

AKTI VIII. MEĐUNARODNOG KOLOKVIJA O PROBLEMIMA RIMSKOG PROVINCIJALNOG UMJETNIČKOG STVARALAŠTVA

AKTEN DES VIII. INTERNATIONALEN KOLLOQUIUMS ÜBER PROBLEME DES PROVINZIALRÖMISCHEN KUNSTSCHAFFENS

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON PROBLEMS OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL ART

LES ACTES DU VIII^{ÈME} COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL SUR LES PROBLÈMES DE L'ART PROVINCIAL ROMAIN

ZAGREB 5.-8. V. 2003.

RELIGIJA I MIT KAO POTICAJ RIMSKOJ PROVINCIJALNOJ PLASTICI

RELIGION UND MYTHOS ALS ANREGUNG FÜR DIE PROVINZIALRÖMISCHE PLASTIK

RELIGION AND MYTH AS AN IMPETUS FOR THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL SCULPTURE

LA RELIGION ET LE MYTHE COMME INSPIRATION POUR LA SCULPTURE ROMAINE PROVINCIALE

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(snimio Tonći Seser, fotograf Arheološkog muzeja – Split)

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PROVINCIALE

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Zagreb, 2005.

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RELIGIOUS TESTIMONIES FOUND ON ROMAN GEMS FROM DALMATIA KEPT IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN VENICE*

BY BRUNA NARDELLI

The gemstones examined, today at the National Archaeological Museum in Venice, formally part of the glyptic collection of the Zadar National Museum¹, were brought to Venice, because of World War II, in 1943.

Most of the gems came from excavations which took place in central Dalmatia, while a smaller portion found its way to the Archaeological Museum of Zadar through inheritance, Private Collections, and through purchasing items fortuitously found in the same area.² Archaeological research, carried out by famous scholars of the time, was particularly intense in the period between 1880 and the First World War, especially along the Dalmatian Coast in *Iader* and in *Aenona* and on Zadar's mainland, in *Asseria*, in *Burnum*, and in *Nedinum*.³ After Zadar was annexed to the Reign of Italy,⁴ research was conducted mostly in the area of the city of Zadar. At that time one of the most important excavations involved the area of the Roman necropolis,

where one hundred and twenty tombs were discovered. It is suggested that the gems, which enriched the glyptic collection, were found within the grave – goods.⁵

In the Venetian collection which includes intaglios and cameos, characterized by various stylistic currents and workmanship, the iconographic range is vast. The intaglios with religious representations of all the gods of the classical Pantheon are predominant.⁶

It is evident, after an iconographic analysis of the Dalmatian gemstones, that although the female goddesses are a majority, Tyche/Fortuna is by far the one most represented. The image of the goddess that has known a lasting success and a great diffusion, such as the one of the Roman Empire, is confirmed in Dalmatia as well. Tyche/Fortuna is by far the most widespread figure in all known Dalmatian collections⁷ and is a substantial presence also in most foreign collections in which Dalmatian gemstones are present.⁸

* I am grateful to Dott. L. Malnati, Soprintendente of the Soprintendenza Archeologica del Veneto, for his kindness in allowing me to study the glyptic collection. My thanks to Dott.ssa G. Ravagnan, former Director of the Archaeological Museum, and unfortunately *in memoriam*.

I am especially grateful to Ardythe Ashley, Cristiana Fusco, Davide Trame, Remza e Željko Košćević for their help with many valuable and helpful suggestions. The photographs were made by contributions of CE. VE. S.C.O. from Venice: warm thanks to Dott.ssa M. Fano for kindly providing me with the photos.

¹ The gem collection was brought to Italy with other archaeological items kept in the Archaeological Museum of Zadar: B. Nardelli, *I cammei del Museo Nazionale di Venezia* (Roma 1999) 104–107 notes 2; 3; 6.

² Nardelli (note 1) 107 note 8.

³ For sites in southern Liburnia see: J. J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia* (London 1969) 203–219. – M. Suić, *Antički grad na istočnom Jadranu* (Zagreb 1976) 20; 36; 116 pl. 134; 137. – M. Suić, *Zadar u starom vijeku*. Prošlost Zadra I (Zadar 1981).

⁴ Act ratified in 1920 with the Rapallo Treaty.

⁵ M. Suić, *Muzeji i zbirke Zadra – Musées et collections de Zadar* (Zagreb 1954) 10–16. – Nardelli (note 1) 107 notes 7; 9; 10; 11. Unfortunately, there is no precise data about the finding of the gemstones: because of the war and subsequent transferring of both the materials and related papers, the daybooks and the catalogues have been lost.

⁶ Of the large intaglio collection, only the magical gems are published: B. Nardelli, *Gemme magiche dalla Dalmazia*. In: A. Mastrocinque (Ed.), *Gemme gnostiche e cultura ellenistica*. Atti del Convegno Internazionale. Verona 22–23 ottobre 1999 (Bologna 2002) 187; 188; 190–193 no. 8; 13; 14; 17; 19; 20. The group of intaglios currently in the Archaeological Museum in Venice (they include the full range of Roman glyptic) will be published soon.

⁷ In the glyptic collection kept in the Archaeological museums of Split, Zadar and Zagreb, which I have had the opportunity to inspect, the female goddesses are a majority, many of them depicting Tyche/Fortuna. Unfortunately the collections are unpublished. Only a small number of gemstones have been published in B. Kirigin, *Gemme antiche provenienti da Stari Grad*. Hvarski Zbornik 4, 1976, 211–213 no. 8; 19. – Š. Batović (Ed.), *Nakit na tlu sjeverne Dalmacije od prapovijesti do danas – Parures dans la Dalmatie du Nord depuis la Préhistoire jusqu'à nos jours*. Catalogue of Exposition (Zadar 1981) 161–162 pl. 23.

⁸ During his trip to Dalmatia Sir A. J. Evans acquired numerous antique gemstones. The majority is in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (S. H. Middleton, *Engraved Gems from Dalmatia* (Oxford 1991) 78–82 no. 114; 115; 118; 119–121), some in Paris and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York

On Venetian engravings, all of them unpublished, the Goddess is depicted in her usual iconography, born from the Greek-Hellenistic tradition of great statuary⁹ though with a mirror image, due most possibly to the use of casts and molds.

In the figurative group under discussion, one scheme more frequently used is nevertheless recognizable: Tyche/Fortuna is shown frontally with her head facing to the right, standing on her left leg, with the right one slightly bent. She wears a high-girded *chiton* and has her mantle around her hips making ample pleats around her side with an end hanging from her right shoulder, with cornucopia on her right hand and rudder on her left.¹⁰

This iconographic layout, frequently used in the Roman glyptic production, most relevantly during the 2nd and 3rd century A.D., is well rendered on one chalcedony¹¹ depicting a slim figure with a small head with a delicate naturalistic appearance (Fig. 1).

The iconography of Tyche/Fortuna in the Roman World holds its peculiarity in the over-definition of attributes.¹² Among the many attributes of the goddess, the cornucopia - horn of Amaltheia - and the rudder, a constant presence since the end of the Republic and

throughout the Imperial Era, have acquired a distinctive role enabling one to recognize her immediately¹³. The Dalmatian items with these two attributes are the most numerous. The wide diffusion of this schema, well shown on three Venetian chalcedony-cornelians (Figs. 2, 3, 4) is proved by the many gems kept in various collections.¹⁴

The cornucopia, a prosperity symbol, is present in the depiction of other divinities, while the rudder, a constant attribute, seen in all Venetian intaglios, is exclusive to Tyche/Fortuna.¹⁵

This constant presence of the rudder in the Hellenistic and Roman representations might be explained not only through its symbolic value as a guide of the world, but also through its consistency with Roman naval policy.¹⁶ Moreover, the rudder could be both a sepulchral symbol (pointing to travel towards the world beyond), and a figurative statement of the professional activity, of the social status.

In the Venetian pieces we can glimpse the stylistic and chronological evolution: the position of the nautical instrument goes from almost vertical (Fig. 5) to nearly horizontal (Fig. 6). On the red cornelian¹⁷ the goddess holds in her left hand a rudder with the so

(B. Nardelli, *Le gemme*. In: E. Marin (Ed.), *Vivae Saloniae* (Split 2002) 206; 210 notes 19; 20). – Among numerous Dalmatian gemstones, kept in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, there is one intaglio found at *Saloniae* depicting Fortuna: E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien* II. Die Glasgemmen. Die Glaskameen. Nachträge zu Bd. I. Die Gemmen der späteren römischen Kaiserzeit, 1: Götter (München 1979) 213 no. 1539 pl. 153. – In the Zemaljski Muzej at Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) there is one cornelian from Narona depicting Tyche: C. Patsch, *Povijest topografije Narone* (Metković 1996) 108 no. 58.

⁹ On the history of research of Fortuna's cult see: J. Champeaux, *Fortuna. Le culte de la Fortune à Rome et dans le monde romain* I (Roma 1982) VII–XXIII. – For Fortuna in Religion and for Fortuna iconography see: I. Kajanto, *Fortuna* in ANDRW, II, 17,1 (Berlin 1981) 502–558. – L. Villard/F. Rausa, s. v. Tyche/Fortuna in LIMC VIII 1, 124–125; 138–141. – B. Lichocka, *L'iconographie de Fortuna dans l'Empire romain. Ier siècle avant n. è – IVr siècle de n. è*. (Varsovie 1997) 25–30 no. 320–345.

¹⁰ The general figurative scheme has been individuated and divided into "types" according to the position of the goddess and ways in which the clothing appears in: A. Coralini, *Immagini di Tyche /Fortuna in età romana*: L'Italia settentrionale in Atti del III convegno internazionale di studi archeologici sull'antica Praeneste, con tema "Le Fortune dell'età arcaica nel Lazio e in Italia e loro posterità, Palestrina 15–16 ottobre 1994 (Palestrina s.d) 241–257. A classification has also been proposed for the study of the Venetian pieces (in order to individuate the most frequent schemes) but without success. This is due to the fact that the images are characterized by a very schematic execution, in particular the details in the draping of *chiton* and *himation*.

¹¹ Inv.n. G 290. Dim.: 12,1 x 8,5 x 5,5. The Goddess has a *kalathos* on her head. Cf.: V. Scherff/W. Gercke/P. Zazoff, *Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen III*. H. Anton Ulrich Museum Braunschweig, Sammlung im Arch. Inst. d.Univ. Göttingen, Staatl. Kunstsammlungen (Kassel 1970) 37 no. 107 pl. 14. – Zwierlein-Diehl (note 8) 214 no. 1542 pl. 153. The measurements of gems are given in millimetres.

¹² G. Traversari, *La Tyche di Prusias ad Hypium e la "scuola" microasiatica di Nicomedia* in Suppl. Rivista di Archeologia (Roma 1993) 7. – Coralini (note 10) 233–241.

¹³ Kajanto (note 9) 518–519. – Lichocka (note 9) 30–34; 93–146.

¹⁴ The three intaglios are correspondent in iconography and in typology to the clothing, but they are different in the mode in which the drapery is rendered. Inv.n. G 249. Dim.: 11,3 x 9,7 x 1,9. Cf.: U. Pannuti, *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Catalogo della collezione glittica* (Roma 1983) 57 no. 80. The 2nd one (Inv.n. G 301; Dim.: 10,2 x 9,9 x 2,5; convex; chipped on edges. The Goddess has a *kalathos* on her head). The intaglio has many direct parallels with gems in various collections: M. Maaskant-Kleibrink, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems in the Royal Coin Cabinet. The Hague, The Greek, Etruscan and Roman Collections* (The Hague 1978) 292 no. 834 pl. 139. – U. Pannuti, *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. La collezione glittica II* (Roma 1994) 179 no. 145. Because of its Dalmatian provenience the most important is the cornelian in Vienna: Zwierlein-Diehl (note 8) 213 no. 1539 pl. 153. The third one (Inv. n. G 254. Dim.: 11,1 x 9,4 x 2,3.) is very close to one intaglio in The Hague for the mode in which the drapery is rendered: Maaskant-Kleibrink (note 14) 292 no. 835 pl. 139.

¹⁵ Coralini (Note 10) 233; 235; 237–241. – Lichocka (Note 9) 30–32.

¹⁶ Coralini (Note 10) 237. – B. Lichocka (Note 9) 31. – Ancient sources tell us that images of Tyche/Fortuna were put as figureheads on ships: Ovidio, *Tristia* I, 10, wooden. – Lucan, 3. 510–511. – Seneca, *Epist.* 76,13, eburnean.

¹⁷ Inv.n. G 288. Dim.: 10,6 x 8,9 x 1,9. The Goddess has a *kalathos* on her head. Cf.: Because of the "umbrella" shape of the rudder, the gem is similar to one plasma at Bologna and one red jasper at Cambridge: A. R. Mandrioli Bizzarri, *La collezione di gemme del Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna* (Bologna 1987) 101 no. 176. – M. Henig, *Classical gems. Ancient and modern Intaglios and Cameos in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Cambridge 1994) 156 no. 324.



FIG.1-6

called “umbrella” shape; the positioning of the rudder and the stylistic and technical properties point to an earlier chronology to the one depicted on the second cornelian¹⁸, where the figure is shown in a schematic way, shrunk to its essential elements, an impoverishment of the former models being clear: for this stylistic and technical characteristics the gem can be dated to the 3rd century A.D.

The iconographic survey of other items from Venice appears to be repeating itself: the image of Tyche/Fortuna is fixed on the *cliché* of the standing figure, and

does not present any particular difference, except for the addition of complementary attributes such as ears of corn that clarifies a syncretism between the deity and an augural embodiment, that is to say the hint at Fortune for a good harvest, present especially in the 2nd and most relevantly in the 3rd century A.D. On two cornelians (Figs. 7, 8) this syncretistic tendency is well shown, the aspect that characterizes the later expressions of the Fortuna's cult in Rome and in the Provinces of the Empire. One red cornelian¹⁹ with the figure strongly elongated and cloth detailing can be dated to the 1st – 2nd

¹⁸ Inv.n. G 264. Dim.: 12,2 x 10,5 x 2,9. The direct parallel for the stylistic and technical characteristics, especially for the shape of the “horizontal” rudder, is with one cornelian from Pompei; Pannuti 1983 (Note 14) 59 no. 86.

¹⁹ Inv.n. G 230. Dim.: 11,9 x 9,8 x 2,9. Cf.: Maasant – Kleibrink (Note 14) 288 no. 816 pl. 136.

century A.D. The device of the other intaglio²⁰ is cut in a schematic way, with cornucopia dominating the scene, the stylistic characteristics of which can help to date the piece to the 2nd century A.D.

The syncretistic tendencies are present also on one cornelian depicting Fortuna, with wings of Victory and ears of corn of Ceres (Fig. 9). The intaglio²¹ underlines the tendency to keep the structure of the figure simple and bound to geometrical lines, interrupting as much as possible the outline of the figure.

The assimilation of other divinities and with added plurality of attributes, which transformed Tyche/Fortuna into one of the great pantheistic divinities extensively venerated in private contexts, with purposes related to eschatology and salvation, is well shown on an onyx²² depicting Fortune/Ceres/Victory/Athena (Fig. 10). She has Nike's wings, Athena's helmet, Ceres' ears of corn, Felicitas' Caducei. Accurately portrayed, especially in the thick pleats of the *chiton*, it can be dated to the 2nd century A.D.

As one of the main figures in the Roman Pantheon, Fortune is often portrayed with other deities or personifications: this is well shown on a green jasper²³ with Nike/Victory, advancing in profile, crowning Tyche/Fortuna confronted (Fig. 11).

The gems we have examined show us that the iconographic characters remained unchanged, that the images of the goddess knew a lasting success and an ample diffusion in Dalmatia too; they are proof of the standardization of the figurative language that starts with Augustus and continues into the 3rd century A.D. The handicrafts were the privileged means of the diffusion of the iconographic characters on a vast area, those same handicrafts that were a "serial glyptic" with themes of widespread popular culture rendered in a known figurative language.

Considering the numerous intaglios representing Tyche/Fortuna, it can be assumed the Goddess of the Faith was worshipped on a vast territory in the North of *Dalmatia* for private use, probably with purposes related to eschatology and salvation; these rhinestones testify of an immediate personal relation with religion as they were clearly used for the owner's own sense of spiritual orientation and assistance during his daily life.

The gems from Zadar bear witness to stylistically and technically uniformed characters. They reveal an increased formal and iconographic adherence to the glyptic Roman production, and also testify to a precise cultural tradition on the choosing and shaping of these images. We are talking about a generic relation whose pattern comes from the prototype: one can affirm that the representations follow an "ideal model" and are distinguished by "an iconographic custom".

It is well known that after the coins, the glyptic production represents the major vehicle for spreading artistic messages and styles in the Roman world. It is a basic issue homogeneously present in the Roman Empire. The practical evidence, that is to say the technical and stylistic characterizing elements of the Venetian group, allows us to make a hypothesis on how they have been imported, probably from one of the big centers: the Aquileia workshops which, for example, were in full activity during the 2nd and 3rd century A.D.²⁴ One must say, on the other hand, that the privileged geographical and commercial location of *Iader*, with its incoming flow of money could have allowed a development of highly luxurious craftsmanship.²⁵ There was also no shortage of historical and political moments particularly favorable for new initiatives and for their spreading on the territory.

One can suppose the existence of adjoining sites (ateliers in the suburbs), from which the masters from Aq-

²⁰ Inv.n. G 294. Dim.: 11,0 x 9,9 x 1,9. Cf.: P. Roscam, *Intailles inédites des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire de Bruxelles, au type d'Tychè-Fortuna*. *BullInstHistBelgeRome* XLIII, 1973, 27–28 no. 6. – Pannuti 1983 (note 14) 55 no. 78. – Zwierlein-Diehl (note 8) 214–215 no. 1551 pl. 154, especially for the position of rudder.

²¹ Inv.n. G 250. Dim.: 12,5 x 10,2 x 2,0. Chipped on right edge. Of numerous direct parallels, the most important is with white jasper found in *Aenona* and kept in Oxford: Middleton (note 8) 80 no. 118. In the Venetian collection is kept one cornelian depicting the Goddess with two ear corns in her left hand and the helmet on her head: Inv.n. G 224. Dim.: 11,7 x 10,0 x 2,6. Cf.: Maaskant–Kleibrink (note 14) 337 no. 1036 pl. 163. – Mandrioli Bizzarri (note 17) 104 no. 104.

²² Inv.n. G 256. Dim.: 12,2 x 9,8 x 2,8. Of numerous direct parallels much importance is placed on the pieces with well-known provenience: G. Sena Chiesa, *Gemme del Museo Nazionale di Aquileia* (Padova 1966) 243 no. 615 pl. XXXI. – G. Sena Chiesa, *Gemme di Luni* (Roma 1978) 91 no. 82 pl. XII. – C. Tomaselli, *Le gemme di età romana dei Civici Musei di Udine* (Udine 1993) 79 no. 121 pl.VII.

²³ Inv. n. G 252. Dim.: 12,6 x 10,5 x 2,3. Cf.: Sena Chiesa, *Gemme del Museo Nazionale di Aquileia* (Padova 1966) 246 no. 630 pl. XXIII. – Scherf et alii (note 11) 37 no 111 pl. 14. – Maaskant – Kleibrink (Note 14) 291 no. 832 pl. 138.

²⁴ The population was ethnically close to that of the Tenth Region: S. Čaće, *Prilozi proučavanju političkog uređenja naroda sjeverozapadnog Ilirika (Il contributo allo studio dell'ordinamento politico dei popoli a nord-ovest dell'Ilirico)*. *Radovi (Zadar)* 18, 1979, 44–125. – M. Zaninović, *The Histri and Liburni in relation to Roman expansion*. *Diadora* 12, 1990, 47–64. – For the glyptic production in Aquileia see: Sena Chiesa (note 23) 1–85.

²⁵ Wilkes (note 2) 206–210, 414. – S. Čaće, *Rome, Liburnia and the Eastern Adriatic in the 2nd century B.C.* *Diadora* 13, 1991, 55–76.



FIG.7-12

uileia might have provided these places with patterns, due to the proximity of Aquileia to *Iadar*, or you can suppose that in workshops existing at the time, although dislocated, intaglios were produced with characteristics reflecting a cultural fashion shared by everybody.

It is difficult to prove the existence of a glyptic production in the *Iadar* area because it has not, by now, been confirmed by the presence of iconographic peculiarities, technical and stylistic - that could have been con-

ditioned by the regional traditions. On the other hand, one could dare a suggestive hypothesis on the existence of a "local type" after concentrating on the study of the whole collection in Venice: this is what I would like to propose while waiting for further studies to be carried out upon all the glyptic collections in private and public museums, as published information becomes available; especially the collection in the Archaeological Museum of Zadar.²⁶ Among the Venetian intaglios, some pieces can be distinguished according to their technical, sty-

²⁶ In the Archaeological Museum of Zadar is a small, but very important, glyptic collection born after the 2nd World War, important because of the certain local provenance. Two rings with gemstones were found during the excavations of a Roman cemetery in the centre of Zadar, in 1985: S. Glušćević, *The*

listic and gemological characteristics; the pattern of the classical iconography consists of an elegant simplification of the form; the drawing presents simple and clear shapes with no internal details, but with an accuracy of the “modeling”, the volumes consist of thick, rounded segments, as well shown on one intaglio²⁷ with Tyche/Fortuna (Fig. 12). One could talk about figures of the “silhouette” kind considering the absence of the internal details and the “soft modeling”. It’s interesting to note that the stone used was always white chalcedony.

This research has been a difficult task, as a great amount of the fieldwork is unpublished and unstudied and the purpose of this presentation has been mainly to provide a glimpse into a new and unexplored field.

One can hope at the end that through the new figures provided, while carrying on with the analyses, a more detailed enquiry could be started on the problems of Roman provincial art in *Dalmatia*.

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Roman cemetery in Kaljsla street. Diadora 12, 1990, 114, 117, pl. VII,13. – During the excavations in the main Roman city cemetery, at the end of 1989, and in 1990, 850 graves were discovered. Discovered were 51 fingers and 19 fragments, only 23 of them with gemstones. I am grateful to S. Gluščević for this information. For the excavations in the main Roman city cemetery: S. Gluščević, *Grave 830 from the cemetery at Relja in Zadar and aspects of the dating of a Hayes 34 (Lamboglia 6) bowl.* Diadora 15, 1993, 55–83. – S. Gluščević, *Novi prinos za poznavanje suburbanog prostora antičkog Zadra.* Histria Antiqua 7, 2001, 217–222. – S. Gluščević, *Rasprostriranje zadarskih nekropola.* Histria Antiqua 8, 2002, 381–384.

²⁷ Inv.n. G 271. Dim.: 10,3 x 7,1 x 1,5. The Goddess has a *kalathos* on her head. There are no known direct parallels: the Goddess is engraved in her usual iconography depicted on roman intaglios.