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Nicolette A. Pavlides: *The Hero Cults of Sparta*

In this well written and well produced monograph, Pavlides offers a comprehensive study of the hero cults of Sparta, particularly those known only from the archaeological record and featuring the sorts of small finds and modest architectural footprints that have kept them out of art history textbooks and general surveys of Greek religion. In so doing, Pavlides adds to our knowledge of Greek cult and religion from the bottom up, painting a picture of the practices and beliefs featured in the lives of regular people in one (albeit a famous and powerful one) of the hundreds of Greek poleis. Not only does Pavlides afford a glimpse at local religion in Sparta, she also provides compelling evidence that, in the sphere of hero cult at least, the Spartans were in line with many of their fellow Greeks.

I highlight two distinguishing features of this book's approach. First, Pavlides emphasizes local quirks and how such quirks differ from or, as often, are similar to the quirks observed throughout the Greek world. The hero shrines covered here are characterized by small and inexpensive offerings, the kind most people could afford and which lent themselves to spontaneous deposition by passers-by, which suggests personal and perhaps familial connections to heroes that to us remain largely anonymous. Second, by comparing the archaeological material found at these small sites with that observed at larger, state-level shrines in Sparta like the Menelaion and the Amyklaion, Pavlides reveals how blurry the lines are between mortal and immortal objects of veneration, and the rituals and sites associated with burial customs, ancestor cult, and hero cult. Pavlides provides readers not only a fuller understanding of Sparta and Spartan religion, but of Greek religion more generally.

After a usefully succinct introduction, Chapter 1 surveys the meaning and use of the term "hero" in Greek literature and the archaeological evidence for the development of hero cult in the Greek world in the Late Geometric and Early Archaic periods, placing hero cult in the context of cults of the recently deceased, mythological heroes, city founders, and others.

Chapter 2 and 3 are the heart of the book and will prove a useful scholarly resource. Chapter 2 catalogues the archaeological evidence for 29 heroic sites in Sparta, centering terracotta dedications as a key identifier of hero worship and the iconography of the famous heroizing reliefs as an indicator of the objects and rituals of hero cult. Chapter 3 surveys the votive assemblages, architectural spaces and elements, and topography of Spartan hero shrines, including a detailed table of votives that can serve as a starting point for further research. A key finding from these surveys is that, while the decline in Spartan bronze dedications is in line with other poleis, despite the scholarly trend of treating Sparta as a frugal outlier, hero shrines did have far fewer expensive and metal dedications than the larger and more famous sanctuaries did, which also accords with the evidence from other poleis. An especially representative statement of Pavlides' approach is when she notes that the sheer number of heroic cults indicates their importance to the developing Spartan community of

the 7th century and later, but also, "... as there is an obvious intersection between grave cults, ancestor cults, tomb cults and hero cults, the private/familial significance of heroes and hero cults should be considered". (101)

Chapter 4 turns to three famous shrines that are technically hero cults even if they have several features distinguishing them from the shrines covered in the preceding chapters. Helen, Hyakinthos, and the Dioskouroi were, like the other heroes worshipped, mortal humans, but they gained immortality in various ways. The dedications to figures like Helen at the Menelaion and elsewhere align with the large, state-level sanctuaries to the gods in Sparta, such as Artemis Orthia, rather than with smaller hero shrines. This chapter discusses the blurred lines between mortality and immortality, and heroes and gods in Greek religion. These three sets of heroes were effectively treated as if they were gods in terms of rituals and material dedications, and yet at the same time there is no universal set of rules in ancient Greek religion for treating gods as opposed to heroes.

Chapter 5 investigates whether and how the Spartans heroized the dead, especially prominent dead like kings and the war dead from battles such as Thermopylae. Despite the special funerary treatment famously given to Spartan kings and the arguments of scholars such as Paul Cartledge that the Spartans were more prone to heroizing their recent dead than other Greeks were, Pavlides argues that the Spartans did not heroize their kings in the traditional way, nor did they immediately raise the war dead to heroic status, at least at the time of the Persian Wars.

Chapter 6 continues the discussion of the dead by focusing on three case studies of how burials and hero cult intersected in Sparta. The first of the three is the cult at Stauffert Street, in which a Geometric burial became the site of offerings and ritual from the 7th century onward at Limnai, one of the five Spartan komai, which received more than its fair share of burials and cult activity. The other two come from Hellenistic and Roman Sparta. One is a Hellenistic building at the site of Ergatikes Katoikies incorporating an earlier burial, likely due to a family looking to increase their clout. The other is a Roman building at the Stavropoulos plot that makes use of a wall from an Archaic cult structure. A late Hellenistic or Early Roman tomb was added to this building to take advantage of the site's older cultic significance. The book ends with a brief concluding section restating its central themes.

The Hellenistic and Roman material that comes at the very end of the book and fills only six pages merely grazes the surface. The interplay between how, on the one hand, later Spartans and visitors to Sparta coopted earlier graves and cult sites, and Archaic and Classical Spartans, on the other, interacted with their more recent dead would flesh out the nuances of both earlier and later periods. Pavlides, following Nigel Kennell (whom she cites on these points on 166), seems to suggest that the tombs, monuments, and commemorations of famous Classical figures like Brasidas and Lysander that Pausanias experienced in the 2nd century CE were purely products of later re-imaginings rather than Classical. She thus situates these monuments and rituals in the preamble to the section on Hellenistic and Roman Sparta without considering the possibility that such

figures might have had cult centres in the Classical period itself. Brasidas and Lysander certainly enjoyed hero worship (the latter even while still alive!) outside of Sparta, a topic that is given too little space in this book. The heroic treatment of Spartan commanders abroad might reveal one sphere in which the Spartans really were different from their fellow Greeks. The Spartan-ness of Brasidas and Lysander is likely not accidental to them receiving religious honors none of their contemporaries enjoyed. Pavlides's focus, however, on small sites and their inexpensive offerings, and the everyday Spartans who visited them, leads the reader away from the standard focus on heroes of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, and probably rightly so. This book is a carefully researched and most welcome entry in the growing scholarly literature of how the Greeks really lived and interacted with the world. Pavlides's work deserves careful consideration and a wide readership.