

HELLENISTIC CAMEOS: PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION AND CHRONOLOGY *

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A fundamental problem in the study of Hellenistic glyptic is the severe lack of provenanced material which renders questions of origin and distribution practically unanswerable. Stylistic analysis often fails to establish provenance or date, or define them in detail, mainly because style was not dependent upon those factors in Hellenistic art — styles were interchangeable and their influence far-reaching. The question of production of cameos and the development of the craft, in particular, is obscured by the same difficulties. The aim of this paper is to outline the problems and help establish the significance of the evidence available to us. The study of Hellenistic and Greco-Roman cameos is an old occupation of European scholarship, drawing its origins from the antiquarian connoisseurship of the last three or four centuries. This has resulted in the creation and acceptance of some conventional presumptions about the material or its significance which seem to confuse the issues of classification and chronology of Hellenistic cameos. Having discussed matters of terminology and the significance of literary evidence, an attempt to clarify the origin of cameos will be made, dealing with certain pieces that are traditionally accepted as among the earliest cameos to be produced in the Hellenistic period.

TERMINOLOGY

The English word *cameo* indicates a precious stone generally having two layers of different colours, in the upper of which a figure is carved in relief, while the lower serves as ground. The word derives from the medieval Latin *cammaeus*, itself of unknown derivation. Similar derived words exist in Italian (*il cammeo*), French (*le camée*), Spanish (*el camafeo*) and German (*die Kamee*). Several origins have been proposed for *cammaeus*, all far-fetched and highly improbable. Most influential seems to have been the

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Abbreviations (other than those for periodicals, for which the standard abbreviations apply)

ANRW – *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*

CAH – *The Cambridge Ancient History*

ComR – *Comptes Rendu de la Commission Impériale Archéologique*

LIMC – *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*

OED – *Oxford English Dictionary*

RE – Pauly-Wissowa, *Real Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft*

derivation suggested by Babelon,¹ who saw *cammaeus* as a transliteration of the Greek *κειμήλιος* ('heirloom'). According to him, the word was used in Byzantium to suggest 'treasure' along with *κειμηλιάρχιον* ('treasury') and *κειμηλιάρχιος* ('treasurer') and was passed on to the West after the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders in AD 1204. This derivation fails to account for the limited use of the 'new' word, to suggest 'cameo' rather than 'treasure', 'jewel' and so on and, most significantly, for the transformation of *κει-* into *ca-* of the first syllable in all known forms of the word. By AD 1222, the Old French *cameu* and *camehu* appear, together, for the first time in the West, in the Sarum inventory.² These are the earliest occurrences of any forms of the word, followed in 1295 by the Latin *camahutus*.³ Other forms of *camahutus* appear in Latin texts of the 14th century and later. *Camahieu* and its variants occur in Old French. Babelon's suggestion was accepted by Greek scholars who called cameos *κειμήλιοι* (i.e. *λίθοι*) in their work, since no suitable term exists in modern Greek. Recently the terms *διάγλυφος* ('cut through') and *ἀνάγλυφος* ('relief') were introduced for intaglios and cameos respectively, offering more accurate descriptions of the objects in question.

In English, the word *cameo* is often used in a loose way, to suggest any miniature work in relief, without restrictions as to colour variation. It is not clear whether such a distinction existed in antiquity and, as will be discussed below, the function of both types must have been the same. This may be confirmed by the lack of a term for 'cameo' in either classical Latin or Greek. In technical terms, however, there is a significant difference, both in methods of engraving and availability of materials, and this distinction will be observed in this paper, in order to clarify chronology.

LITERARY EVIDENCE

A number of inscriptions from Greek sanctuaries, containing lists of offerings and compiled by the officers in charge, offer valuable evidence on types and value of luxurious crafts in antiquity.⁴ Information on gold- and silver-ware, jewellery, dress can be found there. The absence of a suitable term for 'cameo' from the treasury inventories suggests that such objects were not widely available, if produced at all. There have been attempts to amend this lack, but with no convincing results. The inventory from the Acropolis of the year 398/7 BC, compiled by the 'treasurers of Athena and the Other Gods', lists among the treasures of the *Hekatompedon* several rings and gemstones, including: two *iaspis* seals set with gold, a glass seal on a gold ring, a gold ring set with an onyx seal.⁵ Along with these there is an entry for a large onyx, in the shape of an

¹ E. Babelon, *Catalogue des camées antiques et modernes de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris 1897) iv.

² *Ornamenta Eccl. Sarum in Register S. Osmund* (1884) II. 129; *OED*, s.v. *cameo*.

³ *Visitat. Thesaur. S. Pauli (Monast. Angl.)* III; *OED*, *ibid*.

⁴ See, in general, D. M. Lewis, 'Temple Inventories in Ancient Greece' in M. Vickers (ed.), *Pots and Pans; Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics* (Oxford 1986) 71–81; also D. Harris, 'Gold and Silver on the Athenian Acropolis: Thucydides 2.13.4 and the Inventory Lists', *Horos* 8–9 (1990–91) 75–82 (with n. 1 for earlier bibliography) and *ead.*, *The Treasures of the Parthenon and Erechtheion* (Oxford 1995) for the Parthenon accounts.

⁵ *IG*² II.1 1388B II. 86–89:

ὄνυξ [σφραγῆς χ]–
 ρυσὸν δακτύλιον ἔχων, σφραγῆς ἰάσπιδος χρυσὸν δακτύλιον ἔχουσα],
 σφραγῆς ἰάσπιδος περικεχρυσωμένη, σφραγῆς ὑαλίνη περικεχρυσω-
 μένη χρυσὸν δακτύλιον ἔχουσα.

ithyphallic *tragelaphos* weighing 32 *drachmae* (137.92g).⁶ The same object appears in the later account for the year 390/89 (*IG*² II.1 1401, fr. d, l. 45). An entry in the inventory of the year 368/7 (*IG*² II.1 1415, l. 12, repeated in later accounts, 'large onyx, broken') might indicate the fate of the statuette.⁷ This entry has been used to suggest that cameos did exist in the Classical period, interpreting the object in question as a 'cameo representing a priapic *tragelaphos*'.⁸ This, however, cannot be so: engraved gems were described in Greek as 'having' or 'bearing' an image, not *being* it. In the Hellenistic period the words *episēmon* or *sēmeion* were used.⁹ Furthermore, as can be also seen from the passages in nn. 5–10, the survey of the temple inventories of the 5th and 4th centuries BC indicates that neither the subject matter nor the weight of the intaglios brought to the temple was of a concern to the treasurers — this became their practice in the Hellenistic period.

Intaglios were invariably connected with the practice of sealing in Classical antiquity, and in Greek they were usually called *sphragides* or *sphragidia*. Both are words used to denote 'seal', and they appear in several passages of Greek literature as well as in temple inventories as gifts.¹⁰ This soon became a generic term to suggest 'an engraved precious stone', regardless of its real function — and most of the intaglios of the Classical or the Hellenistic period can be safely assumed to have been simply decorative and not functional as seals. The loss of its original meaning can be illustrated by passages where the term *sphragis* is used to indicate a precious stone set on a ring, even if it was plain.¹¹ The wider term *lithos* (stone) was probably used to describe, among other things, what we understand as a cameo, as it was certainly used for both plain and engraved precious stones.¹²

⁶ Most ordinary cameos weigh well under 5–6g (cf. M. Henig, *The Content Family Collection of Ancient Cameos*, [Oxford 1990] throughout). It is in later periods that large 'official' cameos are commissioned. These are a lot thicker and heavier, and bear complex scenes. Cf. the two fragmentary 'State Cameos', *ibid.*, nos. 178 (94.3g: Severan?) and 179 (140.5g: Augustan?). A cameo weighing 137.92g, bearing a single figure, is highly unlikely in the Classical period.

⁷ *IG*² II.1 1388B, l. 62f. (398/7 BC): ὄνυξ μέγας τραγέλαφου πριαπίζοντος σταθμὸν. ΔΔΔ † †; 368/7 (*IG*² II.1 1415, l. 12 (368/7 BC): ὄνυξ μέγας κατεαγώς.

⁸ Babelon (n. 1) xxxvi.

⁹ Cf. the entry for an onyx intaglio set in a ring from the same inventory as the *tragelaphos*, above n. 5. On ways of recording the subject matter of an intaglio cf. the account of 278 BC from Delos (archonship of Hypsokles, *IG* XI² 161B): a gold ring representing an Eros (l. 47: δακτύλιος χρυσῶς ... ἐπίσημον ἔχων Ἔρωτα) and another *tragelaphos* (l. 48: σφραγίς ... σημεῖον ἔχουσα τραγέλαφον). On *sēmeion* and *episēmon* see also J. Spier, 'Emblems in Archaic Greece', *BICS* 37 (1990) 107–29 and L. Lacroix, 'Les "blasons" des villes grecques', *ÉTAC* 1 (1955–56) 91–115.

¹⁰ Cf. *IG*² II.1 1445, l. 20; *IG*² II.1 1534 l. 103 (a *sphragidion* representing an eagle); l. 104 (another, representing a bull).

¹¹ Cf. *IG*² II.1 1534, l. 103, from the sanctuary of Asklepios in Athens, where a *sphragis* is inventoried as *asēmos*, plain:

σφραγίς [ἄ]σημος κατεαγνῖα]

The inventory dates from 276/5 BC.

¹² Usually in composites as *dialithos* (*Deipn.* 5.197c), *lithokollos* (C. B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* [New Haven 1934] no. 5, 38), and *lithokollētos* (Strabo, 15.1.69) all meaning 'gem-studded'.

Two pieces of indirect evidence are sometimes cited with reference to cameo cutting early in the Hellenistic period. One comes from a royal decree by Antiochos III, stipulating that the *eikones* of his queen, Laodike, were to be born on the golden wreaths of the chief priestesses, designated to her cult.¹³ The decree, preserved in three copies, dates from 193 BC,¹⁴ and might be referring to cameo portraits of the queen.¹⁵ This, however, is not the only possible interpretation of the passage and it cannot be used to prove that cameos had been invented by then (only to suggest a possible use, provided that their manufacture already in that period was otherwise attested).

Priests' diadems bore relief decoration, presumably relevant to their profession and the particular deity they served. A marble head in the Vatican, once thought to represent Antiochos I but now generally accepted as a representation of a priest, wears a diadem adorned with a relief head;¹⁶ it has been suggested that it was meant to represent a cameo worn by the priest. The preservation of the statue is not good enough to allow close examination of the head, and no certain interpretation of the figure can be put forward. It is unclear whether a cameo is indeed represented on the band, and the uncertain date of the head reduces its significance as possible testimony for an early production of cameos in the Hellenistic period.

Eventually, cameos did come to adorn bands and diadems. One such gold band, fitted with three cameos, was found in Kerch, in a 3rd century AD context.¹⁷ The band is comparable with other bands or diadems from the area bearing embossed representations, usually of a single Gorgoneion; sometimes coins may be alternatively fitted.¹⁸ Both the band with the three cameos and those with embossed relief decoration come from uncertain or late contexts, preventing us from establishing a Hellenistic date for the objects. The practice, however, of embellishing diadems in this way can be dated to the Hellenistic period if not earlier, and Antiochos' decree can be used to suggest that such diadems were common for priests in early 2nd century BC.¹⁹ Medallions in metal or other material were called *prometōpidia* — forehead-pieces. The word is used to denote the forehead-piece or frontlet, mainly for horses (Xen., *An.* I.8.7; *Cyr.* VI.4.1; also Athen., *Deipn.* v.200e [donkeys]; 2202a [bulls]) as well as the chest-piece (*Arr. Tact.* IV.1; XXXIV.8). Medallions adorning wreaths are mentioned in inscribed accounts: a fragmentary inventory from Delos most likely suggests that a gold wreath, bearing a *prometōpidion* of some sort, was dedicated there in 334/3 BC (*IG* II².1652 7f.).²⁰

¹³ Welles (n. 12) no. 36, 13–14:

αἱ (ἀρχιέρειαι) φοιρήσουσιν στεφάνους
χρυσοῦς ἔχοντας [εἰκόνας αὐ]τῆς

Also: L. Robert, *Hellenica* VII (Paris 1949) 5–22; id., 'Encore une inscription grecque de l'Iran', *CRAI* (1967) 281–97, esp. 286.

¹⁴ Robert, *Hellenica* *ibid.*, 288f.

¹⁵ R. R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford 1988) 12.

¹⁶ G. Hafner, 'Pergamenische Herrscherbildnisse', *Aach. Kunstbl.* 40 (1970) 154–64 and esp. 158 with fig. 9; A. J. Wace, 'Hellenistic Royal Portraits', *JHS* 25 (1905) 86–104 and 94, no. B.2; Smith (n. 15) 12.

¹⁷ *ComR* 1875 19; S. Reinach, *Antiquités du Bosphore Cimmérien* (Paris 1892) 44.

¹⁸ *ComR* 1862, xv; Reinach (n. 17) 19 with pl. LXXXV.12.

¹⁹ G. F. Hill, 'Priester – Diademe', *WJh* 2 (1899) 245–49.

²⁰ The entry reads:

στέφανος χρυσοῦς ---15---

[με]τωπίδιον προσηλαμένος ἄστατος

The 15 letter gap in l. 7 should be restored as ...12...προ– but the nature of the *prometōpidion* seems difficult to conjecture. It could well be a material or a representation, but the gap is too big to restore.

MATERIALS

Students of glyptic use a mixed terminology system for materials, partly based on mineralogy and partly on empirical observation of colour, translucence, brilliance and so on. The latter comes closer to classification applied by ancient mineralogists like Theophrastos and Pliny, who took colour to be their primary criterion. For our needs it is important to understand the ancient terminology, so as to tie the literary evidence with the archaeological remains, while at the same time be aware of modern scientific analysis which might affect questions of locality or technique.

Agate, one of the main quartz varieties, is by far the commonest gemstone in which cameos were cut in the Hellenistic period. Owing to a wide divergence in colour and structure, different terms were applied to related agate types in antiquity, a practice continuing today. Agate is a chalcedonic variety and its main characteristic is the layered structure, with varying colour and translucency. The terms *achates*, *onyx*, and *sardonyx* were used by the Greeks presumably to describe its various types. The first (from which the modern term 'agate' derives) was most likely applied to specimens where colour variation was not prominent, as well as another quartz variety, moss agate, which is grey or bluish chalcedony with dark dendritic inclusions. *Onyx* and *sardonyx* are not mineralogical terms, but are used empirically by art historians in order to describe the various ways in which agate is cut: when the stone is cut horizontally to its layers, as for a 'proper' cameo, *sardonyx* is used when one of the layers is light yellowish or dark brown ('sard') and *onyx* in all other cases (as with the Parthenon statuette mentioned above).²¹ The term 'banded agate', is used for the same stone, but when cut across its layers so that they appear as bands traversing the body of the stone. The term *sardonyx* will be used in this paper to suggest all agate cameos cut in yellowish brown and darker brown varieties, which seem to have been more popular — or available — in the Hellenistic period.

Glass, coloured to resemble stone, was also used to make cameos, first moulded and then given additional cutting for the final details. Several surviving examples suggest the systematic use of this material in the Hellenistic period.

THE ORIGIN OF CAMEOS

A fundamental flaw in our understanding of Hellenistic glyptic seems to be the general assumption that cameos were cut as early as the later 4th century BC, with the advent of what we call the Hellenistic period, whereas the evidence for this is lacking.²² Moreover, and although no cameos are assumed to have been cut in the Classical period, even in the advanced 4th century prior to Alexander, there is a presumption that cameos emerged, as a full-blown craft, in the aftermath of the conquest of Asia. This is linked, no doubt, to the old belief that Alexander's conquest flooded the Greek world with unbelievable wealth and, as far as Art Historians are concerned, Eastern influences. The former, an ancient conviction sustained by authorities like Athenaios (*Deipn.* vi. 231e), is probably true, although Philip's earlier achievements should not be underestimated. Influences, of course, had been crossing the borders between East and West for a long time prior to that. At any rate the effects of the conquest on art and everyday life cannot be assumed to have been immediate; it is probably after the dissolution of Alexander's empire, when the boundaries of the new Kingdoms were more or less established, that the outcome described by Athenaios, 'the influx of vigorous wealth from Asia', became apparent.

²¹ Cf. G. M. A. Richter, *Engraved Gems of the Greeks and Etruscans* (London 1968) 9.

²² *Ibid.* 140–51.

Cutting a cameo entails two basic notions: that of cutting a precious stone in relief, as opposed to cutting in intaglio, thus precluding its use as a seal; cameos are not meant to be practical. The second important point of definition is, it seems, the use of a layered stone, taking advantage of the layers' different colours. The use of the term to suggest stones cut in relief, but in a single layer and without colour variation seems to be confusing the issue, allowing early datings for cameos with no archaeological context. It has been long asserted, for example, that cameos were already cut in the early 3rd century BC, if not earlier, since 'cameos' set in rings were found in the Crimea, in the same tombs with 'coins of Lysimachos of Thrace'.²³ The object referred to here comes from a female grave containing several pieces of jewellery, among which were three gold rings. One represents a bust of Athena, rendered in gold-leaf and garnet cut in relief.²⁴ Typologically, this piece cannot be tied to the later craft of cameos any more than intaglios can. Furthermore, the date of the burial has to be lowered significantly, since the coin in question belongs to a series struck in c. 205–195 BC.²⁵ Cameos in the narrower understanding of the term have been found in tombs of the Black Sea, always however in contexts that are uncertain, or much too late to be of any use to us (see Appendix). It is of some significance that no cameos have emerged from the numerous Late Classical and Hellenistic burials from the area; and this is to be contrasted with the fact that the vast majority of the cameos in the Museums of those areas and the Hermitage come from collections of European dignitaries or private donations.

To return to classification, the idea of a precious stone cut in relief was not new in the Hellenistic period, as can be attested by any Archaic or Classical scarab. Even the use of layered stones to enhance the relief existed in a few but indicative examples (scarabs and 'pseudo-scarabs') from as early as the Archaic period.²⁶ A cornelian scaraboid from the Content collection with the relief representation of a lioness²⁷ can be classified under such an old category of pseudo-scarabs — the so-called 'lion gems' — rather than as a cameo, cut in the 3rd century BC, 'after cameos were invented'.²⁸ Precious stones cut in relief seem to have become more popular from the 3rd century onwards, even set on rings, and as the latter became increasingly ornamental the use of intaglios was no longer

²³ *REIA I* [1914] s.v. **Ringe** 819 (F. Marshall).

²⁴ Found by Aschik in 1838 (in a tomb on the **Quarantine Way**), the ring was published by A. Aschik, 'Fouilles de Kertch', *Annali dell' Istituto* 12 (1840) 6 with pl. A, 1. St Petersburg. The Hermitage (Inv. no. Π 1838.15); Reinach (n. 17) 19 with pl. XV. 15; U. Axmann, *Hellenistische Schmuckmedaillons* (Berlin 1986) no. 34B (and no. 34A [= Π 1838.16] for another example). The latter is illustrated in *Kunsthau Zürich; Aus den Schatzkammern Eurasiens Meisterwerke antiker Kunst, 29 Januar bis 2 Mai 1993*, no. 125.

²⁵ Reinach (n. 17) lxiii with caption for pl. lxxxv.10, was under the impression that the gold staters issued by Lysimachos were portraying the king himself, and were therefore contemporary with him. It was later established that they were in fact portraying Alexander and that they were being issued until much later, well into the 2nd century BC (see Appendix). The coin from the Quarantine Way tomb represents the standard Lysimachos type with the addition of a bull on the exergue of the reverse. This issue has been identified by H. Seyrig, 'Monnaies hellénistiques de Byzance et de Chalcédoine', in C. M. Kraay and G. K. Jenkins (eds.), *Essays in Greek Coinage Presented to Stanley Robinson* (Oxford 1968) 183–200 and esp. 196, as having been struck by Chalcedon in c. 205–195 BC. However, Reinach's old dating is still influencing the opinion of several scholars, for example Axmann (n. 24).

²⁶ Cf. J. Boardman, *Archaic Greek Gems* (London 1968) nos 54 and 143.

²⁷ Henig (n. 6) no. 1.

²⁸ Cf. J. Boardman, *Intaglios and Rings from a Private Collection* (London 1975) no. 37 for a 'lion gem' (burnt cornelian) of the 4th century BC.

necessary.²⁹ Their production continued throughout the Hellenistic period, but intaglios remained the most popular craft in glyptic and definitely set the pace. Two such objects, dating from different periods, can be singled out: a garnet bust in the Getty Museum (Plate 22a) that can reasonably be identified with Berenike II of Egypt (r. 246–220 BC)³⁰ and a chalcedony ‘mask’ in the Vatican (Plate 22b) representing a fleshy face, with large eyes and rounded pupils. The latter are drilled with a technique used in intaglios, giving an effect also met in coinage, of a wide, flat cone.³¹ Owing to its chubby look, the piece has been connected with the Ptolemies, as a portrait of one of the members of the dynasty, tentatively by Furtwängler³² and with more conviction by Megow³³ who sees in it the portrait of a man (although he does not name any of the probable candidates). It seems more likely, however, that the chalcedony fragment comes from a Gorgoneion,³⁴ either wholly made of the same stone, or perhaps composite with metal. The striking fleshiness of the face lacks the individuality expected from the Ptolemaic, or indeed any, portraits of the Hellenistic period.

The scanty and selective excavation record we have from some parts of the Greek and Hellenistic world cannot be used to draw any firm conclusions. Nevertheless, there are some indications we can consider. No cameos have been excavated in Late Classical or Early Hellenistic contexts (see Appendix), and this, in line with our obvious difficulty to recognise in the remaining material traits and characteristics which we can firmly identify as of the Early Hellenistic period, should indicate that, at least in the 3rd century BC, no cameos were produced, apart perhaps from a few marginal examples which we are unable to identify and date securely. Moreover, the dearth of material denies one the possibility of identifying the moment in the history of Hellenistic glyptic when cameos were introduced and became widely popular. ‘Invention’ is a term best avoided, since both notion and technique were already there, and so was subject-matter, appreciation, and —

²⁹ A comparable class of all-metal, usually bronze, rings that seem to date from the later 4th century onwards often bear representations, usually heads and busts, in relief; cf. O. Neverov, ‘A Group of Hellenistic Bronze Rings’, *VDI* 127 (1974) 106–15; J. Spier, ‘A Group of Ptolemaic Garnets’, *JWaltersArtGal* 47 (1989) 21–38 with n. 17; D. Plantzos, ‘Ἐκθέωσις Ἀρσινόης, on the cult of Arsinoe Philadelphos’, *Archaïognosia* 7 (1991–92) 119–34, esp. 129–32. The rings are usually recognised as ‘Ptolemaic’, on the basis of their shape (which however was universally popular) and — on less solid grounds — their iconography, although their style is rather coarse and details are lacking. Their wide distribution (from the Black Sea to Egypt and from Greek localities such as Lemnos to as far East as Afghanistan) might suggest a wide production as well. This type of ring, along with relief rings in other media (bone, marble, glass, wood) and quite possibly the class of precious stones cut in relief discussed above, might have suggested the possibility of cameo cutting to engravers and their clientele; on bone ‘cameos’, see E. Alföldi-Rosenbaum, ‘Ruler Portraits on Roman Game Counters from Alexandria’, in *EIKONES: Festschrift H. Jucker* (1980) 20–39 and L. Marangou, ‘Ptolemaischer Fingerringe aus Bein’, *AM* 86 (1971) 163–71. Their own production, however, remained quite marginal: bronze rings were limited to the subjects listed above, and were interchangeable with similar rings cast in intaglio. As most actual signet rings were all-metal rather than stone-set, the market for all-metal rings cut in relief was quite small.

³⁰ J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California (inv. no. 81.AN.76.59); Boardman (n. 28) no. 59; Spier (n. 29) 30. The identification was carried out from comparison with Berenike’s coins. Although the portraits are not easy to compare, and the absence of any regalia makes even the identification with royalty speculative, the type adopted for the garnet bust is that of Berenike’s portraits; it could be argued, therefore, that the Getty garnet dates from the 3rd century BC and that it was perhaps intended as a portrait of Berenike II.

³¹ Cf. O. Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage* (Cambridge 1991) nos. 178; 297, and so on.

³² A. Furtwängler, *Die Antiken Gemmen* III (Berlin 1900) 334.

³³ W. R. Megow, ‘Zu einigen Kameen späthellenistischer und frühaugusteischer Zeit’, *Jdl* 100 (1985) 445–88 and esp. 451.

³⁴ R. Righetti, *Opere di glittica dei musei sacro e profano* (Rome 1955) 18.

since intaglios were also used for ornamental purposes — even function. It would seem that cameos became widely popular, mass produced even, at a later date, probably in the Augustan period and later, as can be deduced from the large numbers of classicizing specimens we possess and can reasonably date to that period.

'GRAND CAMEOS' IN THE EARLY HELLENISTIC PERIOD?

An issue related to that of the origin of cameos is the frequently attempted attribution to the early Hellenistic period of a number of 'State' representations of royalty that have been often ascribed to Alexandrian court workshops. Discussion of them here is necessary in order to evaluate their importance. Ptolemaic Alexandria, one of the great centres of the Hellenistic world, was reputed even in antiquity as a centre for the arts. Gem cutting was placed under royal patronage by Ptolemy Soter and his successors, as can be attested by a number of intaglio-portraits of the early members of the dynasty, as well as the refined portrait studies struck on their coinage, presumably executed by the same or related artists. The importance of Alexandria for the development of Hellenistic art and our relatively good knowledge of Ptolemaic glyptic (especially when compared with other areas of the Hellenistic world) might account for the obvious enthusiasm with which several scholars suggest the attribution of important but unprovenanced works to Alexandrian workshops.

THE ALEXANDRIA PLASTER CAST

When first published, the cast (Plate 22c) was considered by Adriani to be yet another example of a sizeable group of similar objects copying metal vessels for the purpose of reproduction in metal, and possibly to be used in their own merit as ornaments.³⁵ A large number of casts and plaster objects were found in Memphis (modern *Mit-Rahineh*) and published early this century.³⁶ Another important find of the same character came from Begram, in Afghanistan (ancient *Kapisi*).³⁷

Although of no attested provenance (the piece was part of the royal collection and was donated to the Greco-Roman Museum by King Fouad I of Egypt) the plaster cast was allegedly found in the Fayum. It is admittedly unique among its counterparts, by virtue of its subject matter — a grand depiction of a royal couple — and its size (its maximum diameter is 15 cm): although other royal portraits can be found among the *Mit-Rahineh* casts, these are much smaller and less ambitious.³⁸ The couple represented has been at times identified as Ptolemy I and Berenike I or Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II. The noses of both have been altered on the cast, that of the king leaving a visible 'ghost' on the cheek of his consort. In view of the king's pointed chin and forehead, as well as his once strong nose, it seems more likely that he is intended as a portrait of Ptolemy I, therefore the cast should bear a jugate depiction of the *Theoi Soteres*. Several scholars have, with varying

³⁵ A. Adriani, 'Contributi all' iconografia dei Tolomei', *BArchAlex* 32 (1938) 77 with pl. vi; Alexandria, Greco-Roman Museum (Inv. no. 24345). On casts in general, see F. Burkhalter, 'Moulages en plâtre antiques et toreutique alexandrine', in N. Bonacasa and A. di Vita (eds.), *Alessandria e il Mondo Ellenistico-Romano; Studi in onore di Achile Adriani II* (Rome 1984) 334–47.

³⁶ O. Rubensohn, *Hellenistisches Silbergerät in antiken Gipsabgüssen* (Berlin 1911); C. Reinsberg, *Studien zu hellenistischen Toreutik* (Hildersheim 1980).

³⁷ O. Kurz, 'Begram et l'Occident gréco-romain' in J. Hackin (ed.), *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Begram; Mémoires de la Délégation archéol. franç. en Afghanistan XI* (Paris 1954) 89–150.

³⁸ Rubensohn (n. 36) no. 32; no. 12.

degrees of confidence, accepted the Alexandria plaster as a cast from a cameo, thus establishing evidence for an early production of 'Grand Cameos' in Ptolemaic Alexandria.³⁹ If we accept that the Soter cast is contemporary with the rulers it portrays, then we are given a date early in the 3rd century BC if not earlier for its production.

This conclusion is not safe, however: it is quite clear that the two heads show a high degree of idealism in their depiction, especially in the long, wavy hair of Ptolemy and the fluttering bands of his diadem, but mainly in the generalised, eased-out features of the portraits themselves. There is an obvious clash with the 'dynastic' octodrachms (Plate 23a), where characterisation is more specific (and these are not contemporary with the Soter cast but were issued by Ptolemies II and III). It is therefore quite likely that the original of the cast is of a date later than Soter's reign. More to the point, the assumption that the Alexandria cast copies a Grand Cameo hardly seems justifiable: the cast bears no obvious differences from its counterparts that are unanimously accepted as copied from metal-ware. Material and technique seem to have been the same. Furthermore, if we accept that such casts were taken to facilitate reproduction of metal prototypes,⁴⁰ copying a cameo in the same way is absurd, since the cast could not be reproduced in stone. Nor can we assume that the Alexandria cast could have any function, decorative or other, on its own, since its shape is irregular and is left with rough edges.⁴¹ Therefore, it seems quite clear that the cast cannot be considered in a discussion of Hellenistic cameos. It is to be noted that scholars working on Hellenistic metalware seem to have no doubts that the plaster derives from a metal prototype.⁴²

THE 'CAMEOS OF THE PTOLEMIES':

THE 'CAMEO GONZAGA' IN ST PETERSBURG

AND THE VIENNA 'PTOLEMÄER-KAMEO'

The willingness to accept the Alexandria cast as a Grand Cameo seems to have been prompted by the ever recurring belief that two cameos with similar subject, the so-called 'Cameo Gonzaga' in St Petersburg (Plate 23b)⁴³ and the 'Ptolemäer-Kameo' in Vienna (Plate 24),⁴⁴ in fact represent a Ptolemaic couple, usually thought to be the *Philadelphoi*,

³⁹ H. Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer* (Berlin 1975) 6; H. Möbius, *Alexandria und Rom* (Munich 1964) 17; Megow (n. 33) 461; Smith (n. 15) 12.

⁴⁰ Burkhalter (n. 35) 335.

⁴¹ Adriani (n. 35) 78.

⁴² Burkhalter (n. 35) 345.

⁴³ St Petersburg, the Hermitage (Inv. no. Ж 291; 157 x 118 mm). Bibliography in: W. R. Megow, *Kameen von Augustus bis Alexander Severus* (Berlin 1987) 281–84; O. Neverov, *Cameo Gonzaga* (Leningrad 1977); id., *Antique Cameos* (Leningrad 1988) no. 1. Whether the St Petersburg Cameo is indeed the 'Cameo Gonzaga' has been the subject of considerable controversy. N. T. de Grummond, 'the Real Gonzaga Cameo', *AJA* 78 (1974) 427–29 with pl. 87 has argued that it is the Vienna Cameo that once belonged to the Gonzaga family (both cameos were in Mantua at some time) whereas others disassociate the Gonzagas from either the Vienna or the St Petersburg cameos altogether: see C. M. Brown, 'Isabella d'Este's *Augustus and Livia* Cameo and the *Alexander and Olympias* gems in Vienna and St Petersburg', in C. M. Brown (ed.), *Engraved Gems; Survivals and Revivals* (Washington, forthcoming) with bibliography; also G. Seidmann, 'Portrait Cameos; Aspects of their History and Function', in M. Henig and M. Vickers (eds.), *Cameos in Context; the Benjamin Zucker Lectures* (Oxford and Houlton 1993) 86 with nn. 3–4. Both the St Petersburg and Vienna cameos have been cut down since antiquity.

⁴⁴ Vienna, the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Inv. no. IXa 81; 115 x 113 mm). History and bibliography in: W. Oberleitner, *Geschnittene Steine. Die Prunkkameen der Wiener Antiken-*

or alternatively Alexander and Olympias. Both cameos have been known to scholars since the Renaissance, when these identifications were proposed — and this seems to have prejudiced modern scholarship ever since. Kyrieleis has probably had the last word as to the date of the St Petersburg Cameo,⁴⁵ followed, with slight modifications, by Zwierlein-Diehl⁴⁶ and Megow.⁴⁷ They argued for various dates in the first half of the first century AD, and possible identifications with the major or minor Imperial couples of the period. Their dating is justified on both stylistic and iconographical grounds. The St Petersburg Cameo presents a harsh combination of idealistic and realistic features which is akin to Imperial art of the first century AD and lacking from early Hellenistic portraiture. The two busts on the cameo, especially that of the man, display an assortment of attributes and symbols that were employed by Imperial portraitists.⁴⁸

A new case for an early Hellenistic date for the Vienna cameo has been recently put forward by Oberleitner⁴⁹ whereby the work represents Ptolemy Philadelphos and Arsinoe. His arguments are based on technique and iconography. He repeats the old comparison of the Vienna Cameo with the ‘dynastic’ octodrachms (Plate 23a) and argues that the cameo portrays the same individuals as the coins. On technical grounds, he introduced an argument based on the number of layers of the sardonyx in which it was cut: eleven, as opposed to an average of three – four for the Julio-Claudian period. This, however, could merely suggest that the Vienna cameo is unique, but not necessarily earlier, especially as we are unable to compare it with any certainly Hellenistic material. More crucial is the way in which the sardonyx layers have been used, in relation to the individual parts of the device: ideally the stone is such size and quality as to provide ample depth for the design, be that a face or item of clothing. When, for technical reasons, the stone has to be cut not parallel to the layers, but sideways, then the design has to follow the layer, and this gives an undulated effect to the work (not noticeable when the stone is viewed frontally — or in a photograph). The result of this technique is firmer colour distinction, whereby the design appears neatly ‘coloured’ and clean-cut; cameos cut this way also tend to be thinner.⁵⁰

Several scholars before Oberleitner, notably Kyrieleis,⁵¹ have expressed a similar conviction as to the date of the Vienna Cameo, mainly based on iconography. Megow does not include it in his study of the cameos in the period from Augustus to Alexander Severus,⁵² and elsewhere he states that it should be considered as a link between the ‘Early Hellenistic’ (i.e. the Alexandria Cast) and the cameos from the time of Claudius,

sammlung (Vienna 1985) 32–35; A. Bernhhard-Walcher *et al.*, *Trésors des Empereurs d’Autriche* (Vienna and Québec 1994) 90.

⁴⁵ H. Kyrieleis, ‘Der Kameo Gonzaga’, *BJh* 171 (1971) 162–93.

⁴⁶ E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien II* (Munich 1979) 105.

⁴⁷ Megow (n. 43).

⁴⁸ Kyrieleis (n. 45).

⁴⁹ W. Oberleitner, ‘Der “Ptolemäer”-Kameo – doch ein Kameo der Ptolemäer!’, in O. Brehm and S. Klie (eds.), *ΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ; Festschrift für Max Wegner zum 90. Geburtstag* (Bonn 1992) 329–38.

⁵⁰ Other such cameos cut in this way are Berlin, Staatliche Museen FG 11058 [A. Furtwängler, *Beschreibung der geschnittenen Steine im Antiquarium* (Berlin 1896) no. 11058] and Vienna, the Kunsthistorisches Museum IXa 59 [Bernhhard-Walcher (n. 44) no. 159]. This remark I owe to G. Platz-Horster, in relation to the cameo Berlin FG 11057 (see below) which she is currently in the process of studying.

⁵¹ Kyrieleis (n. 39) 19; 80f.

⁵² Megow (n. 43).

like the St Petersburg Cameo, but closer to the latter.⁵³ He concludes that the Vienna Cameo is a classicizing work of the later 1st century BC, without any attempt to identify the sitters (which would pose substantial difficulties, as the candidates would be very few). Other scholars have produced contradictory views: Nau⁵⁴ accepts that the two cameos are chronologically separate but, reversing Kyrieleis, she considers the St Petersburg Cameo as Early Hellenistic and the Vienna Cameo as Claudian. Hertel⁵⁵ argued that the Vienna Cameo is Augustan, participating in a Roman revival of Hellenistic styles. Finally, Möbius⁵⁶ maintained an Early Hellenistic date and a Ptolemaic identification for both cameos, followed by many, and notably Richter.⁵⁷

The diversity of opinions sketched here suggests a deep failure of method rather than simply a difference of opinion. The material concerned is deprived of any archaeological context, even the mere indication of provenance, which makes our approach to it highly speculative. The study of the two cameos has to be conducted on stylistic grounds, taking into consideration the full range of products from the periods involved and incorporating all available evidence.

The chronological distance between the two cameos seems difficult to accept. They obviously adopt the same approach to royal iconography, with emphasized 'individual' features for the man, and idealized treatment for his consort. Kyrieleis' arguments for the dating of the St Petersburg Cameo fit perfectly the case of the Vienna Cameo, and it seems indeed surprising that he judged it to be three hundred years later. The latter portrayal of the young man (prince? hero? deity?) seems more realistic than that of the St Petersburg Cameo and betrays a stronger Hellenistic influence. This might suggest that the Vienna Cameo was intended as a representation of Alexander (and Olympias?), but this observation does not affect the fundamentally eclectic character of the piece and its considerably late dating. Studying the two pieces in terms of Imperial portraiture of the 1st century AD (cf. Plate 25a), it seems inevitable to link them to one of the major or minor couples of the period, where they would find a plethora of counterparts. The long series of portrait cameos from the Roman Empire suggests the obvious lack of any such parallel series from the Hellenistic Kingdoms.⁵⁸ The question posed is how the two 'Grand Cameos', objects of refined skill and impressive iconography, could possibly be cut in a period as early as the 3rd century BC, from which nothing similar seems to have survived — and the intensive patronage of such a luxurious craft ought to have generated a large number of products.

Furthermore, the two cameos bear no obvious resemblance to royal iconography of the Early Hellenistic period, as it can be studied from coins and intaglios. The portraits cannot be Ptolemaic, and the often attempted comparison with the 'dynastic' series is not convincing: there is a mere adoption of a *schema* here, elaborately treated, so as to convey a more complicated message. Nor is there any convincing resemblance to any other royal portraits we know from the period. Indeed, it is the female heads in both cameos, and in the case of the Vienna Cameo the striking clash between the idealism of

⁵³ Megow (n. 33) 476.

⁵⁴ E. Nau, 'Julia Domna als Olympias', *JNG* 18 (1968) 50–66.

⁵⁵ D. Hertel, 'Eine Darstellung Alexanders d. Gr. und seiner Mutter Olympias: zur Deutung des sog. Ptolemäerkameos in Wien', in H. U. Cain *et al.* (eds.), *Festschrift für Nikolaus Himmelmann* (Mainz am Rhein 1989) 417–23.

⁵⁶ Möbius (n. 39) 16f.; id. 'Zweck und Typen der römischen Kaiserkameen', *ANRW* II 12.3 (1985) 56–59.

⁵⁷ Richter (n. 21) nos. 610 and 611 with the early bibliography.

⁵⁸ Cf. Megow (n. 43) nos. A₁₈; A_{70–76}; B_{26–25}; D₃₉; and so on.

the female to the 'realism' of the male portrait, that confirm their Roman date: what has been called, with reference to the Vienna Cameo, the 'likeness and *ethos* of Arsinoe'⁵⁹ bears no resemblance to the more matter-of-fact coin types employed to portray Arsinoe Philadelphos throughout the Ptolemaic period (Plate 25b), but a plainly idealistic, classicizing head. It is quite significant that Möbius, who made the above statement, was comparing the cameo head with a class of heads cut in precious stone that Vollenweider⁶⁰ identified as portraits of Arsinoe. These have now been rightly dated to the Augustan period, on the same grounds of idealised and non-specific treatment.⁶¹ The idealistic features of the St Petersburg Cameo were thought by Neverov to have been due to an extensive 're-touching' the piece was given in the Roman period, thus explaining, according to this scholar, the discrepancy between what he took to be the Hellenistic date of the cameo and its 'Roman' look.⁶²

THE BERLIN CAMEO

A third cameo, today in Berlin,⁶³ adds yet another depiction of a royal couple: like those in Vienna and St Petersburg, the man is wearing an attic helmet, here however with an addition of an eagle standing on it; the woman is veiled, as in the other two; both the man and the woman wear laurel wreaths, as on the St Petersburg cameo. According to Kyrieleis,⁶⁴ the Berlin cameo should be roughly contemporary with the St Petersburg cameo (as dated by him), representing an idealized portrait of Caligula next to a Julio-Claudian princess. Earlier and later authorities argued for a Hellenistic date, and a Ptolemaic connection: Möbius⁶⁵ recognised Kleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIII (her brother and co-ruler between 51–48 BC); Linfert⁶⁶ saw it as a representation of Kleopatra Selene II and Juba of Mauretania; Megow⁶⁷ re-stated Möbius's thesis but suggested M. Antony as Kleopatra's co-sitter. Such perseverance with Ptolemaic identifications is hardly corroborated by iconographical or stylistic evidence. On the contrary, the assignment of highly idealized portraiture to Alexandrian workshops seems to ignore the evidence offered by such media where the identification of Ptolemaic rulers is certain, namely coins and seals. The Berlin cameo, like the Vienna and St Petersburg ones, present an idealized image of a man, with regular, 'Greek' features. Those of the woman (mainly the chin and the nose) have been 'touched up' in antiquity, and the result is a more personal image, one that could be recognised as a real portrait. This 'touching up' is, at least in parts, due to the piece's breakage, and perhaps we read too much into it when assuming the replacement of an earlier (Ptolemaic?) portrait by a later (Julio-Claudian) one.

⁵⁹ Möbius (n. 56) 57.

⁶⁰ M.-L. Vollenweider, *Die Steinschneidekunst und ihre Künstler in spätrepublikanischer und augusteischer Zeit* (Baden-Baden 1966) pls. 4–6.

⁶¹ Spier (n. 29) with n. 35; id., *Ancient Gems and Finger Rings, Catalogue of the Collections, The J. Paul Getty Museum* (Malibu 1992) 156–57, nos. 433–34. For a recent addition to the group see M. Henig and R. Wilkins, 'A New Portrait of Antonia Minor', *OJA* 15 (1996) 109–11.

⁶² Neverov (n. 43).

⁶³ Berlin, Staatliche Museen (Inv. no. FG 11057); Furtwängler (n. 50) no. 11057.

⁶⁴ Kyrieleis (n. 45) 189–93.

⁶⁵ Möbius (n. 39) 17.

⁶⁶ A. Linfert, 'Bärtige Herrscher', *Jdl* 91 (1976) 157–74, esp. 171–72. The young Kleopatra was the daughter of Kleopatra VII and Marc Antony and, along with her brothers Alexander Helios and Ptolemy Philadelphos, was taken under Octavia's custody after the fall of Alexandria. Juba reigned from 29 BC–AD 5 or 6.

⁶⁷ Megow (n. 33) 456–71.

The interpretations offered by Möbius and Megow are seriously undermined by the lack of any comparative material from Egypt. Such as they are, portraits of Kleopatra on coins and seals are realistic, and so are her joined depictions with M. Antony on his coinage (where the style is strongly that of Republican portraiture).⁶⁸ Linfert's view might be closer to the truth, as it disassociates the idiom presented by the 'Grand Cameos' from royal portrait art as this was practised in Ptolemaic Alexandria.⁶⁹

Although deriving from Hellenistic, even Ptolemaic types, the three cameos cannot be placed in the Hellenistic period. Their openly idealistic iconography is at odds with the art patronised by the Successors. The St Petersburg Cameo was first understood as a joint depiction of Alexander and Olympias, and this ought to have been instructive for later students: although impossible during Alexander's lifetime or soon after his death, such a depiction makes perfect sense in the way Classical Antiquity was and still is understood by the Western World, through the eyes of the Romans. The representation of an illustrious hero next to his ageless mother would fit well within the imagery of the Julio-Claudians, as can be demonstrated by the popularity of the pair in classicizing art of the Augustan period, in various media, including glyptic: the typified realism of Alexander's portrait is matched by the ideal features of his companion — Olympias most likely — in a double sided cameo in Paris (Plate 25c), dating from the Early Imperial period.⁷⁰

CAMEOS OF THE LATER HELLENISTIC PERIOD

Some cameos portraying members of the Ptolemaic dynasty of the later 2nd and 1st centuries BC, mainly made of glass, have been discussed by the present author elsewhere.⁷¹ They suggest a firm interest in royal as well as divine imagery (cf. Plate 26a and b). In terms of iconography and style they are closely related to contemporary intaglios and coins, and are mainly cut in sardonyx or moulded (and subsequently given added detail) in glass.

Royal cameos from other parts of the Hellenistic world exist, although they are not always easy to identify with certainty. A further problem arises with what could be a series of 'Alexanders' dating from the Augustan period if not later, which represent youthful kings, wearing diadems and often cuirasses, with similar powerful and idealized features. It was noted above how Alexander became especially popular with the Julio-Claudians. His portrait, however, had remained 'in demand' throughout the Hellenistic period, and several Hellenistic rulers modelled their portrait types on his.⁷² The idealistic character of portraits like the two cameos in Plate 26c and d suggest such a blend of actual and legendary allusions but render identification practically impossible. It is likely that the two cameos, and similar works, portray Late Hellenistic rulers.

The popularity that cameos (and their settings) seem to have enjoyed resulted in their being kept for generations, which renders their final archaeological context virtually meaningless. From the tomb of a warrior in modern Afghanistan comes a sardonyx cameo depicting the bust of what is most likely a Bactrian ruler (Plate 27a). The Greek kings of Bactria are often seen on their coinage wearing a characteristic round helmet — as on a remarkable coin portrait of king Eukratides I, who reigned c. 170–145 BC (Plate 27b). The cameo, which probably dates from the Late Hellenistic period, was at some

⁶⁸ Kyrieleis (n. 39) pl. 107, 1–7.

⁶⁹ A new study of the Berlin cameo is currently in print: G. Platz-Horster, in M. Avisseau-Broustet (ed.), *La glyptique des mondes classiques* (Paris).

⁷⁰ Kyrieleis (n. 45) 178.

⁷¹ D. Plantzos, 'Ptolemaic Cameos of the second and first centuries BC', *OJA* 15 (1996) 39–61.

⁷² Cf. Smith (n. 15) 59–62.

later stage set into a gold chain made by a local artisan, to be worn by the warrior, and eventually buried with him some time in the 1st century AD.⁷³

APPENDIX: ARTJUKHOV BARROW AND THE 'FIRST COMEO'

A sardonyx cameo set on a massive gold ring (Plate 27a) was found in one of the three graves contained in the Artjukhov tumulus in the Crimea, excavated in 1879.⁷⁴ The tomb (**Tomb II**) contained two burials, one of a man and one of a woman. The man was adorned with a golden wreath; a gold ring; a medallion with garnets; and four silver rings. The woman had been given a wreath; a band; a neck-ring; a chain; two necklaces; a medallion; a pin; a pair of earrings; seven rings in all, some set with stones and one with the cameo in question — representing a child Eros playing with a butterfly; three gold plates; eight silver vases; a saucer; a silver spindle; a lamp; a pelike; and three boxes. Additionally, the two bodies were given one coin each, that of the man a Bosphoran gold stater and that of the woman a Lysimachos-type gold stater.

The significance of the tomb is obvious, as it contains important jewellery and what Minns called 'the first cameo'.⁷⁵ The dating of the burial context has not been straightforward, though. At the time of its discovery, neither the names of the Bosphoran rulers were known, nor their sequence within the dynasty. The coin found in Artjukhov barrow belongs to a regal issue and is inscribed with the name of King Pairisades of Bosphoros (*ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΠΑΙΡΙΣΑΔΟΥ*). Regal coinage was only occasionally struck by the Spartocid rulers of Bosphoros and, it seems, in small quantities.⁷⁶ Being rare and isolated, regal issues of the Spartocids have caused long and inconclusive debates with regard to their date. Most problematic among them seems to be the series of gold staters of Pairisades. Only eleven specimens are known, very few of them (including the one that interests us here) from excavated contexts. They all belong to the same type, depicting a diademed male head on the obverse and a seated Athena holding Nike on the reverse. The inscription, and a set of emblems (trident and two dolphins) appear on the reverse as well. The main problem concerning the Pairisades staters is whether they were all struck by one king of that name, which one and when, or whether they belong to different issues, struck by different kings of the same name and their respective dates.

The stater from the Artjukhov tumulus has been involved in this discussion since the early days of its discovery. Minns attributed the stater to King Pairisades II, who at the time was thought to have reigned some time in the 3rd century BC. He based his attribution *on the date of the objects found in the tomb*, which he took to be 'the end of the 3rd century or the beginning of the 2nd'.⁷⁷ His date and attribution of the Pairisades

⁷³ Warrior's tomb: **Tomb Four** from Tillya Tepe; the cameo was taken to Kabul but is today lost; see V. I. Sarianidi, *The Golden Hoard of Bactria; from the Tillya Tepe Excavations in Northern Afghanistan* (New York and Leningrad 1985) 37–38, no. 4. 10 with pls. 68–69.

⁷⁴ *ComR* 1879 xlv; *ibid.* 1880, 78, and pl. III.9; St Petersburg, the Hermitage (Inv. no.: APT 55); O. Neverov, *Antique Cameos* (Leningrad 1971) no. 11; E. H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks* (Cambridge 1913) 404; 430–33; 584–85.

⁷⁵ Minns (n. 74) 404.

⁷⁶ Cf. D. B. Shelov, *Coinage of the Bosphorus; vi-ii centuries BC* (1956: transl. Oxford 1978) 157–61. Only five royal names of the Spartocid house appear in Bosphoran coinage: Leukon, Spartokos, Pairisades, and Hygiainon.

⁷⁷ Minns (n. 74) 433.

coin was further influenced by the Lysimachos-type stater, already then recognised as posthumous, but dated to a vague 3rd-2nd century period (see below).⁷⁸

Although Minns expressed some reservations about the validity of his reasoning,⁷⁹ his dating of the coin was generally accepted by both numismatists and art historians resulting in the creation of a circular argument according to which coin and jewellery were dating each other. Thus, Zograph and Shelov, both writing in Russian in the early 50s (but published in English only in 1977 and 1978 respectively) accept Minns' dating of the tomb without discussing it. Zograph⁸⁰ included the Artjukhov stater in a group which he dated in 'the very beginning of the 2nd century'. Shelov classified it along two other staters from private collections as the earliest among the eleven Pairisades coins, on the evidence of '... both the style of the types of these staters and by the circumstance of the finding of one of them in a burial clearly falling still within the 3rd century'.⁸¹

Zograph, Shelov and other scholars of the same period were trying to establish a chronology of Bosphoran rulers, and used numismatic evidence to that end. Their dating of regal coinages was largely based on stylistic criteria of comparison with other, firmly dated coinages, or on the establishment of an internal sequence, wherein 'fine' specimens preceded 'coarse' ones. The eleven coins, however, are too small a sample for stylistic analysis, especially when other evidence, mainly typology, points elsewhere. Indeed, the eleven specimens of the Pairisades coinage reproduce the same type so faithfully, that it is impossible to support their spread over more than a century and several rulers. Their rarity prevents us from understanding their sequence, but it might also be an indication of their original function. Zograph was concerned that the Pairisades coinage, and the regal coinages of Bosphoros in general, might well be posthumous, referring to a legendary and perhaps deified Pairisades (the II?) and that they were not intended for circulation but had a donative character.⁸² This might explain the presence of the stater in the Artjukhov tomb, perhaps in a later context, as an object of intrinsic value, but with no recognised face value as a coin.

Since the 1950s, research has managed to sort out the important questions regarding the Spartocid dynasty, based on historical and epigraphical sources. The arrangement proposed by Werner⁸³ was generally accepted. Accordingly, the regal coinages of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC lost some of their significance as evidence, and were in effect abandoned by scholars. Thus, Gajdukevič did not use the regal coinages in his discussion of the kings of the Spartocid dynasty (where he somewhat modified Werner's results) because of their 'infrequent and sporadic character';⁸⁴ he did classify, however, with reservations, the Artjukhov tumulus coin under Pairisades III, whom he took to date from the first half of the 2nd century BC (*pace* Werner, who places this king in c. 215–190 BC). The same approach of spreading the known Pairisades-staters over the reigns of several kings of that name was adopted in Anokhin's recent study of Bosphoran coinage.⁸⁵ Following Werner's chronology, Anokhin attempted yet another stylistic classification of

⁷⁸ On the coinage of Lysimachos, see Mørkholm (n. 31) 81–82 and 145–47 for the posthumous Lysimachos-type coinage.

⁷⁹ Minns (n. 74) 585.

⁸⁰ A. N. Zograph, *Ancient Coinage: Part II: the Ancient Coins of the Northern Black Sea Littoral* (1951; trans. Oxford 1977) 296.

⁸¹ Shelov (n. 76) 160.

⁸² Zograph (n. 80) 296–97.

⁸³ R. Werner, 'Die Dynastie der Spartokiden', *Historia* 4 (1955) 412–44.

⁸⁴ V. F. Gajdukevič, *Die bosporanische Reich* (Berlin 1971) ch. 4.

⁸⁵ V. A. Anokhin, *Monetnoe delo Bospora (Coinage of the Bosphoros)* (Kiev 1986).

Pairisades' coinage, which he distributed between kings Pairisades III, IV, and V using merely criteria based on style. His method was strongly criticised by Frolova.⁸⁶ Price⁸⁷ inexplicably placed the single Pairisades coin in the British Museum in 'c. 200 BC' and attributed its issue to Pairisades III, following Werner in the chronology of the man, but Gajdukevič in that of his coin. Hind⁸⁸ refined the chronology suggested by Gajdukevič, placing Pairisades III in c. 180–150 BC, Pairisades IV in c. 150–125 BC, and Pairisades V in c. 125–109 BC. He also explained the regal coinage of the Spartocids as an imitation of the *Lysimachi* struck by Byzantium from c. 210 BC (see below). If so, and if we accept that these coinages were issued by the king whose name they bore, then the Artjukhov barrow coin ought to date from c. 180 onwards.

This brings us to the other coin found in the tumulus, a gold stater of the Lysimachos type struck in Byzantium, which might offer some more indications as to the date of the burial. At the time of its discovery, the chronology of the *Lysimachi* was also very uncertain: Minns⁸⁹ dated the coin, and accordingly the tumulus, shortly after the death of Lysimachos (281 BC). It is now known⁹⁰ that coinage of the Lysimachos type (with a portrait of Alexander with the horns of Ammon on the obverse and a seated Athena on the reverse) was kept in circulation by several Greek cities throughout the 3rd, and for the most part of the 2nd century BC. The Artjukhov tumulus coin comes from one of the most prominent mints that struck this type, Byzantium, and belongs to the latest phase in its production, when the letters **BY** were added on the reverse, along with the symbol of a trident (after c. 195 BC; they were being struck for some time after 180 BC). It is this coinage that might have prompted the Bosphoran series, which also employs the trident symbol. Seyrig, on the basis of stylistic analysis and hoard evidence, dated the Artjukhov coin to a period 'not earlier than 150 BC'.⁹¹

From the above it is clear that a re-appraisal of the Crimea dates is needed, in the light of the evidence from recent numismatic and related studies. Although the evidence from the coins found in the Artjukhov barrow remains inconclusive, it would seem that **Tomb II** cannot be dated before the second half of the 2nd century BC while it could indeed be significantly later — especially if we accept that coins used in burials belonged to earlier issues. In terms of style and subject-matter this makes better sense, as it would bring the Eros cameo within a very prominent trend in Greco-Roman art, and glyptic in particular, where similar motifs are very popular (cf. the late 2nd-1st century clay seal impressions from Delos).⁹²

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⁸⁶ N. A. Frolova, *VDI* 185.2 (1988) 122–43 (in Russian with French summary).

⁸⁷ M. J. Price, *The Black Sea; Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum IX, British Museum: Part 1* (London 1993) no. 960 with pl. 36.

⁸⁸ J. Hind, 'The Bosphoran Kingdom', in D. M. Lewis *et al.* (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History VI*² (Cambridge 1994) 503.

⁸⁹ Minns (n. 74) 351.

⁹⁰ Cf. Seyrig (n. 25); M. Thompson, 'The mints of Lysimachus', in Kraay and Jenkins (n. 25) 163–82; Mørholm (n. 31) 145–47.

⁹¹ Seyrig (n. 25) 197 and n. 7. The continuing popularity of the Lysimachos-type coinage, and the fact it was resumed in the later 2nd and early 1st centuries BC, has been explained on the basis of the political developments in the Black Sea area in that period; cf. M. J. Price, *The Coinage in the name of Alexander the Great and Philip Arrhidaeus* (Zurich and London 1991) 174.

⁹² Published by N. K. Stambolidis, *Ο Ερωτικός Κύκλος; Les Sceaux de Délos 2* (Paris 1992) 87–93, nos. 227–60.

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