that the people had the power to influence Sparta's political direction⁴⁹¹, and if a candidate wanted to implement his political agenda it behoved them to extensively canvass the polity for support⁴⁹². If Lykodamos was serious about being elected then he could not be a non-entity in wider Spartan thought⁴⁹³, he needed to have distinguished himself through his civic, athletic and military achievements. His main political support was to come from his messmates, the men who knew his moral character most intimately and had been prime beneficiaries of his community largesse's. Lykodamos' gifts of game, sacrificial meats and the fruits of his harvests to his mess, showed his dedication to striving for the good of the group, however the social currency Lykodamos had built with his peers was nothing compared to that built by his richer messmates. The greater resources of the rich meant that

⁴⁸⁰ Endius, who was a Xenos of Alcibiades, held the Ephorate in 413/2 BC (Thucydides, 8.6.3, 12.1–3, 17.2)

⁴⁸¹ Davies, 2018, p.724

Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1265b

⁴⁸² Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 8.4; Plato, *Laws*, 712d2-e5; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1270b14

⁴⁸³ The eponymous Ephor Pleistolas' participated in the drafting of both the treaty and alliance with Athens in 421 BC (Thucydides, 5.19.1–2, 24.1)

⁴⁸⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1275b 9-10, 1270b 28; Plutarch, *Moralia*, 221B

⁴⁸⁵ Thucydides, 1.67.3, 1.87; Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.2.19

⁴⁸⁶ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.2.13

⁴⁸⁷ Herodotus, 3.148

⁴⁸⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, 3.1275b

⁴⁸⁹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 6.4

⁴⁹⁰ Rahe, 1980, p.388

⁴⁹¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1270B27-8, 1271A9-10

⁴⁹² Rahe, 1980, p.398

⁴⁹³ Brasidas' tactically brilliant heroics at Methone in 431 BC led to him being the only Spartan that can concretely be attested to as having received an official commendation from the state (Thucydides, 2.25.2). This honour is likely to have played a contributing role in his becoming the eponymous Ephor for 431/0 BC (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.3.10).

they could increase their socio-metric popularity to a degree that average Spartans could not by contributing extras to the mess more often, and to a greater extent, building a significant social currency that could be parleyed into votes in the assembly.

The Ephorate being open to the whole citizenry made election to the office and the exercise of its powers highly prone to manipulation and corruption⁴⁹⁴. Rich influential men could use their sway and pre-existing connections of social patronage to increase their political support, or the support of men who owed them favours, who when elected would serve the political agenda of their patrons. These men could call upon any Spartans who owed them social favours, who had turned to them for help managing their lands when bordering on subsistence failure, or whose *nothoi* they had sponsored through the upbringing, to use their votes to support their election. This kind of corruption was, according to Aristotle⁴⁹⁵, rife in the 4th century, when poor Ephors could not exercise power as they wanted, nor put forth the motions they wanted before the people as they were forced to repay their debts of social patronage by supporting the policies their patrons desired⁴⁹⁶.

If elected to the Ephorate Lykodamos would hold considerable power⁴⁹⁷, but that power was restricted by having to function as a college⁴⁹⁸, exercising power by majority vote⁴⁹⁹, meaning that no one Ephor could affect socio-political changes without the support of his fellows. Ephors could dismiss magistrates from their posts, and fine or bring to trial any Spartiate⁵⁰⁰, or *Perioikoi*⁵⁰¹, even royalty⁵⁰², but they did not exercise judicial power alone, they presided over serious criminal

⁴⁹⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1270b 6-35

⁴⁹⁵ Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1270b

⁴⁹⁶ Aristotle, *Politics*, 2.1271a

⁴⁹⁷ Thomas, 1974, p.258

⁴⁹⁸ Arnheim, 1977, p.87

⁴⁹⁹ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 2.3.34, 4.29

⁵⁰⁰ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 8.3-4

⁵⁰¹ Isocrates, *Panatheacicus*, 18

⁵⁰² While there are no records of litigations in Sparta or accounts of speeches like there are for Athens, there are references to kings and regents being trialled. Pausanias was trialled twice (Thucydides, 1.128-9, 1.131-134, 1.95), Kleomenes is trialled (Herodotus, 6.82), and Pleistoanax was trialled and condemned for accepting a bribe from Pericles (Thucydides, 1.114.2 2.21.1; Plutarch, *Perikles*, 22; Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 857)

proceedings in concert with the *Gerousia*⁵⁰³, and at only five members compared to the 30 strong *Gerousia*⁵⁰⁴, their power could always be undermined and outvoted by the *Gerousia*. The oaths Lykodamos and his peers swore to support the kings so long as the kings upheld the laws were in practice⁵⁰⁵, symbolic, the kings and their family members in the *Gerousia*⁵⁰⁶, exercised the real political muscle, and the Ephorate itself was not politically unbiased, its members were often deeply indebted to rich supporters of the kings and sometimes to the kings themselves⁵⁰⁷, which severely limited how dispassionately the Ephorate could exercise its powers. It was only in the administration of day-to-day affairs that Lykodamos' had true power as an Ephor, handling the state's commercial business⁵⁰⁸, seeing foreign embassies, putting motions before the assembly, officiating at important festivals, administering discipline, and supervising the kings on campaign⁵⁰⁹. This supervisory role meant that Lykodamos could reap no honour from battle, however he was still liable to share the penalties of failure. Ostensibly he could not interfere in the king's decisions, but allowing the king to disgrace Sparta was a worse crime than interfering, the Ephor Kleandridas was banished alongside the young king Pleistoanax when Pleistoanax was accused of being bribed to withdraw from Attica⁵¹⁰. Attaining political power would, far from granting him greater freedoms and influence, actually made his actions more prone to severe scrutiny than ever before, with equally severe consequences if his conduct did not live up to expectations.

⁵⁰³ Pausanias, 3.5.2

⁵⁰⁴ Cartledge, 2002, p.60

⁵⁰⁵ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 15.7

⁵⁰⁶ Herodotus, 6.57.5; Thucydides, 1.20.3

⁵⁰⁷ It is an Ephor with close ties of friendship to the regent Pausanias that tips him off to his imminent arrest, allowing him to escape to the sanctuary of Brazen Athena (Thucydides, 1.134).

⁵⁰⁸ Plutarch, *Lysander*, 16; *Agis*, 6; Diodorus, 13.106)

⁵⁰⁹ Herodotus, 6.56; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 13; *Hellenika*, 2.4.36, 4.2.20; Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 22.2; *Agesilaus*, 33.6

⁵¹⁰ Thucydides, 2.21.1, 5.16.3

Chapter Six; We Were Once Valiant Young Men

6.1 Old Age in Sparta

There is very little evidence regarding the life of the elderly in Sparta, and what little there is, is very clearly written from a top-down perspective, focussed almost entirely on the opportunities afforded the aristocratic elites. The majority of the information related by Plutarch and Xenophon concerns how men over 60 who had lived lives of virtue and courage could be rewarded with nomination and election to the *Gerousia*, an institution comprised of 28 men over 60⁵¹¹, in addition to the two ruling kings. In theory the only formal restrictions on membership were citizen status⁵¹², election being based on the candidates virtue and nobility, and while some sources imply that men were elected based on moral character⁵¹³, Herodotus' comments that the dyarchy's closest relatives cast votes for them when they were absent heavily indicates that the institution was regularly staffed with the upper social elites⁵¹⁴. Additionally, as the Classical *Gerousia* was a lifelong position⁵¹⁵, openings in the institution were not regularly available, the elite and restricted nature of the institution meaning that in-depth explorations of its functions do not advance understandings of what life was like for ordinary Spartiates in old age.

At age 60, Lykodamos' military obligations were fulfilled⁵¹⁶, however he could still be mobilised in situations of dire need⁵¹⁷, and could still serve as long as he was physically capable if he desired to do so; Agesilaus, despite declining to lead the 371 BC invasion of Boeotia due to his advanced age, was militarily active into his 80's⁵¹⁸, and the 80 year old Hippodamos was not only mobilised to escort King Agis, but died in combat fighting for him⁵¹⁹. It is questionable whether Lykodamos would

⁵¹¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 5.6

⁵¹² Davies, 2018, p.724

⁵¹³ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 4.7, 10.1 10.4; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 26; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1270b21-26

⁵¹⁴ Herodotus, 6.57

⁵¹⁵ Cartledge, 2003a, p.61

⁵¹⁶ Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 5.4.13

⁵¹⁷ After the disaster at Leuctra and the massive casualties Sparta suffered, the Ephors mobilised Spartans over 60 for combat (Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 6.4.17).

⁵¹⁸ Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, 40.2; Xenophon, *Agesilaus*, 2.28

⁵¹⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 222A.

have lived long enough to be released from military service and, unfortunately for the aims of this thesis, there is currently no data on the lifespan of the average Peloponnesian man, let alone the average Spartiate. Forensic analysis of skeletal remains has posited an approximate life expectancy of 45 for men⁵²⁰, however only a small sample of skeletal matter in Attica was analysed making it difficult to conjecture how congruous these findings would be with life expectancy in Sparta. Attempts have been made to establish a median Classical life expectancy using the recorded births and deaths of 83 5th/4th century Greeks⁵²¹, but these are not helpful regarding the lifespans of people whose birth and death dates are not recorded. Enough Spartiates survived past 60 to maintain the *Gerousia*, and some members of the two royal houses lived well into old age⁵²², however I believe that the differential lifestyles of the Spartan upper elites, furnished with fuller diets and better general health by their comparatively immense wealth, likely meant they had greater chances of surviving into old age than the average citizen. Lykodamos' life expectancy would have been influenced by when he had been born and reached maturity, the 465/4 BC earthquake caused significant casualties⁵²³, potentially up to 20,000 people if Diodorus' account is correct⁵²⁴, cutting short a whole generations life expectancy, and the protracted nature of the Peloponnesian War meant that Spartiates over 20 were mobilised with increasing frequency, at least until *Neodamodeis* and *Perioikoi* were being regularly drafted into the Lacedaemonian army⁵²⁵, which would also have drastically effected life-expectancy. The Spartan lifestyle did promote long life however, Lykodamos was freed from

⁵²⁰ Angel, 1945

⁵²¹ Batrinos, 2009, p.82-83.

⁵²² If Archidamia, the great grandmother of Agis IV, had married at 18 and given birth to Archidamus II around 19, and Archidamus had begat Eudamidas II around 26, who in turn had begat Agis IV around 26 years old, then Archidamia would have been around 70/71 years old when Agis IV was born. When the fact that Agis IV must have reached physical maturity before ascending to the throne is considered, then Archidamia could have been anywhere from 91 to almost 100 years old when she was executed.

⁵²³ This earthquake was seen as one of the most destructive in memory (Plutarch, *Kimon*, 16.4-5), the daytime occurrence and house collapses meant that most of the casualties were boys under 7 and girls under 18, a significant proportion of the next few breeding generations. It was only through chasing a hare that the boys in the gymnasium were saved when the building collapsed.

⁵²⁴ Diodorus, 11.63

⁵²⁵ The class of *Neodamodeis* is created sometime between 424-1 being first mentioned in Thucydides, 5.34

arduous physical agrarian labour, reducing his risk of spinal injuries, he had a full⁵²⁶, varied diet and had engaged in daily rigorous physical activity since childhood, which improved his mental health and cognitive capacity⁵²⁷, and helped prevent skeletal/muscular atrophy, stroke, and cardiovascular disease, meaning that provided Lykodamos survived his military obligations, he stood a good chance at living into his winter years.

If Lykodamos reached 60, then provided his children did not have any serious fertility issues, he could have multiple grandchildren by the time he reached 60. How much time he would have spent with them, and what kind of relationship they had is contestable, especially considering how Spartan society was structured to promote the importance of the state over the family. Spartan households, as previously discussed⁵²⁸, were not multi-generational, which limited the formation of strong intergenerational bonds. Men's civic obligations and removal of male children from the home for education limited the relationships parent's had with their children during their formative years and the ability of elder generations to build connections with young children, especially as children only become capable of building meaningful, reciprocal relationships with adults several years into their development⁵²⁹, it is also possible that Lykodamos' daughter lived several miles away from his *oikos*, further limiting the time he spent with his grandchildren. Further complicating the grandparent/grandchildren relationship is the fact that Sparta was a society that did not limit affiliative bonds to blood relations, Lykodamos was obligated to act as a father to all children, not just his own⁵³⁰, kinship being defined by community membership as well as blood. In such societies elders are culturally bound to pass down socio-cultural lessons to the whole community not just their own family⁵³¹, a civic duty that would have made Lykodamos' relationships with his grandchildren broadly similar to those he had

⁵²⁶ If Lykodamos ate the full measure of his monthly mess contributions this worked out at over 6,000 calories per day (van Wees, 2017a, p.361)

⁵²⁷ Schuch et al, 2016

⁵²⁸ See chapter 1.3 The Household

⁵²⁹ Golden, 2015, p.115

⁵³⁰ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15; Xenophon, *Lacedaemonion Politeia*, 6.1-2

⁵³¹ This has been most fully explored in relation to indigenous peoples, primarily those of North America. See Deloria (1944), and Oswalt (2009) for a thorough exploration of this concept.

with other Spartan children. The difference would be that Lykodamos' actions/conduct impacted his grandchildren in ways they did not impact non-family members, the friendships and alliances he had created during his life were inherited by his descendants, and if he decided to dissolve a relationship this left his descendants bereft of that social connection⁵³². The cultural obligation to ensure that Spartan values and virtues were being passed down as they should be would also be stronger regarding his own family, as their conduct reflected upon him and their bloodline. In practical terms, Lykodamos' wife was able to build a more cohesive and meaningful relationship with their grandchildren than Lykodamos was, Spartan grandmothers being consistent figures in the lives of the younger generations is heavily implied by several of Plutarch's apothegms. When Gyrtias' grandson, Acrotatus, is badly wounded fighting with his peers⁵³³, and years later when news arrives of his death in combat⁵³⁴, she is the one to take charge of the situation, not Acrotatus' grandfather, father or mother. Regardless of the historical veracity of these anecdotes, when combined they strongly indicate that, at least in Plutarch's view, Spartan grandmothers were integral aspects of the inter-generational dynamics of Spartan society.

As an elder of the *polis*, Lykodamos was expected to participate in the upbringing of the next generations of Spartans from birth, joining with his peers for the ceremonial inspection of new-borns at the *lesche*, a practice of immense symbolic importance. Lykodamos and the other elders were arbiters and gatekeepers of the Spartan ethnic and cultural standard, ensuring that the next generation possessed the constitution to survive the rigours of Spartan life in the inspection and in taking a pedagogical role in the lives of the younger generations as they grew to maturity. He and his peers served as overseers for the *Paidonomoi* calling them to task if they were not educating the youth to the expected standard⁵³⁵, but also adding an extra layer of legitimacy to Spartan teachings, and creating a sense of intergenerational

⁵³² Alcibiades' grandfather had dissolved a *Xenoi* relationship, and Alcibiades was clearly not happy about it (Thucydides, 5.43.2, 6.89.2)

⁵³³ Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apoththegmata*, 240F1

⁵³⁴ Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apoththegmata*, 240F2

⁵³⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 18.3

solidarity⁵³⁶, by affirming the rectitude of the lessons Spartan youths were taught and the behavioural standards they were expected to meet by serving as a paradigmatic example of those standards⁵³⁷, and by extension the Spartan system's success. This responsibility extended to all aspects of Lykodamos' life, in the choral ground where he tested the youth on their understanding of the odes they were singing, at his exercises in the gymnasium where he served as a moral, cultural, and physical tutor to the youths and young men beautifying themselves, an inducement for Lykodamos to behave with rectitude⁵³⁸, to not become lax in conduct or speech, a task he had spent his life training for. Laconicism especially was a skill Lykodamos had spent decades being encouraged to improve in⁵³⁹, when he had not been sufficiently brief when sending messages to the state, the Ephorate passive aggressively corrected him⁵⁴⁰, now, as an example of Spartan conduct to be used as an inspiration to the youth, it was even more important that he was as deliberate in his speech as possible. Lykodamos' pedagogical burden did not relax even when he was attending to private or family affairs, if he saw a youth not walking with his hands in his tunic⁵⁴¹, or not giving way to his elders in the street, Lykodamos was socially obligated to correct this behaviour⁵³⁸. Arguably the most important lesson that Lykodamos could pass on were the practical realities of Spartan life, especially military life. Having undergone the same educational experience as the youngest generation, he knew how the state inculcated the importance of the citizen's honourable death in combat into boys from a young age⁵⁴². It was Lykodamos' task to properly contextualise this imperative, to let his younger charges know that it is perfectly acceptable to be afraid, that it was mastering fear that made men brave⁵⁴³. Lykodamos could speak from experience that the true Spartan does not

⁵³⁶ Silverstein et al, 1998, p.144

⁵³⁷ French, 1997, p.256

⁵³⁸ A Spartan, being asked why he wore his beard so very long, said, "So that I may see my grey hairs and do nothing unworthy of them." (Plutarch, *Moralia*, 232E4)

⁵³⁹ Brevity in speech is highly praiseworthy in an individual (Cicero, *Laws*, 3.39.11)

⁵⁴⁰ The state responded to Lysander's communication announcing his conquest of Athens "Athens is taken," with the reply "taken" (Plutarch, *Lysander*, 14.4).

⁵⁴¹ Xenophon, *Lacedaemonian Politeia*, 3

⁵⁴² Xenophon, *Lacedaemonian Politeia*, 9.6

⁵⁴³ Loraux, 1997, p.75

Tyrteaus, Fr.12. 10-11 'no man ever proves himself a good man in war unless he endures to face the blood and slaughter'.

throw his life away⁵⁴⁴, that only those with proper respect for life could earn glory in death⁵⁴⁵. As a man whose body was crisscrossed with scars testifying to his bravery and willingness to put the needs of the state above his own⁵⁴⁶, Lykodamos was a believable and genuine authority on what would be expected of the younger men when they reached maturity, and by putting the state's teachings and a Spartiate's duties into proper context, Lykodamos was able to help the next generations understand the practical realities of adult Spartiate life.

Plutarch asserts that one of the benefits of Lycurgus' reforms was a plenitude of free time, what Plutarch unfortunately does not specify is if there were any differences between how men in their prime and men past 60 spent their free time. There was only so much time that could be spent with their families, adult sons had their own families and socio-civic duties to attend to, pubescent grandchildren were undergoing education and adult daughters had households to run. Lykodamos was free to engage in those pursuits that we might not initially associate with the supposedly uncultured Spartans of the mirage, philosophy, writing poetry and composing music/song for choral performances. Pausanias would have us believe that Spartans were not overly moved by poetry⁵⁴⁷, but this criticism relates to how Spartans did not poetically commemorate the history of the dyarchy, which does not preclude Spartans writing or enjoying poetry. It was not unknown for Spartans and Laconians to compose poetic or elegiac verses⁵⁴⁸, and there is no suggestive evidence that there was anything inherently wrong with being interested in poetry, provided that its content was congruous with Spartan values. Given the central importance of *mousike* to the Spartan *Diaita*, and the fact that the choral performances of Lacedaemonian festivals were, in terms of content, specifically tied to the socio-political purposes of the celebrations, it is not unreasonable to suppose that many were written by Spartans. Lykodamos would be, thanks to his

⁵⁴⁴ David, 1992, p.36

⁵⁴⁵ Loraux, 1997, p.67

⁵⁴⁶ Just as Marcius' scars were proof of his valour many centuries later in Rome (Plutarch, *Coriolanus*, 15.1)

⁵⁴⁷ Pausanias, 3.8.2

⁵⁴⁸ Dionysodotos the Laconian composed poetry (Athenaeus, 15.678b), and Chilon was famed for his elegiac poetry and his philosophical apothegms (Diogenes Laertius, 1.3.68-73; Diodorus, 9.2)

years of training and experience, well versed in at least one musical instrument, the Aulos, Cithara or Lyre, and it is not unreasonable to assume that he sat with his instrument and writing tools, composing the music and lyric for an upcoming civic celebration, or even for his own family. As an elder, Lykodamos was free to enjoy the privileges of citizenship, he had free to roam the city as he wished, beneficiary of the respect of all younger Spartiates⁵⁴⁹. If Plutarch's apothegms are to be taken as historically representative, then the elderly in Sparta were afforded an unusually high level of respect compared to other *poleis*⁵⁵⁰, with all younger Spartans being culturally obligated to offer up their seat for them, even when answering "natures call"⁵⁵¹, a clear sign of the high societal status of senior Spartans as men of proven social worth⁵⁵². Over the past 60 years, Lykodamos had built, mostly through shared hardship and danger, strong bonds of friendship with many different men, from his *Agele* mates and messmates to the men he served alongside in the Phalanx and as a *Hippeus*. We are told that Spartans were very restrained in their physical greetings with each other⁵⁵³, however I find it likely that Lykodamos and his closest friends would be more relaxed than younger men, perhaps clasping each other warmly and calling each other by the nicknames they had been christened with as green boys during their education. These men and their friendships would be highly important to Lykodamos, and it is likely that he introduced them to his grandchildren. His friends could tell Lykodamos' grandchildren thrilling war stories and tales of valour, and most possibly playfully arguing about the details. It is very easy, with a little imagination, to reconstruct how these afternoon amusements may have played out. These old friends bickering about their glory days, arguing about which one of them had been the first to break the enemy line decades previously, and comparing their old war wounds. Lykodamos' friends telling Lykodamos' grandchildren that they once saved their grandfather's life from a giant peltast near 8 feet tall,

⁵⁴⁹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15

⁵⁵⁰ Only in Sparta does it pay to grow old (Plutarch, *Moralia*, 235C 55, 235 F60)

⁵⁵¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 20.6

This specific detail about Spartan men habitually giving up their seat when relieving themselves may not actually be reflective of the Classical period, instead being characteristic of the period when Sparta was under Roman rule and public facilities were a common feature of the *polis*.

⁵⁵² Davies, 2017, p.30

⁵⁵³ Athenaeus, 11.41

Lykodamos himself laughing and chipping in that the last time he heard this story the peltast was only 7 feet tall. These war stories would not just be about old men reliving their glory days, they were encouragements for the young children listening to emulate the valour of their forebears.

6.2 Death and Burial in Civic Contexts



(Figure 3, 6th Century BC Spartan Two Story Tomb⁵⁵⁴)

When Lykodamos' life eventually ended he, as a man who had fastidiously lived according to Spartan values, was entitled to a civic burial with all honours, but as the only extant information on Spartan civic burials concerns women who died in childbirth⁵⁵⁵, it is difficult to ascertain what the civic burial customs in Sparta were,

⁵⁵⁴ Raftopoulou, 1998, p.135

⁵⁵⁵ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 27; *Moralia*, 238D
Brule, and Piolot, 2004, p.152

beyond Lykodamos being entitled to burial in his crimson cloak⁵⁵⁶. Very few tombs or graves from the Classical period have been uncovered in Sparta⁵⁵⁷, partially as the relatively small archeologically protected zone means that many areas of the Classical city are currently underneath the working modern city. It was only in 1994 that the zone was extended, leading to several rescue excavations and the discovery of the Olive Oil Cemetery in 2008 which the evidence indicates was in use from the Archaic to the early Christian periods⁵⁵⁸. While only 18 of the 69 graves currently excavated have tentatively been identified as Classical⁵⁵⁹, these are enough to indicate that the Spartan civic dead could be interred in public cemeteries, however they are not enough to assert that this was an obligatory *nomos*.

If Lykodamos' death had been sudden and he had passed while about his business in the civic centre, then his family would likely have been informed by messenger to come and recover his body⁵⁶⁰, if however his death had been expected due to Lykodamos gradually becoming sickly and infirm, I believe it is reasonable to assume that his family and closest peers came to pay their last respects, and possibly receive parting gifts, during his final days. The Spartans may have a reputation for simple means and pleasures⁵⁶¹, but this does not preclude the possession of personal items of symbolic, pragmatic, sentimental, or material value, such as the silver earrings⁵⁶², and the decorated bronze mirrors dedicated at sanctuaries by wealthy women⁵⁶³, that Lykodamos would wish to pass on to his

⁵⁵⁶ MacDowell, 1986, p.121

⁵⁵⁷ Christesen, 2018, p.308

⁵⁵⁸ Christesen, 2018, p.310, 325

⁵⁵⁹ Christesen, 2018, p.326

⁵⁶⁰ There is no direct evidence to support this statement, I have taken inspiration from Herodotus' account of the poet Aristeas' family being notified to collect his body from the fuller's shop where he had dropped dead as a plausible account of what might have been the practice in Sparta (4.14).

⁵⁶¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 24

⁵⁶² Koursoumis, 2014, p.196.

AMM Archaeological Museum of Messenia, catalogue number M38.

⁵⁶³ Koursoumis, 2014, p.198-99

Considering the care and attention that Spartan men are reported to have taken over their hair, as well as the fact that Spartan women shaved their heads when they married, it is eminently plausible that mirrors were not limited to use by maidens. They were most likely a shared household item used by both sexes or it may be that Spartan men had mirrors of their own.

descendants. A trusty skinning knife he had hunted with since boyhood, or a Gorgoneia that he had often carried into battle, would be ideal gifts to pass on to a grandson about to enter military service as apotropaic talismans. Once Lykodamos had passed his body needed to be prepared before it could be interred, which the shifting of all domestic labour to Helots implies was their responsibility, however considering the symbolic significance of death rituals in preparing the dead for passage into the underworld and in helping the living grieve, it is likely that Lykodamos' own family took care of these rituals, wrapping his body in his red cloak as a sign of honour, and placing a coin in his mouth as payment for passage into the underworld, likely one of the obols usually kept for paying mess dues. The finding of terracotta and bronze grave goods in the 6th century, two story tombs, discovered during excavations in Sparta indicate that it would not be incongruous with Spartan burial practices to for Lykodamos' to be interred with simple votive offerings from his family⁵⁶⁴ (Figure 3). His grave, simple and devoid of familial, political or social context, would be in keeping with the Classical practice of burying the dead in unmarked plots⁵⁶⁵, but even an uninscribed grave marker would allow his family to continue to honour him over a significant chronological period by providing a central location to engage in ancestor worship and commemoration. Although he had not died defending that state, the most noble end a Spartan could meet, Spartan culture encouraged the belief that life was a worthy endeavour in of itself, to strive for valour in both life and death⁵⁶⁶, and in striving to uphold Spartan cultural values his whole life, Lykodamos left his family with a valorous legacy that inspired pride and was an example to emulate.

⁵⁶⁴ Christesen, 2018b, p.326

⁵⁶⁵ Pechatnova, 2020, p.330

⁵⁶⁶ Plutarch, *Pelopidas*, 1.4

Conclusion

What's in a life? The Benefits of the Psychological Perspective on Spartan Society

This thesis, in electing not to explore Classical Sparta as political entity or as a military power, focussing instead on the Spartans as a people with their own culture and socio-civic touchstones, has attempted to challenge the notion that they were a people who bore little in common with the citizens of other Classical *poleis*, and bear even less resemblance to modern man. I am not the first to attempt this, Spartan exceptionalism has been thoroughly challenged by several dedicated scholars over the last several decades, producing a body of work exposing the reality of Classical Spartan society as one that has been significantly exaggerated as it has been transmitted into the modern age. What this thesis has done is to expand upon this body of work by combining it with evidence relating to other Classical *poleis*, as well as commonalities in the psychological impact of familial and social interactions revealed by modern sociological and anthropological scholarship, to plausibly reconstruct the lived experience of a hypothetical average Classical Spartan in a society that was fundamentally more similar to life in other Classical *poleis* than the exceptional city presented by the mirage implies. That reconstruction being complete, the subjects experience from life to death detailed, this thesis is left with these questions, what was the worth of his life, what benefit does Spartan scholarship reap from knowing his lived experience, can this type of approach further our understandings of Sparta in the manner that I believed it could, and can this type of approach be applied to other areas of Spartan scholarship?

The utility of using commonalities in the lived experiences of ancient and modern peoples to examine major historical events has already been proven by the scholarly work done on understanding the effect of warfare and battle trauma on Classical hoplites mentioned in the introduction, and the continued interest of scholars in men like Brasidas, Kleomenes, Agesilaus and Lysander, demonstrates that the lives of powerful, influential men are illuminative in tracking socio-cultural and political changes. This thesis expanded upon these precedents to demonstrate

that an individual does not have to have impacted the historical record for their life experiences to be illuminating regarding the cultural and political practices of their society. This endeavour was embarked upon knowing that there would be methodological problems, as detailed in the introduction, the major hurdle being that the extant evidence on Spartan life is top down, written from the perspective of elite authors writing for an elite audience, resulting in a paucity of evidence on the lifestyles, experiences, and outlooks of the ordinary man. I aimed to demonstrate that there were distinct differences in the lives led by the upper elites and those on the lower end of the Spartiate economic spectrum, particularly in terms of political access and social opportunities. In showing that the average man would be highly unlikely to ever be considered for the *Gerousia* because it was restricted, in practice although not in theory, to the upper elites, and in arguing that *Syssitia* membership was linked to existing ties of social patronage, specifically through the *Erastes-Eromenoi* dynamics, I believe this thesis has achieved that aim, although those conclusions are not unknown to current Spartan Scholarship. What I had not envisioned was that my research would reveal that not only was the average man's lived experience different from his elite counterparts but that there were a plurality of markedly different paths that the average life could take.

I had initially thought that this thesis' reconstruction of the average life would be heavily restricted by the paucity of direct evidence, instead I was presented with far more information than a thesis this size could reasonably accommodate while maintaining depth, critical engagement with the material and readability. Even discounting the major differences in how a Spartan's life would have progressed if he was relegated to inferior status, there were multiple different nexus points where my hypothetical average Spartans life could have taken a drastically different direction, being selected as an *eromenos* by a royal family member and fast tracked into the Kings mess, marrying into a high class family with significant land holdings, or being appointed as a benefactor when he left the *Hippeis* and entering into a *Xenoi* relationship with a wealthy elite in another *poleis*; any one of these events would have resulted in a life significantly different than the one that I have reconstructed. The existence of these multiple variant paths has led me to the

conclusion that the life of the average Spartan was far more susceptible to being influenced by small changes than that of the upper elites, a conclusion that I could not have reached without taking the methodological approach to this thesis that I have. So far however this does not advance our understanding of how exploring Spartan society from the ground up can help modern scholarship contextualise Spartan history or socio-cultural practices as this thesis had intended to. In the process of researching this thesis, and by focussing on the psychological and emotional aspects of the hypothetical subject's experience of participating in Sparta's civic, religious and political institutions, as opposed to what those institutions were or how they functioned logistically, it became obvious that there were certain thematic constants to a Spartan's life. One of these is that participation in socio-civic ceremonies and communal religious observances, as well as the affiliative bonds built through membership in the social groups that comprised the educational age classes, and the fraternity of the *Syssitia*, were vitally important to the construction of the collective Spartan identity, and most crucially, a Spartan's sense of ipseity. As, unfortunately due to concerns of space and depth, this thesis has not detailed the temporal changes that Spartan institutions and *nomoi* underwent in response to wider domestic and foreign socio-political shifts as was originally intended, I have not been able to track how the collective or individual Spartan identity altered in response to these shifts. Had I fully explored this I believe that I would have demonstrated that there was a major difference between the lives of the rich and the poor that rarely ever arises in scholarship, that the average man's life is affected by socio-political changes in different ways than that of his richer compatriots.

It is well established that the upper echelons of Spartan society, particularly the ruling kings and those in administrative positions, were prone to political factionalism that contributed to the rise and fall of several historically important figures, the regent Pausanias being one famous example. When major changes occurred, those who had the most socio-metric or political influence suffered immediate consequences, but the ordinary people were the ones that needed to adjust the most to the new status quo, and as a result, were the ones whose sense

of identity, as well as their social and fiscal circumstances were the most affected. It is my belief that, while this thesis has not been able to explore this particular aspect of life on the ground in Sparta to any degree of depth, that the research I have presented, and the methodology that I have used can be used to study the role that Sparta's institutions and customs played in creating and affirming the collective and personal identities of Sparta's other social classes. This thesis did not delve into the experiences of citizen women but by re-evaluating the experiences of women in civic events, in Sparta's female orientated cults, and particularly in their parental roles, it is possible to utilise the approach this thesis has taken to the ordinary Spartan's experience, to gain insight into how female identity was created and affirmed in regard to the female role as arbiters of the cultural standards of masculinity. This thesis has argued that women were, especially during the early years of their marriages, the main socialising influence upon children, this can be expanded in further studies to argue that the Spartan education system was not necessarily the main formative influence on whether children internalised and lived up to Spartan cultural values, that it was instead Spartan mothers' preparation of their children that allowed for the upbringing to be successful.

The methodology this thesis has taken was intended to humanise the Spartans as a people with recognisable concerns, hopes, setbacks and achievements, whose journey through life bears significant commonalities with that of their wider Greek contemporaries. The intention behind this was to raise questions about the manner in which scholarship approaches the study of Spartan society by demonstrating that it is not enough to know what Sparta's cultural, social and political practices were, we need to know, so far as is it is possible, what the people's experience of these practices were and how they affected their lives, or our understanding of Sparta will always be incomplete. By approaching Sparta from the rarely considered bottom-up perspective of the experience of the ordinary person we can dispel the erroneous sense of homogeneity that scholarship has inherited from the literary sources, and in the process demonstrate that taking this approach is an effective way of contextualising Spartan cultural attitudes, which can only benefit scholarly understandings of the Spartan state as a whole.

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