

# ART AND ROYALTY IN SPARTA OF THE 3RD CENTURY B.C.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that a revival of the arts in Sparta during the 3rd century B.C. was owed mainly to royal patronage, and that it was inspired by Alexander's successors, the Seleukids and the Ptolemies in particular. The tumultuous transition from the traditional Spartan dyarchy to a Hellenistic-style monarchy, and Sparta's attempts to regain its dominance in the Peloponnese (lost since the battle of Leuktra in 371 B.C.), are reflected in the promotion of the pan-Peloponnesian hero Herakles as a role model for the single king at the expense of the Dioskouroi, who symbolized dual kingship and had a limited, regional appeal.

## INTRODUCTION

Spartan influence in the Peloponnese was dramatically reduced after the battle of Leuktra in 371 B.C.<sup>1</sup> The history of Sparta in the 3rd century B.C. is marked by intermittent efforts to reassert Lakedaimonian hegemony.<sup>2</sup> A tendency toward absolutism as a means to that end intensified the latent power struggle between the Agiad and Eurypontid royal houses, leading to the virtual abolition of the traditional dyarchy in the reign of the Agiad Kleomenes III (ca. 235–222 B.C.), who appointed his brother Eukleides

1. For the battle of Leuktra and its consequences, see Cartledge 2002, pp. 251–259.

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The coins illustrated in this article are not reproduced to scale.

2. On the history of Sparta in the 3rd century B.C., see Oliva 1971, pp. 201–318; Shimron 1972; Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, pp. 28–79.

as co-king, thus dislodging the Eurypontid line, at least temporarily.<sup>3</sup> This struggle had an impact on the art and coinage of Sparta, which is particularly noticeable in the reigns of Areus I (309–265 B.C.), Kleomenes III, and Nabis (207–194 B.C.).

## HERAKLES IN SPARTAN COINAGE

The dominance of individual Spartan kings, following the model of other Hellenistic monarchs, is reflected in the messages imparted by their coinage. The drive to reclaim their lost influence in the Peloponnese led the kings of Sparta to issue coins in order to finance their mercenary armies. The very first coins of the Lakedaimonians were the silver tetradrachms struck by Areus I in 267–265 B.C.: the intended recipients were his mercenaries during the Chremonidean War.<sup>4</sup> The legend, naming King Areus as the issuing authority (*basileos Areos*), clearly imitated the coinage of Alexander's successors, with the title *basileus* carrying dynastic connotations beyond the local significance of Spartan kingship. Not only was this coinage issued exclusively in Areus's name, ignoring the other king of Sparta, the Eurypontid Eudamidas II (ca. 275–244 B.C.), it also pressed home its message by adopting a coin type used by Alexander the Great, with a youthful head of Herakles on the obverse and a seated Zeus on the reverse.<sup>5</sup> Alexander's posthumous silver tetradrachms were the most reliable legal tender at the time and their intended recipients more often than not were mercenaries.<sup>6</sup> The Chremonidean War thus prompted Areus to put an end to the traditional Spartan ban on coinage and at the same time overlook the Lakedaimonian aversion toward Alexander. This presented no problem, since the recipients of the coins would have been foreign mercenaries.

Herakles and his symbols would henceforth become a fixture of Spartan coinage until the reign of Nabis at the turn of the 2nd century B.C.<sup>7</sup> It is remarkable that the coins of 3rd-century Sparta are either anonymous (bearing the legend ΛΑ or ΛΑΚΕ) or issued in the name of a single king, and few of the Hellenistic kings of Sparta minted them. An anonymous group of bronze obols with a head of Herakles in a lionskin cap on the obverse and a club flanked by the stars of the Dioskouroi on the reverse (e.g., Fig. 1) was minted either by Areus around 265 B.C. or by his immediate successors in the decade 260–250.<sup>8</sup> The bronze coins of Kleomenes III adopted a similar type, but with a youthful Herakles.<sup>9</sup> His club remained on the reverse of another series of bronzes issued by Kleomenes, which introduced the *piloi* and stars of the Dioskouroi on the obverse.<sup>10</sup>

3. Plut. *Cleom.* 11.3. The dyarchy officially came to an end under the Eurypontid Lykourgos in 217 B.C.: Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 64.

4. On the coinage of Sparta, see Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978; Mørkholm 1991, pp. 149–150, pls. 24, 25.

5. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 1, group I. On the significance of Areus's Alexandrine coinage, see Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 35.

6. Mørkholm 1991, p. 36; Price 1991, pp. 155–166 (Peloponnesian Alexanders); Meadows 2001, p. 56.

7. Huttner 1997, pp. 51–52.

8. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann, 1978, pl. 1, group II; Mørkholm 1991, pp. 149–150.

9. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 4, group VI.

10. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 4, group VII.



Figure 1. Bronze obol. Sparta.  
Ca. 265 or 260–250 B.C. London,  
British Museum. Photo O. Palagia



Figure 2. Bronze triobol. Sparta.  
219–196 B.C. London, British  
Museum. Photo O. Palagia

The Dioskouroi had been the traditional symbol of the Eurypontid-Agiad dyarchy since the Archaic and Classical periods.<sup>11</sup> Even though their presence on 6th-century Lakonian pottery is uncertain,<sup>12</sup> they were nevertheless represented on the throne of Apollo at Amyklai<sup>13</sup> and in the bronze reliefs in the temple of Athena Chalkioikos.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the tomb of Castor was shown to visitors near the agora of Sparta.<sup>15</sup> As for official art, we need look no further than Lysander's dedication of a bronze statuary group of his naval commanders, set up at Delphi after his victory at Aigospotamoi in 405.<sup>16</sup> It is significant that his image stood alongside those of the Dioskouroi, which were decorated with gold stars. The disappearance of these stars before the battle of Leuktra in 371 was taken as an omen of Spartan defeat.<sup>17</sup>

By the 3rd century B.C., however, the potency of the Dioskouroi as the model for Spartan royalty *par excellence* had weakened: their symbols on the bronzes of Kleomenes III and his successors, and later those of Nabis and his predecessors (Fig. 2),<sup>18</sup> were always complementary to those of Herakles. Both royal houses of Sparta claimed Herakles as ancestor.<sup>19</sup> He was prominent in the Archaic art of Lakonia, primarily in depictions of his labors.<sup>20</sup> On the basis of a Lakonian bronze statuette of Herakles in armor and some depictions of the armored hero in Lakonian pottery, John Boardman has argued that Herakles in Sparta served as a paradigm of the warrior hero

11. Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 63.

12. Pipili 1987, pp. 54–58.

13. Paus. 3.18.14.

14. Paus. 3.17.3.

15. Paus. 3.13.1.

16. Plut. *Lys.* 18.1; *Mor.* 395B,

397F; Paus. 10.9.7–8; *Syll.*<sup>3</sup> 115. Jacquemin 1999, p. 338, no. 322.

On the naval battle of Aigospotamoi, see Cartledge 2002, p. 225.

17. Plut. *Lys.* 18.1; *Mor.* 397F.

18. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 4, group VIII, pl. 5, group

VIII, and pl. 7, group X.

19. Huttner 1997, pp. 43–64. The earliest source is Pind. *Pyth.* 10.1–4.

On Herakles as role model for royalty, see Huttner 1997, pp. 221–323.

20. Cf. Pipili 1987, pp. 1–13.

and hoplite king.<sup>21</sup> Pausanias (3.15.3) saw a temple of Herakles adjacent to the city wall of Sparta, not far from the sanctuary of Helen.<sup>22</sup> He remarks that the cult statue of Herakles wore armor on account of his fight against Hippokoon and his sons. That the kings took their Heraklean ancestry seriously is indicated by Plutarch (*Cleom.* 13.2, 16.4), who reports that Kleomenes III was perceived by Aratos and other visitors to his court as the only descendant of Herakles. This remark is best interpreted in the domestic context of Kleomenes' struggle with the other royal house of Sparta, which also claimed Heraklean ancestry, rather than in a broader context involving rival Hellenistic monarchs: of Kleomenes' contemporaries only his ally Ptolemy III Euergetes claimed to be the progeny of Herakles.<sup>23</sup> It is interesting that Kleomenes' noble conduct was attributed by his contemporaries to his Heraklean blood.<sup>24</sup>

The persistent appearance of Heraklean imagery on the coins of Hellenistic Lakedaimon suggests that the hero came to be preferred to the Dioskouroi as a symbol of Spartan royalty, not only in conscious emulation of Alexander the Great, who also claimed Herakles as an ancestor,<sup>25</sup> but also because the hero conveniently symbolized monarchy rather than dyarchy. The fact that Herakles was the hero of the philosophers as well<sup>26</sup> may have particularly appealed to Kleomenes III, who was a pupil of the Stoic philosopher Sphairos.<sup>27</sup>

## STATUES ERECTED FOR AND BY AREUS I

In addition to introducing coinage, 3rd-century B.C. Spartan kings seem to have encouraged the erection of statuary, primarily their own portraits, at home and abroad. In this they were anticipated by Lysander, victor of the Peloponnesian War, who set up bronze groups with the spoils of his victory at Aigospotamoi in the sanctuaries of Apollo at Delphi<sup>28</sup> and Amyklai.<sup>29</sup> At Delphi, in addition to the bronze portrait that formed part of the naval victory monument, a second portrait of Lysander in marble, with long hair and beard, stood within the Treasury of the Akantians, together with spoils taken from the Athenians during the Peloponnesian War in the Chalkidike.<sup>30</sup> There were two portrait statues of Areus I at Olympia, the first presented by the Eleans, the second by Ptolemy II, his ally in the Chremonidean War. The latter was probably set up in 266 B.C., and was strategically positioned not far from portraits of Ptolemy I, Antigonos the One-Eyed, and his son, Demetrios Poliorketes.<sup>31</sup> Areus was also active at Delphi, where he received *promanteia* and other honors in 267 B.C.<sup>32</sup>

During the reign of Areus I a bronze statue of the Eurotas River by Eutychides, the pupil of Lysippos, was set up in Sparta.<sup>33</sup> Eutychides' fame rested mainly on his statue of the Tyche of Antioch, commissioned by Seleukos I around 300 B.C. for the newly founded city.<sup>34</sup> Local personifications as symbols of cities became common in the Early Hellenistic period, and we may tentatively attribute the bronze Eurotas to the personal initiative of Areus I, as part of his program of civic renewal.

21. Kassel, Staatliche Museen Br. 17; Boardman 1992. I am grateful to John Boardman for drawing my attention to this publication.

22. The location of this temple is unknown.

23. Theoc. *Id.* 17.26; *OGIS* 54; Huttner 1997, pp. 124–129. The Antigonids only assumed a Heraklean *persona* under Philip V (221–179 B.C.): Huttner 1997, pp. 166–174.

24. Plut. *Cleom.* 13.2, 16.4; Huttner 1997, p. 54.

25. Palagia 1986, pp. 138–142; Huttner 1997, pp. 86–123.

26. Diog. Laert. 6.2.

27. Plut. *Cleom.* 11.2; Shimron 1972, p. 33. On Kleomenes III and Stoic philosophy, see Erskine 1990, pp. 123–149.

28. See n. 16, above.

29. Paus. 3.18.8.

30. Plut. *Lys.* 1.1; *Mor.* 397F.

31. Paus. 6.12.5, 15.8; *Syll.*<sup>3</sup> 433.

32. *Syll.*<sup>3</sup> 430.

33. Plin. *HN* 34.78.

34. Overbeck 1868, nos. 1530–1531; Meyer 2000; Andreae 2001, pp. 67–68; Schmalz 2002.



Figure 3. Silver tetradrachm. Sparta. 227–222 B.C. Portrait of Kleomenes III. London, British Museum. Photo O. Palagia



Figure 4. Silver tetradrachm. Phokaea. Antiochos II, 261–246 B.C. Portrait of Antiochos I. London, British Museum. Photo O. Palagia

### COIN PORTRAITS OF KLEOMENES III

The services of Eutychides were not the only feature of Hellenistic Sparta borrowed from the Seleukids. In addition to introducing sweeping social reforms and extending his influence throughout the Peloponnese by force of arms, Kleomenes III was also the first Lakedaimonian king to place his own portrait on his coins, although he refrained from naming himself in the legend (Fig. 3).<sup>35</sup> In the portrait, contrary to Spartan custom, he wears the royal diadem of the Successors, an element that forms a sharp contrast with the austere lifestyle attributed to him by Plutarch (*Cleom.* 13). The coin portrait was very likely inspired by that of Antiochos I (281–261 B.C.) (Fig. 4).<sup>36</sup>

The influence of the Seleukids upon Kleomenes is readily explained. Not only did Seleukid coins circulate in Sparta at the time,<sup>37</sup> but Kleomenes'

35. On the reign of Kleomenes, see Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, pp. 49–58. For anonymous silver tetradrachms with a royal portrait attributed to Kleomenes III and dated to the years of his military campaigns in the Peloponnese (227–222 B.C.), see Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pp. 7–16, pl. 2, group III; Mørkholm 1991, p. 149, pl. 34, no. 505. Areus had issued coins in his name but they did not feature his portrait. Nabis was the only king of Sparta who dared to do both: see below, Fig. 10, and Grunauer-von Hoerschel-

mann 1978, pl. 6, group IX, no. 17.

36. As shown on his own coins and those of Antiochos II (261–246 B.C.): Houghton and Lorber 2002, pls. 18–20, 22, 23. On the Seleukid overtones of Kleomenes' coin portrait, see Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, p. 8; Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 55.

37. Tetradrachm of Antiochos II found in Sparta (hoard buried ca. 222 B.C.): Thompson, Mørkholm, and Kraay 1973, no. 181.



Figure 5. Bronze. Sparta. 226–223 B.C. London, British Museum.  
Photo O. Palagia

father, Leonidas II, spent many years prior to his accession at the Seleukid court, presumably as a high-ranking mercenary, and strove to imitate the lifestyle of the eastern monarchs, thus making himself unpopular at home.<sup>38</sup> His son obviously learned his lesson well, but retained such aspects of regal pomp as were useful for conveying his message to the outside world, especially to his mercenaries.<sup>39</sup>

From 226/5 to 223/2 B.C. Kleomenes' mercenary army was subsidized by Ptolemy III.<sup>40</sup> This relationship had a direct impact on the bronze coinage issued by Kleomenes from 226 to 223, which showed an eagle on a thunderbolt on the obverse and a winged thunderbolt on the reverse (Fig. 5): as the eagle and thunderbolt were used on the reverse of Ptolemaic coins, the design of Kleomenes' bronzes may be taken as a tribute to his patron's coin types.<sup>41</sup> In addition, Ptolemy demanded Kleomenes' children and their grandmother as hostages, with fatal consequences for the dynasty.<sup>42</sup>

## CULT STATUE OF PTOLEMY III

A slightly under-life-size portrait head of Ptolemy III in Parian marble (Fig. 6) must date from the same period (226/5–223/2 B.C.).<sup>43</sup> This is the first sculpture in Parian marble found in Lakonia that postdates the Late Archaic period.<sup>44</sup> The figure was probably completed in wood and plaster according to a well-known technique employed in Ptolemaic ruler portraiture.<sup>45</sup> Such statues were usually produced in Alexandria and often exported to various destinations in the Ptolemaic Aegean. The head is crowned by a royal diadem; wings grow from the hair, indicating assimilation to Hermes.<sup>46</sup> The representation of Ptolemaic rulers with divine attributes may indicate ruler cult, as attested not only in Egypt itself but also in Egyptian dependencies.<sup>47</sup>

38. Plut. *Ages.* 3.6, 10.2. Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 238, n. 10. The date of his exile is uncertain. Plutarch says that he lived in the court of Seleukos I (312–281 B.C.) but Antiochos I (281–261 B.C.) is more likely. Kleonymos, the father of Leonidas II, had acted as regent to Areus I: Paus. 3.6.2; Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 30. His defection to Pyrrhos in 272 may have precipitated his son's exile: Plut. *Pyrrh.* 26.9; *Mor.* 219F.

39. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, p. 11; Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 55.

40. Cartledge and Spawforth 2002, p. 54; Hölbl 2001, pp. 52–53.

41. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 3, groups IV and V; Bringmann and Noeske 2000, pp. 238–240.

42. Plut. *Cleom.* 22.4–10, 38.2–6.

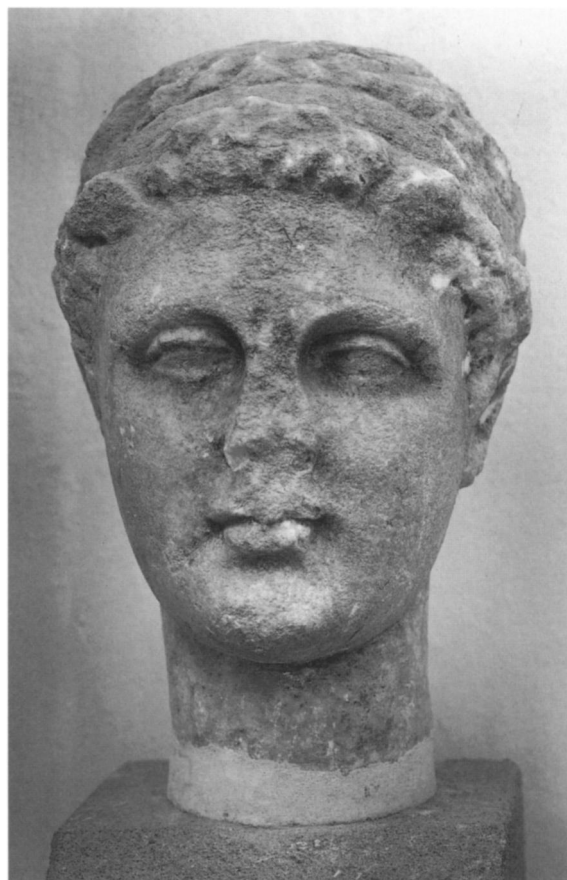
43. Sparta, Archaeological Museum 5366. Rumpf 1963; Kyrieleis 1975, pp. 34, 145, 169, no. C 8, pl. 24:1.

44. On Late Archaic sculpture in Parian marble from Lakonia, see Palagia 1993.

45. Kyrieleis 1975, pp. 130–136; Laronde and Queyrel 2001, pp. 757–759.

46. The wings were mistaken for bull's horns and Ptolemy was interpreted as a new Dionysos by Rumpf (1963), followed by Kyrieleis (1975, p. 169).

47. Hölbl 2001, p. 96.



**Figure 6. Marble portrait of Ptolemy III Euergetes. Sparta, Archaeological Museum 5366.** Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens, neg. no. Sparta 326

The Ptolemies began to assume the symbols of Hermes probably in the reign of Ptolemy III: some bronze coins of Abdera may depict his winged head on the obverse.<sup>48</sup> The symbolism of Hermes as a patron of merchants and communications, as well as a harbinger of peace, is obvious.<sup>49</sup> The association of the Ptolemaic rulers with Thoth, the Egyptian Hermes, is documented by the priests' decree of 196 B.C. honoring Ptolemy V, inscribed on the Rosetta Stone.<sup>50</sup> In this decree Hermes-Thoth is the dispenser of justice who triumphs over his enemies. The Seleukids may in fact have anticipated the Ptolemies in assimilating the ruler to Hermes. A portrait of Antiochos II with wings over a diadem appeared on coins issued by his Hellespontine mints.<sup>51</sup> Antiochos Hierax (242?–227 B.C.), a contemporary of Ptolemy III, placed a posthumous portrait of Antiochos I with similar attributes on his coins issued in the Troad (Fig. 7).<sup>52</sup>

Ptolemy III may also be assimilated to Hermes-Thoth on a clay sealing from Edfu, where he holds a caduceus and wears a lotus leaf.<sup>53</sup> He also holds

48. I am grateful to Catherine Lorber for explaining her reasons for identifying the ruler on the Abdera coins as Ptolemy III. He had previously been identified as Ptolemy II: see Svoronos 1904, p. σιστ', no. 929, with arguments to the contrary in Ashton

1998. On Ptolemy III assimilated to Hermes, see Svoronos 1904, p. σξγ'; Kyrieleis 1973.

49. Cf. Laubscher 1992, p. 320.

50. *OGIS* 90; Kyrieleis 1973, p. 143; Hölbl 2001, p. 165, n. 38.

51. Houghton and Lorber 2002,

p. 177, nos. 490–492, pl. 23. On Seleukid coin portraits with wings, see also Fleischer 1991, pp. 21–22.

52. Houghton and Lorber 2002, pp. 306–309, nos. 871, 872, 874–877, pl. 41.

53. Milne 1916, p. 91, no. 68, pl. 4.



Figure 7. Silver tetradrachm. Troad. Antiochos Hierax, 242?-227 B.C. Portrait of Antiochos I. London, British Museum. Photo O. Palagia



Figure 8. Bronze. Marathos, Phoenicia. 246-222 B.C. Portrait of Ptolemy III. London, British Museum. Photo O. Palagia

a caduceus on coins of Marathos in Phoenicia (Fig. 8).<sup>54</sup> It is interesting that these coins were minted by the city, not the king; it is therefore probable that the Ptolemies chose to emphasize the assimilation to Hermes for the purpose of foreign relations. A small bronze group of wrestlers in the Istanbul Museum, depicting the winner with wings and a lotus leaf on his head, has been interpreted as the triumph of Ptolemy III over a barbarian enemy; variants of the group show the winner with an Egyptian head-dress.<sup>55</sup> A bronze figurine of a seated Hermes in Paris, with wings on his head and wearing a lotus leaf, has also been interpreted as Ptolemy III.<sup>56</sup>

The head of Ptolemy III in Sparta (Fig. 6) is usually considered a private dedication, not an official portrait. But what constitutes an official portrait? And what is the significance of the divine attributes unless the head belonged to a cult statue? Ptolemy's financial support usually came at a price, as the hostages demanded from Kleomenes show. In 224/3 B.C., about two years after he struck his financial bargain with Kleomenes, Ptolemy was made an eponymous hero of Athens and received cult in exchange for his support against the looming threat of Antigonos Doson.<sup>57</sup> Statues of Ptolemy III as an eponymous hero of Athens were erected both in the Athenian Agora and at Delphi.<sup>58</sup> On the evidence of the Spartan portrait statue with divine attributes, the establishment of a cult of Ptolemy III in Sparta, following the example of Athens, is a distinct possibility. It may have been founded by one of his officials: a parallel is offered by the cult of Ptolemy III and Berenike II set up on Thera by Artemidoros of Perge.<sup>59</sup>

54. Svoronos 1904, p. σζγ', nos. 1073-1088, pl. 31.

55. Istanbul, Archaeological Museum 190. Kyrieleis 1973.

56. Paris, Louvre Br 4305. Laubscher 1992.

57. Habicht 1997, p. 182; Hölbl 2001, p. 52.

58. Paus. 1.5.5 and 10.10.2.

59. Hiller von Gaertringen 1899, p. 172; 1904, pp. 100-101; Bagnall 1976, p. 134; Palagia 1992, p. 171, n. 5.



## CULT STATUE OF HERAKLES

The acrolithic technique of Ptolemy's portrait was employed in a nearly contemporary colossal bearded head of Herakles, about half a meter high and also in Parian marble, now in the Sparta Museum (Fig. 9).<sup>60</sup> In light of Herakles' political significance for the Hellenistic kings of Sparta, a colossal statue of the hero from this period can only be a product of royal patronage. Its findspot is uncertain, as it was donated to the museum in the 19th century by the Manousakis family, which owned land in various parts of Sparta and its suburbs.<sup>61</sup>

The size suggests that the hero was seated. His neck is contoured for insertion. The rear is flat, rough picked, and forms a jagged edge on top for the application of plaster (Fig. 9, right). He did not wear a lionskin cap, however, as his curly hair is modeled at the top and sides. The bottom of his beard, now lost, was made of a separate piece of marble and pinned on. The marble piecing may have been due to a flaw in the stone; on the other hand, it may be evidence that a larger piece is missing, perhaps including the hand of Herakles resting on his chin. His upward gaze indicates that the head was tilted toward the sky. The torso would have been completed in plaster and wood, only his head and limbs being made of marble.

Colossal acrolithic heads with a stepped rear surface for the application of plaster are found mainly in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. Two examples, also in Parian marble, may be associated with Ptolemaic ruler portraits and dated to the reign of Ptolemy III: a posthumous head of Ptolemy I Soter, now in Copenhagen,<sup>62</sup> and a head, probably of Berenike II, from the Athenian Agora.<sup>63</sup> The style of the Herakles head in Sparta points to a date in the second half of the 3rd century B.C., but is hard to pin down more closely. It draws on Lysippan prototypes, especially the seated types of Herakles Epitrapezios<sup>64</sup> and Herakles Resting after Cleaning the Augean Stables (in Taranto).<sup>65</sup> The latter supported his head on his hand and gazed up, as does the Herakles in Sparta.<sup>66</sup> This type is now mainly known from miniature copies in which Herakles rests his right cheek on his hand, but there is a variant reproduced on a bronze statuette in Paris and on a gold quarter-stater of Herakleia in Lucania, dated ca. 281–278 B.C.,<sup>67</sup> in which Herakles' hand is placed directly on his chin in a gesture similar to the one suggested for the Spartan head.

60. Sparta, Archaeological Museum 52. *LIMC* IV, 1988, p. 790, no. 1312, s.v. Herakles (O. Palagia); Damaskos 2002. The head was damaged by fire. The acrolithic technique was also employed in colossal statues of the Roman period from Lakonia: examples include a head of Helen in Taygetos marble (Sparta, Archaeological Museum 571: Palagia 2001, pp. 291–295, fig. 5) and a head of Dionysos (Sparta, Archaeological Museum 728: Damaskos 2002, p. 118, figs. 3–5).

61. A findspot on the acropolis of

Sparta is proposed by Damaskos (2002, p. 117), whereas Kourinou (2000, p. 205, n. 695) tentatively suggests the area of Psychiko.

62. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek 2300. Kyrieleis 1975, p. 165, no. A 3, pls. 4, 5.

63. Athens, Agora Museum S 551. Stewart 1998; Palagia, forthcoming.

64. *LIMC* IV, 1988, pp. 774–775, nos. 957–979, s.v. Herakles (O. Palagia); Moreno 1995, pp. 140–147, 347–351.

65. *LIMC* IV, 1988, pp. 773–774, nos. 927–940, s.v. Herakles (O. Pala-

gia); Moreno 1995, pp. 281–288, 374–379. The original was taken to Rome in 209 B.C.: *LIMC* IV, p. 773.

66. The head of Herakles in Sparta is considered a variant of the Taranto type by Moreno (1995, p. 286).

67. Bronze statuette: Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 558. *LIMC* IV, 1988, p. 774, no. 938, s.v. Herakles (O. Palagia). Gold quarter-stater: *LIMC* IV, 1988, p. 773, no. 930, s.v. Herakles (O. Palagia); Van Keuren 1994, pp. 38–39, 88, pl. 22, no. 124; Moreno 1995, p. 284, fig. 4.41.2.



**Figure 9. Marble head of Herakles. Sparta, Archaeological Museum 52.** Photos H. R. Goette, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens, neg. nos. 2000/12, 2000/15

The Herakles in Sparta, then, probably sat on a rock, looking up, chin resting on his hand. The Lysippan connection does not necessarily mean that the sculptor was a close follower of Lysippos, since the master's Herakles types were popular all over the Greek world. The acrolithic technique, mixing stone with plaster and wood, indicates that the statue stood in a sheltered position, and the colossal size suggests a cult statue. The fact that only the head and limbs were of stone equally suggests that his torso was not naked. He may well be associated with the Herakles in armor seen by Pausanias (3.15.3) in his temple near the city wall.

Because Nabis was thought to be the first Spartan ruler to reproduce a seated Herakles on coinage (Fig. 10),<sup>68</sup> the head in the Sparta Museum has been assigned to his reign. The statue was tentatively reconstructed following the coin type, with the figure seated on a rock, right hand resting on club, left placed on the rock.<sup>69</sup> We have seen, however, that the head of Herakles in the Sparta Museum probably followed the iconographic scheme of the Lysippan Herakles in Taranto, gazing up, chin resting on hand. Moreover, Nabis was not the first to mint coins of the seated Herakles type. A group of tetradrachms with a seated Herakles on the reverse and the head of Athena on the obverse (e.g., Fig. 11), not carrying Nabis's name, is now attributed to his predecessors, Lykourgos and Machanidas (219–207 B.C.).<sup>70</sup> The Athena head was inspired by a gold stater of Alexander with Nike on the reverse; it may, in fact, have reached Sparta via an imitation coin type issued by Antiochos II.<sup>71</sup> A similar coin type with the head of Athena on the obverse and Nike on the reverse was minted by Side in the

68. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 6, group IX, no. 17. A portrait of Nabis is on the obverse, his name on the reverse.

69. Damaskos 2002, pp. 119–120.

70. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, pl. 6, group IX, nos. 1–16; Mørkholm 1991, p. 150.

71. Gold staters issued by the mints of Antiochos II at Sardis and Tarsos: Houghton and Lorber 2002, p. 184, no. 517, pl. 25; p. 198, nos. 559–560, pl. 26. Alexander's Athena type: Mørkholm 1991, p. 50, pl. 3, nos. 38, 47; Price 1991, pls. 1–4.

**Figure 10. Silver tetradrachm.**  
Sparta. Nabis, 207–194 B.C. Portrait  
of Nabis. London, British Museum.  
Photo O. Palagia



**Figure 11. Silver tetradrachm.**  
Sparta. 219–207 B.C. London, British  
Museum. Photo O. Palagia



**Figure 12. Silver tetradrachm.**  
Side. 200–175 B.C. London, British  
Museum. Photo O. Palagia



early 2nd century (Fig. 12).<sup>72</sup> More to the point, the seated Herakles on the Spartan coins is not a statuary type. It was copied after a coin type used in the mints of Antiochos I at Sardis (or Smyrna) and Magnesia ad Sipylum, and in the mints of Antiochos II at Temnos(?), Myrina, Kyme, and Phokaia (Fig. 4).<sup>73</sup> It is interesting that the coin type of seated Herakles issued by Antiochos II was adapted by Euthydemus of Bactria as well (Fig. 13), possibly around the same time as the Spartan coins (ca. 208–206 B.C.).<sup>74</sup>

The dissociation of the Herakles head in Sparta (Fig. 9) from the coin type of Nabis (Fig. 10) allows fresh speculation as to possible patronage. Given the insistence of Kleomenes III that he was the only progeny of Herakles, and his un-Spartan interest in art (as indicated by the plundering of the statues and paintings of Megalopolis),<sup>75</sup> he might well have commissioned a cult statue of Herakles as a paradigm of the soldier king. The fact that he took the unprecedented step of introducing royal portraits to Spartan coinage signifies that he understood well the value of propaganda abroad, while the dedication in Sparta itself of a colossal cult statue of Herakles as his royal ancestor points to a systematic manipulation of the arts to convey domestic political messages as well.

72. Franke, Leschhorn, Müller, and Nollé 1988, pp. 24–31, pl. 1; Mørkholm 1991, p. 143, pl. 33, no. 481.

73. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, p. 27; Houghton and Lorber 2002, pp. 122–123, nos. 313, 318, pp. 178–182, nos. 497, 500–501, 503–505, 509–512, pls. 17–18, 23–25.

74. Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978, p. 27; Mørkholm 1991, p. 121, pl. 25, nos. 383–386; Holt 1999, p. 131, pls. 24–25.

75. Plut. *Cleom.* 25.1.



Figure 13. Silver tetradrachm. Bactria. Euthydemos I. Ca. 208–206 B.C. Portrait of Euthydemos I. London, British Museum. Photo O. Palagia

## CONCLUSION

The preceding survey has made clear that, in an effort to reclaim sovereignty over the Peloponnese, a handful of 3rd-century B.C. Spartan kings adopted un-Spartan policies aimed at the outside world, following current political and artistic trends in other Hellenistic kingdoms. Some of these policies had been anticipated by Lysander, victor of the Peloponnesian War. The Hellenistic kings of Sparta imitated Alexander's successors in their patronage of the arts and in the dissemination of royal portraits, both on coins and in statuary erected in Panhellenic sanctuaries. Sculpture from 3rd-century Sparta provides evidence of ruler cult (albeit imported) and the promotion of Herakles as the divine ancestor of the royal line.

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