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BURIALS OF THE FALLEN IN ANCIENT GREECE

Abstract

The paper evaluates works of ancient authors who mention and provide details of the burial of fallen soldiers in ancient Greece, and then it compares them with preserved archaeological finds. Textual analysis shows a long-term tradition of war graves on battlefields. The commanders of the troops provided funeral services in the first place, as the extradition request of bodies was equal to the recognition of defeat. In most cases both sides had enough time to take care of their fallen after the battle, but there were exceptions when the last honors were rather provisional. In addition to burial directly on the battlefield, it seems that, depending on the circumstances, the removal of the remains to the hometown or burial outside the battlefield and outside the home also applies. The tombstones could have various forms, in the case of collective burials, tumuli with stelae bearing the names of the deceased were preferred, in the case of burial of military commanders, tombstones took the form of a monumental statue. Cremation burial is thought to have prevailed over inhumation.

Key words: antiquity, burial, fallen, Greece, war dead

Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
That here obedient to their words we lie. (Hdt.7.228.2)

1. The Fallen in the Persian Wars

Public burial and commemorative ceremonies for the fallen in ancient Greece referred to the collective identity of a citizen. One of the basic duties of the state was to take care of the remains of the detainees who fell in defense of the homeland and grant them last honors. In Archaic and Early Classical times, burial on the battlefield was a common practice. In addition to contemporary traditions, Homeric epics, where we encounter cremation, were a model for the military burials. We even see the burial of fallen enemies in armor and the erection of burial mounds (Hom. Il. 7. 421–428, 6. 417–419). The best example is the description of Patroclus's funeral with all the requisites: we see a rich funeral feast, the felling of trees around the funeral area and their transport to the place, a ceremonial procession with the body, the construction

of the border itself, the slaughter of many sacrificial animals as well as other sacrificial gifts in the form of amphorae with honey and fat and the bodies of horses, and even the twelve bodies of killed young Trojans. In addition to the grief over the dead, the extinguishing of the remains of the border with wine, the collection of the bones of the fallen and their burial in a (golden) urn in a round tomb surrounded by a stone foundation with a piled-up clay mound (*tymbos*) are also mentioned (Hom. Il.23.30–257; Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). Archaeological finds complement the testimonies of ancient historians. Collective burial (*polyandrion*) usually meant covering multiple bodies with earth, a monumental structure, or both. Funerary architecture above ground can be divided into round and rectangular mounds. The rectangular mounds and built tombs were popular from the Archaic period (Kurtz – Boardman 1971: 105–112) and bodies were cremated, partly cremated or buried. When Herodotus (Hdt. 6.117) mentions 192 fallen Athenians buried on the plain of Marathon, he does not mention anything about the way they were buried. Archeology is helpful in this regard, as is the fact that the mound heap over their cremated remains as well as tumulus covering the inhumated bodies of their allies, the Plataeans, have survived to this day. The Athenian tumulus (*soros*) is simple shape, with a height of up to 12m and a diameter of 50m; it not only stands on the border of the Archaic and Classical periods, but also on the border of the old aristocratic world and the world of democracy. The new democratic regime used older aristocratic symbols, which it adapted to its needs and the mound became a political "manifesto" pointing to a collective identity (Whitley 1994: 213–19; Whitley 2003: 363). Archaeological records, including pottery found in excavating the mound, corresponds with the literary evidence regarding its dating (Hammond 1968: 14–17; Whitley 2003: 364). A stele containing a casualty list was put up near the tomb (Paus. 1.32.3). The list of fallen was probably preserved in the form of a funeral stele found at the villa of Herodes Atticus in Cynuria in the northern Peloponnese (Duffy 2018: 70–71). The epigram, which is mentioned by Lycurgus (Lyc. 1 109), may have been placed not only at Marathon but also in the Stoa Poikile (West 1969: 6). Thucydides considered such burial as a singular honour, referring to this habit as the *patrios nomos* due to its former character (Thuc. 2.34.5, Clairmont 1983: 368–371). At the same time, he refers to the heroes of the Homeric epics, who were also cremated and had mounds built over their remains. Even for the fallen in historical times, it should have been an honor.

The victims of the Battle of Thermopylae were not buried immediately (due to defeat), but a memorial to them was additionally built at the site of the battle with the *polyandrion*, and columns with inscriptions proclaiming, among other things, the complete devotion of Spartans to the law, and was the most prominent one (Strab. 9.4.16, Diod. 11. 33. 2). Poetry was a suitable medium, similar to architecture, painting and sculptures. Therefore, even the verses on memorials, whether an ode to the winner of the games or the fallen, spread the glory of the individual to the world. A great tumulus was built close to the monument celebrating the victory at Salamis at the highest point in the northern part of the Cynosoura Peninsula (Stroszeck 2004: 317). An inscription from the first century BC concerning the reconstruction of sanctuaries in Attica mentions the grave of the leading general of the conflict with

the Persians in 480 BC Themistocles and a *polyandrion* on the island (Culley 1975: 207–223; Duffy 2018: 116–119). Since he as well as Spartan commander Eurybiades had not died in those battles but later, their graves were not built on the battlefield. Themistocles died in 460 BC at Magnesia but his remains were brought back to Athens and he was allegedly buried not far from the harbour at Pireus (Plut. Them. 32.5). The grave of Eurybiades was at Sparta (Paus. 3.16.6). The partially preserved inscription may be related to the burial of Corinthians who died at the Battle of Salamis on the island (Plut. De Herod. 870e; Duffy 2018: 114–115).

After the Battle of Plataea, the Greeks could bury their dead right after the fight, burying them separately, according to the "tribes." However, the numbers given to Herodotus were underestimated. According to him, they all buried their fallen in common graves, namely the Tegeans, the Athenians, the Megarcans and the Fliuntians. Only the Spartans allegedly buried their fallen in three graves, especially the young, the rest and the Helots (Hdt. 9. 70–71, 85). The Athenian mound was supposed to be marked with elegiac verses by Simonides (Anth. Gr. 7.251). Archaeological research has so far failed to find unambiguous evidence of them (Duffy 2018: 59–61). The battle occupied an important place in the funeral honours paid to warriors, inasmuch as they had become legendary for establishing freedom for the Greeks. Afterwards, many cities which had not participated in the battle erected tombs on the same battlefield, since they wanted a share in its glory. Ancient writers often mention annual sacrifices to the fallen in Battle of Plataea (Thuc. 3.58.4, Plut. Arist. 21.2–5). Plutarch quotes verses commemorating the fallen Corinthians that may have marked their grave (Plut. De Herod. 872d-e). Herodotus does not mention a burial mound for Corinthian soldiers at the battlefield. However, there is a possibility that an empty tomb, a cenotaph, was built at the site of the battle later and the commemorative verses were inscribed there. A preserved epitaph (Anth. Gr. 7.512), possibly dating from the fifth century BC, probably comes from the battlefield, from a stele marking the grave of the fallen Tegeans (Duffy 2018: 130–131). The epitaph's reference the burning of Tegea may be associated with a battle, most probably the Battle of Plataea, when the city was threatened with fire. The courageous men had saved the city by laying down their lives in battle (Page 1981: 278).

2. War Graves at Home

Our information about the burial of the fallen in ancient Greece is quite incomplete. However, in addition to burial directly on the battlefield, it seems that, depending on the circumstances, the removal of the remains to the hometown or burial (in case of slaughter) outside the battlefield and outside the home also applies. There were no restrictions on transporting the corpses of the dead from the battlefield and burying the body with a family (Stuperich 1977: 69–70). In the Dark Ages and Archaic period, many conflicts were not far from home and bodies might be transported back to the relatives. After conflicts occurring great distances from home, comrades could cremate the dead and bring the ashes home. The Athenians cremated the dead either on or near the site of the battle, gathered the bones and ashes and placed them in vases, which were a common method for transporting remains (Arrington 2015: 31–34). Such tradition recalls the burial of about 120 men, whose cremated remains

were stored in 140 vessels at necropolis of Paroikia on Paros. Based on the quantity of burials, the figure decoration of the vases and a spearhead stuck to the bones, this mass burial is believed to be the earliest Greek *polyandrion*. Dated to the Late Geometric period, it has been interpreted as a state monument to the soldiers who lost their lives in a conflict possibly related to the Lelantine War (Zapheiropoulou 1999: 13– 24; Zaphiropoulou 2006: 271–277).

As for the customs themselves, we must distinguish between the winner and the defeated. The building of a monument to the victors was ideally followed by the burial of the fallen. Within the framework of military rules and customs, it was basically the duty of both parties in the conflict, and although both sides could sometimes build a *tropaion* and declare themselves the winner, in the case of burying their dead, the result of the fight was the most important. The defeated party, i.e. the one that did not remain on the battlefield, had to ask the winner, through messengers, in order to be able to bury its (already plundered) fallen, which actually formally acknowledged its own defeat (Thuc. 2.79, 3. 7, 110; Xen. Hell. 4. 3, 6. 2). Everything, therefore, depended on the outcome of the battle or on the distance of the battlefield (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). Thus, the Athenians built a common tombstone (stelae) to their fallen at home after the defeat at Tanagra in Boeotia in 457 BC, while in Pausanias's times, there was still a pillar depicting the two fighting riders Melanopus and Macartatus. After another defeat at Ephesus in 409 BC, they agreed to a truce, during which they took over their fallen from the victors. They then transported them to their nearby base in Notium where they were subsequently buried (Paus. 1. 29.6). The commanders were primarily in charge of the burial of troops, although we see that the relatives themselves could take over if they were within reach of the battle site. This happened, for example, after the victory of the Athenian exiles led by Thrasybulus in one of the clashes over the section of the government of Thirty tyrants near Athens (Xen. Hell. 2.4). However, according to Thucydides's mention of funeral rites in Pericles's famous speech to the fallen in the first year of the Peloponnesian War, it might seem that the Athenians buried "all" of their fallen in the municipal cemetery in Athens, except those who fell at Marathon. This would mean the removal of bodies, or their remains, even from more distant battlefields. What advances funeral customs is the way they exposed and buried the bones of the fallen separately according to the place of residence (*phyle*). At the same time, a special empty coffin (*kline kene*) was reserved for the missing, those whose bodies were not found (Thuc. 2.34).

A public graveyard at Athens provides the best-documented example of the political use of wartime burial, directly related to its democratic political system. For the tombs was reserved an honourable place along the way leading from Kerameikos to the Academy, the so-called *demosion sema.* Pausanias recorded that a public monument was erected for almost every Athenian who died in the battle (Paus. 1.29.4). This included stelae inscribed with the names of those who fell at Drabiscus in Thracia during the conflict with the Edones in 465/4 BC (Thuc. 1.100.3). Another war memorial was built in 432 BC for the fallen in the Battle of Potidaea (Rolley 1999: 161–162). A number of tombstones are known from archaeological finds, which were used to mark empty tombs. They were often victims of naval battles.

Before the end of the fifth century BC, a new motif in Athenian funerary iconography appeared – the farewell of a warrior fallen in battle, reflecting the number of fallen in their fight for the homeland (Matheson 2005: 23–35). At first, there were no emotions shown – rather, in contrast to the depictions of non–Greeks, there was heroic tranquillity, which was probably borrowed from the monumental sculpture of the time. Family tombs were also built near the city gates, next to state monuments – which is why the private memorials may have been influenced by the iconography of the public monuments (Boardman 2002: 185–5).

The young rider Dexileos was buried in a mass communal grave for the fallen in the Battles of Corinth and Coroneia of 394/3 BC. A private tomb was also built for him, despite the fact that a state memorial in *demosion sema* had commemorated him. The private stele was erected in the *peribolos* enclosure along with several monuments to members of his family (Hurwit 2007: 35–60). The stele bears the signs of an early sculpture of Timotheus, with the probable date of its making in 394/3 BC. The monument was placed five meters above the level of the road. The suggested heroic separation was demonstrated also by the location of the memorial on the Sacred road to Eleusis, just before the point where the Street of Tombs leading to Piraeus branched (Hurwit 2007: 37–38). Below the relief is inscribed the following epitaph: "Dexileos son of Lysanias of Thorikos. He was born in the archonship of Teisandros (414/3 BC); he died in that of Euboulides (394/3 BC), at Corinth, one of the five cavalrymen" (IG II2 6217, Clairmont 1993: 2.209). The stele is one of the few monuments that mention the age and the battle at which the soldier died. Providing dates of birth and death was unusual in Athenian commemorative practice. A plausible explanation is that providing such information would have made the clear impression that Dexileos was too young to have participated in the recent oligarchies (Hornblower 2002: 147). The so-called Tomb at Horos 3 represents an exceptional grave monument in Kerameikos. It combines a Π-shaped precinct with a circular building located in the middle. A single male burial in a poros sarcophagus was found inside. The deceased, an exceptional individual or individuals, probably deserved a state burial (*demosia tafe*), as indicated by the Panathenaic amphora crowning the tomb, and its proximity to the *demosion sema*. The sepulchral monument have been dated between the end of the fifth century and the third quarter of the fourth century BC (Palagia 2016: 374–389). A sculptured grave monument of a soldier leading his horse, erected in Kerameikos, was made by the famous fourth-century sculptor Praxiteles (Paus. 1.2.3). From the description it is not clear whether this was a stele or a free-standing sculpture.

3. The Fallen in the Peloponnesian War

Researching the burial of the fallen, one, though not entirely clear, report from Thucydides report is interesting, since it decribes the situation after the victory of the Athenian force led by Nicias over part of the Corinthian army on Isthmus in 425 BC. After the retreat of the defeated, the Athenians "began to remove armor from the fallen enemies, bury corpses and build *tropaia*." However, after the arrival of the remaining Corinthian troops, they retreated to the ships with booty and the corpses of (their own) fallen, except for two which they could not find. They then

sailed to the nearby islands and sent a messenger to negotiate an armistice so they could collect the corpses and those they left there. There were less than 50 fallen Athenians, while the Corinthians numbered 212. This would confirm the practice of taking the fallen home to Athens, although we encounter several contradictions here. First, the question is who were the victors buried on the battlefield if they retreated to the ships, as we assume with our own fallen? Similarly, we can also ask: did they try to bring about the armistice only to find the two of their own fallen who they had left on the mainland? The strangest thing, however, is that the Athenian expedition did not return home immediately, but only after plundering the coastal areas of the Peloponnese after Epidaurus. Therefore, we can only assume that the bodies were taken directly to Athens because we have no report of their burial elsewhere, and "dragging" them along for a few more weeks would be illogical (Thuc. 4.42–45). The situation was later clarified by Plutarch. The commander of Athens was Nicias, who we can consider both pious and superstitious. It was he, after finding out that they had left two of his own men unburied on the battlefield, who stopped the fleet and sent a messenger with a request to bury them. Although he otherwise criticizes Nicias's actions, he nevertheless acknowledges his attitude of being willing to sacrifice victory and glory rather than neglect the last honors of two of his fellow citizens (Plut. Nic. 6; Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30).

One way or another, we can assume that if it was possible, at least the Athenians tried to transport their fallen home. However, the parties to the conflict did not always agree on the issue of a ceasefire and the extradition of the fallen. In the Battle of Delium in 424 BC, the Boeotians defeated the Athenians in their territory (on the border), thus building a *tropaion*, collecting the corpses of (their) fallen and taking away the equipment and armaments of the fallen enemies. After the fight, an Athenian messenger was sent home after being warned that they would not reach an armistice, nor would the bodies be released unless the Athenians withdrew from the battlefield. Negotiations, or rather mutual accusations, then lasted for several days. Only after the conquest of the city, seventeen days after the battle, did the Athenians get the bodies of their compatriots back (Thuc. 4.97–101). At Thespiae, on the road to Leuctra, there were discovered the remains of a burial mound with a colossal lion statue, dated to the second half of the fifth century BC. The tomb contains cremated remains and inhumations. Archaeological finds, including pottery, suggest that the tomb can be identified as a *polyandrion* of the Thespians who fell at the battle (Schilardi 1982: 6–24). In the case of defeat in a more distant foreign country with a large number of victims, it was not so easy. Six hundred fallen Athenians, whose bodies, after being defeated in the Battle of Amphipolis in 424 BC, were buried by the survivors somewhere on the spot before sailing home proves the effort made to take care of the last things, even abroad (Thuc. 5.11). Even in the case of victory near their own territory, burials did not always take place directly on the battlefield. Thus, after the victory of the Spartans over the Argives (including the allies) in the Battle of Mantinea in 418 BC, the victors transported their dead to nearby Tegea and buried them there. The hostility of the Mantineans and the alliance of Tegea, which decided the location of the last resting place of their fallen, were essential for the Spartans (Thuc. 5.74). During the Sicilian expedition of the Athenians in the years 415–413

BC, there are also a few references to the issue. Immediately after the first collision before Syracuse and the victory of the Athenians, Thucydides states that the victors burned about fifty of their fallen at the pyre, remained on the battlefield and then after the ceasefire agreement, released (about 260) the fallen from Syracuse (Thuc. 6. 71; Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30).

4. Defeats, Disasters and Burials

An extreme and unparalleled case is the situation after the last unsuccessful attempt by the Athenian fleet to escape from Syracuse two years later. The catastrophic situation of the Athenians is also evidenced by the fact that after the defeat of their fleet, they were so demoralised that they not only tried to collect wreckage from ships and corpses, but also to negotiate for the extradition of the fallen. The general demoralisation also manifested itself in the fact that they left their dead unburied and many wounded in the camp during the escape of the ground forces. If we have nothing to do with an exaggerated attempt to prove the desperate situation of the Athenians, then this would be one of the few examples of a deliberate, despite forced, ignorance of funeral customs. But given the total liquidation of the Athenian expeditionary army, we hear nothing of the remorse that would denigrate this "neglect" of the last honors (Thuc. 7. 72, 7; Plut. Nic. 25). The establishment of public burial affected the sepulchral commemoration of individuals. Mourning of the dead was sternly banished in the case of those who had fallen in battle, marked in epithaphs as "good men" (*andres agathoi*), but this was compensated for by various privileges for the families of the decedents during commemorative festivals (Pritchett 1985: 105–106; Stears 2008: 139–155). Efforts by the polis to control emotional manifestations during funerary rituals are understood as a Panhellenic phenomenon (epigraphically attested at Athens, Gortyn, Delphi, Ceos) appearing at the end of the Archaic and beginning of the Classical period (Richter 1961: 54). During the Greco-Persian Wars, the number of public funerals connected with the highlighting of deeds performed for the country increased (Boardman 1955: 55–66), with public praise of the fallen frequently taking place. Pausanias mentions that the fallen at Marathon were worshipped as *heroes* (Paus. 1.32.4). In Athens, funerary games were organised for them on a regular basis, while their families organised private memorial festivities referred to as *nomizomena* (Nováková 2016: 110–112). Thucydides mentions annual rites paid to the war dead at Plataea (Thuc.3.58.4). Isocrates states that the Plataeans mention the reinstruction of their tomb cult when requesting Athens to restore their city after the Theban destruction in 373 BC (Isoc. Plataicus 61; Duffy 2018: 145). According to Diodorus, a public funeral oration and games were instituted in 479 BC to commemorate those who had died in the Persian Wars (Diod. 11.33.3). Pausanias recalls a common grave of the fallen of the Persian Wars in Megara, who are referred to as heroes (Paus. 1.43.3). His mentioning of this corresponds to the text of the inscription (IG VII. 53), which pays honour to all the citizens of Megara fallen in the years 480 and 479 BC (Guijarro Ruano 2016: 35–55). The inscription refers to the naval Battles of Artemisium and Salamis that took place in 480 BC, and also to the battle fought off Mycale on the west coast of Anatolia, and the Battle of Plataea, both of which took place in the year 479 BC. The bloody sacrifice

of a bull – implying those cult-honours, which took place periodically – is mentioned in the text (Schörner 2014: 151–162). Unlike the Greeks, there is no testimony of the Persians burying their war dead in order to honor the bodies. They abandoned their dead following the battle of Marathon (Paus. 1.32.5) and the dead at Plataea were left unburied, too. Years after the battle, when the flesh had completely decayed from the bones, the locals moved them into the common grave (Hdt.9.83). Following defeats at Artemisium and Salamis, the Persian corpses were abandoned floating in the waters. Bodies may have been forsaken because of the scale of the disaster as well as for religious and cultural reasons (Arrington 2015: 23–24).

The duty to take care of the dead was essential for the Greeks and is evidenced, in particular, by the well-known fate of the Athenian commanders after the naval battle of the Arginusae Islands in 406 BC in which the Athenian fleet defeated the Spartans. Victory was one thing, but the "neglect" of rescuing their own who had gone overboard and burying the dead brought about a process in which they convicted and executed six of the eight commanders present. The mitigating circumstance was neither the victory itself nor the storm, which made it impossible to rescue anyone. This result was rather affected by the struggles within the domestic political scene, and although the citizens soon regretted it, it does not change the "peculiarities" of the Athenian democratic system, which often even got rid of its most capable representatives (Xen. Hell. 1.6–7). A similar question resonated only a year or two earlier in Sicily. The Syracuse politician and Commander Hermocrates, who played a significant role in the defeat of the Athenians in Sicily in 413 BC but went into exile after the victory of the Democrats in his hometown, returned in 407 BC. He tried to use this "card." He had the bones of fallen fellow citizens from the destroyed Himera brought to Syracuse, which in 409 BC was conquered by the Carthaginians. His attempt did not quite work out. Although the citizens ceremoniously buried the remains and even sent him into exile, his opponent Diocles, who was responsible for leaving the bodies in Himera, did not call Hermocrates himself to the city. His subsequent coup attempt and death during a fight in the street essentially proved them right (Diod. 13. 61.6, 13. 75. 2–8).

5. Burials on Battlefields

In most cases, both sides had enough time to take care of their fallen after battle, but there were exceptions when there was no room for it and the last honors were rather provisional (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). Examples are also found in Xenophon's Anabasis. When the Greeks were in the territory of the Carduchs (Kurds), after the clashes, they exchanged a native guide for their own fallen and "as far as possible showed them all the honors they deserved for good men" (Xen. Anab. 4.2.23). This "provisional arrangement" became even more pronounced at the end of the pilgrimage of the Greeks back home in the territory of Bithynia. Parts of the units there looted the local Thracians and Persians, while the Greeks suffered considerable losses. As they fell, as the context suggests, especially on the run, Xenophon's troops found their bodies over a large area. They buried them, either because the bodies were (after five days) in decay and could not be transmitted or because of the threat of further attacks, "where everyone fell," meaning those who

lay along the route of the march. However, for those that were not found, they at least made one "big" symbolic cenotaph (*kenotafion*) and decorated it with wreaths. Xenophon was always in the role of one who respected religious customs, so we can recognize that as a commander, he did his best under the circumstances, although he did not bear the share of the losses (Xen. Anab. 6.4.9).

Similar to the Athenian commanders but with a different end was the case of Spartan king Pausanias (446–428 and 409–394 BC). When the Spartan "vanguard" led by Commander Lysander prematurely attacked the Thebans in 395 BC and suffered a defeat under the walls of the city of Haliartos in Boeotia, Lysander himself, the famous victor from Aigospotamoi, fell. The king, who arrived to the battlefield later, did not dare fight the battle and preferred a truce in such an uncertain situation. One of the reasons was the effort to recover Lysander's body and the other fallen. The important thing was that their bodies lay under the city walls, so even in the event of victory, they would be difficult to obtain. Facing his own weakening and the strong position of the Thebans, he decided to take the bodies during the armistice. But the Thebans were only willing to release them if they withdrew from the country, to which Pausanias agreed. However, he was condemned for that in Sparta. One of the reasons was the fact that he had the dead picked up for a truce and did not try in accordance with Spartan traditions to win them in a victorious battle (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). As he did not appear in court, he was sentenced to death in absentia, which he avoided by escaping to Tegea. Naturally, it was not just a way of getting the fallen, but especially due to the fact that he did not try to reverse the situation, he lost his faith and acknowledged defeat, which was not forgiven in Sparta (Xen. Hell. 3.5). Plutarchos briefly confirms this information and, as an expert on the situation (born in nearby Chaeronea), adds that Lysander was buried at the point where they crossed the Boeotia border with him, in the town of Panopos in Phocis His memorial (*mnemeion*) was to stand there in his time on the way from Delphi to Chaeronea (Plut. Lys. 29.3).

A year later, after the Battle of Coronea (394 BC), the Thebans themselves had to deal with a similar dilemma. It has already been mentioned above that the day after the "indecisive" battle, King Agesilaus's Spartan army lined up in battle, set up a *tropaion* and then sent the Thebans a messenger asking them to bury their fallen as a truce, thus de facto acknowledging their defeat. This is briefly stated by both Xenophon and after him, Plutarch. But in a short celebration in honor of King Agesilaus, Xenophon mentions one more detail. The evening after the battle, the king had "the corpses of the enemy in the middle of his camp" taken away. We had not yet encountered such a procedure, although it was a situation where the winner had not yet been completely decided. However, this "confiscation" of bodies looks strange. We can consider this as a kind of "insurance," or a form of coercion against the enemy, who did not have the opportunity to get their fallen without a fight and rather than face too much risk chose to surrender (Xen. Hell. 4.3; Xen. Ages.2). A similar dilemma had to be solved by the Spartans in 371 BC after losing the Battle of Leuctra, where not only King Cleombrotus I fell, but also their hegemony over Greece. When the defeated troops withdrew to their own camp, some of the Spartans suggested that they prevent the Thebans from erecting a victorious monument and

trying to get their fallen in battle. However, given the high losses and reluctance of the allies to fight, the polemarchs refused. So they sent a messenger with a request for a ceasefire, to which the Thebans agreed. Subsequently, the winners built a *tropaion*, released the fallen and thus obtained confirmation of their victory (Xen. Hell. 6.4; Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30).

6. Burials in the Late Classical Period and Afterwards

Immediate military-political circumstances seem to have been decisive, in the first place, at the site of the burial of the fallen after battle. In the case of Archaic times and the Early Classical period, we lack information, but if we can trust the information from historians from the Classical period, for various reasons, the fallen could have been buried outside the battlefield, distinguishing whether the territory was their own, allied or hostile (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). After the experience of neglecting the rescue of those that had been stranded at sea, for example the fallen off the Arginus Islands with another Athenian naval commander – Chabrias, after the victory over the Spartan fleet in 376 BC at Naxos, he gave up the persecution of the enemy and preferred to return to save the survivors and provide for the fallen. As for the situation after the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, we know that the fallen Macedonians had a "mass burial ground" (*polyandrion*) there, while the remains of the Athenians were taken home and a celebratory speech (*logos*) was to be given to them by the decision of the people to deliver Demosthenes, who escaped the battle (Plut. Dem. 21, Plut. Alex. 9.2). The minimal number of mentions of the burial of the fallen in the case of the campaign of Alexander the Great is especially peculiar. Thus with Plutarch, due to his biographical intention, only a note appears that after the Battle of Granicus in 334 BC, only 39 of Alexander's men had fallen. The conqueror had their portraits made of metal by his court sculptor Lysippus, but the mention of the method and place of burial is absent here (Plut. Alex. 16). Arrian is a little more specific when he writes that Lysippus's metal statues of the fallen, (about) 25 Macedonian riders from the nobility, stood in the Macedonian city of Dion. Alexander had the other fallen (more than 60 cavalry and 30 infantry) buried the next day (on the battlefield), even with their armor and honors. These equestrian portraits probably became a model for equestrian statues of Hellenistic rulers and Roman emperors (Arr.An. 1.16).

In in Arrian's work we find a few more mentions of burials after the fight, but the details are not sufficient (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). For example, he mentions that after Issa, he had the fallen buried with all the honors, with the participation of the whole army in full armor. Elsewhere, describing the persecution of the rebels in Sogdian, he states that Alexander had his fallen soldiers buried at the scene of the raid as "circumstances allowed." Similarly, he briefly mentions giving up the last tribute to the fallen in the battle with King Porus in India (Arr.An. 2.12., 4. 6, 5.20, 24). Although Curtius Rufus did not have much sympathy for Alexander, his submission also shows the emphasis placed by the Macedonians on the burial of the fallen, because "few of their military duties were preserved" as well as this. This is also evident from Alexander's efforts to retrieve the bodies of his men from the walls of Halicarnassus thanks to Memnon, the commander of the Greek mercenaries

in Persian service. He considered their non-release as unacceptable behavior for a Greek. Even after Issa, the conqueror had even the noblest Persians buried, showing he was able to show respect to the enemy as well (Curt. 2.9, 3.12, 5.4). Plutarch's report on the only Greek among the diadochoi – Eumenes of Cardia (362–316 BC) is interesting. After his defeat by Antigonus Monophthalmus at Orcynia in Cappadocia, although he was being pursued and was on the run, he returned with his troops to the battlefield and cared for the dead. He had the fallen carried to one place and used the doors from the surrounding villages for their cremation due to a lack of wood. The soldiers and officers were burned separately. He then buried their remains in two mounds and then withdrew. Antigonus, whose army arrived to the battlefield later, was said to be very surprised by Eumenes's impudence and fearlessness.

If we realise that Eumenes could not fully rely on his Macedonian troops, then the burial of their fallen countrymen might not have been a mere manifestation of "piety." However, the reality is strange, and it could follow from a report that Eumenes not only buried his fallen, but also those of Antigonus. It was natural that the defeated Eumenes remained unburied on the battlefield, but it would be strange that the winner would not secure the last honor for his own men. However, it would be logical to consider trying to catch up with the enemy (Roháč; Nováková 2020: 6–30). Antigonus eventually returned to the battlefield after an unsuccessful pursuit, presumably to make up for not performing the habits previously. It may be unnecessary speculation, but it also follows the above that the form of burial at the end of the fourth century BC was cremation and common graves – *tumuli* (Plut. Eum. 9). We hear a similar expression of appreciation from Plutarch in the case of Demetrius Poliorcetes, who after his victory over Ptolemy I in the naval Battle of Salamis, Cyprus, in 306 BC, had the fallen enemies buried with "great splendor" (*megalopretos*) (Plut. Demetr. 17). After the Battle of Kafya (220 BC) in Arcadia, where the Aitolians defeated the Achaeans, the head of the Achaean League and an army from Megalopolis, who buried the fallen Achaeans, came to the battlefield the next day. On the Kafya plain, they dug a mass grave (*polyandrion*), collected the corpses and buried the unfortunate with all the honors (Plb. 4. 13, 2–3). Even after one of the greatest battles of that time – the Battle of Raphia in June 217 BC, which had with thousands of casualties, we only hear briefly about the burial of the fallen (Plb. 5. 86. 2, 5, 8). Ptolemy IV had to bury about 2,200 of his men the day after the battle, while the defeated Antiochus III had to take care of the burial of more than 10,000 men.

7. Conclusion

Mentions of the burial of the fallen, recorded in the written sources, supplement the archaeological finds and in many cases expand our knowledge of the burial customs in ancient Greece. Historians often refer to the duty of the last honors, which was respected by both the victorious and defeated commanders. This is in line with the generally accepted respect for the fallen and the effort to provide memorial services so that religious and social conventions are observed. This has affected both the bodies of the fallen and their remains, as even the long passage of time has had no influence on the provision of a funeral ceremony. On the contrary, the events of the

Classical period indicate that the burial of the fallen, in some cases long after death, often became the subject of political debate and struggle. The most common methods included burial at the battlefield. A mound, covering a communal grave, recalled the tradition of the Homeric epics and promoted the collective identity of citizen. The fallen, referred to as "good men," received various posthumous honors. The removal of bodies (or cremated remains), even from more distant battlefields, is documented in written and archaeological sources from the Archaic period onwards. The best example was a place in democratic Athens, reserved for public burials. Transporting bodies was significantly more difficult in the case of a large number of fallen or of home being a long-distance from the battlefield. With the expanding Greek world, as well as the increase in mass-scale conflicts, burial on the battlefield became the preferred choice. However, in the event of a catastrophic defeat or of a malignant epidemic weakening one side to a large extent, no adequate funeral expressions of respect for the dead could happen and the victims were not even buried. However, these were extreme situations that only temporarily, although on a mass scale, disrupted established practices and customs.

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LE SEPOLTURE DEI CADUTI NELL'ANTICA GRECIA

Riassunto

L'articolo valuta le menzioni nelle opere degli autori antichi, che forniscono dettagli sulla sepoltura dei soldati caduti nell'antica Grecia e le confronta con i reperti archeologici conservati. L'analisi testuale mostra una lunga tradizione di tombe di guerra sui campi di battaglia. I comandanti delle truppe provvedevano principalmente ai servizi funebri , poiché la richiesta di consegna dei corpi era uguale al riconoscimento della sconfitta. Nella maggior parte dei casi entrambe le parti avevano abbastanza tempo per prendersi cura dei loro caduti dopo la battaglia, ma vi erano anche eccezioni nel qual caso gli ultimi onori erano piuttosto provvisori. Oltre alla sepoltura direttamente sul campo di battaglia, sembra che, a seconda delle circostanze, vi fosse anche il trasferimento dei resti nella città natale o la sepoltura fuori dal campo di battaglia e fuori casa. Le lapidi funerarie potevano avere varie forme, nel caso di sepolture collettive si preferivano tumuli con stele recanti i nomi dei defunti, nel caso di sepolture di comandanti militari le lapidi assumevano la forma di una statua monumentale. Si pensa che la sepoltura per cremazione abbia prevalso sull'inumazione.

Parole chiave: antichità, sepoltura, caduti, Grecia, caduti in guerra