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Musical and Dance Motifs on Roman Engraved Gems of the Augustan Era

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Abstract

This paper presents a selection of Roman engraved gems (cameos and intaglios) which are decorated with musical and dance motifs, focusing primarily on artifacts dated to the Augustan era. The iconography of gems from this era varies, including figures that hold or play a musical instrument or dance, or sometimes only a musical instrument that covers the surface. The musicians and dancers are usually figures derived from Greek mythology and religion. This paper has three aims: first, to classify the motifs according to the mythical figures or musical instruments that they represent. Second, to present/describe their iconography, and third, to interpret, how these objects were used by Roman rulers. I divided the gems examined into four categories: a) objects related to Apollo's iconography; b) Dionysian themes; c) musical motifs with tritons; and d) single musical instruments.

Keywords

Augustus – Gems – Gem engravers – Musical iconography – Glyptic – Greek mythology – Religion

1 A short introduction

The Roman emperors and elite adapted the ancient Greek custom of using engraved luxury gems as jewellery (usually ring-seals, earrings, necklaces, and pendants), amulets, or gifts (private or diplomatic). They assembled interesting collections and owned *dactyliothecae* (ring cabinets), as Hellenistic rulers also did.[1] These small engraved gemstones have the form either of *gemma excisa*/cameo (i.e., the design of the relief carvings projects out of the background) or of *gemma incisa*/intaglio (i.e., the design is cut into the flat background of the stone). Both types could be

[1] According to Pliny (*HN* 37.5) M. Aemilius Scaurus, Sullas' son-in-law, was the first person we know to have built up such a *dactyliotheca*; for a long time this was the only one in Rome. The following *dactytliothecae* seem to be spoils of war (e.g., by Pompeius from Mithridates VI from Pontus, in 61 BCE, others by Julius Caesar and Marcellus). Finally the Roman elite started collecting: cf. Vollenweider 1966: 18; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 108–9; cf. 264–304; Micheli 2016: 73–113. On Roman seal-boxes, see Platz-Horster 2011: 224–5.

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either private objects used for various purposes, or a powerful and fascinating medium that was used for transmitting ideas, which promoted political, cultural or religious ideals, or for self-representation as in the case of portraits.[2] Some of these artefacts were created by famous Greek gem engravers, who earlier had worked in Hellenistic court-workshops, and then later in Roman Republican and Imperial ones.[3] Sometimes they signed their works, as did for instance Skylax, Solon, Sostratos, Dioskourides and his sons (Eutyches, Hyllos and Hyrophilos). The Greek gem engravers subsequently taught Roman artists. The gem cutters included musical themes from Greek mythology and religion in their iconographical repertoire; such as Apollo, Hermes, the Muses, Eros, heroes as musicians (Heracles, Achilles), centaurs, tritons, satyrs, and maenads. They were influenced by Late Classical or Hellenistic glyptic original works, various monumental artworks in sculpture or painting, coins, and medals. The Roman gems' iconography combines various elements into new symbolisms, useful for private and political goals.[4]

This paper presents a selection of engraved gemstones (cameos and intaglios) with musical representations.[5] Due to the enormous quantity of objects, I divided them into four categories according to their motifs and iconography, their style, and their meaning and symbolism: namely, a) objects related to Apollo's iconography; b) Dionysian themes; c) musical motifs with tritons; and d) single musical instruments.

The examples were selected according to the importance of the mythical figures to music, as well as their meaning for Roman rulers and society (Apollonian–Dionysian). The motifs representing tritons are associated with the god Neptune, who offered his protection and support during naval battles, and also with Venus Pelagia/Marina; the fourth group is comprised of representations of contemporary musical instruments. The motifs will be classified according to the mythical figure or the musical motif that they illustrate, their iconography will be presented and their meaning in the Roman period interpreted, with a specific focus on the Augustan era, and, finally, it will be shown how these amazing and luxurious objects were used by Roman rulers, elites and ordinary people.

[2] About the use of images for political purposes by Roman emperors, see Zanker 1987: 79–100; 245–63; and passim; Roccos 1989: 587, ns. 76–7; Wolters 1999; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 126–32; cf. Gołyźniak 2020. For Augustus and the bankers, see D'Hautcourt 1997: 800–10 (references for propaganda in nos 1–2).

[3] About Greek gem cutters in Rome, see Vollenweider 1966; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 109–46.

[4] See e.g. Gołyźniak 2020; regarding the visual language and employment of archaic and classic elements in Roman art, see Zanker 1987; Zanker 1988; Zanker 2010; Hölscher 1987; Hölscher 2006; Hölscher 2018.

[5] I selected representative examples, often made by famous gem engravers, who sometimes signed their creations. The examples were selected according to the importance of the mythical figures to the music and their meaning for Roman rulers and society. For their authenticity, i.e. their construction in Antiquity, I relied upon the literature, as well as on personal observation/research and discussion with experts; especially at an international conference on gems, where I presented a paper. No one has expressed the opinion that these examples are modern imitations/replicas: Liveri 2021: 69–70.

2 Apollo's images on gems

Among the musician deities who were venerated by Romans, Apollo, the Greek god of music, light, prophecy, etc., is the dominant figure. Apollo's cult was promoted by Roman rulers (both during the Republican and Imperial periods) and especially by Sulla, Caesar, Octavian/Augustus and Nero; each of these individuals used different symbolism for Apollo and supported the cult with varying intensity. The dictator Sulla worshipped Apollo as symbol of *libertas* and promoted his cult, especially among his soldiers.[6] Caesar expressed his support for Apollo's worship by organizing in his honor the *ludi Apollinares* in 45 BCE, celebrating this festival during his birth month Quintilis, which he renamed to Julius (6–13 July).[7] He financed these games and began the construction of a large theater for the scenic performances. It was completed by Augustus, who dedicated it posthumously to his nephew Marcellus.[8]

The culmination of Apollo's cult occurred under Octavian/Augustus. Apollo was among the most popular gods of his reign. He became his patron god, because Octavian believed that the god secured his victory against Cleopatra and Marc Antony in the naval battle of Actium (2 September 31 BCE).[9] The victorious Octavian, after he became emperor and obtained the title Augustus, dedicated the temple of Apollo Palatinus on the Palatine Hill in Rome to Apollo on 9 October 28 BCE, which was directly connected to his *domus*/'palace' via frescoed halls and corridors.[10] It was reinstituted during the *ludi saeculares* in 17 BCE, which included sacrifices, hymns, theatrical performances, chariot races, and other events, associated with the feasts for the beginning of the *aetas aurea/saeculum aureum* (Suet., *Claud.* 21).[11] This temple was the earliest in a long series of impressive

[6] Plut., *Sull.* 29.6: λέγεται δὲ ἔχων τι χρυσοῦν Ἀπόλλωνος ἀγαλμάτιον ἐκ Δελφῶν ἀεὶ μὲν αὐτὸ κατὰ τὰς μάχας περιφέρειν ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τότε τοῦτο καταφιλεῖν οὕτω δὴ λέγων: ὦ Πύθιε Ἄπολλον, τὸν εὐτυχῆ Σύλλαν Κορνήλιον ἐν τοσούτοις ἀγῶσιν ἄρας λαμπρὸν καὶ μέγαν ἐνταῦθα ῥίψεις ἐπὶ θύραις τῆς πατρίδος ἀγαγών, αἴσχιστα τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ συναπολούμενον πολίταις; "There is also a story that Sulla had a little golden image of Apollo from Delphi which he always carried in his bosom when he was in battle, but that on this occasion he took it out and kissed it affectionately, saying: O Pythian Apollo, now that thou hast in so many struggles raised the fortunate Cornelius Sulla to glory and greatness, can it be that thou hast brought him to the gates of his native city only to cast him down there, to perish most shamefully with his fellow-countrymen?" (transl. B. Perrin); cf. Gołyźniak 2020: 75–6.

[7] Julius Caesar renamed the month Quintilis in his reform of the Roman calendar and the institution of a new one (Julian Calendar): Scullard 1981: 158; Caesar was born on the 13th of the month Quintilis; regarding the Julian Calendar reform and the *ludi Apollinares*, see Weinstock 1971: 13; 156–7; and passim; cf. Bernstein 1998: 171–86, esp. 183–86; cf. 335–48; Meyboom 2005: 235, n. 51.

[8] Meyboom 2005: 235.

[9] For Actium, see Gurbal 1995; Sheppard 2009.

[10] See, for instance, Zanker 1983: 21–40, figs 1–2; Zanker 1987: 73–5, figs 51–2; 54a; 72; and passim for its decoration; cf. 279–81, fig. 222 (wall paintings from Augustus house); Kellum 1985: 169–76; Kellum 1993: 75–84; Simon 1986: 19–25 (buildings on the Palatine Hill); 182; 184–94, pls 28–9; 34, figs 240–45; 247–48; Lefèvre 1989; Hekster and Rich 2006: 149–68; for Apollo Palatinus or Apollo Actius on coins, see Jucker 1982: 82–100, figs 1–6; Zanker 1987: 90–91; 227–8, figs 68 (denar of C. Antistius Vetus, Rome, 16 BCE, Apollo Actius on a podium, decorated with *rostra* motifs), 179c (coin from Lugdunum/Lyon 15 BCE, Apollo Actius); Restani et al. 2010: 166, fig. 3; for Augustus' house, cf. n. 45 below.

[11] Zanker 1983: 24–36; Zanker 1987: 74; cf. 171–77; Zanker 2010: 88; Gołyźniak 2020: 226–7; on *ludi Apollinares*, cf. Bernstein 1998: 171–86, esp. 183–6 for *ludi scaenici*.

monuments. The cult statue represented Apollo Citharoedus. It was Greek original marble work of the fourth century BCE, made by Scopas for the Apollo sanctuary at Rhamnus in Attica, that transported to Rome in 28 BCE and installed in the temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill.[12] A copy of this statue is the 'Apollo Barberini' marble statue in Munich from Tusculum (first – second century CE).[13] The musician god holds his cithara with his left hand and with his right perhaps a cup (the right arm is missing). It is worth mentioning that "Apollo also symbolized the new era and he was responsible for the world order like Octavian/Augustus, who after the Battle of Actium changed the rhetoric of his propaganda putting emphasis on his capabilities to rule the Roman Empire".[14]

The image of Apollo was engraved on various glyptic artefacts (e.g. coins, medallions, plaques and jewellery in gold and silver), including gemstones (cameos, intaglios) or less valuable materials (glass paste) for ordinary people and mass production.[15] The most renowned artists were already employed by the leading politicians and the Roman elite in Republican times, and after Augustus they were also employed at the imperial workshops. We can distinguish the following Apollo types on gems: a) Apollo's heads or busts; b) Apollo standing alone as musician holding or playing his cithara or lyre; c) Apollo standing or in other positions in various compositions with other figures; and d) Apollo punishing the satyr Marsyas after their musical contest, where the god was the winner.

Numerous gems produced in the first century BCE represent Apollo's bust or head in variations, usually diademed or laureate, i.e., with a diadem or a laurel wreath around his head, to the left or to the right with an object beside or behind him: such as a bow, a bow and a quiver, a musical instrument (usually a cithara or lyre) or a laurel branch.[16] Such motifs were extraordinarily popular beginning in the time of Sulla. The trend continued during Caesar's dominance and became enormous during Octavian/Augustus, being associated with his cultural, religious and political reforms.

One of the perhaps best illustrations of a glyptic Apollo bust in profile, without a musical instrument, is a carnelian intaglio (2.0 × 1.4 cm) in St. Petersburg (Figure 1), signed by the son of Dioskourides Hyllos (ΥΛΛΟΥ, last third of the first century BCE), that depicts a diademed bust of Apollo looking to the left[17] (the later inscription "LAVR MED" indicating it belonged to the

[12] See some fragments of the Apollo Palatinus statue in Jucker 1982: 95–6, figs 14–15; cf. Roccos 1989: 571–88, figs 8–9; cf. figs 3–7 (various statues' versions of Apollo Palatinus); on Scopas: Stewart 1977; contributions in Katsonopoulou, Stewart 2013.

[13] Munich, Glyptothek, inv. 211: Lambrinudakis et al.1984: 204–5, no.146, pl. 196 (O. Palagia); Fuchs 1992: 203–11, no. 30, figs 201–6; Flashar 1992: 200–217, figs passim and 184–5.

[14] Gołyźniak 2020: 183–4; for Roman emperor cult, see the contributions in Cancik and Hitzl 2003; esp. for Augustus' and Apollo's cult, Edelmann 2003: 196–98; Castaldo 2018: 96–114; for the age of Augustus, see Eck 2007.

[15] Cf. Apollo's image on various other artefacts, as e.g. on sculptures, reliefs, paintings, etc.: see e.g. Zanker 1987; Zanker 1988; Simon 1986.

[16] Cf. corresponding representations on coins: e.g. in Böhm 1997.

[17] St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. Ж 1229 (after Neverov); ГР-21426 (after the Museum's website): https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digitalcollection/18.+carved+stones/1068920 [accesed: 16 November 2021]. The setting is a later work; this gem belonged to the Collection of Lorenzo il

Figure 1: Apollo's bust without musical instrument, after Apollo Palatinus. Carnelian intaglio/gem, signed by Hyllos (last third of the first cent. BCE). St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-21426. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum. © The State Hermitage Museum, photo by Svetlana Suetova.

collection of Lorenzo Medici is also visible). According to Richter (1971: 151, no. 708) this Apollo type imitates an original of the fifth century BCE.

His hairstyle is elaborate, with his curly long hair tied back by a ribbon. Parts of his *himation/or* citharode's robe are visible, fastened on the left shoulder by a buckle. It is comparable to the hairstyle of Apollo Citharoedus bust on a carnelian gem (1.43 × 1.17 × 0.13 cm) in Berlin (last third of the first century BCE, Figure 2).[18] However, small differences are visible regarding Apollo's hairstyle (in Berlin: a long strand of temple hair is tucked into the hair band above the ear), facial features (in Berlin: eyes, large nose, half open lips) and a citharode's robe. In my opinion, in the example in St. Petersburg they are represented or engraved more expressively and harmoniously

Magnifico: Vollenweider 1966: 71–2, 119, pl. 81.1 and 3 (on Hyllos, pp. 69–73); Richter 1971: 151, no. 708, fig. 708; Neverov 1976: 73–4, no. 113; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 416, fig. 474 (Abguß/casting); Gołyźniak 2020: 183; 216; 227; 412, no. 10.8, fig. 779.

[18] Berlin, Antikensammlung, Dressel collection, inv. 32.237, 431: Weiss 2007: 145, no. 77, pl. 13 (last third of the first century BCE).

Figure 2: Bust of Apollo Citharoedus. Carnelian gem (last third of the first cent. BCE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. 32.237, 431. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo by Bernhard Platz, CC BY-SA 4.0.

than those in Berlin, showing the creator's skills; in the Berlin gem parts of the stringed musical instrument (cithara) have also been added. This Apollo type is called 'Palatine'/'Palatinus', perhaps after the Apollo Citharoedus/Palatinus statue in the temple of Apollo Palatinus or Apollo Actius on the Palatine Hill in Rome, although its head is not preserved; perhaps it is a reference to the ideal musician god, as is also mentioned by L.J. Roccos.[19] Dioskourides (active 65–30 BCE) succeeded Solon as the official gem engraver of Augustus, leading the imperial workshops in Rome and working with his skillful sons (Herophilos, Eutyches and Hyllos), "created a sort of dynasty of gem engravers delivering top quality works of glyptic art to the imperial court" (see also below).[20]

The diademed or laureate bust or head of Apollo Citharoedus was very popular in Augustan Age glyptics. This type was cut by famous artists or copied by ordinary ones, as examples e.g. in Perugia, in Berlin, in Lisbon and elsewhere show.[21]

Another idealized Apollo Citharoedus bust decorates an orange carnelian stone (21 × 19.5 mm) in Naples (Figure 3), from the Augustan and Julio-Claudian period (27 BCE–68 CE).[22] The artist's name is unknown. The bust of Apollo is turned in profile to the left. Only parts of his garments are visible: the god is wearing a *chiton* with long sleeves, and over that the long citharode's robe, fastened to the left shoulder by a buckle, as in the previous example. He has a different, more elaborate hairstyle than in the example in St. Petersburg. His long curly hair is gathered back. A part of his cithara, carved in very low relief, is visible on the background in front of him.[23] This engraved gem reached a high level of aesthetic quality, showing harmonious, expressive features in the style of Hellenistic originals.

Diademed or laureate busts of Augustus or of young princes who were members of his family, and identified with Apollo, were also included in the engraved gems iconography.[24] This shows that Augustus also used the glyptic art to promote his successors and to build a respectable position for

[19] "With the Palatine Apollo the reference is to the ideal musician god and specifically to the Athenian cult statue of Apollo Patroos": Roccos 1989: 583; cf. n. 77.

[20] For Dioskourides and his sons, see Pliny, *HN* 37.8; Suet., *Aug*. 50.1; Vollenweider 1966; Gołyźniak 2020: 215–16 with references.

[21] E.g. the above mentioned carnelian in Berlin (n. 18); for other examples, see Gołyźniak 2020: 183; 227; 389, nos 803–6, fig. 596.

[22] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 26145/307 bis: De Caro 1994: 284; Pannuti 1994: 165–6, no. 131. He argues that perhaps the gem was found in the house of Menander in Pompeii.

[23] Cf. a carnelian with a bust of Apollo Citharoedus in Museum Grassi für Angewandte Kunst in Leipzig, inv. 505 (end of the first century BCE – beginning of the first century CE): Cain and Lang 2015: 23; 56–7, figs 8–9, I 8 (J. Lang).

[24] See e.g. examples in Simon 1986: 155, fig. 205; Gołyźniak 2018: 68–71, nos 6–7, figs 6–7.

the Julio-Claudian dynasty.[25] Octavian/Augustus' head is depicted on the obverse of aurei and silver denarii after the Actium battle, while on the reverse a standing Apollo Actius as lyre player or Citharoedus is visible.[26] Sometimes, he stands on a podium decorated with *rostra* motifs. He offers a libation on an altar, holding his instrument with his left hand and a *phiale* with his right.

Figure 3: Bust of Apollo Citharoedus. Orange carnelian stone (first cent. BCE – first cent. CE/68-69). National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 26145. Photo after De Caro 1984: 284. © National Archaeological Museum of Naples. Courtesy of the Ministero della Cultura – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.

Variations of the single standing Apollo Citharoedus type, or Apollo as lyre player based on Hellenistic originals, are also used by gems engraved in the Roman period.[27] The god is represented holding either his cithara or lyre in his hand (as in Boston, Naples and St. Petersburg) or with it laying on the ground (as in Boston and Vienna), or on a base, a pillar or a column (as in Berlin and Rome). In the Naples example, on an intaglio in plasma, in a dark seaweed green color, Apollo stands in three-quarter posture in the middle of the composition with his head in profile.[28] He is turned to the left, holding with his right hand a lyre or a cradle cithara, while touching its strings with his left. His hair is combed into a bun/chignon (*krōbýlos*), with his head crowned by a diadem or laurel. He is naked, but he has a cloak (*khlamýs*) over his shoulders, which falls back to his calves. The god is flanked by an idyllic landscape: to the right is a small cliff (or a heap of stones), on which a raven in profile to the left has been placed. On the left, a rocky hillock is visible (perhaps a representation of the omphalos?[29]), on which or behind it there is an *aedicula* with a standing figurine inside. Behind this construction a small tree, perhaps a laurel, completes the scene. To the variations belongs a lyre-playing Apollo standing to the right on a *nicolo* blue on dark intaglio in Boston (first century CE)[30] and on a sardonyx ring stone in St. Petersburg (first century BCE).[31] In

[25] Gołyźniak 2018: 69; cf. Gołyźniak 2020: 241–9; cf. 389, nos 803–6.

[26] Jucker 1982: 84–91, figs 1–6 (Apollo Actius); for coinage/Münzprägung before and after Actium, see Simon 1993: 172–81; p. 91 (no. 52: Rome, denar, 16 BCE, = obv. Augustus' head and rv. Apollo Citharoedus); p. 92 (nos 54–6, Lugdunun, aurei and denari, 15 and 10 BCE: obv. Augustus' head and rv. Apollo Citharoedus), pp. 99–101; cf. n.10 above.

[27] See Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 396–402, nos 172–261, pls 311–16 (passim on gems and coins).

[28] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 26050/212: Pannuti II 1994: 164–5, no. 130; Platz-Horster 2010: 183, n. 15; on the term prase/plasma, 180–81.

[29] Cf. a standing Apollo Citharoedos in front of an *omphalos* on a coin from Megara (209–212 CE): Lambrinudakis et al. 1984: 200, no. 93, pl. 191 (O. Palagia).

[30] Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 01.7579: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/180366/oval-gem-with-standing-apollo?ctx=610296ee-8c98-4bd5-a07d-ca037ff15eb1&idx=27 [Accessed: 16 November 2021].

[31] St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. 1220 after Neverov, ГР-21426 after the Museum's website: Neverov 1976: 100, no. 88; Lambrinudakis et al. 1984: 240, no. 442, pl. 218 (O. Palagia); cf. a similar carnelian ring stone in the same Museum with the same inv. no. in Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 396, no. 175, pl. 311.

the latter, the god walks holding a *phiale* with his right hand and a lyre or a cithara with his left, (as on the aforementioned coins). In other examples, Apollo Citharoedus stands in front of a tree (perhaps a laurel, his sacred tree) and a tripod on a round pedestal, as in a carnelian intaglio in Leipzig (end of the first century BCE – beginning of the first century CE);[32] the god stands on his left leg, while the right is on the podium. The tree and the tripod suggest that the scene took place in Delphi.

Apollo walks while playing his lyre on a green glass gem with white-blue-white stripes on the example in Hanover (second – third quarter of the first century BCE).[33] The god is nude; his mantle falls back forming a background. He holds his lyre vertically on his body. On another glass gem in the same museum (third quarter of the first century BCE), a nude Apollo stands frontally in 'counterpoise' posture, holding his lyre with his right hand and a plectrum with the left.[34] On a rock crystal intaglio in Leipzig (first – second century CE) the god seems to be playing his cithara.[35]

On a dark violet amethyst in Vienna (last third of the first century BCE) Apollo is leaning on a column with a bow and arrow, while his lyre is on the ground at his feet.[36] This example shares some similarities with a Hellenistic garnet intaglio in Boston (second century BCE).[37] In the latter example, the statue-like god stands frontally, being seminude, leaning with his left elbow on a short column, on which stands a tripod, with his large lyre placed on the ground. A bird sits on one of the instrument's bars. The god raises his right hand and looks down to the left.

A very interesting scene (Figure 4) decorates an oval carnelian intaglio (2.27 × 1.78 × 0.46 cm, including frame and loop) in Berlin (end of the first century BCE/beginning of the first century CE).[38] It represents the controversy between Apollo and Amor based on Ovid's description regarding "Daphne and Phoebus".[39] Apollo, holding his bow with his left hand and resting on his lyre with the right, follows a small Amor who holds his two arrows with the left hand, while raising the other. The god is naked; his mantle falls only on and behind his shoulders. The figure of Apollo reveals reflections of an original Greek statue (perhaps of Lycean Apollo?).[40] This hypothesis is based on the fact that the god leans with his right hand on his instrument that stands as a support on a garland-adorned base. However, the typical gesture of the Apollo Lycean type, i.e., resting his other

[32] Leipzig, Grassi Museum für Angewandte Kunst, inv. 330: Cain and Lang 2015: 56; 59, fig. I 9 (J. Lang); cf. another green agate intaglio in the same collection in Leipzig with Apollo seated on an altar in front of a tripod and a tree (first–second century CE), p. 59, fig. I 10.

[33] Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 87a: Schlüter et al. 1975: 68, no. 245, pl. 39.

[34] Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1641: Schlüter et al. 1975: 68, no. 246, pl. 39; Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 396, no. 172, pl. 311.

[35] Leipzig, Museum Grassi für Angewandte Kunst, inv. 97: Cain and Lang 2015: 59, fig. I 11 (J. Lang).

[36] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IX B 1275: Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 396, no. 171c; Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 135, no. 411, 69 (she mentions cithara, but it is a lyra); Gołyźniak 2020: 389, no. 809.

[37] Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 99.362: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/187226/oval-gem-with-apollo?ctx=b766f4b4–4056-4851-99bf-5240519775f1&idx=239 [Accessed: 6 November 2021].

[38] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. Misc. II863, 46: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 165, no. 439, pl. 77; Lambrinudakis et al. 1984: 284, no. 816, pl. 255 (G. Kokkorou-Alewras).

[39] Ovid, *Met.* 1.452–6, esp. 463–73.

[40] About Apollo Lykeios, see Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 448–50, nos 509–31; Nagele 1984: 77–105; Schröder 1986: 167–84.

hand on his head, is missing. Nevertheless, some examples show Apollo standing and supporting himself with one hand on his lyre, which is placed on a base (column, pillar, pedestal, etc.).[41] On another glass gem in Rome Apollo (or Augustus as Apollo) is standing *en face* between a tripod on an altar and his cithara on a column.[42]

Therefore, Apollo Citharoedus was a very popular iconographical motif, used in a variety of artworks: either in Greek originals, transported from Greece or in their copies: as e.g., a) the cult statue in the temple of Apollo Palatinus in Rome, which I have already mentioned; b) the bronze statue of Apollo Citharoedus from the House of the Cithara Player in Pompeii (middle of the first century CE), a copy of a Greek original of the middle of the fifth century BCE, attributed by some scholars to Phidias' teacher Hegias; [43] c) numerous other statues and reliefs; and d) on wall paintings in Rome (Palace of Augustus on the Palatine Hill),[44] and in the Vesuvian area in Campania (Pompeii, Moregine and Herculaneum).[45]

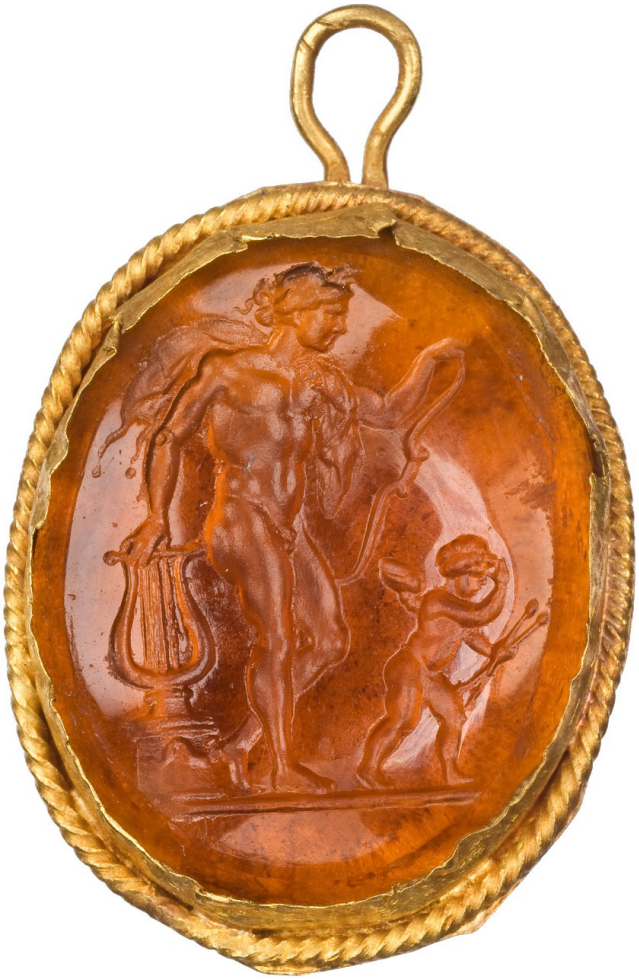

Figure 4: The controversy between Apollo and Amor. Carnelian intaglio (late first cent. BCE/early first cent. CE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. Misc. II863. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo by Johannes Laurentius, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Another motif involving Apollo is the punishment of Marsyas. This event took place at Mount Tmolus in Phrygia, after the musical contest between them, (*aulós*/*tibiae* for Marsyas and cithara for Apollo).[46] According to the Muses' judgment the god won, and Marsyas was hanged from a tree and flayed alive. The Phrygian satyr Marsyas invented the aulos or, according to another legend, he found it after Athena, the divine aulos inventor, threw it away.[47] Olympus and

41 Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 448–50, nos 511–12; 516–19; 530–31, pls 344–6.
42 Gołyźniak 2020: 389, no. 811.
43 National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 5630: De Caro 1994: 209.
44 Carettoni 1983; Tomei 1998; Tomei 2004; Iacopi 2008.
45 Simon and Bauchhens 1984: 403–6, nos 271–82, pls 317–18 (standing); nos 286–300, pls 319–20 (leaning or seated); Melini 2008: 31–2.
46 Weis 1992: 366–76, esp. for the contest 370–73; Restani 1995; Zschätzsch 2002: 146–56 (agon Apollo–Marsyas); cf. Van Keer 2004: 20–37.
47 For the contest between Athena and Marsyas, see Zschätzsch 2002: 3; for Athena and aulos, 1–14, pl. 1a–b; Liveri 2018: 39, n. 1.

Hyagnis were also mentioned as the inventors of the aulos and were famous musicians in ancient Greece.[48] A peaceful scene before the contest was included in Polygnotus *Nekya*/Underworld (460–450 BCE), which decorated the Cnidian Lesche in Delphi (Paus., 10.30.9). It depicted Marsyas sitting on a rock teaching Olympus, a beautiful boy, to play the pipes. This painting was lost, but has been reconstructed according to Pausanias' description (10.25.1–31).[49]

Marsyas' punishment by Apollo was a very popular subject in glyptic art from the early first century BCE onwards. It was also used as an allegorical glyptic motif for political purposes; first by Sulla to illustrate his victories over barbarian tribes (Cimbri and Teutones) and in the East (First Mithridatic War), then by his opponents in order to mock him, and later by Octavian for his victory over Marc Antony and Cleopatra at Actium (see below).

The subject appears in some variations on Roman gems relating to iconography and style. Nevertheless, various scenes depicting Marsyas, Apollo, and Olympus show common features on Roman imperial gems of the first and second centuries.[50] Usually, the artists engraved the moment just after the Muses declared Apollo the winner of the musical competition and just before Apollo flayed Marsyas alive as punishment, pinning his skin to a pine tree. Two main versions of the scene regarding Marsyas can be distinguished: a) Marsyas is depicted sitting on a rock bound, awaiting his punishment; and b) he is shown hanging bound to a tree trunk. The type of Marsyas *religatus* is surrounded by other figures associated with the myth (Apollo, Olympus, one or two satyrs, Victory). Regarding the musical instruments, we observe that Apollo, usually holding his cithara or lyre, stands on the right or left. However, the aulos, Marsyas' musical instrument for the contest, is not always depicted in punishment scenes.

Some selected gem examples bearing this motif will be presented: the first one is a glass gem in London, associated with Sulla.[51] Marsyas in the middle of the scene hangs bound on a tree, flanked on the one side by Apollo and Olympus, and on the other side by a standing Victory. The god holds his lyre or cithara, whereas Olympus, a pupil of Marsyas and later also famous aulos player, is placed in front of him. S. Toso argues that intaglios decorated with this motif are associated with Sulla's political aims, based on a statuary group composition of this myth during his time in Rome, which was a copy of an original Hellenistic work, created in Pergamon in the second half of the third century BCE.[52]

Another version was created later, under Augustus, by the famous engraver Dioskourides, decorating an orange-brown carnelian intaglio (40.2 × 34 mm) in Naples (Figure 5).[53] This object, the

[48] Olympus was also a legendary founder of ancient Greek music: Weis 1994: 38–45; Van Keer 2008: 23–79.

[49] For a reconstruction of Nekyia, see Stansbury-O'Donnell 1990: 213–35, figs 1–5; cf. Kebric 1983; Manoledakis 2003: 62–77; Van Keer 2008: 33–5, fig. 13; Roscino 2010: 38–66; on Polygnotus, see also Matheson 1995.

[50] Cf. also a white and milky chalcedony intaglio in Oporto/Portugal (second century CE) bearing a bearded Marsyas: Cravinho 2018: 150–51, no. 6 with examples.

[51] Toso 2007: 222–3; Gołyźniak 2020: 76; 343, no. 7.13–14, fig. 112.

[52] Toso 2007: 222; cf. Gołyźniak, as in previous note.

[53] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 26051/213: Vollenweider 1966: 61–2; 114, pls 63.2; 64; Richter 1971: 58, no. 251, fig. 727a; cf. 156, no. 727; Dacos et al. 1973: 55–7, no. 25, figs 18; 61; De Caro 1994: 344; Pannuti

Figure 5: The Punishment of Marsyas by Apollo or 'Seal of Nero'. Orange-brown carnelian intaglio, decorated by Dioskourides (c. 30 BCE–20 CE). National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 26051. Courtesy of the Ministero della Cultura – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photo by Giorgio Albano.

so-called seal of Nero, was probably created in the imperial workshop in the Augustan period. Its history is colorful, from its creation to its inclusion to the collection of Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence and finally to its transport in Naples (the abbreviated inscription "LAV.R. MED." is visible in front of Marsyas head). Three figures (Apollo, Marsyas and Olympus) are represented on this gem. On the right stands a half-nude Apollo holding his large cithara with his left hand and the plectrum with the right. His torso is turned to the right, his head to the left, where Marsyas sits nude on a lion skin laid on a rock with his hands bound behind his back; perhaps they are tied to the tree, from which hangs the *sybḗnē*, the case for his pipes, which are visible to the right. He is turning hopefully to his kneeling pupil Olympus, his mourner at the contest, who pleads with Apollo to spare Marsyas' life.[54]

1994: 161–2, no. 127; Melini 2008: 31; Restani et al. 2010: 168, fig. 5; Rambach 2011: 131–47, fig. 1; Lapatin 2015: 137; 247, pl. 95. He dates it to 30 BCE; Gołyźniak 2020: 173, no. 9.615, fig. 519.

[54] Van Keer 2008: 23–6; for Olympus, cf. n.48 above.

It is possible that the engraver Dioskourides was influenced by a fourth-century BCE wall painting by Zeuxis depicting Marsyas bound, which decorated the temple of Concord in the Roman Forum.[55] Versions of the subject appear also on wall paintings in Pompeii (e.g., in the House of M. Epidius Rufus, IX.1.20, where the Muses listen to the competition between Apollo and Marsyas).[56] The figures of Apollo and Marsyas are influenced by plastic works (statues[57] and reliefs[58]) as well.

A great variety of interpretations and symbolisms were attributed to the musical competition between Apollo and Marsyas, which ended with the god's victory on this intaglio: some scholars interpret it as a political allegory related to the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. Apollo was identified as Octavian/Augustus, who was the victor against Marc Antony and Cleopatra, themselves identified with the barbarian Marsyas and Dionysiac elements. He also was characterized as 'New Dionysus' (see below). Additionally, the cithara, a symbol for harmony and culture, ideals which Octavian/Augustus sought to represent,[59] was the winner against the aulos, an orgiastic symbol, which provoked passions and symbolized the Barbarian Orient, which Marc Antony was said to have favored. Apollo would, therefore, represent a successful and cultivated agonist, enjoying his victory over his defeated competitor. Therefore, additionally, this agon has a variety of symbolisms: ugliness versus beauty; presumption (*hybris*) versus punishment (*nemesis*); chaos versus order; passion versus reason; barbarian versus Greek; East versus West; nature versus culture; life versus death; mortals versus gods; Dionysian versus Apollonian; wind versus stringed instrument.

An ancient imitation/reproduction/replica gem related to the previous example of Dioskourides is a fragmentary amethyst intaglio in Lyon (dated in the third quarter of the third century BCE).[60] Numerous artworks are decorated with this motif. Different composition of the scene, i.e. a different placement of the figures, and a different style appear on a carnelian gem (18.1 × 13.1 × 2.6 mm) in Malibu (first century CE).[61] Here Marsyas is hanging from a tree, while two satyrs

[55] Pliny the Elder mentions Zeuxis' painting (Pliny, *HN* 35.36): *zeuxidis manu romae helena est in philippi porticibus, et in concordiae delubro marsyas religatus.* "There is at Rome a Helena by Zeuxis, in the Porticos of Philippus, and a Marsyas bound, in the Temple of Concord there."; cf. Rambach 2011: 132; Ovid states also the myth of Marsyas (Ov., *Met.* 6.382; Ov., *Fast.* 6.695–710).

[56] This house part is dedicated to Diadumeni (g), triclinium (s): Schefold 1962: 135; 177; figs 173.3–4 (Apollo plays his cithara and Marsyas his aulos); Rawson 1987: 32–3; 197–8, no. A29, fig. 15; Weis 1992: 371, no. I 26 with fig.; Pompei 1998: 916–55, esp. 944–53 with figs (p. 953, no. 71: Marsyas playing his aulos and Olympus); cf. Melini 2008: 30–31. For more examples of representations of this competition on Pompeii's wall paintings, see Rawson 1987; also, *Pitture e Mosaici:* e.g. Pompei 1996: 7–8, figs 63–4 (Marsyas holding his *tibiae*: House of the Golden Bracelet, VI.17.42, triclinium 19).

[57] Cf. copies from Greek bronze original works: a) the statue of Marsyas from the Marsyas Group by Myron (450–440 BCE) in Vatican, Musei Vaticani, inv. 9974: Fuchs 1983: 349–51, fig. 388; Jalouris 1994–1995: 117; 244, no. 88, fig. 88; b) the statue of the hung Marsyas from the Marsyas group with Scythian in Paris, Louvre, inv. MA 542: Jalouris 1994–1995: 198; 272, no. 212, fig. 212.

[58] Cf. Greek original works, e.g. the relief base from Mantineia, a work of Praxiteles (330–320 BCE), Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. 215: Fuchs 1983: 455, fig. 530; Jalouris 1994–1995: 190–91; 268–9, no. 197, fig. 197.

[59] E.g. according to his narration in Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Sheid 2007; Cooley 2009; cf. Eck 2007.

[60] Lyon, Médaillier du Musée des Beaux-Arts: Rambach 2011: 133–4, figs 4–5.

[61] Malibu, Getty Villa Museum, inv. 85. AN.370.48: Spier 1992: 113, no. 288 with some examples; he, following Henig (1978: 35), uses the shape form A4 for this gem (see fig. 5). Similarly for the Maenad in Malibu (see

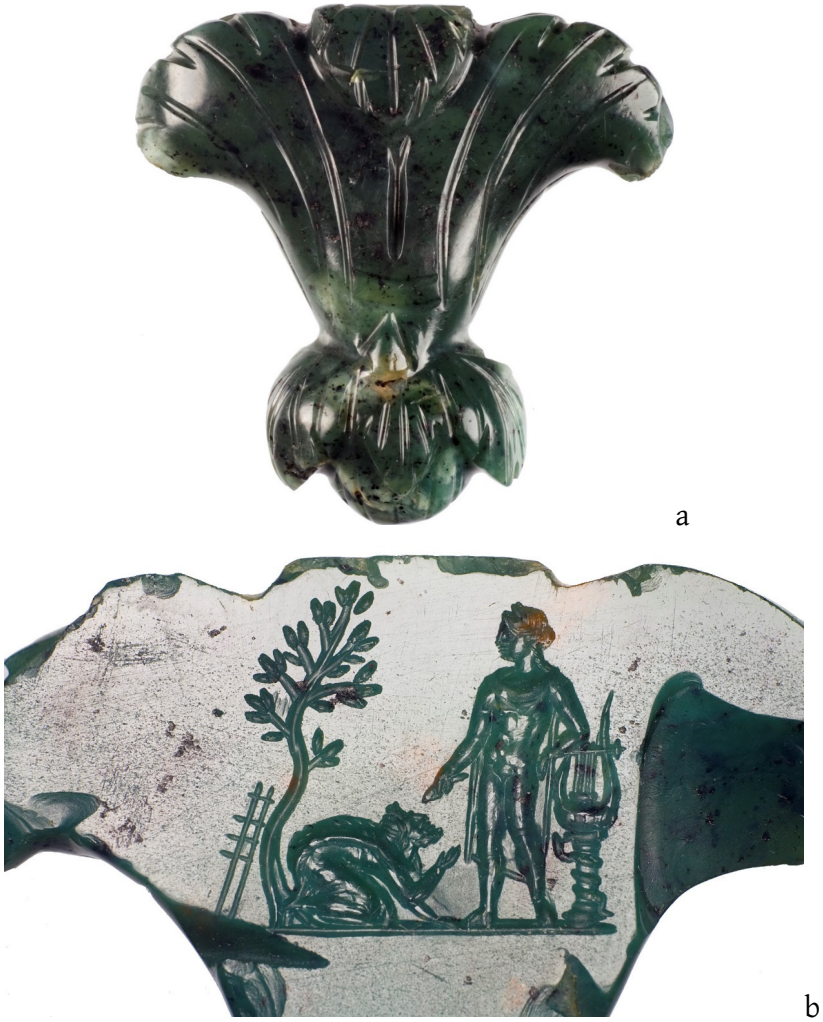

Figure 6: Plectrum of plasma/chromian chalcedony (first cent. CE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 11371. a: Exterior surface; b: Interior surface: Apollo and Marsyas after the musical contest. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photos by Johannes Laurentius, CC BY-SA 4.0.

prepare to flay him. Apollo stands holding a lyre behind the tree and in front of a column. Olympus is omitted.

Two objects in Berlin bear particular representations: a unique supposed plectrum (Figure 6) of plasma, (3.57 × 3.69 cm) in a vivid green color, in the form of an *akanthos* chalice (first century CE);[62] and an oval red-yellow jasper (first century CE, Figure 7).[63] In the first example Apollo stands on

below).

62 Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 11371: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 174, no. 468; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 427, pl. 119, fig. 566; Platz-Horster 2010: 189, pl. VIII, 2–3; Platz-Horster 2012: 100, no. 103, pl. 23; Schwarzmaier and Zimmermann-Elseify 2021: 29–30. This object has been identified as a plectrum: the musician would have held it by the swinging leaves and could use the rounded end to pluck the strings of a kithara or lyre. I would like to thank Stefan Hagel for discussing the function of this item; however, he does not agree with its identification as a plectrum because he finds the three prongs at the bottom of it impractical.

63 Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 8393: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 173–4, no. 466, pl. 83; cf. a dark orange carnelian gem in the Dressel collection in the Antikensammlung in Berlin with similar motif: Weiss 2007: 128, no. 26, pl. 6.

the right, holding with the right hand the plectrum of his lyre and resting with the left on his lyre, which is placed on a base. Marsyas is kneeling on the left and begs him to spare his life. His pipes are behind the tree. In the second example Apollo is seated on the rock on the right side, holding his lyre with his right hand, while he supports himself with his left. Before him Marsyas and his pipes are hanging from the tree and Olympus kneels before him, wearing his Scythian garments. Perhaps this scene's iconography is influenced by a plastic group from the middle of the third century BCE in Pergamon.[64] Nevertheless, the Marsyas' instrument is not always depicted; sometimes it is placed in front or between the crossed legs of the seated Marsyas.[65]

Figure 7: The punishment of Marsyas by Apollo and kneeling Olympus. Oval red-yellow jasper (first cent. CE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 8393. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo: Archiv.

3 Dionysian musical and dancing themes

Dionysus was also venerated in Rome either by adaption of Greek beliefs and cult practices or under a Latin name (Liber) and an adjusted interpretation and perception of his worship.[66] This is confirmed by the use of numerous Dionysian themes which decorate various artworks, including musical or dancing motifs, and also by the success of Dionysian scenes in Augustan 'sacral-idyllic' landscapes.

Dionysian musical or dancing subjects depicted on Roman engraved gems represent either a single member of a *thiasos* (satyr, silenus, maenad) or a Bacchic group (two or more figures performing a variety of dances or other musical activities): e.g., they dance ecstatically, sometimes also singing, holding a wine cup or a *thyrsos* or both, or they move while holding or playing a musical instrument (aulos, cithara, cymbals, lyra, syrinx, tympanum). Centaur musicians associated with Dionysus and Ariadne are also included in this group, usually drawing the divine chariot separately or together. Numerous examples are preserved with such Dionysian motifs on Roman cameos and intaglios of precious stones or glass, based on Greek Classical and Hellenistic originals.[67]

Variations of dancing satyrs and maenads were very popular. For instance, dancing satyrs in a great variety of dance movements are engraved in glyptic works from the first century BCE – first

[64] Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 174; cf. n.55 above.
[65] See examples in Cravinho 2018: 150–51; cf. also the preceding.
[66] Gasparri 1986: 540–66; cf. Gasparri and Veneri 1986: 414–514; Wyler 2020.
[67] On centaurs as musicians, see Rodríguez López, Romero Mayorga 2018: 26–50.

century CE in Berlin[68], Boston[69], Hanover[70], St. Petersburg[71], London[72], Naples[73] and elsewhere[74]. The dancers are represented as statue-like, nude or seminude, holding usually a *kantharos* and/or a *thyrsos* while dancing. A very elaborate design appears on a purple glass gem in Boston. The satyr moves to the left. His head is thrown back sharply, in a manner that over-extends the neck and thrusts the chin upwards. His right leg is bent back and very shallowly carved. He holds a staff (*thyrsos*) in his extended left arm; and a panther pelt is draped over his right arm.

Figure 8: Dancing satyr. Oval convex carnelian intaglio, attributed to Sostratos' workshop (first cent. BCE). St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР 21518. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum. © The State Hermitage Museum; photo by Evgenia Tkachuk.

This motif is common with small variations on numerous gems; for instance, on a carnelian gem in the Hermitage (2.0 × 1.6 cm, first century BCE, Figure 8), attributed to the Sostratos' workshop, the satyr has similar stance as his counterpart in Boston. Additionally, on the ground, between his legs, an inverted vase with a plant is visible. In Berlin, on a different gem, an oval plasma, bright green, translucent with small brown spots (3.81 × 2.30 × 0.72 cm, first quarter of the first century BCE) the satyr moves to the right (Figure 9):[75] his body is represented as very muscular and not as harmoniously proportioned as the one in the Hermitage; the panther pelt is also engraved differently. Perhaps the increase in Dionysian themes is associated with Mark Antony's entry into Ephesus in early 41 BCE, where he was

[68] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. 32.237; 259, carnelian dark orange (third quarter of the first century BCE): Weiss 2007: 155–6, no. 112, pl. 18; cf. no. 113, pl. 18 and other examples in Richter 1971: 45; 143, nos 177–80; 693 with corresponding figs.

[69] Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 98.745: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/186321/rectangular-gem-with-dancing-satyr?ctx=184aa1fa-050d-4a00-a7b5-19f73a6ffd2b&idx=222 [Accessed: 16 November 2021].

[70] Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 298 (jasper, red-brown): Schlüter et al. 1975: 174, no. 861, pl. 112 (first half of the first century CE).

[71] St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. Ж 13221: Neverov 1976: 67; 99, no. 80.

[72] London, British Museum: Vollenweider 1966: 19 (n. 20); 94, pl. 9/3–4.

[73] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25873/41 (cameo fragment of a white onyx on light brown agate), from Lorenzo de' Medici collection: Vollenweider 1966: 19 (n. 20); 94, pl. 9.1; Pannuti II 1994: 129–30, no. 97.

[74] See examples in Vollenweider 1966: 18–22; 94, n. 20–32, pl. 9/1–5; Joys 2002: 120–21; Overbeck and Overbeck 2005; cf. a similar motif (dancing satyr) in Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 426, pl. 117, fig. 556 (carnelian, third quarter of the first century BCE, in Xanten, Dom St. Victor); see also some examples (carnelian, banded agate, jasper and chromian chalzedony) in Grassi Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Leipzig, nos132; 99; 109): Cain and Lang 2015: 59, figs I 40–42 (C. Götz).

[75] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 2300: Vollenweider 1966: 19 (n. 20); 94, pl. 9.5 (casting); Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 147, no. 375, pl. 67.

Figure 9: Dancing satyr. Oval plasma, bright green, translucent with small brown spots (first cent. BCE – first cent. CE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 2300. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo: Archiv.

worshiped as Dionysus the Giver of Joy and the Beneficent (χαριδότην καὶ μειλίχιον).[76] In other depictions dancing satyrs also play a musical instrument: for example a cithara, as in Tarragona, attributed to Skylax (mid-first century BCE?).[77]

The female counterparts of the satyrs, the maenads, were similarly popular. Numerous variations of single ecstatic dancing maenads, based on Late Classical and Hellenistic prototypes,[78] were preserved in Roman times. The motif of a dancing maenad with swirling drapery was very popular on rings in 300 BCE. It was also used in other media (e.g. paintings, reliefs, statues and statuettes), and may reflect the influence of a well-known statue of a dancing maenad by the famous sculptor Scopas.[79] Two groups of examples are more prominent: maenads dancing while holding either a *kantharos* or a *thyrsos* or their shawls, and maenads dancing while playing a musical instrument.

To the first category belong gems in Malibu, Naples, New York and Berlin.

A classicizing carnelian stone, but only slightly convex (14.2 × 10.3 × 2.7 mm) in Malibu (Figure 10), created by an unknown cutter (first century BCE) depicts a maenad in profile dancing to the left holding

[76] Plut., *Ant*. 24.1–3; see esp. 24.3: "At any rate, when Antony made his entry into Ephesus, women arrayed like Bacchanals, and men and boys like satyrs and Pans, led the way before him, and the city was full of ivy and thyrsus wands and harps and pipes and flutes, the people hailing him as Dionysus Giver of Joy and Beneficent. For he was such, undoubtedly, to some; but to the greater part he was Dionysus Carnivorous and Savage"; on Antonius as Neos Dionysos: Plut., *Ant.* 60.3; Cass. Dio, *HR* 48.39.2; cf. Fear 2020: 96, n. 18; Vollenweider 1966: 19–20.

[77] Tarragona, National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona, inv. 7543: Németh and Canós-Villena 2002: 157–64, fig. 1.

[78] E.g. on Greek gold and silver rings of the fourth century BCE, as for instance in the examples of Malibu (400–350 BCE): Malibu, Getty Villa Museum, inv. 85. AM.279; 81. AN.76.154: Spier 1992: 34; 36, nos 52; 57; Joys 2002: 123; Gerring 2000: 180, no. Vr. 10 (gold ring).

[79] Some scholars recognize the statuette of a dancing Maenad in Dresden as a copy of the Scopas' original: Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen und Albertinum, inv. Hm 133 (mid. fourth century BCE): Barr-Sharrar 2013: 321–37, figs 1–6; 10–22; 28 with references; cf. the contributions of Wolf, Petropoulos, and Geominy in Katsonopoulou and Stewart 2013; "Alternatively Wilfred Geominy in his paper entitled *Looking for a new Skopaic Maenad* proposes the so-called Berlin Dancer, a figure he considers as corresponding well with the style of a fourth century sculpture, as actually representing this masterpiece of Scopas instead of the Dresden Maenad."; Childs 2018: 133–4, fig. 190.

a *kantharos* in her right and a *thyrsos* in her left hand.[80] Her hairstyle is unusually wild and stands upright. Her garment consists of a fine long and sleeveless *chiton*, whose folds follow her movement, and of a shawl (*himation*) over her arms. The style instead reveals some archaism and seems to be local. Perhaps it comes from Asia Minor.

Figure 10: Dancing maenad. Carnelian intaglio (first cent. BCE). Malibu, Getty Villa Museum, inv. 85.AN.370.67. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

Two chalcedony agate cameos from the Pietro Barbos gem collection in Naples (Figure 11 and Figure 13), are attributed to the famous gem carver Sostratos (Late Hellenistic, last quarter of the first century BCE).[81] He was a very skillful Greek artisan, active at the court of Cleopatra and Marc Antony in Alexandria of Egypt, who were known to stage Dionysian performances, both in public and at court.[82] Later, he moved to Rome to work for Roman rulers (e.g., Augustus). Sostratos and his workshop preferred Dionysian scenes and represented figures in complex poses.[83] In contrast, our next examples, a brown fragmentary glass gem (mid. first century BCE)[84] and an oval amethyst (2.85 × 2.21 × 0.68 cm, last third of first century BCE, Figure 12)[85], both in Berlin, and a glass cameo (3.5 × 2.7 × 0.6 cm, first century CE, in New York, Figure 14)[86] are unsigned.

Figure 11: Dancing maenad. Chalcedony agate cameo, attributed to Sostratos (last quarter of first century BCE). National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25914/81. Courtesy of the Ministero della Cultura – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photo by Giorgio Albano.

All maenads are represented in white low relief performing different steps and holding their mantles or waving shawls behind

[80] Malibu, Getty Villa Museum, inv. 85. AN.370.67: Spier 1992: 93, no. 219; (he includes this gem in the form A4; for this form, see n. 61 above); Joys 2002: 121.

[81] National Archaeological Museum of Naples: a) inv. 25914/81: Pannuti II 1994: 133–4, no. 101; https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/the-gem-collection-of-the-mann-national-archaeological-museum-of-naples/pgJi8kv2qQrBLw [Accessed: 16 November 2021]; b) inv. 25934/101: Pannuti II 1994: 134–5, no. 102; https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/the-gem-collection-of-the-mann-national-archaeological-museum-of-naples/pgJi8kv2qQrBLw?hl=en [Accessed: 16 November 2021]; Vollenweider 1966: 19–20; 101, pl. 26.4–7.

[82] Vollenweider 1966: 19–20; cf. Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 182; Gołyźniak 2020: 204.

[83] For Sostratos and related works, see Vollenweider 1966: 32–3; Vollenweider 1972: 181; Spier 1992: 154; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 112–13; 409–10; Prioux 2015: 58–65; Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 181–7; Gołyźniak 2020: 193–4.

[84] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 6242: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 148–9, no. 381, pl. 68.

[85] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 2301: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 167, no. 446, pl. 78.

[86] New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 17.194.10: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/249255 [Accessed: 16 November 2021]; Gazda 2000: 223–4, no. 91; Draper 2008: 15, fig. 23.

them. The first maenad in Naples (23.9 × 20 mm, Figure 11) is engraved in three quarter view, bent or moving to the left. Her long fine dress follows the movement of her body. Her right leg is bent forward and her left leg outstretched back. The right edge of her shawl is wrapped around her right hand, and she holds with her right hand an inverted *thyrsos* and with her left the other side of her shawl, almost diagonally behind her. Thus, she performs an ecstatic dance. The second maenad in Naples (26.2 × 19 mm, Figure 13) is depicted almost in profile to left (head and under body), whereas her upper body is cut in a three quarter posture/view. She dances on her toes moving her left leg elegantly forward and her right leg to the back. At the same time, she holds her mantle or waving shawl with both hands behind her, forming an impressive background. The second maenad in Naples, the first in Berlin and this one in New York (Figure 14) each throw back one of their hands during their ecstatic dance, a motion common in numerous examples, influenced also by Greek Late Classical works (e.g. Mänadenkrater in Berlin, Derveni crater in Thessaloniki).[87]

Figure 12: Dancing maenad. Oval amethyst intaglio (last third of first cent. BCE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 2301. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo by Johannes Laurentius, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Figure 13: Dancing maenad. Chalcedony agate cameo, attributed to Sostratos (c. 25–1 BCE). National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25934/101. Courtesy of the Ministero della Cultura – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Photo Archivio MANN.

The first Berlin maenad dances holding her shawl below forming a bow. The second Berlin maenad (Figure 12) dances on her tiptoes to the right, whereas her upper body and head turn back. Her body is in three quarter view, her head in profile. She wears a sleeveless transparent chiton that leaves a breast free. She has a transparent veil around her head and upper body. However, one observes iconographical differences between the maenads mentioned above; e.g. regarding the folded garments and the movements. Therefore, the Naples gems are of higher quality regarding iconography and style, showing a more elaborate figure treatment than that on the glass gem in New York. Different styles and movements are shown by the Berlin dancers as well.

In other depictions on gems, the maenad dances while playing a musical instrument, usually a tympanum (frame

[87] Derveni crater: Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum, inv. B1: cf. Vocotopoulou 1997: 265–6, nos 169–75, pls 170; 172; Tsigarida and Ignatiadou 2000: 75–82, figs 78–80; 82; 84; cf. Barr-Sharrar 2013: 321–2, fig. 7 (Mänadenkrater); 324–5, figs 8–9 (Derveni crater).

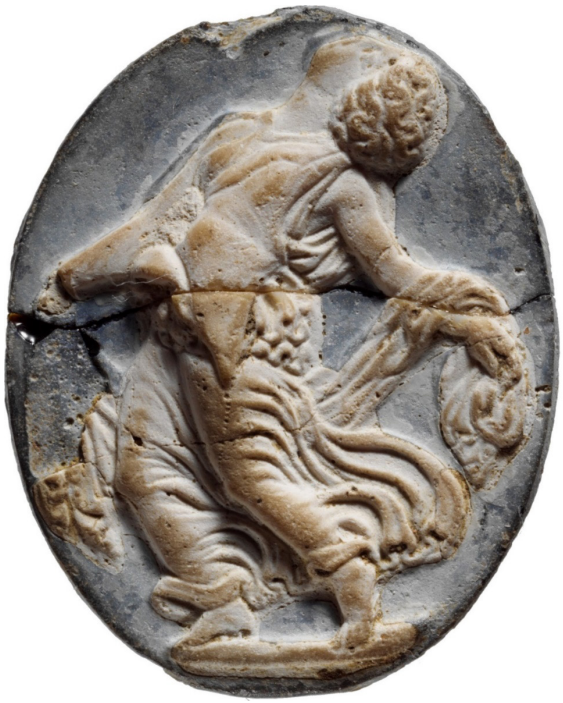

Figure 14: Dancing maenad. Cameo glass medallion (first cent. CE). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 17.194.10. Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, OA/public domain.

Figure 15: Maenad dancing and playing a tympanum (frame drum). Oval orange carnelian intaglio (early first cent. BCE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 6833. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo by Johannes Laurentius, CC BY-SA 4.0.

drum: for instance in Berlin, Figure 15,[88] in Nijmegen and in Munich[89]), but also auloi (in Naples[90]). The Berlin example (2.68 × 1.89 × 0.58 cm), an oval orange carnelian intaglio (beginning of the first century BCE), represents a maenad moving to the left while holding a large tympanum and a ribbon with both hands. She wears a transparent *chiton*, which follows her movements. Maenads dancing and playing a tympanum or cymbals decorate reliefs and wall paintings, e.g. in Pompeii.[91]

The maenad on the glass ring stone in Nijmegen is carved in a different expressive pose (first century BCE).[92] She is represented from behind in three-quarter view dancing to the right on her tiptoes, throwing her head back and holding a large tympanum with her left hand while striking it with the right. A snake, also a Dionysian attribute, is wrapped around her arm. She is nude, whereas her fine folded dress seems to be in front of her, like a large shell in the background. Remains of her *nebrís* are also preserved. Such single exotic dancers or abbreviated dancing and musical scenes

88 Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 6472: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 148, no. 380, pl. 68.

89 Joys 2002: 123–4, figs 4 (Nijmegen), 5 (Boston) with examples. However, the amethyst glass in Boston is modern (18th–19th century) according to the Museum's website.

90 National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 2586/35 (cameo in *nicolo*): Pannuti II 1994: 139–40, no. 106.

91 Schefold 1962: 106, pls 62 (from the House of the Vettier); 70 (from the House of the Dioskouri, both Maenads with tympanum); Aoyagi and Pappalardo 2006; 60 (cymbals); Melini 2008: figs on pp. 67; 76; 86 (conch, cymbals and tympanum); cf. Liveri 2021: 77–82 (percussion music used by Dionysos' worshippers).

92 Nijmegen, Museum Kam: Joys 2002: 123; 125, n. 38 with references.

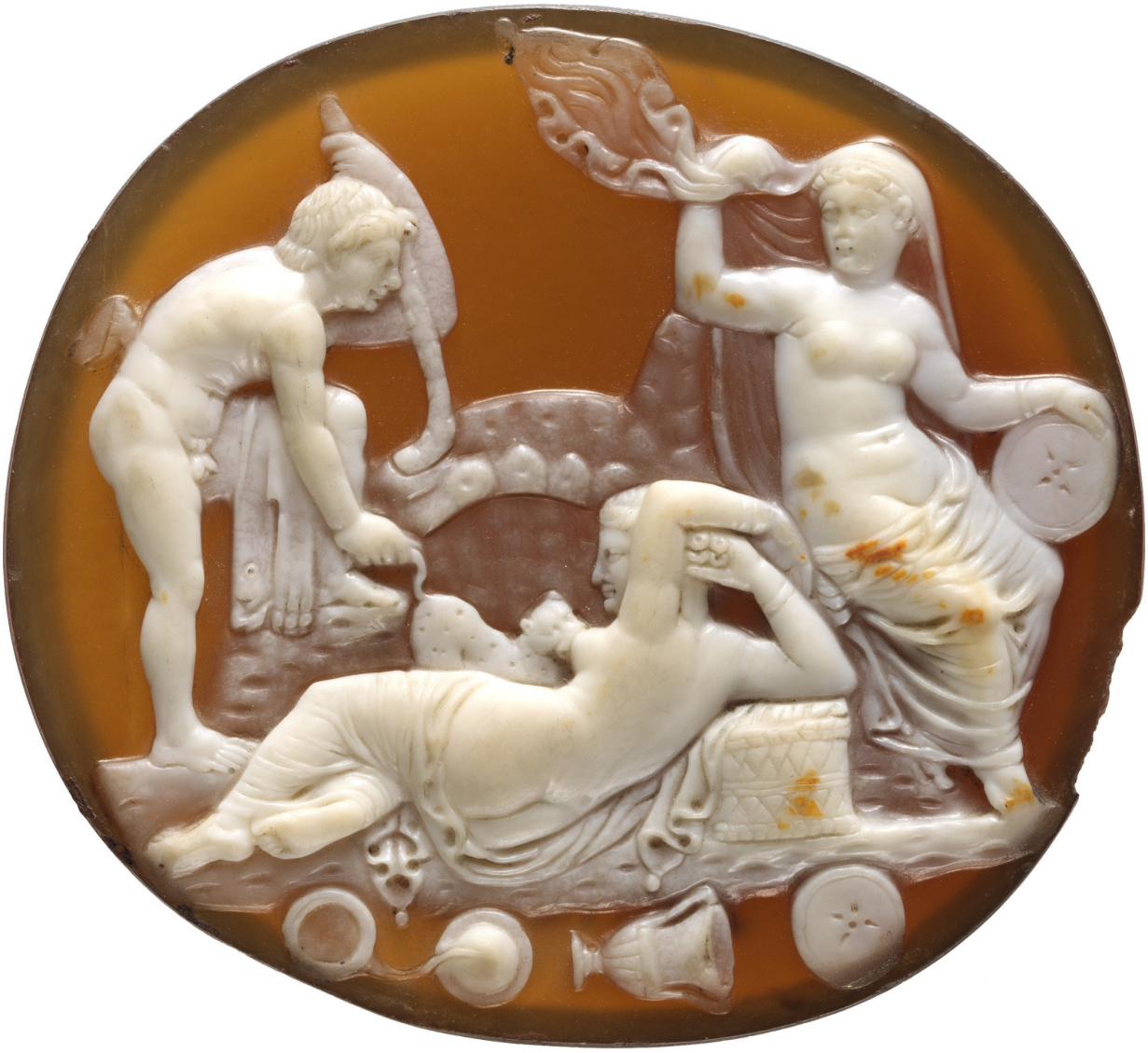

Figure 16: A Bacchic group. Sardonyx cameo (first cent. BCE – first cent. CE). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 25.78.96. Fletcher Fund, 1925. Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, OA/public domain.

were, due to their ecstatic and erotic wild dancing, suitable for decorating jewellery that was worn by symposiasts or other luxury objects (e.g. glass cups in cameo technique).[93]

'Sacral- or sacro-idyllic' scenes[94] are perhaps represented on the next examples, which show the calm behavior of bacchantes in an idyllic ambient. Sometimes a satyr is shown amusing the infant Dionysus. Such a scene is carved on an onyx-sardonyx cameo in the Farnese Collection in Naples (30–20 BCE).[95] A naked satyr is seated on a rock to the left carrying the infant Dionysus on his shoulders while joking with him, whereas his staff and his *syrinx* are on the rock. The bucolic scene is carved very carefully in high relief with details.

[93] Harden 1988, nos 31–2; Restani et al. 2010: 167–8, figs 4a–b.

[94] On 'sacral- or sacro-idyllic' landscapes, see Simon 1986: 182–210; Zanker 1987: 284–90, figs 224c–227; Silberberg 1989; Silberberg-Pierce 1980: 241–251; Kotsidu 1998: 91–105; Croisille 2010; Hinterhöller-Klein 2015.

[95] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25880/48: Dacos et al. 1973: 54, no. 23, fig. 17; De Caro 1994: 345; Pannuti II 1994: 117–18, no. 86; Melini 2008: 64; Gasparri 1986: 553, no. 160, pl. 443.

On a Hellenistic or early imperial sardonyx cameo in New York (3.3 × 3.6 cm, Figure 16, first century BCE – first century CE) a Bacchic group consisting of a satyr, two maenads, and a small panther is illustrated.[96] It seems that they are resting after their dance with tympana and cymbals. In the center is a half-inclined maenad with her bare back facing the viewer. She leans her head on her hands looking at the satyr in front of her who holds the panther's tail, while the animal is breastfed by the maenad. Her position is erotic. She has left her cymbals and drum on the ground, flanking a crater lying on its side a vase associated with Dionysus and wine.

Figure 17: Seated silenus holding an aulos pipe in each hand. Carnelian intaglio (mid. first cent. BCE). Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 6833. Courtesy of the Antikensammlung. © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Photo: Archiv.

To the right another half nude maenad is seated, resting her drum on her left thigh, while her right hand tries to hold her fluttering mantle over her head. This Bacchic scene reminds us of resting maenads with or without their tympanum found on reliefs and wall paintings in Pompeian houses.[97] However, they are depicted in a different style and with different iconography.

Variations have also been found; e.g. on two onyx cameos from the first century CE: on the first example, Dionysus and Ariadne are seated seminude on layered rocks.[98] The god holds a *kantharos* with his left hand; behind it is a disc, perhaps a tympanum. On the right a hermaic stele in the form of a small draped standing silenus is visible. The second cameo bears a maenad on the left reclining in the sanctuary of Dionysus.[99] She is seminude and raises her hand to take a tympanum that is hanging from a bare tree. A *syrinx* hangs from a branch over the goat's head on the right. A clothed statue of Bacchus, a goat, and a seated youth are included in the scene.

[96] New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 25.78.96: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/251876 [Accessed: 16 November 2021]; Gazda 2000: 223, no. 90; Boardman 2009: 218–19, no. 481.

[97] Jashemski 1993: 348–56, figs 406–7; 412 (painted pinakes in: no. 60. VI. Insula occid. 42, House of the Wedding of Alexander); Simon 1986: 195–6, fig. 254; wall paintings in room 32 of the House of the Golden Bracelet in Pompeii: Pompei 1996: 117–22, figs 151; 153; 155, no. 153; Coarelli 2002: figs on pp. 210–11; Aoyagi and Pappalardo 2006: 187, figs 10 and on the pages 189–95; 209–10; 221 (from Oecus 32); cf. a sleeping Maenad in: Pompei 1990: 146–8, nos 51–2 (House of the Cithara Player, I.4.5 and 25, in triclinium 19). On the gardens of Pompeii, see also Jashemski 1979.

[98] Boardman and Wagner 2018: 222, no. 207.

[99] Boardman and Wagner 2018: 224, no. 209.

Satyrs or sileni are also depicted dancing, holding, or playing a musical instrument, such as a seated pot-bellied old silenus on a carnelian intaglio in Berlin (mid first century BCE), who holds one aulos pipe in each hand, while his aulos case (*sybḗnē*) is visible on the ground (Figure 17).[100]

Another satyr/silenus who is also seated plays a lyre on a dark green plasma in Vienna (first century CE)[101] and on a black glass gem in Lisbon (second half of the first century BCE)[102]. Among the interesting pieces of the Lisbon collection are: a pale-green chrysoprase (first century BCE – first century CE),[103] where a young satyr seats on the floor holding a *syrinx* in his raised hand, and a pale-orange carnelian (first – second century CE)[104] with a bearded satyr/silenus who walks to the right while playing a pipe held in his raised hand and holding another pipe in his left.

Centaur musicians are depicted on gems either singly or pulling the chariot (*biga*) of Dionysus and/or Ariadne in triumphal processions.[105] A young centaur decorates two orange carnelian intaglios in Vienna (first century BCE). The first one moves to the left while playing a lyre.[106] The second centaur places his lyre at the top of a column.[107] Single centaurs play auloi on sardonyx cameos in Naples[108] and in Alnwick Castle (first century BCE – first century CE?)[109].

Usually, two centaurs (a male-female pair) are the deities' charioteers. Representations in various versions are preserved. Sometimes, one or both of them hold or play a musical instrument. For instance, on the sardonyx-agate cameos in Paris and Florence one centaur holds or plays a lyre;[110] while on the Paris cameo that illustrates the Triumph of Dionysus and Ariadne, the female centaur companion beats cymbals. In both examples the divine pair of Dionysus and Ariadne sit embracing on the chariot, surrounded by cupids; in the Paris example, marine or earthly deities/figures are placed on the ground below.

On the sardonyx-agate cameo (4.2 × 2.7 cm) from Alexandria in St. Petersburg, attributed to the workshop of Sostratos of the first century BCE, both centaurs play music (Figure 18):[111] On the

[100] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. FG 6833: Zwierlein-Diehl 1969: 147–8, no. 377, pl. 68; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007: 426, pl. 117, fig. 558.

[101] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IX B 1287: Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 148, no. 469, pl. 77; cf. similar motifs on two gems in Boardman and Wagner 2018: 184–5, nos 170–71 (in the first one additionally a *syrinx* hangs on a tree).

[102] Lisbon, National Archaeological Museum, inv. Au 639: Cravinho 2017: 187–8, no. 16, pl. 2, with many examples or parallels.

[103] Lisbon, National Archaeological Museum, inv. Au 669: Cravinho 2017: 188, no. 17, pl. 2.

[104] Lisbon, National Archaeological Museum, inv. Au 1206: Cravinho 2017: 190, no. 20, pl. 2.

[105] On Dionysiac processions in the art, see Boardman 2014: esp. 22–6 on cameos; cf. passim for various artefacts and periods of the Antiquity.

[106] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IX B497: Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 99, no. 260, pl. 45.

[107] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IX B720: Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 99–100, no. 261, pl. 45.

[108] National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25921/88 (perhaps from the Medici collection): Pannuti 1994: 199–201, nos 167–8.

[109] Alnwick Castle, Beverly Collection, inv. (10591) K 53: Scarisbrick et al. 2017: 38, no. 31.

[110] a) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (*Cabinet* des *médailles)*, inv. Chab. 61: Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 184; 186, fig. 8; Boardman 2014: 25–6, fig. 13; b) National Archaeological Museum of Florence, inv. 14457: Giuliano and Micheli 1989: 177, no. 60; Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 184; 186, fig. 11.

[111] St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12696: Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 183; 186, fig. 9.

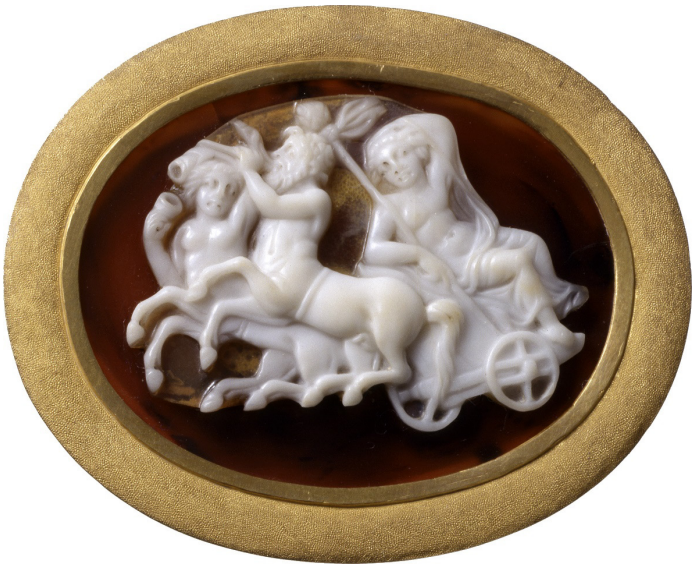

Figure 18: Two centaurs pull the chariot of Dionysus (or Ariadne?), both playing music (conch and cymbals). Egypt, Alexandria, sardonyx cameo (first cent. BCE). St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12696. Courtery of the State Hermitage Museum. © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Svetlana Suetova.

right, the female, with a human upper body that faces to the front, beats cymbals, [112] while her male companion blows a conch. His head and lower body are represented in profile, and his upper body is in three quarter view. In this interesting scene in white low relief, Dionysus (or Ariadne?) is half naked while holding a *thyrsos,* reclining alone on a chariot drawn by the centaur pair, who are moving in profile to the right.[113] The representation of Bacchic pairs could have another symbolic meaning that is also comparable to contemporary leading political pairs;[114] the Dionysus-Ariadne pair may especially be identified with Antony and Cleopatra VII and their 'sacred marriage', moving in a triumphal procession and accompanied by loud music.[115] As mentioned above, these Dionysian *thiasos* motifs are associated with the triumphal processions of Marc Antony in Ephesus in 42 BCE and in Alexandria in 34 BCE after his Armenian military campaign.[116]

In another version of the subject in St. Petersburg (Figure 19), on a sardonyx-agate cameo (3.1 × 2.3 cm) attributed also to the Sostratos' workshop, the centaur pair pulls Dionysus' (or Ariadne's) chariot to the right. Here the female counterpart/companion seems to play a large tympanum while looking to the left.[117] However, the movement has been rendered clumsily, and unsuccessfully. The left arm of the male centaur is also omitted. Centaur musicians are also depicted on sarcophagi and on wall paintings, e.g. in Campania, in the Vesuvian area (Pompeii etc.).[118]

4 Triton musicians

The next examples were inspired by nautical themes. Poseidon/Neptune and his followers (the tritons and nereids) were also a very popular motif for gem engravers. Poseidon, as god of water

[112] On cymbals in the cult of Dionysus, see Liveri 2013: 1104–5.
[113] Whether the figure is male or female cannot be determined. It seems effeminate with breasts. We observe the same in the next example from St. Petersburg.
[114] Plantzos 1999: 86–7; Gołyźniak 2020: 193–4.
[115] Ibidem, 204.
[116] Plut., *Ant.* 50; Cass. Dio 49.40.3; Tondriau 1946: 160–67; Vollenweider 1966: 19–20, pl. 23.1.
[117] St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12669; Vollenweider 1966: 35; 100, pl. 23.5 and 7; Boardman 2014: 25; Gradel and Gennaioli 2020: 183; cf. 183, fig. 10.
[118] See examples and references in Pannuti 1994: 198–201.

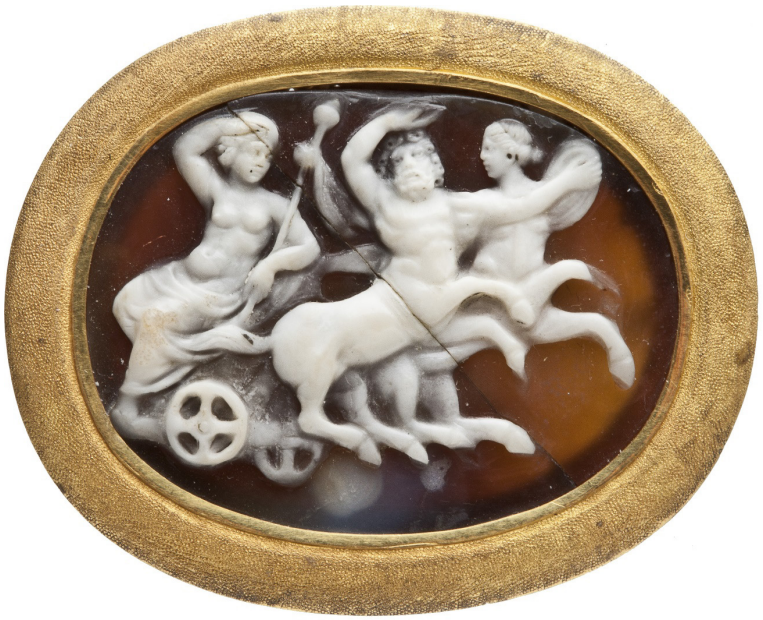

Figure 19: Two centaurs pull the chariot of Dionysus (or Ariadne?); one of them playing the tympanum. Egypt, Alexandria, sardonyx-agate-onyx cameo (first cent. BCE). St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12669. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum. © The State Hermitage Museum; photo by Konstantin Sinyavky and Svetlana Suetova.

and the sea and a protector in naval battles, and Venus Marina were included in the Roman iconographical repertoire, especially after Actium.[119] The mythical sea creatures, the nereids and tritons, are depicted in very pleasant and playful scenes, either singly or in groups in various compositions.

Tritons are usually portrayed blowing into a conch shell, as on a chalcedony intaglio in Vienna (first quarter of the first century BCE) which is decorated with a triton in the sea, in profile to the right.[120] He blows into a conch shell holding it with both hands. A variation appears on the carnelian intaglio of Geneva, signed by Hyllos (first century CE).[121] Here a triton with crustaceous claws for legs carries a trident while blowing a conch shell.

Rarely do tritons play other musical instruments, e.g. an aulos, as on a carnelian intaglio (1.00 × 1.46 × 0.26 cm) from the first century CE in Hanover (Figure 20).[122] It represents another naked and bearded male triton to the right, holding two pipes with his left hand crosswise, while he raises his right. He faces to the front, his upper body being seen in three-quarter view. On another carnelian intaglio in Vienna a triton is depicted as a lyre player (first century BCE).[123] He moves in

[119] Venus also protected Augustus as Venus Genetrix of the Julian house. For Venus Pelagia and a triton on a gem (early first century CE), see Gołyźniak 2020: no. 232, fig. 877; cf. depictions of Aphrodite/Venus *Velificans* on two gems: a) riding a sea dragon; and b) riding a sea horse accompanied by a dolphin and two Erotes; also on the reliefs of the Ara Pacis Augustae in Rome: Galinsky 1969: 211–12, figs 151–2.

[120] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IX B 1304: Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 150, no. 481, pl. 79; Icard-Gianolio 1997: 76, no. 36a, pl. 51.

[121] Geneva, Musée d'Art et d' Histoire; Vollenweider 1966: 71; 118, pl. 77. 7; Icard-Gianolio 1997: 76, no. 36b.

[122] Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 500: Schlüter et al. 1975: 191, no. 950, pl. 125 with examples; Icard-Gianolio 1997: 76, no. 37, pl. 51.

[123] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IXB 1471: Zwierlein-Diehl 1973: 98, no. 254, pl. 44; Icard-Gianolio 1997: 81, no. 100, pl. 58.

profile to the left, while a wingless Eros rides on his back playing an aulos. Similar entertaining and playful motifs of a triton, usually holding or blowing a shorter or longer conch shell, also adorned various Roman artworks, such as mosaics, wall paintings, reliefs and other artefacts.[124]

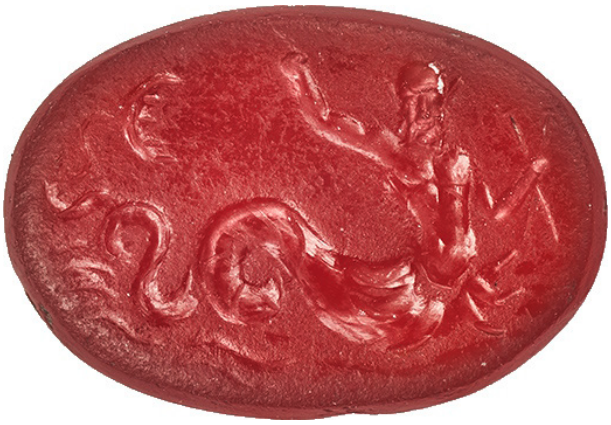

Figure 20: A triton holding an aulos. Carnelian cameo (first cent. CE). Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 500. Courtesy of the Museum. © Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Museum August Kestner. Photo by Christian Rose.

However, the most interesting and important glyptic work bearing tritons is the famous sardonyx cameo in Vienna (after 27 BCE), the so-called 'Actium cameo' (Figure 21), showing four tritons drawing Augustus' chariot/quadriga.[125]

The scene's composition is impressive, including various motifs and symbols. The relief carvings are very elaborate. It should be mentioned that all the heads were replaced in the second half of the sixteenth century. The triumphant sea victor Augustus-Neptune (or Genius Augustus?), wearing the toga, stands on the chariot while holding a branch in his right hand and a scepter in his left. Only the second triton from the left holds a conch shell in his right hand while raising the other; his counterpart on the right holds a dolphin. The two outer tritons hold other objects: with their raised hand a globus on which are placed other symbols of imperial power: on the left the *clipeus virtutis*, i.e. a gold shield surrounded by an oak wreath and carried by capricorns; on the right Victory/Victoriola with an oak wreath (*corona civica*). The outer tritons hold with their downward left hands a sword in its sheath (the sword hilt is missing) and a rudder. Therefore, according to the scene's iconography, music also plays a role in this triumphal naval procession, as represented by the triton musician with a conch shell. This cameo is a masterpiece of glyptic art, commemorating Augustus' victory and power. It is a representative work, used for his political aims, after his victory at Actium.[126] The creator of this piece was a genius, combining all the symbols of the new era in a composition that demonstrates the new ideology of the emperor.[127] Thus, the *princeps* Augustus is glorified after his victory in the naval battle in Actium as the guarantor of peace and prosperity for the Roman people.

[124] Melini 2008: figs in p. 67 (conch); Icard-Gianolio 1997: 75–7; 79–82, nos 28; 30a–b; 31; 32a; 33; 36b; 40–41; 43b; 44–5; 50; 69; 77a–b; 78; 82; 95; 97; 107; 108; 122 pls 49–59 (conch); no. 74 (*syrinx*). Compare an unusual representation of a triton with lobster/crayfish lower body to the right blowing a long conch on a fresco at Portici in Herculaneum: Fröhner 1878: 24–5; https://jenikirbyhistory.getarchive.net/media/froener-notice-sculpture-p025-b20559 [Accessed: 13 January 2024].

[125] Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IXa 56: www.khm.at/de/object/3499ff579a/; https://www.khm.at/objektdb/detail/59148/ [Accessed: 16 November 2021]; Zanker 1987: 102, fig. 81; Zwierlein-Diehl 2008: 92–7, no. 5, figs 28–31; 36–7; Gołyźniak 2020: 221; 415, no. 10.92, fig. 812.

[126] About Actium, see references in n. 9 above; additionally, Davis 1999: 63; cf. Eck 2007.

[127] See references in note 125.

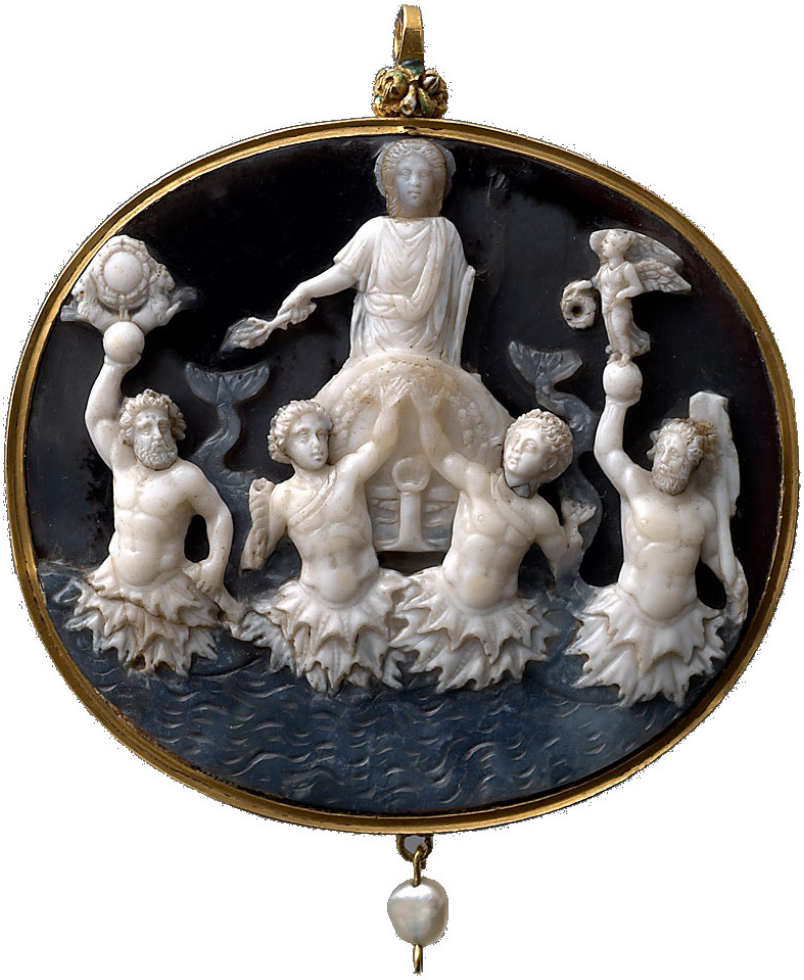

Figure 21: 'Actium Cameo'. The victorious Augustus on a chariot drawn by four tritons (after 27 BCE). Sardonyx and enamelled gold cameo. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. IXa 56. © Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna.

5 Musical instruments

Individual musical instruments (usually the string instruments lyre and cithara) also decorate gems either as single motif or in combination with other motifs, e.g. a *khélys* (χέλυς) lyre flanked at the top by two birds, shown on a glass gem in London (last third of the first century BCE).[128]

Variations of stylized lyres with two to nine strings appear in various collections: such as for example in Lisbon (three strings, black and pale-blue nicolo fragmentary intaglio, late second – third century CE, or third century CE),[129] in Berlin (four strings, sardonyx, beginning of the first century CE),[130] in St. Petersburg (five strings, a shard-agate onyx cameo, 1.2 cm, first century BCE,

[128] It is re-set in a third-century CE bronze ring: Gołyźniak 2020: 236; 432, no. 10.533, fig. 929.

[129] Lisbon, National Archaeological Museum, inv. 1194: Cravinho 2017: 222, no 66 with parallels.

[130] Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. 1816: Platz-Horster 2012: 84, no. 60, pl. 13 with parallels; cf. an orange carnelian and a brown-red garnet gem (both dated to the third quarter of the first century BCE) in the Heinrich Dressel collection der Antikensammlung in Berlin: Weiss 2007: 304–5, nos 611–12, pl. 80.

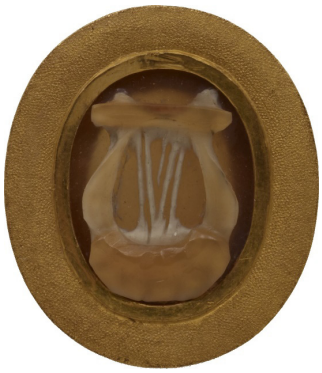

Figure 22: Lyre with five strings. Sard-agate onyx cameo. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12595. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum. © The State Hermitage Museum; photo by Evgenia Tkachuk.

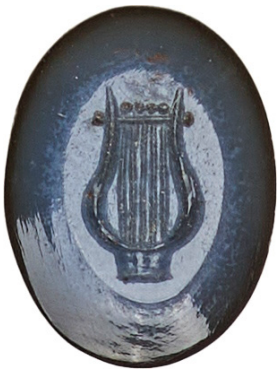

Figure 23: Lyre with five strings. High oval nicolo (first cent. CE). Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1215. Courtesy of the Museum. © Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Museum August Kestner. Photo by Christian Rose.

Figure 24: *Khélys* lyre with four strings. Light brown glass cameo with casting overhang (second half first cent. BCE – beginning first cent. CE). Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1414. Courtesy of the Museum. © Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Museum August Kestner. Photo by Christian Rose.

Figure 25: *Khélys* lyre with seven strings. Light brown glass cameo with casting overhang (second half first cent. BCE – beginning first cent. CE). Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1415. Courtesy of the Museum. © Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Museum August Kestner. Photo by Christian Rose.

Figure 22),[131] in Hanover (five, a high oval nicolo, 0.94 × 0.71 × 0.25 cm, first century CE, Figure 23, and six strings),[132] and in Naples (nine strings, cameo in agate-sardonyx).[133]

Two *khélys* lyres, with four and seven strings respectively, are found on light brown glass cameos that are included in the collection of Hanover; both are upright oval with casting overhang, dated to the second half of the first century BCE to the beginning of the first century CE: the first one (Figure 24, 1.31 × 1.04 × 0.26 cm) is decorated with bands below and on the field above, flanked by a plectrum.[134] From each horn of the second *khélys* lyre (Figure 25, 1.25 × 1.04 × 0.28 cm), hangs

131 St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. ГР-12595: https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/18.+carved+stones/1002446 [Accessed: 16 November 2021].

132 Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1215 (five), K 1213 (six): Schlüter et al. 1975: 253, no. 1344, pl. 185 (five); Platz-Horster 2012: 84 (six).

133 National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 25922/89 (from Medici collection): Pannuti 1994: 296–7, no. 264.

134 Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1414: Schlüter et al. 1975: 153, no. 745, pl. 96.

Figure 26: Seven-stringed lyre, syrinx and two inclined auloi. Orange carnelian gem (first cent. CE). Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1217. Courtesy of the Museum. © Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Museum August Kestner. Photo by Christian Rose.

a dolphin-shaped band/ribbon.[135] Single musical instruments also decorate wall paintings in Pompeii.[136]

A unique representation of a new musical instrument, the hydraulis (water organ), which had been invented by Ctesibius in Alexandria about the middle of the third century BCE, is engraved on a sardonyx gem from Italy in London (first century BCE).[137] The performer, standing perhaps on a podium, as is best known from terracotta models, is visible up to the chest behind the row of pipes. At each side of the instrument, we find figures working the pistons. The abbreviated inscription "AMVV", meaning 'VIVAM', i.e. "Success to myself", would apply to the owner of the gem.

A *syrinx* surrounded by other objects (a grape, a fruit or tympanum on a branch or pedum?) decorates a black glass gem with white horizontal stripes in Hanover (second half of the first century BCE).[138] A grasshopper sits in profile on the *syrinx*. Gems with a *syrinx* motif are also visible in Berlin and Munich.[139] A plectrum and a scabellum flank a lightning motif on a white glass gem in Berlin (third quarter first century BCE).[140]

Depictions of a group of different instruments are unusual, e.g. on an orange carnelian, in Hanover (transverse oval, 0.79 × 0.89 × 0.18 cm; first century CE) include a seven stringed lyre, a *syrinx* and two inclined aulos pipes beneath it (Figure 26).[141]

Engraved gems decorated with musical instruments, either singly or in combination with other fertility symbols (fruits, grasshopper), belong to the symbolic gems, associated with Augustus' political, cultural and religious reforms, to promote the ideas of peace (*pax*) and prosperity (*prosperitas*) during his Golden Age (*aurea aetas*).[142] They must have had a similar significance under his successors.

135 Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1415: Ibidem: 153, no. 746, pl. 96.
136 Aoyagi and Pappalardo 2006: figs on pp. 236–7; 241 (cithara on a tripod); Melini 2008: figs on pp. 75–9 (tympana, panpipes, cymbals, lyres, citharas).
137 London, British Museum: Perrot 1971: 84, fig. 2; Markovits 2003: 38–40, pl. 1 with references; about the mechanism of the hydraulis, see also Hagel 2023.
138 Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1704: Schlüter et al. 1975: 147, no. 704, pl. 91.
139 Ibidem, 147 (Berlin); Brandt and Schmidt 1970: 227, no. 2140, pl. 185 (Munich).
140 Weiss 2007: 305, no. 613, pl. 80.
141 Hanover, August Kestner Museum, inv. K 1217: Schlüter et al. 1975: 253, no. 1346, pl. 185.
142 Gołyźniak 2020: 234–8, esp. 235; cf. 'sacral- or sacro-idyllic' scenes above.

6 Conclusions

We have seen a variety of musical themes on Roman engraved gems. Some of these small portable objects are masterpieces, characterized by high artistic quality, elaborated treatment of motifs and deep symbolism or great significance. Their iconography is usually influenced by Classical Greek or Hellenistic original artworks in sculpture, paintings, gems, etc. However, the glyptic iconography is also enriched by adapting to the trends of the time in which it was created, i.e., following contemporary political and religious ideas that served political purposes. The musical theme (musicians, dancers, or single musical instruments) was either the main decoration's motif that covered the small space available on the gem, or a secondary accompanying subject. Apollonian themes dominate, following the political, cultural, and religious ideas of Octavian/Augustus, and associated with the promotion of the peace, wealth, and prosperity in the 'New Golden Age' of the Empire. Nevertheless, Dionysian subjects (satyrs, maenads, centaurs pulling the chariot of Dionysus and Ariadne) are also very popular, showing an opposing world, identified with Marc Antony, Octavian's rival, and associated with religious mysteries, symposia, etc. The maritime subjects represented by the triton musicians, and associated with Neptune and Venus Pelagia/Marina, show the significance of the sea in Roman life. Calm and peaceful Bacchic or musical scenes, triton musicians, single or multiple musical instruments combined with other symbols (e.g. fruits, grasshopper) can be included in the 'sacral-idyllic' scenes which represent the changing iconography and significance of the motifs, according to the new ideology and mentality of Golden Age society.[143] Various musical instruments (e.g. the lyre, cithara, aulos, cymbals, tympanum, panpipes, shell conch) are depicted. The aforementioned engraved gems include official ones, commemorating the victories of Octavian/Augustus, especially in Actium, such as the intaglio with the punishment of Marsyas in Naples and the state cameo in Vienna.

Their creators were mainly famous and skilful Greek engravers, who were active initially in the court workshops of Hellenistic rulers and then in Roman ones; sometimes they signed their works. They used a variety of materials, including precious or semi-precious stones, such as amethyst, chalcedony agate, carnelian, sardonyx and glass. The latter material was also used by numerous workshops for mass reproductions, because it was cheap and widespread. The Greek cutters followed Classical or Hellenistic models, but also adopted new forms according to contemporary trends in symbolism, aesthetics and fashion.[144]

The musical motifs commissioned by the Roman emperors were used not only for personal reasons (adornment, amulets), but also served their political, cultural and religious aims, transmitting powerful messages and specific ideas. Therefore, the meaning of some motifs could be interpreted according to a new symbolism, representative of the new Golden Age of Augustus, which was dominated by the ideas of peace, old Republican virtues (e.g. *pietas* and *virtus*), wealth, and prosperity in the Roman Empire, under a glorious, divine leader. Similar motifs were used for the

[143] For Aurea Aetas, see Zanker 1987: 171–96.

[144] About Greek styles and Art in Augustan Rome, see Hölscher as n.4 above.

decoration of all artworks (architecture, paintings, sculpture, etc.), in coinage, and in private and official life. They also appear in contemporary Roman literature (as mentioned in Vergil and Horace, but also in Ovid and Propertius, albeit only critically) and in other areas of life.

Finally, these amazing objects of minor art, often valuable and of extraordinary workmanship, and appreciated for their beauty and rarity, confirmed both the skills of their engravers and the wealth and power of their owners. Their popularity and adoption not only among the aristocrats and the elite, but also by the lower classes (both followers and others) confirms the success of Augustus' methods, which used the power of the images in order to consolidate his reforms (political, religious and cultural) and to give rise to a new ideology (including perhaps a new cultural identity) which combined and transformed various elements of past political, religious, and social life).

Abbreviations

AGDS: Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen
LIMC: Lexikon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae

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