

## Helios and the Emperor in the Late Antique Peloponnese

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5 *This paper discusses a badly damaged over-life-sized marble head with radiate headgear found in the Roman theater of Gytheum. It probably belonged to a public statue or shield monument of the god Helios and is thought to be late antique. It is here argued that this monument was in fact intended to pay honor to the ruling emperor, who was associated with the god Helios. It is also suggested that the association of the new*  
 10 *Flavian dynasty with the solar god represents a particular way by which the people of Greece, among other provincials, chose to express their loyalty to the emperor along traditional religious lines.*

### **Description and Identification**

15 The head is carved of local beige marble, with a height of 0.52 meters and a width of 0.37 meters. It has a strong frontal rendering and cursorily curved features. It may be reworked from a previous piece (Figs. 1-5). It now appears severely damaged due to later re-use; the back side is hollowed out. It seems that the head was later placed upside-down and the newly carved concavity used as a fountain urn. It features large  
 20 almond-shaped eyes, wide-open. Boldly emphasized eyelids frame the eyeballs. The damaged nose is wedge-shaped and crudely modelled. The mouth simply appears as a horizontal sharpcut across thickly modeled lips. The ears are rendered by curved incisions in very low relief. The hair projecting in front of the forehead is a compact mass, defined against the flesh by a continuous chisel-line above the forehead. The hair  
 25 is rendered in a cursory way as being thick and long and brushed back-wards on all sides of the head; superficially incised chisel lines on the left and right temple can be discerned; below the left ear the head is broken off. Seven rectangular mortises (0.02 m×0.03 m) are still visible, chiseled above the hairline for the support of metal inserts. Their number, size, and near rectangular shape suggest that these deep  
 30 mortises were most probably intended for the insertion of metal rays. Near the center of the cranium, a thin metal spike is still preserved. If this is a feature of the head and not a later addition, it may be a dowel for the attachment of a separate piece of stone to complete the top of the head. The head gives the impression that it was left unfinished. Yet the sockets for metal rays and the metal spike on the top of the head  
 35 leave little doubt that this piece, together with the rest of the monument of which it presumably was a part, had been placed on display in antiquity. Despite its bad condition, the characteristic headgear identifies this as an image of the god Helios. Its style and technique places it chronologically after the collapse of the provincial sculpture workshops in Late Antiquity, which can be roughly placed after  
 40 the 270s. Thereafter only a few workshops, located mostly in provincial capitals or big cities, were able to produce high-quality portrait sculpture for the needs of local elites and for representatives of the imperial government. The rendering of the frontal, bulging eyes, awkwardly placed on the face, appears similar to the style of a life-sized portrait head made of local marble and found in the theater of Sparta. In  
 45 the case of the Spartan head, which probably portrayed a local dignitary or a provincial governor, the pupils of the eyes are drilled. Its excavators suggested a date close to the last phase of the theater, about 375-400 (Fig. 6). Moreover, two late antique statues of similar technique and style, one an imperial portrait (probably Constantine I), from an urban mansion in Messene can be approximately dated on  
 50 archaeological grounds to no later than 360/70. Based on its late antique style and crude technique, the Gytheum head could be dated to any period from the late third century onwards. Yet it is its possible connection to imperial imagery, as we will see below, which provides a more specific chronological and historical context, in the second or third quarter of the fourth century.  
 55 In a period when the local production of sculpture had sharply decreased and the cutting of new pieces of life-size sculpture depicting mythological themes was rare, the discovery of this head from Gytheum is striking. Gytheum in southernmost Laconia was the most important city of the region and the major port for exporting the famous local green porphyry stone in Roman times. The  
 60 *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (composed around 359-360) singles out "Laconica" as one of the three districts of the province of Achaia. By "Laconica" one should

understand the cities of the League of the Free Laconians, rather than Sparta. Thinking in commercial terms, the author of *Expositio* adds, "it is considered to be rich in one product alone, the stone of Crocinum which they call 'Lacedaemonian'." The *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Tetrarchic to fifth century) names Gytheum, along with Asopos and Boeae as part of the late Roman *cursus publicus*. Moreover, the late Roman imperial fleet probably used Gytheum as an occasional port of call on the east-west sea route, while auxiliaries in the Roman army from Sparta and Laconia are attested in the second and third centuries.

It is important to ask why the people of Gytheum decided to erect this imposing statue of a pagan god in the public domain, despite its poor work-manship and deviation from the trends that we postulate about late antique public statuary in Greece and the Greek East, when we find almost no public statuary monuments with polytheistic themes. The choice of a pagan god whose cult was of little popularity in Greece but with strong links to Hellenistic and imperial perceptions of rulership, along with the fact that the majority of public statuary in Late Antiquity normally consisted of images of the emperor, suggest a connection between this mythological figure and the ruling emperor. Drawing on extensive previous scholarship in this field, Bergmann and Bardill have recently offered a systematic study of the use and meaning of the radiate portrait by Hellenistic and Roman rulers as well as the relation of solar imagery to imperial iconography. Bardill points out that Constantine had tried to re-employ iconographic traits of Alexander, Augustus and Nero, among them an association with the god Apollo-Helios and the use of the radiate crown. The statue of Constantine as Apollo-Helios on the porphyry column in Constantinople had an obvious precursor in the statue of Augustus on a column in the precinct of Apollo on the Palatine Hill, and also the "Colossus of Nero" in Rome. Although many later emperors had worn radiate crowns on coins, only with Constantine did this attribute convey a profound solar aspect in the guise of Sol Invictus, with the exception of Aurelian (reigned 270-275). In fact, a fascination with solar imagery and the imagery of light as an attribute of imperial rule under divine guidance would endure until the end of his life, whether expressed in a traditional religious context or a Christian one. By 310 Constantine officially declared Sol as his new religious patron. The Latin panegyrist of 310 has him witness a vision from Sol while on a military campaign, near an important sanctuary of Apollo Grannus in Gaul. All of Constantine's imperial mints for the years from 310 to 317 massively produced copper alloy coins that displayed Sol on the reverse. He also adopted the legend *SOLI INVICTO* on his gold *solidi* as well as the epithet *INVICTUS* as part of his personal titulature. After his victory over Maxentius, Constantine issued a gold medallion (Ticinum, 313) showing Constantine's bust overlapping that of Sol wearing a radiate crown; on the shield of the emperor, Sol in his horse-drawn chariot rises from the ocean (Fig. 7). Constantine and Sol were overtly juxtaposed on the Arch of Constantine dedicated in 315 in Rome and also the colossal statue of Sol nearby. Even after Constantine began to advertise his conversion to Christianity, the images of Sol and Constantine continued to be featured together on the gold *solidi* of various mints between 316 and 324 or 325, describing Sol as the protector of Constantine. In this period, Sol probably provided a unifying bridge between Licinius's paganism and Constantine's Christian God. Furthermore, Licinius's troops in 324 marched against Constantine under Sol's protection, while Constantine too seems to have celebrated his victory over his opponent with gold *solidi* bearing the legend *SOLI COMITI AUG*. Even though after 325 or 326 Constantine abandoned Sol Invictus on his coins and his support for Christianity became more manifest, the erection of the colossal radiate statue in Constantinople as late as 328 or 330 shows that Constantine continued to promote his solar associations in a way that easily appealed to a pagan and a Christian audience. In various sources of this period the solar imagery is now used to symbolize the eternity of Constantine's unified rule, the beginning of a Golden Age, but also the coming of a new Christian era.

The most remarkable monument that associated Constantine with Helios, which is also the most pertinent to our discussion, is the colossal bronze statue of Constantine on a porphyry column in the middle of his forum in Constantinople (Fig. 8). Its model was apparently the Colossus of Sol in Rome, which was erected by Nero and later moved to the Colosseum. Constantine's New Colossus was erected in 328 or 330 but is now lost. Only the column survives, truncated, but later textual sources refer to the statue above. It wore a radiate crown and carried a spear in one hand and a globe in the

other. Whether it was naked or draped is not certain, as comparative evidence suggests either possibility. Most modern scholars agree that the image of Constantine incorporated the identity of Apollo-Helios. Writing in the sixth century, Hesychius mentions "the notable porphyry column on which we see Constantine set up, shining forth to his citizens in the manner of the sun". He gives an interpretation of the image that emphasizes the element of solar and divine radiance of the emperor, while avoiding any explicit pagan association, and in that it seems to reflect to a great extent the way Christians viewed it. Later texts make explicit that the figure was a statue of Apollo (Patria) or Helios (Anna Comnena, Zonaras) re-used by Constantine, something that may be taken as yet another indirect proof of the intentional religious ambiguity of the message that the monument had originally intended to transmit. Another sixth-century source, Malalas, reports that the statue bore seven rays on his head, as in our example from Gytheum. Constantine's crown probably had angled, rather than vertical, rays, of a type that appeared often in the iconography of Hellenistic kings as well as the representation of Nero-Helios, thus making later observers identify it with the Sun god. An illusion to the sun could also be contained in the inscription that was probably placed on the base of the column, whose text (or part of it) is given by a mid-tenth century source.

Constantine's adoption of the diadem, of Sol-Apollo as the dynasty's protector, and the Apolline portrait (modeled on Alexander and Augustus) denoted a striking break with previous Tetrarchic traditions. The new message offered different readings to his subjects. With the majority of the empire's population still pagan, it is reasonable to suppose that most would have tried to situate the emperor against traditional religious forms of mediation, foremost the imperial cult and the assimilation of the person of the emperor with ancestral cults. The promotion of Sol Invictus as the heavenly protector of the emperor provided a universal point of reference. It was this parallel association with Apollo-Helios and a Hellenistic royal style in his official self-representation that probably shaped how a Greek-speaking population sought to naturalize the official imperial message.

The following examples illustrate this dynamic. Sometime between 324 and 337, the city of Termessos in Pisidia erected a monumental equestrian bronze statue in which the emperor Constantine was honored in the guise of the local god Helios Pantepoptes, "All-Seeing Sun" (Fig. 9). The latter appears on the city's past bronze coins with a radiate crown and riding on a horse; it seems that the equestrian statue along with the inscribed block were re-used to create an image of Constantine from a previous dedication to the local solar god. There seems to be only a single way to interpret this evidence: the people of Termessos tried to respond to the strong solar associations of the new Flavian dynasty by assimilating him with a local solar deity. On the inscription of a statue dedication to Constantine in Lepcis Magna in Libya Tripolitania, we read that the provincial governor set up a marble statue that "was radiant by his divine spirit to our lord Constantine, most powerful victor, eternal Augustus" (dated between 324 and 326). The language is more allusive here, but as Tantillo suggested, a badly damaged imperial head of Julio-Claudian date, which was re-carved and given seven holes for the insertion of metal rays, possibly came from the same monument. Another example is a reused portrait head of a clean-shaven man from Augusta Treverorum (Trier), who is wearing a diadem and radiate crown and has also been identified with Constantine. A fourth example is a reused bust of Caracalla with a dedication to Constantine, found in a Mithraeum in Rusicade in Numidia. Constantine's name replaced that of Caracalla. In the inscription, the emperor is addressed with the standard epithet of Sol: "to the divine spirit (*numini*) of the most sacred (*sanctissimi*) and invincible (*invictissimi*) Constantine." Furthermore, a group of late antique images, which have long been only tentatively identified as reproducing radiant portrait images of Constantine in minor form (for private veneration?), further underline how fertile the ground was for the cultivation of this particular assimilation of the emperor with Sol. Each of them, it has been suggested, may be a reminiscent of the image of a radiate Constantine holding the Tyche of the city of Constantinople, which on the day of the city's anniversary would be paraded on a golden chariot into the hippodrome and parked before the imperial box, or that of the forum. Returning to the Gytheum head, it was found in the Roman theater, but we cannot rule out that the monument stood in the nearby Kaisareion of the city. The Kaisareion is only epigraphically attested but is believed to have been part of the so-called "Roman

185 Agora," located close to the theater. According to the well-known *lex sacra* of Gytheum (15 CE), the sacred procession of the local Kaisareion passed by different sanctuaries of the city and finally reached the Kaisareion and the Agora, where sacrifices took place; then the sacred images of the emperor and his family (probably panel paintings) were carried to the theater, where they could watch the festivities. The head, whether originally erected in the theater, or the Kaisareion, could be linked to the local festival of the imperial cult, which is epigraphically attested until the late third century. The connection with the festival of the imperial cult in the reign of Constantine in Gytheum is also likely, since a priest of the imperial cult is attested at Sparta in 325 or 329. Could the veneration of the person of the emperor also be embedded in a traditional local cult of the god Helios in Gytheum or its periphery? An honorific inscription dated to the imperial period refers to a local priesthood of Helios and Selene. One may assume that the cults of Septimius Severus and Julia Domna, who had been closely associated with that divine couple, and later that of Constantine, were integrated into this local cult. Be that as it may, a temple of the god Helios in Gytheum is not known. Regarding cults of Helios in Laconia, we know of a sanctuary of Helios in Taleton on the peak of Taygetos; an oracle sanctuary of Ino-Pasiphae (Selene) at Thalamae, where Helios was also worshipped; and a place sacred to Helios on the Tainaron promontory mentioned in the Homeric hymn to Apollo. It is impossible to know whether the foundation of the statue of Helios was connected to these Laconian ancestral cults, or was anchored in a previous cult of Helios and Selene at Gytheum. I would propose instead that the Gytheum head should be understood along the same lines as the above examples, that is, as an attempt on the part of the local community to read the solar associations of Constantine's official image through a local religious idiom. The transcendent power of the association between Constantine and Apollo-Helios in Achaia is explicitly attested by the issue of a bronze coin of Constantine from the mint of Thessalonica, which together with Achaia was part of the diocese of Macedonia, featuring a unique iconographic type on its reverse: Sol Invictus together with an enigmatic solar pattern made of overlaid X-formations (Fig. 10). It is dated to 319, that is, only two years after the annexation of Illyricum by Constantine. The veneration of an emperor styled as Apollo-Helios in the Greek East had a striking precedent in the case of Nero. Drawing on the model of Alexander and Augustus, Nero associated himself with solar and Apolline aspects, wishing to express his aspiration for a new Golden Age of peace and prosperity. He too appeared wearing a radiate crown on coins, while his Colossus in Rome was presumably the model for Constantine's similar statue in New Rome. In response to court propaganda that linked the emperor with Apollo and Helios, Greek cities venerated Nero as New Apollo (at Athens) and New Helios (at Akraiphia in Boeotia and at Sagalassos in Pisidia). It is therefore likely that the strong similarities between the ideological package of Nero and that of Constantine (including a close association with Sol-Helios-Apollo; the imitation of Augustus's persona; the Golden Age; the Colossi) stimulated similar initiatives on the part of the Greek provincials of Greece and Pisidia, while striving to pay honor to a benevolent emperor associated with Apollo-Helios. I have so far argued that the Gytheum head can be associated with public honors to the emperor Constantine, based on the strong solar imagery of his official representation and the receptiveness of this particular aspect of his image into local contexts, as the numerous examples presented above show. It should be noted that Licinius and Julian too were associated with Sol Invictus, yet the almost total absence of public dedications to these emperors in Achaia, the shorter period of their reigns, and the lack of similar evidence proving the connection of Helios and these emperors on a provincial level in Achaia or elsewhere make Constantine our most plausible candidate. If we accept the proposed identification, the earliest chronological context of the Gytheum head should be the year 317, when Constantine took control of the province of Achaia. Since Constantine felt no qualms about representing the Sun god as his divine companion on coins down to 325 and 326 (at least on the gold), and his Colossus was erected in Constantinople as late as 328 or 330, it is possible to place the Gytheum head any time between 317 and Constantine's death in 337. Besides, pagans preferred to associate Constantine and his successors with the sun long after their conversion to Christianity.

**Greece and Constantine**

245 By exploring additional aspects of the regional history of Greece in the early fourth century, the present section seeks to set the Helios head of Gytheum in a wider historical context. I begin by highlighting a serious landmark in the late Roman history of the province of Achaia: the regaining of its proconsular status after a short interlude during the Tetrarchy. This occurred either after a joint decision of Constantine and Licinius in 314 or – more probably – by Constantine alone, after he 250 took control of Illyricum from Licinius in 317. A remarkable number of statue dedications to Constantine and his sons are attested in Greece. They come from even insignificant cities, to the extent that these stones are often the only late antique public inscription, or the last attested, from the site.

255 Julian in his *Speech of Praise for Constantius* mentions that the Athenians had granted the title of *strategos* of the Athenians to Constantine and also dedicated to him a statue with an elaborate inscription. Greatly pleased with this action, which gave him "more than the highest honors," Constantine bestowed on the city an annual gift of many tens of thousands of bushels of wheat. A series of statue dedications to Constantine and his sons (in Latin) were recently discovered near the Roman Agora. Two prominent 260 Athenians were closely connected with Constantine; one is Nicagoras, son of Minucianus, a cultured man and priest of Eleusis, who travelled at the emperor's expense to the Valley of the Kings in Egypt in 326. He left two graffiti in the tomb of Ramses VI in the Valley of the Kings near Thebes commemorating his visit and naming his benefactor, "the most pious emperor Constantine". There was also the Athenian Praxagoras, who wrote 265 a flattering history of Constantine in two books, of which only small fragments survive. A third possible example is Onasimus, a historian and rhetorician, who was a citizen of Sparta or Athens (or both) and wrote an *Encomium* of Constantine.

The aim of Nicagoras's mission at Thebes is puzzling. For several scholars, by sponsoring it Constantine intended to favor the pagan aristocracy of Athens and present 270 himself as a friend of the arts. Moreover, Fowden has suggested that Constantine entrusted Nicagoras to visit Egypt and secure the removal of two obelisks, which were later erected on the spina of the Circus Maximus in Rome and of the hippodrome in Constantinople, and a porphyry column for his Colossus in Constantinople. As he notes, this project should be understood as a conciliatory move by Constantine, who had 275 already started to favor Christianity, towards the pagan establishment of his Empire. Constantine's favors to Athens, a predominately pagan city and center of learning, are customarily interpreted in the same way.

280 There is much scholarly discussion about the motives and the circumstances of the removal of statues and other religious objects from Greek cities by Constantine. The emperor had dispatched officials to travel through the provinces and confiscate treasures from Greek sanctuaries either to melt them down into bullion or to transport them to Constantinople. Despite what Eusebius wanted his readers to believe (that Constantine wanted his subjects to ridicule pagan art), the emperor really intended to adorn and glorify the new city with the art and iconic cultural symbols of the Greek 285 East. The removal and transfer of temple treasures from the provinces apparently intensified around 330. The famous Panhellenic victory monument of the battle of Plataea (479 BCE), the Serpent Column of Delphi, together with a statue of Apollo and sacred tripods, were removed and placed on the spina of the hippodrome of Constantinople. It accompanied other victory monuments, images of public figures and 290 other spolia that intended to denote the supremacy and grandeur of the city, graced by the authority of the Greek and Roman past. A group (or groups) of Muses from the Museion on Mount Helicon in Thespieae was also sent to Constantinople. It is striking that Nicagoras, a priest of the Eleusinian mysteries, would be assigned a mission that many pagans may have regarded as a sacrilege, as many expressed their indignation at 295 the stripping of temples of their treasures and holy objects by Constantine's agents. However, both Delphi and Thespieae, whose artworks were removed, honored Constantine and his sons with several statue monuments. On the flip side, Constantine showed his favor towards the Pythian priesthood, even though Delphi may have also been responsible for instigating the renewal of the persecution against the Christians by Diocletian. Indeed, 300 this implies a reciprocal process between Constantine and the prominently pagan local establishment. Local elites had consented to Constantine's policy of confiscating temple treasures, and in the case of Nicagoras may have been involved in it, perhaps in exchange for favors or other local privileges. On the other hand, this may be the

305 reason why so few artworks from mainland Greece are reported in Constantinople in the  
 early fourth century, in comparison to those from other cities of the East.  
 Between 326 and 329, the city of Sparta dedicated a statue of the provincial governor  
 Publilius Optatianus (*signo Porfyrius*) and placed it next to the image of Lycurgus,  
 310 along the east *parodos* of the city's theater. As proconsul of Achaia, Optatianus had  
 the privilege of appealing directly to the emperor and enjoyed the pleasures of the  
 intellectual life of Athens, the historical monuments of Greece, and perhaps  
 traditional cult. Optatianus was a Roman aristocrat and a poet and had exchanged  
 letters with Constantine on literary matters in 312. He was later banished (apparently  
 315 in 322/323), but perhaps thanks to a series of poems he sent to the emperor, he was  
 recalled from exile (325/326) and advanced to prefect of the city of Rome (in 329 and  
 333). His post in Greece probably dated after his exile and before his prefecture. The  
 local magistrate Marcus Aurelius Stephanus, who paid for the statue of Optatianus, is  
 also the last recorded priest of the imperial cult in Achaia. Could Optatianus also be  
 320 responsible for the statue of Helios in neighboring Gytheum? This is impossible to  
 know. In the Spartan text, he is described as a benefactor in all things and savior of  
 Lacedaemon. In his praises to Constantine, Optatianus makes regular references to  
 Apollo and the Heliconian Muses primarily in terms of literary allusions, that is, as  
 gods of his poetic inspiration. At the same time, his collection includes clear  
 references to Christianity. Regarding the protecting deity, he often refers to him as  
 325 "the Highest God", but in a few cases the god Helios is mentioned in this function or  
 in an allusion to Constantine's rulership. Along with these poetic allusions, in one of  
 Optatianus's picture-poems dedicated to Constantine the enigmatic solar symbol we saw  
 on the coin of Thessalonica appears once again. Although this evidence cannot be  
 connected to the Gytheum head, it may reveal the attitude of a powerful imperial  
 330 official who, as part of his *conventus*, must have visited Sparta and, probably on one  
 of these occasions, was honored with a statue set up by the priest of the imperial cult  
 next to that of the city's mythical law-giver.  
 Krallis has recently suggested that sections 2.22-28 of Zosimus *New History*, which  
 refer to Constantine's war against Licinius, is modelled on the battles of Salamis and  
 335 Hydapses and might come from the work of the Athenian historian Praxagoras. The  
 assimilation of Constantine's victories to famous battles of the Greco-Persian Wars and  
 the campaigns of Alexander by an Athenian historian possibly reveals how the Athenian  
 intellectual elite tried to flatter the emperor by giving a Panhellenic, or  
 340 Athenocentric, myth-historical version of Constantine's successful campaigns, casting  
 his opponent as an oriental despot of some sort fighting against Hellas. This new  
 reading also supports the view that the Serpent Column of Delphi in the hippodrome  
 should primarily be seen as a trophy monument, which urged the viewer to compare the  
 great moments of Hellas with Constantine's victories and, together with the Egyptian  
 obelisks, reinforced the solar allusions of Constantine's image in the hippodrome. When  
 345 Prohaeresius was called forward to praise Constans publicly in Athens with respect to  
 the renewal of the grant of corn supply to the city, he cited Celeus, Triptolemus, and  
 Demeter. So, a mythical king of Athens, Alexander, Apollo-Helios, and Zeus Eleutherius  
 (who was traditionally associated with the imperial cult in Athens and the Panhellenic  
 commemoration of the Persian Wars at Plataea) may all have been powerful comparisons to  
 350 make for praising Constantine. Interestingly enough, when Himerius (315-386), a teacher  
 of rhetoric in Athens, praised Constantius II on behalf of the city, he also used solar  
 imagery and named the Sun as Constantius's II ancestor (*προπάτωρ*), thus revealing that  
 Sol still offered an appropriate comparandum for the son of Constantine when an  
 355 Athenian wished to praise him in 351. It is therefore possible to imagine that the head  
 of Gytheum may have also been reconfigured several times in honor of different emperors  
 in the course of the fourth century.

### **Conclusion**

360 The Gytheum head belonged to a late antique sculptured monument representing Helios.  
 The poor condition and technique of the work do not allow us to decide whether the  
 sculptor had also intended to combine divine and imperial portrait iconography. Be that  
 as it may, the image of Helios and his symbolism in the 320s provided a syncretistic  
 blueprint for the glorification of Constantine that possibly aimed to reassure the  
 pagan population of the recently conquered eastern territories in the face of  
 365 Constantine's Christianity. Deprived of traditional worship, entailing sacrifice and

370 idol veneration, but also accommodating an attempted de-paganized version of imperial  
cult, the solar imagery offered a polysemy that would cater to both pagans and  
Christians. I have argued that the Gytheum head could be read as a manifestation of  
loyalty and popular devotion towards Constantine, being expressed in a way that was not  
375 only in accord with the official image promoted at that time by the court, but also  
drew on traditional norms of honoring the emperor in the Greek East. Key elements of  
Constantine's negotiated conceptualization by the cities of Hellas would include the  
close association with the Sun god – the Supreme Deity and protector of the emperor –  
and the link between his recent military victories and classical Greek and Roman  
380 conceptions of the glorious past. If the Athenians liked to emphasize culture and  
letters, the Laconians prized more the god who was still most connected to the late  
Roman army. In all these time-tested strategies of praise, the people of Hellas were  
walking a well-trodden path, whose value an emperor like Constantine still knew how to  
appreciate.

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385 [https://www.academia.edu/30896517/Helios\\_and\\_the\\_Emperor\\_in\\_the\\_Late\\_Antique\\_Peloponnes  
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