

# Death and Dying

BY SONDERFORSCHUNGSBEREICH 948

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*Please note: This article is a 'work in progress' and based on collective discussions held in the Sonderforschungsbereich 948 "Helden – Heroisierungen – Heroismen". We therefore refrain from naming individual authors.[1]*

## 1. Definition and overview

In many cultures, mortality is a prerequisite for heroism. This is because death is seen as a risk that **heroes** take, a sacrifice they make, and thus the ultimate **transgression**. Both the willingness to die and death and its circumstances play an essential role in **heroization processes**. The **adoration and admiration** of heroes does not end with their lives, but continues, or in some cases, emerges posthumously.[2]

Death and dying play a role in heroization processes in two ways:[3]

1. In the case of *heroic death*, death and its circumstances form a distinct factor for the heroization of a figure. For example, the death of a **soldier** or firefighter in combat or during a rescue operation can become the occasion or reference point for them to be declared heroes. As a rule, this is a retrospective heroization which goes hand in hand with

the attribution that a hero exposed themselves to a dangerous situation, knowingly risking their life and thus making a self-sacrifice. The hero's inner attitude towards death thus becomes a decisive criterion of heroization – often irrespective of whether this attitude was genuine or whether it was a mere projection by admirers. In military contexts in particular, the dead are heroized by being certified as having died a “hero's death” – a term that was often invoked in the cult of the fallen of the First and Second World Wars[4] and which has become problematic in the post-heroic societies of the present.[5]

2. The *death of a hero* primarily means no more than the death of a figure who had already achieved heroic status during their lifetime. The death of a hero is often an occasion for the community of admirers to recall his/her [deeds](#) and actions and to reaffirm his/her heroic status. Such an event is therefore often associated with ritual tributes, commemorative practices[6] and mortuary and funerary cults[7]. A psychological interpretation of this phenomenon could point to the fact that the death of the hero also creates an awareness of the transience of his glory. Since the hero can no longer perform new deeds, the risk of his being forgotten also increases; the community of admirers counteracts this by promptly creating a permanent monument. However, the death of the hero also offers opportunities for commemorative representation: for example, the hero can no longer damage his charismatic and heroic status himself, which facilitates hagiographic representation. In some cases, it is only through their death that a person moves the necessary distance from the community, thus making them available as an object of heroization. Finally, the ‘death of heroes’ is often perceived as a historical turning point or an epochal schism that has great significance for a community's culture of remembrance[8]. This has been illustrated in recent times in numerous examples ranging from political or religious leaders[9], to civil rights icons[10], and even pop stars[11] whose deaths provoked strong social and media reactions.

In both variants, dying is closely linked to heroization processes whose effect is based primarily on two principles: First, the fundamental anthropological experience of death is accompanied by the need to give meaning to an individual's death by relating it to something supra-individual. The attribution of a ‘heroic death’ provides this *constitution of meaning* by suggesting that the hero sacrificed his life for the community, its values and its institutions.[12] Secondly, the heroization of death is based on the *individualisation* and *personalisation* of dying. Both the attribution of ‘heroic death’ and the ‘death of the hero’ emphasise the person as an individual and set him or her apart from the mass of all those who have died. Only individualisation enables the heroization and appropriation of the dead by the bereaved.

Moreover, death and dying are predestined for heroization because they have an inherent *transgressiveness*: the classification of a (heroic) death can be perceived as the maximum expression of human freedom of action and transgression from the norm. This applies above all to self-sacrifice and suicide as specific forms of heroic death. In addition, death refers to the transience of the heroic and therefore offers both an *empathetic moment* (the hero dies like all human beings) and an *adorative moment* (the hero appears inimitable even in death). This effect can be supported by certain [media](#) representational strategies that stage heroic death as both a transitory moment and as a tragic catastrophe.[13] Finally, there is a particularly good chance of a successful heroization: the death of persons can easily be instrumentalised since the dead can no longer defend themselves against their heroization or forfeit their heroic status through their later actions. “The myth of the heroic victim thus has a double, not to say double-edged, function: it provides consolation and creates meaning, but it can also be instrumentalised for slogans of perseverance and for inhuman combat operations.”[14]

The following remarks focus on the phenomenon of 'heroic death'.

## 2. The 'heroic death' as a specific form of heroization

'Heroic death' is a specific form of [heroization process](#). As in other heroization processes, the hero and his actions are ascribed exceptionality and exemplariness, and his death is given an affective and moral charge. 'Heroic death' can also have a strong [power of attraction](#) and an appellative effect. Nevertheless, the heroization of death has specific characteristics that distinguish it from other variants of heroization.

### 2.1. Preconditions of the 'heroic death'

Whether a person can be heroized because of their death, largely depends on the historical and cultural context. In premodern societies based on three estates or other orders of social hierarchy, heroic status was normally reserved for the ruling, military or clerical elite. The recognition of a heroic death was thus limited to a small minority and was interpreted – like the heroic in general – as an expression of [qualities of character](#) such as greatness of soul, drive and courage.<sup>[15]</sup> Death vouched for the heroic status of the person or – if the circumstances did not meet the expectations of a hero – could relativise it.

In egalitarian societies, on the other hand, heroes are subject to fewer social restrictions.<sup>[16]</sup> This becomes visible, for example, from the 18th century onwards in the course of the bourgeoisification of the heroic in the military, which led to the sacrifice of the patriotic *citoyen*, who fought for the nation as a simple soldier, being praised as a 'heroic death'.<sup>[17]</sup> Whether or not the deceased had already demonstrated a heroic character during his lifetime is usually irrelevant. In modern societies, as well as in ancient Athens, the heroic death even offers a possibility for achieving heroic fame which can compensate for and outshine a person's earlier misconduct. The Athenian statesman Pericles, for example, remarks in his epitaph on the fallen of the Peloponnesian War: "Even for those who were worse in other ways it is right that first place be given to valor against enemies on behalf of country."<sup>[18]</sup>

The death of women has its own variants of heroization. Prominent is the suicide of the virtuous heroine (e.g. Lucretia), which not only serves to restore personal honour, but also at the same time reaffirms the morals and norms of the community. Another model of heroization is [martyrdom](#) for metaphysical goals or faith<sup>[19]</sup>; the joint love-death out of the absolutisation of love (e.g. Romeo and Juliet, Pyramus and Thisbe); and group sacrifice after lost military conflicts (e.g. the 'heroic death of the four hundred soldiers of Pforzheim'<sup>[20]</sup>).

In addition to personal conditions, the potential for heroization also depends on the circumstances of the death. By no means is every death on the battlefield appreciated as heroic, even if the fallen otherwise fulfil the necessary conditions. Medieval knights were expected not to senselessly seek danger in battle, as "a self-inflicted death [was] seen as a deterrent and not worthy of imitation".<sup>[21]</sup> A 'heroic death' could only be attributed when the risk was proportionate to the possible gain, and courage did not turn into recklessness. If, on the other hand, a figure was already considered a hero during their lifetime and suffered a decidedly unheroic death, this did not necessarily lead to its deheroization – this is shown by the example of Frederick Barbarossa, who died in a bathing accident during the Third Crusade, without this having any influence on his heroization.<sup>[22]</sup> Finally, culture-specific factors also have a significant influence. For example, in the visual culture of ancient Greece, the death of heroes on the battlefield was reimagined and represented as a Homeric duel, although mass combat dominated contemporary practice.<sup>[23]</sup> In contrast, the post-heroic societies of the present strive to avoid the risky combat operations of their soldiers and to replace them with highly

technical, remote-controlled conflicts. In this context, the heroization of death is only possible to a very limited extent and requires special 'necropolitical' strategies.[24]

## 2.2. Assertion of intentionality

The 'heroic death' presents the community of admirers with the challenge of asserting the passively suffered death of the heroized figure as an actively accomplished feat (*ergon / deed*). Therefore, the hero must be portrayed as an intentional actor who consciously accepts death as a possible consequence of his actions. The subsequent attribution of intentionality happens independently of the actual motives of the heroized figure. However, it is propitious for heroization if a heroic willingness to sacrifice could already be anticipated in the person's life.

## 2.3. Internalisation of agonality and agency

The admiration of the 'heroic death' is not primarily directed at the hero's accomplished deed, but at his inner attitude. For the heroization, it is not decisive whether the heroized person acted successfully and, for example, was able to prevail in battle against an antagonist. Rather, the point of reference is the selfless willingness of the person to stand up for certain goals or values at the risk of or in the certainty of his or her own death.

The rhetoric of the 'heroic death' is thus based on the suggestion that the heroized figure had to wrestle with themselves and overcome their egoistic interest in his or her own survival. The decision to stake one's life is presented retrospectively as a mental and agonal struggle that preceded external action. Similarly, agency appears internalised, for the hero's agency manifests itself in his active decision to risk his life. This is all the more true when the hero intends his own death – as in the case of heroic suicide, deliberate self-sacrifice or *martyrdom* (e.g. the *miles christianus*). However, for the hero to simply accept death as a mere possibility can already be sufficient for his heroization.

## 2.4. Increased transgressiveness

The 'heroic death' represents a particularly drastic transgression from the norm. On the one hand, the decision to self-sacrifice can be considered the maximum expression of human freedom of action. This transgression of boundaries is all the more blatant the more it is based on an inherent paradox: By having his life at his ultimate disposal, the hero brings about a state in which his own life becomes utterly unavailable to him.

On the other hand, 'heroic death' implies a negation of fundamental social values. The hero gives up – not only temporarily, but permanently – his human and civil rights, including first and foremost the right to life and physical integrity, as well as the enjoyment of all social and material privileges. Nevertheless, in many cases 'heroic death' strengthens social cohesion because the bereaved interpret it as a necessary sacrifice and a conscious contribution to the upholding of their community and its value system. This functionalisation of death is supported by commemorative practices – from the erection of monuments to the fallen to ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – that focus on the sacrifice of heroes.

## 2.5. Projecting the heroic achievement into the future

If the hero's death was not directly accompanied by a real achievement, a prospective achievement can be attributed to him instead, which only unfolds its effect after his death (e.g. in the form of the claim that the hero strengthened the community with his sacrifice and contributed to the upholding

of values). At the same time, the hero's death becomes an appeal and an obligation for those left behind to also stand up for the community with great willingness to sacrifice.

## 2.6. Collectivisation of individual glory

The attribution of glory is typically justified by the individual and extraordinary deeds of a hero. In the case of heroic death this individualistic principle can be projected onto an entire community and can thus be **collectivised**: Regardless of their individual performance in battle, a fallen person participates in the collective glory earned by their unit and is given a place in the collective memory of their community.

## 3. Theoretical approaches and heuristics

### 3.1. Symbolic exchange

Egon Flaig describes 'heroic death' as a symbolic exchange between hero and society. For his self-sacrifice, the hero receives a "counter-offering [...] of a ritual and ideal nature", namely an honourable place in the collective memory: "Those willing to die count on a counter-offering in any case, namely an honourable commemoration of their name and the transfer of this honour to their descendants." The symbolic exchange is necessary because self-sacrifice is economically incommensurable: "If one wanted to pay for the willingness to die in real terms, the costs would rise to astronomical heights. For those willing to die offer a specific good that is otherwise unavailable on the market."<sup>[25]</sup> Since heroic deaths form an important part of the culture of remembrance, they continue to have an effect in the future and become an obligation for later generations to also commit themselves to their own community – if necessary with their own lives. The symbolic exchange of the hero's death therefore serves the "intergenerational reproduction of a collective".<sup>[26]</sup>

A critical objection to this interpretation is that the hero can never receive the glory he has acquired, since he no longer exists as a subject of exchange after his death. Flaig himself remarks: "In this respect, we are dealing with a symbolic exchange, which is a non-exchange."<sup>[27]</sup> Even more fundamentally, there must be the qualification that a figure's willingness to sacrifice is not a necessary condition for their death to ultimately be interpreted and heroized as a sacrifice. Rather, an involuntary death can later be reinterpreted and instrumentalised for political or social purposes.

### 3.2. Anthropological creation of meaning

The heroization of death can be understood as a reaction to the fundamental anthropological need to endow death with meaning – as 'making sense of the senseless'. The concrete content of this assignment of meaning is thereby open: The survivors can interpret death as a sacrifice and in return grant the deceased a share in the collective glory. (This is the case, for example, in the *Epitaphios* of Pericles).<sup>[28]</sup> Death and life are related through the sacrifice. The suggestion of a symbolic exchange of sacrifice and glory is therefore to be understood as an offer of meaning by the survivors, not as an independently applicable descriptive model.

### 3.3. Functionalist interpretation

For the community of the bereaved, the heroization of death and dying fulfils important social functions. By interpreting the death of a figure as a sacrifice for one's own community and its values, heroization serves as the affirmation and reproduction of social norms as well as an external

demarcation. The sacrifice commits the survivors to the common values. At the same time, the heroic death becomes an example and an appeal for the survivors to also stand up for the community with a great willingness to sacrifice.

Because the heroic death refers to the mortality of the hero and thus to his humanness, it offers a great potential for identification by the admirers. Therefore, heroic death sometimes strengthens social cohesion to a greater extent than the adoration of exceptional victorious heroes.

Because of these stabilising functions, heroic death is often a target of political instrumentalisation and staging. In this way, political actors and institutions can declare themselves to be the 'higher good' for which the hero sacrificed himself. The effectiveness of this staging is further increased if suitable prefigurants for the heroic death can be identified. The [prefigurations](#) can be historically obvious – for example, when the son's death in battle is interpreted as a necessary repetition of their father's death in battle – or establish broad historical references. However, heroic death is not only legitimised retrospectively but also projected prospectively into the future: The most recent heroic self-sacrifice itself becomes a prefigurant for future generations, thus appealing to their own willingness to make sacrifices.

#### 4. Representation and mediality

The representation of the hero's death in texts and especially in images usually follows one of several variants:

1. *The still unharmed hero.* The focus is on the moment of self-sacrifice, in which the hero's agency, inner agonism and/or heroic attitude reach their highest expression.

2. *The dying, not yet dead hero.* This variant dominates above all the representation of the 'heroic death', because here too the agency and the sacrificial attitude of the still living hero can be well represented. Other distinguishing [qualities of the hero](#) in relation to his opponents (such as courage, beauty, being the foremost, inferiority) can also be highlighted, indicating his high level of agency.

3. *The hero in the immediate moment of dying.* Reference is made above all to the anthropological problem of mortality, which the hero shares with his admirers.

4. *The dead hero.* This variant is primarily for depicting the 'death of a hero' rather than the 'heroic death'. The depiction of the dead hero often marks an epochal moment in memory culture. Here, the 'exchange character' of the hero's death can be staged and used in an adhortative/mobilising way through a certain, honouring treatment of the corpse.

5. *The transfigured hero.* The dead hero is imagined as a counsellor or 'true victor' in the afterlife. This transfiguration can also be implied with the death itself.

6. *The hero during his lifetime.* The representation of the hero during his lifetime helps the admirers to visualise and remember the hero as a member of his community. This motif plays a role in many forms of heroization and is not exclusive to heroic death.

In the pictorial representation of heroic death, techniques and strategies are often used to emphasise the heroic status of the deceased:

*Idealisation and vitality:* the [body](#) of the dying person appears beautiful, youthful and/or athletic – it is clearly visible that it is not a death of old age but a premature one. Wounds

are discreetly depicted, only a minimum of blood indicates injuries. If a corpse is shown instead of the dying person, it too appears largely intact and shows no signs of decomposition.

*Posture and dynamics:* The posture or movement of the dying person reflects their intention and readiness to die. The hero stands or sits upright while dying; in battle depictions, he is still recognisable as a dynamic actor with his own agency.

*Vulnerability:* Compared to his antagonists, the hero appears vulnerable, possibly weakened or outnumbered. The self-exposure is illustrated by a minimum of armour and protection, often also by nakedness. The obvious inferiority makes plausible and legitimises the hero's defeat in battle and at the same time marks his courage to face the opponent despite his vulnerability.

## 5. References

- 1 The members of the collaborative research group 6 "Synthesen" in the Sonderforschungsbereich 948 were particularly involved in the preparation of the article. The article was edited by Georg Feitscher.
- 2 Cf. Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf: "Einleitung". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 9-12, 9.
- 3 Cf. Brink et al.: "Einleitung", 9-12, 9.
- 4 Cf. on the heroization of the fallen in the world wars Mosse, George L.: Fallen soldiers. Reshaping the memory of the World Wars. New York 1990: Oxford University Press, 34-50 and 70-106; cf. specifically on the First World War Tison, Stéphane: "Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen". In: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War. Berlin 11.2.2019. DOI: [10.15463/ie1418.11340](https://doi.org/10.15463/ie1418.11340); Detering, Nicolas / Franzen, Johannes: "Heldentod und Heldentrauer. Verhaltensregeln im Ersten Weltkrieg zwischen Authentizitätsanspruch und Rollendichtung". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 179-188; regarding the Second World War Brink, Cornelia: "Sein letztes Bild. Von der Unsichtbarkeit des Sterbens im NS-Heldenkult um Soldaten". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 209-230; Neutatz, Dietmar: "Der erfundene Heldentod. Die Legende von den 28 Panfilov-Männern". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 189-208; see also Heinrich, Klaus: arbeiten mit herakles. Zur Figur und zum Problem des Heros. Antike und moderne Formen seiner Interpretation und Instrumentalisierung. Frankfurt a. M. 2006: Stroemfeld, 20-21.
- 5 Cf. Münkler, Herfried: "Heroische und postheroische Gesellschaften". In: Kein Wille zur Macht. Dekadenz. (= Merkur 61.8/9 [2007]), 742-752, bes. 749-752; see also Münkler, Herfried: "Neue Kampfsysteme und die Ethik des Krieges". (Vortrag bei der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung.) 21. Juni 2013. Online at: <https://www.boell.de/de/node/55069> (accessed on 18.02.2022); see also Bröckling, Ulrich: "'Bloß keine Leichensäcke!' Eine Hantologie postheroischer Kriegsführung". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 247-258.
- 6 An overview of the diverse forms of commemoration in the 20th century alone is provided by Schulz, Bernhard: "Helden des Todes, Helden des Lebens. Zur Ikonographie des Gedenkens im 20. Jahrhundert". In: Heldengedenken. Über das heroische Phantasma. (= Merkur 63.9/10 [2009]),

934-941.

- 7 Cf. e.g. on the significance of the cult of the dead and the grave in ancient hero worship Tilg, Stefan: "Zur Rolle des Todes in der Heroisierung antiker Dichter". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 67-79; von den Hoff, Ralf: "Heldenleichen im Bild. Die Bergung von Gefallenen und der Heroismus der Athener". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 159-178.
- 8 Cf. e.g. Pink, Johanna / Gölz, Olmo: "Die Drohung der ungewissen Zukunft. Der Tod Nassers und Khomeinis als Epochenbruch". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 231-245.
- 9 For the examples of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and Iranian revolutionary leader Ruholla Khomeini, cf. Pink / Gölz: "Die Drohung der ungewissen Zukunft", 2018, 231-245. For the example of Paul von Hindenburg, whose death was propagandistically staged by the National Socialists as a transfer of power to Hitler, cf. the chapter "Das Ende des Mythos? Hindenburgs Tod und Testament" in von Hoegen, Jesko: Der Held von Tannenberg. Genese und Funktion des Hindenburg-Mythos. Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2007: Böhlau, 406-425; von der Goltz, Anna: Hindenburg: Power, Myth, and the Rise of the Nazi. Oxford 2009: Oxford University Press, 182-192; and comparatively on the death of Philippe Pétain, cf. Schubert, Stefan: Retter und Verräter. Paul von Hindenburg, Philippe Pétain und die Grenzen des Politischen im Zeitalter der Weltkriege. Basel/Berlin/Boston 2024: De Gruyter Oldenbourg.
- 10 An example of this is the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. which was followed by a silent march and funeral services attended by tens of thousands. Cf. "Dr. King's Assassination". In: Civil Rights Digital Library, n.d. Online at: [https://crdl.usg.edu/events/mlk\\_assassination](https://crdl.usg.edu/events/mlk_assassination) (accessed on 21.05.2024); and Burns, Rebecca: Burial for a King. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Funeral and the Week that Transformed Atlanta and Rocked the Nation. New York City 2013: Scribner.
- 11 Cf. for example Falkenhayner, Nicole: "Kurt Cobain's Death: On the Construction of a Paradoxical Generational Hero". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 143-155; Watson, C.W.: "'Born a Lady, Became a Princess, Died a Saint'. The Reaction to the Death of Diana, Princess of Wales". In: Anthropology Today 13.6 (Dec. 1997), 3-7. DOI: [10.2307/2783375](https://doi.org/10.2307/2783375)
- 12 Cf. Pannewick, Friederike: "Sinnvoller oder sinnloser Tod? On the Heroisation of the Victim in Middle Eastern Cultures". In: Conermann, Stephan / von Heer, Synrinx (Eds.): Islamwissenschaft als Kulturwissenschaft. Historical Anthropology. Vol. 1. Berlin 2007: EB-Verlag, 291-314.
- 13 Cf. Brink et al.: "Einleitung", 9-12, 11.
- 14 Pannewick: "Sinnvoller oder sinnloser Tod?", 2007, 291-314, 310. Translation by Emily Lippert. In the original: "Der Mythos des heroischen Opfers hat also eine doppelte, um nicht zu sagen zweischneidige Funktion: Er spendet Trost und stiftet Sinn, aber er lässt sich auch zu Durchhalteparolen und für menschenverachtende Kampfeinsätze instrumentalisieren."
- 15 See also Asch: Herbst des Helden. Würzburg 2015: Ergon, 19.
- 16 Cf. Asch: Herbst des Helden, 2016, 19. Here Asch also draws attention to the fact that in egalitarian societies, despite lower social hurdles, heroes are "even more of an exceptional phenomenon with transgressive features than in an aristocratic one" (Translation by Emily Lippert).
- 17 Cf. Asch: Herbst des Helden, 2016, 107-134; see also Minelli, Kelly: "Soldat (Frühe Neuzeit)". In: Compendium heroicum. Ed. by Ronald G. Asch, Achim Aurnhammer, Georg Feitscher and Anna Schreurs-Morét, published by the Sonderforschungsbereich 948 „Helden – Heroisierungen – Heroismen“ University of Freiburg, Freiburg 14.02.2018. DOI: [10.6094/heroicum/soldat-fnz](https://doi.org/10.6094/heroicum/soldat-fnz)
- 18 Oration over Athenian war dead by Perikles. In: Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War. Book 2.



Transl. with introduction and notes by Steven Lattimore. Indianapolis/Cambridge 1998: Hackett Publishing Company, 91-97, 95.

- 19 Cf. for example Niewiadomski, Józef / Riebenrock, Roman A. (Eds.): *Opfer – Helden – Märtyrer. Das Martyrium als religionspolitische Herausforderung*. Innsbruck/Vienna 2011: Tyrolia.
- 20 Cf. Aurnhammer, Achim: "Georg Büchner: 'Helden-Tod der vierhundert Pforzheimer' (1829)". In: Aurnhammer, Achim / Bröckling, Ulrich (Eds.): *Vom Weihegefäß zur Drohne. Kulturen des Heroischen und ihre Objekte*. Würzburg 2016: Ergon, 159-172. See also Aurnhammer, Achim: *Die Vierhundert Pforzheimer. Entstehung, Popularisierung und Dekonstruktion einer Heldenlegende*. Göttingen 2023: Wallstein.
- 21 Dendorfer, Jürgen: "Der Tod des Ritters im hohen Mittelalter". In: Brink, Cornelia / Falkenhayner, Nicole / von den Hoff, Ralf (Eds.): *Helden müssen sterben. Von Sinn und Fragwürdigkeit des heroischen Todes*. Würzburg 2018: Ergon, 105-126, 105. Translation by Emily Lippert. In the original: "[...] ein selbstverschuldeter Tod, ein abschreckendes und nicht nachahmenswertes Beispiel".
- 22 Cf. Dendorfer: "Der Tod des Ritters im hohen Mittelalter", 2018, 105-126, 106.
- 23 Cf. von den Hoff: "Heldenleichen im Bild", 2018, 159-178, 160.
- 24 Cf. Bröckling, Ulrich: "Drohnen und Helden". In: Aurnhammer, Achim / Bröckling, Ulrich (Eds.): *Vom Weihegefäß zur Drohne. Kulturen des Heroischen und ihre Objekte*. Würzburg 2016: Ergon, 290-301; also Bröckling: "'Bloß keine Leichensäcke!'", 2018, 247-258.
- 25 Flaig, Egon: "Symbolischer Tausch und heldischer Tod". In: Bohrer, Karl Heinz / Scheel, Kurt (Eds.): *Heldengedenken. Über das heroische Phantasma*. (= Merkur 63.9/10 [2009]) Stuttgart 2009, 843-848, 845. Translation by Emily Lippert. In the original: "Die Todesbereiten rechnen auf jeden Fall mit einer Gegengabe, nämlich mit einem ehrenden Gedenken ihres Namens und der Übertragung dieser Ehre auf ihre Nachkommen. [...] Wollte man die Todesbereitschaft realiter bezahlen, dann stiegen die Kosten in astronomische Höhen. Denn die Todesbereiten bieten ein spezifisches Gut an, welches auf dem Markt sonst nicht zu haben ist."
- 26 Flaig: "Symbolischer Tausch und heldischer Tod", 2009, 845. Translation by Emily Lippert.
- 27 Flaig: "Symbolischer Tausch und heldischer Tod", 2009, 845. Translation by Emily Lippert. In the original: "Insofern handelt es sich um einen symbolischen Tausch, welcher ein Nicht-Tausch ist."
- 28 Cf. Thucydides/Lattimore: *The Peloponnesian War*, 1998, 91-97.

## 6. Selected literature

- Bohrer, Karl Heinz / Scheel, Kurt (Eds.): *Heldengedenken. Über das heroische Phantasma*. (= Sonderheft Merkur 63.9/10 [2009]) Stuttgart 2009: Klett-Cotta.
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