

HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN GEMS AND JEWELLERY FROM SOUTH-WESTERN TURKEY

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Abstract: In this paper, 19 Hellenistic and Roman engraved gemstones are discussed, all of which are in the collections of local museums at Aydın and Marmaris in south-western Turkey. They are significant, as very few gemstones have been published from southern Ionia and from the whole of Caria. Following the listing of the gems in Aydın, the next section describes six gold finger rings and earrings with plain gem or glass settings, as well as a ring which has lost its gem. In addition, a rock-crystal cabochon, probably of Roman date, from Aydın is illustrated. The final two parts of the paper describe two forgeries and then the bezel of a finger-ring and a clay bulla, both of which are of Hellenistic date.

Cuvinte-cheie: pietre prețioase gravate, intaglio, camee, bijuterii, Aydın, Marmaris, sudul Ioniei, Caria, Asia Mică, sud-vestul Turciei, perioada elenistică, perioada romană, perioada bizantină timpurie, gliptica greco-romană, toreutică greco-romană, arheologie anatoliană, arheologie clasică

Rezumat: În această lucrare sunt prezentate 19 pietre prețioase gravate elenistice și romane, toate fiind parte a colecțiilor muzeelor locale din Aydın și Marmaris din sud-vestul Turciei. Sunt semnificative, deoarece au fost publicate foarte puține pietre prețioase din sudul Ioniei și din întreaga Caria. La sfârșitul părții referitoare la exemplele gliptice de la Aydın, șase inele și cercei de aur cu bijuterie simplă sau sticlă și într-un caz cu bijuteria lipsă, formează un capitol separat. De asemenea, este ilustrat un caboșon din cristal de stâncă, datat în epocă romană, probabil de la Aydın. În două capitole de la sfârșitul acestui articol vor fi descrise două falsuri, precum și o lunetă a unui inel de la Marmaris.

1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous unpublished engraved gems are preserved in museums situated within the vast territory of ancient southern Ionia and Caria in south-western Turkey (Map 1)¹. In this paper, we list and discuss ten engraved gems, curated and exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Aydın (ancient Tralles) in north-eastern Caria followed by nine further gems in the Museum of Marmaris in ancient south-western Caria. To a large degree, this is a rescue publication of locally important material, most of which has not been published before and is now made available to the public and the scholarly world for the first time. The object of this study is therefore to bring together in one article the most significant engraved gems and jewellery, from the Hellenistic period down to Late Roman times,

collected in two Turkish local museums in south-western Anatolia, for which no comprehensive study has previously been conducted. Nevertheless, information concerning their original provenances is lacking for most of them. With no firm externally datable contexts, these gems inevitably have to be dated by comparison with similar examples.

Although there has been impressive recent study and publication on glyptics in Turkey over the years, these publications do not seem to be widely known outside Turkey. In particular, the past 20 years have been an especially productive period for research on Graeco-Roman glyptics in Turkey, much of it by young scholars who have written catalogues of these finds in local museums in their graduate theses. In this paper we attempt to assemble these references, although we do not claim that this is a comprehensive accounting.

Methodologically the entry for each gem is given as completely as possible with at least the following information included: catalogue number in boldface; the museum accession number; reference to illustrations; classification by type; the facts concerning the discovery; measurements; the present condition of the piece; a description of the piece; and a date. Comparanda are

¹ The three local museums in the Turkish province of Aydın are those of Aydın, Miletus (established in 1973 and reopened in 2011 in a new building) and Aphrodisias (established in 1961 and opened in 1978). These museums own large collections of ancient Greek and Roman gems as well as jewellery, almost all unpublished, except for cat. no. 1 below. There are also engraved gems and items of jewellery from the sites in the province of Aydın conserved in the Museums of Istanbul and Ankara.