

Antje Krug, *Antike Gemmen im Römisch-Germanischen Museum Köln*. Wissenschaftliche Kataloge des Römisch-Germanischen Museums Köln 4 (= Sonderdruck aus: *Berichte der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission* 61, 1980, 151–260). Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 1981. 149 pages, 73 plates.

This is a very welcome addition to the list of gem-catalogues. Although A. Krug makes it clear that this is not one of the great collections such as that in the Staatliche Münzsammlung in Munich (published in three volumes in the series: *Antike Gemmen in Deutschen Sammlungen*) it can hold its own in comparison with smaller cabinets like those of Kassel and Göttingen – indeed its interest is all the greater in that it contains a very large number of provenanced local finds, 89 actually from Cologne, 4 from Mainz, 1 from Metz, 1 from Xanten, 2 from Trier and 148 from the Rhineland in general, many of them no doubt from Cologne or Xanten. The collection provides an excellent opportunity for reviewing the range of gems worn by the inhabitants of Roman Germany, including Roman citizens of high rank. Twenty seven of the rings containing gems from Cologne are of gold which should, at least in theory, indicate their owners' Equestrian status.

Occasional caution is necessary in the case of gems acquired from collectors rather than from recent excavations. I find it hard to believe that the early Hellenistic bone ring (No. 25) actually comes from Cologne and not a site in the Eastern Mediterranean and while the silver ring from the Niessen Collection (No. 77) is certainly Roman, the paste with which it is now set, showing Endymion, may be neo-classical. G. Seidmann suggests that it was moulded after the gem of the same size by Nathaniel Marchant RA, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1784.

For the most part the gems display the usual range of Graeco-Roman subjects without a hint of such 'Celtic' cults as those of the Matres or of Epona. Oriental deities do appear: Cybele on her lion (No. 68) and Serapis enthroned between Isis-Fortuna and Hygieia (No. 71) on gems from Cologne and the Anatolian moon-god Men (No. 140) and an eastern Artemis (No. 141) from the Rhineland. A magical amulet from Xanten (No. 47) shows the anguipede holding a shield inscribed IAW, while below the words ABPACAX CABAW (Θ) provide a close parallel to an amulet recently discovered in a Late-Roman treasure from Thetford in England. The Xanten gem is of especial interest in that it gives the name of the owner in Greek letters; he was nevertheless a Roman, not a Greek, called Crescentinius Benignus. Eastern magic was evidently practiced, if sporadically, throughout the Empire, even in the Rhineland.

Cameos are relatively few in number but some of them are notable. A fine bust of Minerva said to be from Split (but perhaps from nearby Salona) in Jugoslavia (No. 38) with its prominent eyes and patterned tunic looks, at first sight, later than the first century A.D. However, the same stylistic elements are to be seen on a cameo of a woman with the coiffure of Julia daughter of Titus found with a burial in Egypt, and now in an English private collection. A. Krug herself rightly points out the close resemblance between a cameo showing the youthful Hercules from the Luxemburger Straße in Cologne (No. 79) and a cameo from Caerleon in Wales, where however the young hero faces left rather than right. The studio which produced these, possibly in Antonine times, may have been in the North-West even in Cologne (it must be admitted that nothing in the present catalogue proves the existence of gemworkshops, but it is highly likely that they existed especially in such a major Colonia). An early Christian cameo showing the Good Shepherd (No. 93) is a considerable rarity, though intaglios portraying this theme are quite well known.

An important cameo of early fourth-century date portrays a male head surrounded by ten female heads. It may have been cut for the Decennalia of Constantine I in A.D. 315. Here it should be mentioned that the very best gem in Cologne, the 'Marlborough Cameo' which is a portrait of Augustus is not included in the catalogue having been published, simultaneously, elsewhere (*Kölner Jahrb. Vor- u. Frühgesch.* 17, 1980, 12 ff.).

The layout and printing of the catalogue are alike excellent, being both clear and easy to read. Unfortunately the plates are not always as satisfactory. Some (for instance Nos. 1, 14, 15, 56 and 90) are so dark that they are virtually useless. Many of the others can only be studied with difficulty. I cannot help feeling that plaster impressions should have been used more often, either by themselves or accompanying the pictures of the gems. Except in the case of Magical Amulets and of course Cameos, it is probable that the devices of gems were more often appreciated in Antiquity as sealings on letters and documents than in the original.

It is inevitable that the present work will cause bibliographic confusion. In the first place it is an article in *Ber. RGK* 61, 1981, 151 ff.; secondly it is the fifth instalment of the author's own 'Fundgemmen' (earlier contributions to which have appeared in *Germania*) and finally it is the fourth volume of the 'Wissenschaftliche Kataloge des Römisch-Germanischen Museums' in Cologne, which has provided it with a very beautiful photograph on the cover. It may thus be cited in bibliographies in three ways.

Such criticisms are, however, relatively minor in saluting a work which the reviewer has already found fascinating and useful and to which he will doubtless turn on many occasions in the future.

Oxford

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