

## Symbolism in 300 Graphic Novel

Yopi Handi Perdana

English Literature, Languages and Arts Faculty, State University of Surabaya  
yovie.gatez@gmail.com

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk: (1) mengidentifikasi atribut perang dalam novel grafis 300 dan (2) mengetahui Leonidas sebagai ikon Sparta. Untuk menjawab tujuan tersebut, penelitian ini menggunakan teori simbolisme dan teori semiotika. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dengan metode analisis isi. Sumber utama penelitian ini adalah novel grafis yang berjudul 300. Data berupa beberapa gambar, kalimat, paragraf dan ungkapan yang digunakan untuk mengetahui atribut perang dan Leonidas sebagai ikon Sparta. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa atribut perang memiliki banyak jenis seperti helm, tombak panjang, perisai, dan phalanx. Studi tersebut juga mengungkapkan bahwa Leonidas sebagai ikon sparta dan juga inspirasi banyak orang.

**Kata kunci:** *sparta, leonidas, persia, symbol, war*

### Abstract

This study aims to: (1) identify the attributes of war in 300 graphic novel and (2) to know Leonidas as the icon of Sparta. To answer the objectives, this study used symbolism theory and semiotics theory. This study used a qualitative research with the content analysis method. The main source of this study was a graphic novel entitled 300. The data were some picture, sentences, paragraphs and expressions used to know the attributes of war and Leonidas as the icon of Sparta. The result of this study found that the attributes of the war has many types as helmet, long spear, shield, and phalanx. The study also revealed that Leonidas as the icon of sparta and also the inspiration of many people.

**Keywords:** *sparta, leonidas, persia, symbol, war*

## INTRODUCTION

Leonidas in 300 graphic novel is the main character. He is king of Spartan and the leader of Sparta army that war with Persia. Sparta's army has many kind of war attributes. Helmet, long spear, shield, and phalanx are some of the war attributes that revealed in the graphic novel.

Aside from that, this study focuses on the main character, it clearly gives example how they occur in every person's life. Leonidas as the icon of sparta and also he can inspired many people to never give up. From those explanations, the questions in this study are broken down below:

1. How is the symbolism of war attribute being represented in the graphic novel?
2. How is Leonidas become the icon of Sparta?

### Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of problems above, the purposes of the study are described as follows:

1. To reveal the symbolism of war that represented in the graphic novel
2. To know Leonidas as the icon of Sparta

### Theoretical Approach

This study uses a close-reading method toward the sources and using symbolism approach in order to identify the main problem for this thesis.

### Source of Data

This study takes data and samples from journal, thesis, textbook, and also article about symbolism, war symbolism that can be used in order to complete this research. The sources may come from online sources (internet).

### Limitation of the Study

This study only focused on symbolism of war (sparta's war).

### Procedure of Analysis

This thesis, firstly, take the relevant data from any reliable sources, such as scientific journals and papers, or from online media (internet). Then, take the data into several hypotheses before analyzing it with related theories. Next step is analyzing process with the collected data and relevant theories in order to solve the problem and to prove which the previous hypotheses was right or false.

### Langer's Theory of Symbolism

Susanne Langer (1895-1985) is an American philosopher who has so far made the notion of the

symbol as the specific aspect of her studies. She considers symbolism to be the central concern of philosophy because it underlies human knowledge and understanding. Langer tells that it is possible to perceive the interpretations of symbols when we conceive it. Langer (1954) distinguishes the difference between symbol and sign. She tells that symbol and sign are not the same though people use signs in addition of symbols. Signs can be used to react in the environment while symbols allow us to create imagery and ideas not directly related to the real world. Simply the difference between a sign and a symbol is that a sign causes us to think or act, whereas a symbol causes us to think about the things symbolized. In this light, it is possible to say that a symbol differs from a sign in that the symbol does not announce the existence of the object that is its meaning, but brings this thing to mind.

### Whitehead's Theory

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), is an English mathematician and philosopher who gave his cooperation for many subjects but symbolism was his most significant subject. Whitehead believes that symbolism represents the human imaginations and thoughts. According to his perception word also a symbol that denotes the ideas, emotions and images with its usage. According to Whitehead —Symbolism is very fallible in the sense that it may induce actions, feelings, emotions and beliefs about things which are only notions without exemplification in the world which the symbolism leads us to presuppose. (Whitehead, 1927:6) While Langer distinguishes the difference between sign and symbols, Whitehead (1927) claims the difference between symbolism and direct knowledge. Direct knowledge is infallible means there is no space for mistakes. It is correct and perfect. But symbolism is very fallible. It is open to mistakes. Within symbolism, it is possible to have we wrong interpretation of the symbol we have and also we are not sure that it is correct (Whitehead, 1927).

### Frye's Theory

Herman Northrop Frye (1912- 1991) was a Canadian literary critic and literary theorist in 20th century. According to him —The word symbol means any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention (Frye, 1957, p.71). Frye in his *Anatomy of criticism* asserts that when we are reading, we focus our attention for two directions at once. One direction is outward, in which we go outside with our reading, from the writers to the things they mean in the text. The second direction is the inward in which we try to appreciate and analyze the meaning from the word. Here Frye brings this notion to bring the concept symbol for the surface because in both cases readers deal with symbols. These

two types of understanding take place simultaneously in all reading. However the verbal structure may be classified according to whether the final direction of meaning is outward or inward

### Saussure's Theory

Ferdinand de Saussure is a Swiss linguistic who studied about semiotic during the 19th century. According to Reyes (2008), semiotics came from the Greek word —Semiotikon which means sign as well as the study of signs and their interpretation. Reyes states that Saussure described semiotics as connection between an object (the signified) and its linguistic representation (the signifier) and how the two are inter connected. Charles Peirce gave a more comprehensive definition of semiotics: —Is the doctrine of the essential nature and fundamental varieties of possible semiosis. by semiosis I mean an action, an influence, which is, or involves, a cooperation of three subjects, such as sign, its object and its interpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in anyway resolvable into action between pairs (quoted, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia) Semiotics studies not only the signs and symbols, but their meanings. And also other factors that affect them such as the encoder, interpreter and culture etc. Signs and symbols are not only limited to visual representation but also different from language, shapes, colors, textures, clothing, to actions, gestures, mannerisms, and facial expressions.

### Charles Sanders Pierce Theory

Based on Charles Sanders Peirce's idea, semiotics distinguished between three types of signs: icon, index and symbol. Peirce said that signs could be defined as these three categories. Signs are also defined as something visual that represent a meaning to the public or particular people. All these three words which are icon, index and symbol are a tool for analyzing the core of semiotics which is the language of signs.

Icon is better to be considered first. Essentially, icon means a pictorial representation of something. An icon also can be illustrative or diagrammatic. For example, the "No smoking sign" below always reminds of a very important message "You are not allowed to smoke in this place". So, it really is warning us that we are not allowed to smoke or if we smoke we are going to face the law. In essence, in this sign we see a picture of cigarette that is lit up and a red line drawn on it to show that cigarette is extremely prohibited in a particular place. Index sign is another type of signs. Basically, an Index signs is a sign where there is a direct link between the sign and the object. Most of traffic signs are index signs, because, they give information which relates to a

particular location. Traffic signs or road signs are signs placed at the side of roads to provide information to drivers. For example, picture of "No U turn" traffic sign is simple to analyze, because its meaning is obvious. Whenever we are driving in a road and face this sign, automatically, we know that we may not turn because it is prohibited. If we do so, we are going to face further penalties.

Symbol is another type of signs that are important to be considered. A symbol has no logical meaning between it and the object. For instance, if we look at the symbol of love below, we see a red heart that every time we see it, it gives us the sign of love. As everyone knows, the most common symbol for love and certainly the most recognizable is the Heart symbol. But, why the shape of heart is shown like that? As, it was written before, symbols may not have any logical meaning to its object represented. The shape of heart is only assumed to be the sign of love and has become a symbol in the society during ages. So, the shape of heart always is used to strengthen relationships and passion. The heart shape may convey a lot of messages that all of them are related to love at the end. One of the meanings that it may convey is that a new love interest is on the way or another message is that sometimes you should pay closer attention to loved ones at this time.

Basically, all these three words which are icon, index and symbol have a particular meaning. They all are related to each other in some ways. To prove, they all are representing a meaning which sometimes can be straightforward like index signs or somehow vague like symbols which some of them are needed to be studied and some of them have got a meaning during ages. It was the way I analyze the three signs of semiotics which are Icon, Index and symbols.

The second view comes from pragmatism side, especially from Charles Sanders Peirce. He says that there are three sides of sign. The sides are representamen, object, and interpretant. In that book, Peirce says that a sign is something stands for something. Peirce gives a definition of representamen as the sign itself, the object is the thing which is referred, and the interpretant is the product from the connection between interpretant and object. Taking the example above, according to Peirce the word pen is the representamen, yet the object is the pen physically. For the interpretant is what thought which is appeared when someone hears pen, such as "writings", "ink", "paper", "letter", and so on.

According to Peirce, every side of semiosis (representamen, object, interpretant) has its own classification. The representamen can be divided into qualisign which is formed by quality, such as the

concept of color, sinsign which is formed by the real physical reality or the shape of a thing. Peirce says about sinsign (sin is "being only once" as in single, simple, Latin *semel*) is actual thing or event. Then legisign is the law or rule of how the thing should be such as the sound of whistle in the soccer match. Mostly the legisign is made by human being to organize the social life, and because of that almost all the convention is the legisign.

The interpretant has rheme, dicent, and argument. The rheme is the probability for interpretant such as a concept, the dicent is the fact of interpretant or the real description of a thing, then argument is logical reasoning of interpretant. In addition, in the Philosophical Writings of Peirce, the rheme is a qualitative possibility. It is the possibility interpretant which will be understood. The dicent (or *dicisign*) is a actual existence, and the argument is a sign of law such a sound of whistle in soccer competition. In addition, Peirce says that the semiosis process is unlimited process, because he thinks that the interpretant can be a new representamen, and if it joins with another Object it will produce the new interpretant again, and so forth. And finally, it can be unlimited. Yet, according to Roland Barthes semiosis has a limitation. Barthes says that the limitation of semiosis process depends on the individual autonomy (exegesis ability) or the supra-individual principles (the values and norms in a culture which regulate the human being's habit) of the person who does the semiosis. The semiosis will end when the person does not have anything else to be connected again with the last interpretant.

## ANALYSIS

### Symbolism of War Attributes

War have many attributes. For example spear, gun, sword and any other. In the Trojan War, the attributes that represented from the war is horse. It also called as Trojan horse. The Trojan horse is full of army to win the war. In this era, Trojan horse known as computer virus that have bad effect as same as Trojan horse at the war.

In this graphic novel (300) there are many war attributes that represented this war. Not only thing but also human as symbol of war. Spartan warriors are trained from infancy to be nothing but soldiers. They are to be perfect in every respect and aspect of war, and nothing else. Weaklings perish soon after birth; youth are taught to thief and terrorize the slave class to harden them; young men are taught to nothing unless it has something to do with the arts of war - Even music and

dance are there only to help keep step when marching and obeying orders. The result is a man who thinks nothing of danger, expects to win, and creates a sense of dread in his opponents.

Unlike such Greek city-states as Athens, a center for the arts, learning and philosophy, Sparta was centered on a warrior culture. Male Spartan citizens were allowed only one occupation: soldier. Indoctrination into this lifestyle began early. Spartan boys started their military training at age 7, when they left home and entered the *Agoge*. The boys lived communally under austere conditions. They were subjected to continual physical competitions (which could involve violence), given meager rations and expected to become skilled at stealing food, among other survival skills.

The teenage boys who demonstrated the most leadership potential were selected for participation in the *Crypteia*, which acted as a secret police force whose primary goal was to terrorize the general Helot population and murder those who were troublemakers. At age 20, Spartan males became full-time soldiers, and remained on active duty until age 60.

The Spartans' constant military drilling and discipline made them skilled at the ancient Greek style of fighting in a phalanx formation. In the phalanx, the army worked as a unit in a close, deep formation, and made coordinated mass maneuvers. No one soldier was considered superior to another. Going into battle, a Spartan soldier, or hoplite, wore a large bronze helmet, breastplate and ankle guards, and carried a round shield made of bronze and wood, a long spear and sword. Spartan warriors were also known for their long hair and red cloaks. This study explains some of war attributes that used by Spartan army. Helmet, shield, long spear and phalanx will explain in this part.

### Spartan Helmet

According to Johnson (1996), there are four kinds of symbols: symbolic objects (Flag, Money and goods); symbolic characteristics of objects (purple for royalty, yellow for cowardice); gestures actions (a wink, a raised right hand) that have meaning in certain cultural contexts and the vast range of spoken and written words that make up language.

The helmet was the most significant piece of hoplite armor which was the most popular type in Sparta. Even though the helmet completely enclosed the head and protect that, vision and hearing were restricted. Lakedaimonians had used the type of open faced. In the 5th century with the development of the Lakedaimonian battlefield tactics, good vision and hearing became more important. A new type of helmet (*pilos*) was adopted. It

was in a shape of hat and sometimes was worn under the helmet for comfort, giving rise to helmets of this shape.

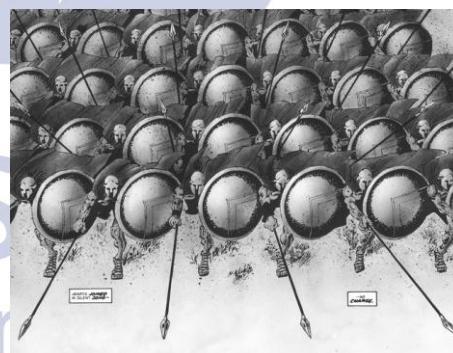
Spartan helmet is a symbol for Sparta. The helmet represented the people of Sparta that have no fear. Every nation has their own design of helmet. It also as symbol of the nation. In this era, Spartan helmet usually as the symbol of glory, brave and good spirit. The helmet also as the logo of some company.

A young Spartan must go to wild life and back to Sparta alive if want have this helmet. Because this helmet is a symbol of Sparta. A Spartan always use their helmet when go to war. This helmet also as symbol of Sparta when war beside flag.

The army use helmet to protect their head and also as the symbol of Sparta nation. The helmet is unique. The design is different than other nation, so it can be recognized when war that helmet is from Sparta nation.



Long Spear



A spear is a pole weapon consisting of a shaft, usually of wood, with a pointed head. The head may be simply the sharpened end of the shaft itself, as is the case with fire hardened spears, or it may be made of a more durable material fastened to the shaft, such as flint, obsidian, iron, steel or bronze. The most common design for hunting or combat spears since ancient times has incorporated a metal spearhead shaped like a triangle, lozenge, or leaf. The heads of fishing spears usually feature barbs or serrated edges.

The word spear comes from the Old English *spera*, from the Proto-Germanic *speri*, from a Proto-Indo-

European root *\*sper-* "spear, pole". Spears can be divided into two broad categories: those designed for thrusting in melee combat and those designed for throwing (usually referred to as javelins).

The spear has been used throughout human history both as a hunting and fishing tool and as a weapon. Along with the axe, knife, and club it is one of the earliest and most important tools developed by early humans. As a weapon, it may be wielded with either one hand or two. It was used in virtually every conflict up until the modern era, where even then it continues on in the form of the bayonet, and is probably the most commonly used weapon in history.

### Round Shield



A shield is a type of personal armor, meant to intercept attacks, either by stopping projectiles such as arrows or redirecting a hit from a sword, mace, battle axe or similar weapon to the side of the shield-bearer.

Shields vary greatly in size, ranging from large panels that protect the user's whole body to small models (such as the buckler) that were intended for hand-to-hand-combat use. Shields also vary a great deal in thickness; whereas some shields were made of relatively deep, absorbent, wooden planking to protect soldiers from the impact of spears and crossbow bolts, others were thinner and lighter and designed mainly for deflecting blade strikes.

In prehistory and during the era of the earliest civilizations, shields were made of wood, animal hide, woven reeds or wicker. In classical antiquity, the Barbarian Invasions and the Middle Ages, they were normally constructed of poplar tree, lime or another split-resistant timber, covered in some instances with a material such as leather or rawhide and often reinforced with a metal boss, rim or banding. They were carried by foot soldiers, knights and cavalry.

Depending on time and place, shields could be round, oval, square, rectangular, triangular, bilobal or scalloped. Sometimes they took on the form of kites or flatirons, or had rounded tops on a rectangular base with perhaps an eyehole, to look through when used with

combat. The shield was held by a central grip or by straps that went over or around the user's arm.

Often shields were decorated with a painted pattern or an animal representation to show their army or clan. These designs developed into systematized heraldic devices during the High Middle Ages for purposes of battlefield identification. Even after the introduction of gunpowder and firearms to the battlefield, shields continued to be used by certain groups. In the 18th century, for example, Scottish Highland fighters liked to wield small shields known as targes, and as late as the 19th century, some non-industrialized peoples (such as Zulu warriors) employed them when waging war.

In the 20th and 21st century, shields have been used by military and police units that specialize in anti-terrorist actions, hostage rescue, riot control and siege-breaking. The modern term usually refers to a device that is held in the hand or attached to the arm, as opposed to an armored suit or a bullet-proof vest. Shields are also sometimes mounted on vehicle-mounted weapons to protect the operator.

### Phalanx



The phalanx was a rectangular mass military formation, usually composed entirely of heavy infantry armed with spears, pikes, sarissas, or similar weapons. The term is particularly (and originally) used to describe the use of this formation in Ancient Greek warfare, although the ancient Greek writers used it to also describe any massed infantry formation, regardless of its equipment, as does Arrian in his *Array against the Alans* when he refers to his legions. In Greek texts, the phalanx may be deployed for battle, on the march, even camped, thus describing the mass of infantry or cavalry that would deploy in line during battle. They marched forward as one entity. The word phalanx is derived from the Greek word *phalangos*, meaning finger.

The term itself, as used today, does not refer to a distinctive military unit or division (e.g., the Roman legion or the contemporary Western-type battalion), but to the general formation of an army's troops. Thus a phalanx does not have a standard combat strength or



composition but includes the total number of infantry, which is or will be deployed in action in a single phalanx formation.

The earliest known depiction of a phalanx-like formation occurs in a Sumerian stele from the 25th century BC. Here the troops seem to have been equipped with spears, helmets, and large shields covering the whole body. Ancient Egyptian infantry were known to have employed similar formations. The first usage of the term *phalanx* comes from Homer's "(φαλαγγξ)", used to describe hoplites fighting in an organized battle line. Homer used the term to differentiate the formation-based combat from the individual duels so often found in his poems.

Traditionally, historians date the origin of the hoplite phalanx of ancient Greece to the 8th century BC in Sparta, but this is under revision. It is perhaps more likely that the formation was devised in the 7th century BC after the introduction of the aspis by the city of Argos, which would have made the formation possible. This is further evidenced by the Chigi vase, dated to 650 BC, identifying hoplites armed with aspis, spear and panoply.

Battles between two phalanxes usually took place in open, flat plains where it was easier to advance and stay in formation. Rough terrain or hilly regions would have made it difficult to maintain a steady line and would have defeated the purpose of employing the use of a phalanx. As a result, battles between Greek city-states would not take place in any possible location, nor would they be limited to sometimes obvious strategic points. Rather, many times, the two opposing sides would find the most suitable piece of land where the conflict could be settled. Mostly, the battle ended with one of the two fighting sides fleeing to safety.

The phalanx usually advanced at a walking pace, although it is possible that they picked up speed during the last several yards. One of the main reasons for this slow approach was to maintain formation. If the phalanx lost its shape as it approached the enemy it would be rendered useless. If the hoplites of the phalanx were to pick up speed toward the latter part of the advance it would have been for the purpose of gaining momentum against the enemy in the initial collision. Herodotus states, of the Greeks at the Battle of Marathon, that "They were the first Greeks we know of to charge their enemy at a run". Many historians believe that this innovation was precipitated by their desire to minimize their losses from Persian archery. The opposing sides would collide, possibly severing many of the spears of the row in front and killing the front part of the enemy army due to the bone breaking collision of the start of the battle. The battle would then rely on the valour of the

men in the front line; whilst those in the rear maintained forward pressure on the front ranks with their shields. When in combat, the whole formation would consistently press forward trying to break the enemy formation; thus when two phalanx formations engaged, the struggle essentially became a pushing match.

### Leonidas as the Icon of Sparta

Icon is better to be considered first. Essentially, icon means a pictorial representation of something. An icon also can be illustrative or diagrammatic. For example, the "No smoking sign" below always reminds of a very important message "You are not allowed to smoke in this place". So, it really is warning us that we are not allowed to smoke or if we smoke we are going to face the law. In essence, in this sign we see a picture of cigarette that is lit up and a red line drawn on it to show that cigarette is extremely prohibited in a particular place. Basically, all these three words which are icon, index and symbol have a particular meaning. They all are related to each other in some ways. To prove, they all are representing a meaning which sometimes can be straight forward like index signs or somehow vague like symbols which some of them are needed to be studied and some of them have got a meaning during ages. It was the way I analyze the three signs of semiotics which are Icon, Index and symbols.

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Leonidas (540 BC - 480 BC) was a king of the Greek city-state of Sparta. He led the Spartan forces during the Second Persian War, and is remembered for his heroic death at the Battle of Thermopylae. Leonidas would have been in his sixties by the time of Thermopylae and undoubtedly an experienced military commander. Following Xerxes' proposed land invasion of mainland Greece in 480 BC Leonidas was selected to lead a small contingent of Spartan hoplites - some 300 hand-picked men with male heirs - to defend the pass of Thermopylae and hold the invading force until more troops could be mustered. The 300 Spartans were joined by troops from various other city-states to make up a

force of up to 7,000 men, woefully inadequate to halt Xerxes' army of 80,000. Thermopylae, 150 km north of Athens, was an excellent choice as the point to defend Greece, as there mountains rolled down into the sea leaving only a narrow pass along the coast. Nevertheless, Xerxes was so confident of success that he sent a messenger to Leonidas to ask for the Greeks to surrender and lay down their arms. The Spartan king's laconic reply was 'molon lave' - come and get them. With Leonidas leading from the front and the hoplites fighting in their tight phalanx formation, they took full advantage of their superior armour and weapons and managed to hold the vast Persian army for two days. However, betrayed by a local shepherd who told the Persians of a mountain path which would allow them to get behind the Greek lines, things looked grim for the defenders. Leonidas ordered the bulk of his force to withdraw and kept with him only the Spartans, Thespians, and Thebans in order to make a last stand and provide a rear-guard action. Of the small Greek force, attacked from both sides, all were killed except for the Thebans, who surrendered. Leonidas was killed, but the Spartans retrieved his body and protected it. Herodotus says that Xerxes' orders were to have Leonidas' head cut off and put on a stake and his body crucified. This was considered sacrilegious.



"THIS IS SPARTA" is the famous word from Leonidas. He say that word when kick the Persian messenger to the hole in Sparta. This word can call as one of Leonidas's signature. Nowadays, people use this word to cheers up their spirit. Leonidas say this word to show the world that Sparta is freedom nation that will not become one of Persia's doll. The word can make his people get back their brave, their dignity, and their confident to defend their land.



The phalanx formation is another signature from Leonidas. He created this formation when the final battle come. With his few of soldiers, he make a genius formation that can defend from enemy but also can make element of surprise when attack. The all of Sparta's icon is showing here. Helmet, spear, shield, phalanx, and also Leonidas.

Leonidas become icon of Sparta because he can lead the Spartan. He also the king of Sparta. He defend his land from Persia. He prefer to war with Persia rather than give his land to them. Even the Persia has larger army but Leonidas not scared. He faced the Persia army with just small amount of Sparta's army. When people talk about Sparta, they talk about Leonidas. Leonidas the one of another great icon that still talked by people until now. His brave, his dignity, his charm always become great inspiration by many people.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

300 is famous story in the world. It tell about dignity, bravely, spirit, and freedom. This battle actually not equal but Leonidas as king of Sparta have many motivation and can delive it to his army. His, motivation, his apirit, his brave can make the army have enough power to face the war.

Leonidas, the king of Sparta, leads the Greek coalition army against the Persian army. The Greek coalition army consists of 6,300 men from many Greek cities/states. Three hundred of these men are from Sparta, a Greek city/state that bases its society on protection from enemies by maintaining an organized standing army.

Xerxes, king of the Persians and leader of a vast army, sends his men around the small pass at Thermopylae, not directly through it. Xerxes, the Great King, has an elite army named the "Immortals" because the army consists of exactly 10,000 men at all times. Demaratus warns Xerxes that the Spartan army would challenge and possibly defeat the Immortals but Xerxes does not believe that is possible.

Trained as a soldier, Leonidas was not born into royalty so he never thought he would be king. As the leader, Leonidas has to make a difficult decision. Armed with information from Ephialtes, a Greek traitor, the Persians are en route to victory - and Leonidas knows it. Should he and his men finish the battle, in which they would surely die, or should they retreat? Would he return home to his wife Gorgo, or would she never see him again?

Leonidas decides to make a courageous last stand at the city of Thermopylae. His Spartan army is faced with inevitable death at the hands of Xerxes' vast

armies. It is due to the bravery of these 300 that Athens and the rest of Greece continue to fight the Persians. The idea of democracy is allowed to grow through the suppression of the Persians.

Symbolism in this graphic novel consist of some elements. It also elements of war. Helmet, shield, phalanx, and long spear are some of war attributes that show in this graphic novel. Leonidas also become symbol of this war. He give meaning in this war as king of Sparta, leader of war, and as symbol of Sparta.

The helmet was the most significant piece of hoplite armor which was the most popular type in Sparta. Even though the helmet completely enclosed the head and protect that, vision and hearing were restricted. Lakedaimonians had used the type of open faced. In the 5th century with the development of the Lakedaimonian battlefield tactics, good vision and hearing became more important. A new type of helmet (pilos) was adopted. It was in a shape of hat and sometimes was worn under the helmet for comfort, giving rise to helmets of this shape.

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Shields vary greatly in size, ranging from large panels that protect the user's whole body to small models (such as the buckler) that were intended for hand-to-hand-combat use. Shields also vary a great deal in thickness; whereas some shields were made of relatively deep, absorbent, wooden planking to protect soldiers from the impact of spears and crossbow bolts, others were thinner and lighter and designed mainly for deflecting blade strikes.

The phalanx was a rectangular mass military formation, usually composed entirely of heavy infantry armed with spears, pikes, sarissas, or similar weapons. The term is particularly (and originally) used to describe

the use of this formation in Ancient Greek warfare, although the ancient Greek writers used it to also describe any massed infantry formation, regardless of its equipment, as does Arrian in his *Array against the Alans* when he refers to his legions. In Greek texts, the phalanx may be deployed for battle, on the march, even camped, thus describing the mass of infantry or cavalry that would deploy in line during battle. They marched forward as one entity. The word phalanx is derived from the Greek word *phalangos*, meaning finger.

As king, Leonidas was a military leader as well as a political one. Like all male Spartan citizens, Leonidas had been trained mentally and physically since childhood in preparation to become a hoplite warrior. Hoplites were armed with a round shield, spear and iron short sword. In battle, they used a formation called a phalanx, in which rows of hoplites stood directly next to each other so that their shields overlapped with one another. During a frontal attack, this wall of shields provided significant protection to the warriors behind it. If the phalanx broke or if the enemy attacked from the side or the rear, however, the formation became vulnerable. It was this fatal weakness to the otherwise formidable phalanx formation that proved to be Leonidas' undoing against an invading Persian army at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 B.C.

From the audacity and resolve of his words, it was no mistake or coincidence that King Leonidas and the rest of his Spartans were chosen to lead the miniscule force in the first land encounter with the Persians at Thermopylae. The extreme militarism that defined Spartan society throughout the ages further explains why Leonidas and his three hundred warriors were ideal participants to defend Thermopylae.

King Leonidas and his defending force held off the Persian offense successfully for three days by their superior use of mass. Mass as a principle of war means "organizing all the elements of combat power at your disposal to have decisive effect on your enemy". In the Battle at Thermopylae, this principle applies to the unit's size, arms and armor, and battle formations under the Persian and Greek's commands. In regard to the Persians' use of mass, their strength in numbers had been their saving grace in all previous conquests.

Leonidas as a symbol of the war because he inspired all of the people of Sparta that defend their land is a must. No one can take Sparta to their empire. Leonidas's spirit also make all of the Spartan army fight until the end. They never give up, fearless even they just small amount than Persia. Leonidas give Spartan army motivation through his speech and good strategy. Leonidas's strategy always get good result. They can win in three days. Even at the end Sparta lost the war, but



Leonidas's spirit make him as symbol of this war. Every time people talk about Sparta, they also talk about Leonidas

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