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THE SEAL OF LOTHAR II: MODEL AND COPY
(Figures 1–9)

On the »Lothar Cross« in the cathedral at Aachen is one of the very few surviving ninth-century seal dies (figs. 1 and 2)[1]. Engraved in a flat oval of rock crystal (quartz) only 38 mm high, this small matrix has since 1847 focussed discussions of Carolingian sigillography and royal art patronage[2]. With the additional evidence here presented, the crystal may now also serve in another arena, the examination of models and copies in medieval art. The Aachen matrix can be identified as the copy of a specific model, the Roman gem used by Emperor Lothar I and King Lothar II as a chancellery seal (figs. 3 and 4). It demonstrates both the stylistic fidelity and the iconographic freedom which could be elements of the copying process. First, however, the stone's patron must be specified, and the seal placed in its proper context among other Carolingian engraved gems.

The patron of this matrix is named by an inscription on the stone itself: +XPEADIVVAHLOTHARIVMREG, +*Christe adivva Hlotharium reg(em)*. Exact interpretation of these words, however, has been uncertain and controversial. The format of the intaglio (a profile bust surrounded by a Latin capital inscription) places it squarely in the line of ninth/tenth-century continental royal seals. There were, however, four different Carolingian kings named Lothar: Lothar I (king of Bavaria from 814, co-emperor with Louis the Pious from 817, king of Italy from 822, and sole emperor 840–55); Lothar II (son of Lothar I, king of Lorraine 855–69); Lothar of Italy (descendant of Lothar II, co-king of Italy with his father Hugo from 931, issued documents alone 945–50), and Lothar of France (descendant of Charles the Bald, king of West Francia 954–86). Lothar II is probably the crystal's patron.

The later two rulers may be eliminated from serious consideration by the variant formats of their chancellery seals. Lothar of Italy first shared a seal with his father,

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1 The seal is number 6 in my catalogue of Carolingian engraved gems, Genevra Kornbluth, Carolingian Treasure, diss. U. of North Carolina 1986. Other surviving Carolingian gem matrices are those of Emperor Louis II (jet; Zürich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, inv. no. LM 30439, Kornbluth no. 20); Archbishop Radpod (crystal; Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, inv. no. 1956.6, Kornbluth no. 8); Abbot Theodulf (crystal; Halberstadt, cathedral treasury, inv. no. 46, Kornbluth no. 9); and a priest Norpertus (agate; Florence, Museo Archeologico, inv. no. 246, Kornbluth no. 12).

2 The engraved surface measures 38×32 mm. The unengraved side is larger (over 42×36 mm), with maximum dimensions hidden by the metalwork mount. For full bibliography see Kornbluth (as n. 1) p. 419–20. The stone was first noted by Charles Cahier, Croix diverses, in: Ch. Cahier and Arthur Martin, Mélanges d'archéologie, d'histoire et de littérature, vol. 1, Paris 1847, p. 203–06. The most important discussions are in Ernst aus'm Weerth, Kunstdenkmäler des christlichen Mittelalters in den Rheinlanden, Leipzig 1857–66, vol. 2, p. 130–33; Jules Labarte, Histoire des Arts Industriels, vol. 2, Paris 1864, p. 103–06; Ernest Babelon, La glyptique à l'époque merovingienne et carolingienne, in: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Comptes rendus, ser. 4, 23 (1895) p. 409–10; and Gustav Pazaurek, Glas- und Gemmenschnitt im ersten Jahrtausend, in: Belvedere 11 (1932) p. 15–16.

and when reigning alone sealed with a half-figure (not a bust), arm extended and bearing a scepter, and the inscription +LOTHARIVS GRACIA DEI PIVS REX[3]. Four seals are known from documents of Lothar of France, all of them bearing inscriptions different from the crystal's. One has a frontal bust, two show half-length figures with baton and scepter, and one has a profile bust crowned with fleurons[4].

Both Lothar I and Lothar II, however, used seals bearing a profile bust and the inscriptions, respectively, +XPEADIVVAHLOTHARIVMAVG(VSTVM) and +XPEADIVVAHLOTHARIVMREG(EM) (figs. 3 and 4)[5]. Either man could have been the patron of the Lothar seal[6].

The inscription on the gem specifies that Lothar was a king. Lothar I was merely king of Bavaria, and not emperor, from 814 to 817; was deprived of co-imperial status at various times from 829 to 833 (after revolts against his father); and throughout his reign kept the title of king. He could therefore have called himself Lothar Rex at any time from 814 to 855, and was entitled to no other honorific from 814 to 817.

It is unlikely, however, that he commissioned the crystal seal. Lothar I did not call himself *rex* after 817. He used an *augustus* seal from at least 835 (five years before he became sole emperor). In his documents, he is always referred to as *augustus* (*augustus invictissimi domni imperatoris Hludovvici filius* 822–33, while king of Italy; *divina ordinante providentia imperator augustus* 833–55; and *divina preveniente providentia imperator augustus* 855). He used the imperial title before his 823 coronation and throughout the period of revolts (829–33)[7]. Although Lothar I had

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3 Luigi SCHIAPARELLI, I Diplomi di Ugo e di Lotario di Berengario II e di Adalberto, Rome 1924 (Fonti per la Storia d'Italia 38), p. X (listing 5 examples of the seal, 3 fragmentary); Percy Ernst SCHRAMM, Die deutschen Kaiser und Könige in Bildern ihrer Zeit, vol. 1, Leipzig and Berlin 1928 (Die Entwicklung des menschlichen Bildnisses 1), p. 184, Abb. 52b, 53a, b; Archivio Paleografico Italiano, vol. 9, fasc. 45, Rome 1920, plate 90 nos. 13–20. Henri BORDIER and Edouard CHARTON (Histoire de France 1, Paris 1859, p. 234) suggest that Lothar III was the patron of this object. They seem to be referring to this Lothar, though they may have meant Lothar of France. A. SCHOOP revives the proposal (as one possibility among several): Sacrum Imperium, in: 350 Jahre Humanistisches Gymnasium in Aachen 1601–1951, Aachen (1951) p. 111–12. P. E. SCHRAMM and Florentine MÜTHERICH oppose this suggestion on stylistic grounds: Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser, vol. 1, Munich 1962 (Veröffentlichungen des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte in München 2), p. 125.

4 The inscriptions are, respectively, +LOTHARIVS DEI GRACIA REX, +LOTHARIVS DEI GRACIA REX FRANCORVM, LOTHARIVS+REX FRANCO, and +LOTHARIVZ GRATIA D̄I REX (Louis HALPHEN and Ferdinand LOT [ed.], Recueil des actes de Lothaire et de Louis V Rois de France [954–987], Paris 1908 [Chartes et diplomes relatifs à l'histoire de France], p. XLIX–LII). All of the seals are illustrated by HALPHEN and LOT, plate II.

5 SCHRAMM, Die deutschen Kaiser (as n. 3) p. 172–74, Abb. 20 and 24c.

6 SCHRAMM and MÜTHERICH note that earlier scholars favored Lothar I, while later Posse and Schramm substituted Lothar II (as n. 3, p. 125). This assessment is not strictly accurate. In fact, scholars have historically been about evenly divided on this issue, with Lothar II getting more support at this time. See KORNBLUTH (as n. 1) p. 101 n. 39 for a summary of the literature.

7 The *augustus* seal is found on documents from Jan. 24, 835 (Theodor SCHIEFFER [ed.], Die Urkunden Lothars I. und Lothars II., Berlin 1966 [M. G. H., Dipl. Kar., 3] no. 23) to Sept. 8, 851 (no. 115); cf. SCHRAMM, Die deutschen Kaiser (as n. 3) p. 173. A seal of Oct. 7, 833, is too damaged for its inscription to be read. On the formal continuity of documents during 829–33, see SCHIEFFER p. 4–5 and SCHRAMM, Kaiser, Könige und Päpste, vol. 2, Stuttgart 1968, p. 80. From Aug. 830 to early 832 Lothar issued documents only in conjunction with Louis the Pious, but in those documents he was still granted the imperial title (cf. J. F. BÖHMER and Engelbert MÜHLBACHER [ed.], Regesta Imperii, Innsbruck ²1908,

the right to call himself merely »king«, it appears that he never did so once he had assumed the imperial title. Only during 814–17, therefore, could this Lothar have commissioned the crystal seal. There is, however, no evidence that he actually used the title *rex* even during that short period[8]. The wording of the inscription thus speaks against Lothar I as patron.

Lothar II, on the other hand, never had the right to any title but *Rex*. This is the title which appears on his seals, documents and coins[9]. The inscription on his wax seals, +XPEADIVVAHLOTHARIVMREG, is precisely that of the crystal. This Lothar is therefore probably the HLOTHARIVM REG of the Aachen intaglio.

The inscription identifying Lothar II as patron also links this seal with the »Susanna crystal« in London (figs. 5 and 6), a 115 mm disk with the story of Susanna and the Elders and a similar attributive inscription, LOTHARIVS REX FRAN-CORVM ME FIERI IVSSIT[10]. It and other related gems share major stylistic features with the Lothar seal. All have autonomous drapery-folds and clearly-articulated facial features[11]. They share relatively wide eyes, and ears placed in the center of the profile head (not near the back, as on later intaglios)[12]. And letter-forms link the seal to this group, rather than to other Carolingian gems[13].

vol. 1, p. 347, no. 876 [847], Aug. 13, 830: *dilecto filio nostro, consorte imperii nostri*). When he returned to Italy and began issuing documents again in his own name (Feb. 832, SCHIEFFER no. 8), he was still referred to as *augustus*. The imperial title is also constant on Lothar I's coins (Karl MORRISON and Henry GRUNTHAL, Carolingian Coinage, New York 1967 [Numismatic Notes and Monographs 158] nos. 516–93), though it is on nine issues from Cologne and Maastricht combined with REX (+LOTA-RIVSREXIMP, var. no. 536, and various misspellings nos. 532–40). The one exceptional use of the *rex* title is on a document from Pavia (Febr. 832), which Schramm relates to a Lombard tradition.

8 SCHRAMM notes that Lothar is designated »*rex in Baioaria*« in the Freisinger Traditionsnotizen of 815, but »es läßt sich nicht nachprüfen, ob er diesen Titel vor seiner Erhebung zum Mitkaiser (817) tatsächlich geführt hat« (ID., Kaiser, as n. 7, p. 79).

9 SCHRAMM (Die deutschen Kaiser, as n. 3) p. 174 and (ID., Kaiser, as n. 7) p. 82, SCHIEFFER (as n. 7) p. 378 (formula: *divina praeveniente clementia rex*); MORRISON and GRUNTHAL (as n. 7) nos. 1182a–1192.

10 On the Susanna crystal (London, BM, inv. no. M&LA 55, 12–1, 5, KORNBLUTH [as n. 1] no. 1), see KORNBLUTH 400–08, with bibliography. Other gems closely related to the Susanna crystal are: a Baptism of Christ in Rouen (Musée Départemental des Antiquités de la Seine-Maritime, inv. no. 473, KORNBLUTH no. 2), Crucifixions in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles, inv. no. 2167ter, KORNBLUTH no. 3) and Venice (family of Vittorio Cini, KORNBLUTH no. 4), and a smaller Baptism in Freiburg im Breisgau (Cathedral treasury, KORNBLUTH no. 5).

11 This distinguishes the group from other Carolingian gems with generalized features and more sculpturally-conceived drapery; see KORNBLUTH (as n. 1) nos. 14–19.

12 A wide eye (taking up 1/5 of the width of the face, as on the Susanna crystal) separates this group from later intaglios (compare the Radpod seal, 883–915, with an eye occupying only 1/8 of the face's width). In the Radpod/Freiburg group (KORNBLUTH [as n. 1] nos. 7–9), the small eye and ear at the back of the head produce a characteristically wide, curving, planar cheek. The Lothar seal shows no such wide plane.

13 As on the Susanna crystal, Paris Crucifixion, and Cini Crucifixion, the seal's letters are monoline Square capitals. As on most seals, they are deeply engraved rather than only scratched on the surface, and so appear thicker than letters on other gems. Aside from those features normal to ninth-century capitals (compare the Berne alphabet, Berne Bürgerbibliothek MS 250), important similarities between the Lothar seal and the Susanna group intaglios are the unserifed angle of ›L‹, serifs perpendicular to the strokes of ›X‹, and serifs at both ends of the abbreviation-mark, which is placed above the space between two letters rather than above any single letter. The abbreviation-mark is used intermittently (for XP̄E but not for REG), as in the Susanna group. It is also noteworthy that there are no epigraphic links with gems outside the Susanna group. The ›D‹, ›O‹, ›P‹, and ›R‹ here lack the angularity of their

Some important elements of the seal's style, however, vary from the norm of this group[14]. The figure's brow, for example, though distinct, does not sharply project beyond the edge of the face, as it does on most Carolingian gems (figs. 6 and 7). The ear has the unique form of a reversed square ›C‹, of uniform width and unarticulated in the center, instead of the simple vertical cuts of the Susanna group[15]. And most remarkably, the jaw is not the heavy square normal on the gems and indeed in most later Carolingian art. Rather, the line of the lower jaw leaves the chin at an acute angle and continues upward in a shallow curve. The change in angle for the back vertical of the jaw takes place at a point on the imaginary line connecting the lower lip and the top of the neck, rather than on the usual line between the lower lip and base of the neck. This vertical component is therefore exceptionally short, and the whole head appears more triangular than rectangular. These features seem to be independent of size and surface texture, as they are independent of the normal style of the Susanna group, and may well reflect the model used for this seal.

The type of model used here can be easily identified. There can be no doubt that, like most Carolingian coins and seals, the Aachen crystal (with a profile rather than frontal bust, and inscription in Square capitals, figs. 1, 2, and 7) was based at least in part on Roman forms. In particular, the figure re-creates a specific Roman coin- and gem-type. It is seen from the rear, with the back of the right shoulder (in a positive impression) facing the viewer, the neck twisted, and the face in profile. The fastening on the cloak, while correctly placed on the right shoulder, thus appears at the front of the neck, not the back. On the shoulder a horizontal and three short vertical bars represent the edge of a metal *cuirass* and the leather *pteryges* beneath. The cloak itself is therefore a military wrap, probably the *paludamentum* of generals and emperors[16]. The head is bound by a fillet which reaches the forehead in two parts, like the imperial laurel. The figure type can thus be designated an imperial military bust, seen from the rear.

This type is far from rare in Roman art. It appears, for example, on gems of Commodius and coins of Trajan, Caracalla, and Elagabalus[17]. In this case, however,

counterparts in the Radpod group, and the center horizontal of ›E‹ is not raised, nor is the ›O‹ smaller than other letters. There are no links with either the angulated capitals of the Norpertus seal (KORNBLUTH [as n. 1] no. 12) or the wedge-serifs of the Louis II seal (fig. 8).

14 Some few differences seem directly related to variations in scale and finish. The die's figure is large, with a profile head (H. 13 mm) three times the average size of those on the Susanna crystal (4 mm). Perhaps because of this, or possibly to facilitate the production of wax imprints, the head is more finished than those on the other gems, with individual cuts carefully blended into each other. The size and finish of the head probably influenced the use of an almond-shaped eye (as opposed to the usual roughly ovoid depression) and the carefully smoothed transitions from nose to brow-line and brow to temple.

15 This ear-form is distinguished from that of the Radpod/Freiburg group by its upper horizontal, uniform width of engraving, and straight bottom edge without a recurving tip on the lower horizontal.

16 For the cuirass and pteryges, see H. Russell ROBINSON, The Armour of Imperial Rome, New York 1975, p. 147ff. I am grateful to Dr. Gerhard Koeppel for pointing this out. On the *paludamentum*, see Lillian WILSON, The Clothing of the Ancient Romans, Baltimore 1938, p. 100–04. LABARTE notes that the intaglio bust is draped »à l'antique« (as n. 2, p. 104), and SCHOOP that it bears »römischer Imperatorentracht« (as n. 3, p. 111).

17 Gems: Gisela RICHTER, The Engraved Gems of the Greeks Etruscans and Romans, vol. 2, London 1971, p. 564. The coins are illustrated in Harold MATTINGLY, Coins of the Roman Empire in the

the crystal's model can be more precisely defined. The general pose described here is found on the Roman gem owned and used as a seal by Lothar II and his father (figs. 3 and 4, center impressions). So too is the crystal's beardless figure with a light, rising jaw and a heavy angulated ear separated from the cheek by a wide vertical. And so also are the pattern of folds and the proportions of the Aachen figure's torso.

None of the three stylistic elements differentiating the Lothar seal from the Susanna crystal (smooth brow in a fully-featured head, large angulated ear, and light, rising jaw) is paralleled on any of the other Carolingian intaglios. They were all, however, present on Lothar's Roman gem[18]. On the wax impressions of this stone, as on most Roman intaglios, the forehead is smooth. More significantly, the ear on this particular gem is the proper size, and bends forward at both top and bottom without visible interior articulation. Additionally, the line of the jaw climbs rapidly towards the ear, changing to near-vertical on a line with the top of the neck, and forming a roughly triangular head. Even the twist of the figure's neck as it turns to look back over its shoulder is clearly present, only slightly different from the ninth-century version[19].

Except for this slight variation in the joining of neck and cloak, the drapery patterns on the crystal and Lothar's Roman stone are identical (figs. 7 and 3): a hook in the front, then a downward diagonal; the horizontal and three lower verticals of the leather flaps or *pteryges;* two major folds surrounding a smaller one; two shorter, nearly-horizontal folds; then one wide fold and a neck-twist on the Roman gem, two folds of normal width (one blending into the neck) on the crystal.

Some Roman gem or coin was almost certainly used as a model for the crystal seal. In pose and drapery, as well as in facial structure, the Roman seal-stone of Lothar matches that model. One final factor indicates a direct connection between seal and model: the proportion of head to body on the Aachen gem.

The torso on the crystal matrix is noticeably small in proportion to the size of the head. The jet seal of Louis II, with the same imperial figure-type, shows a much more nearly even balance between these two parts of the figure (compare figs. 1 and 8). An even balance is also the norm for such figures on Roman objects. This normal proportion was indeed present on the Roman stone used by Lothar I, in its original

British Museum, vol. 3, London 1966 (esp. plate 13 no. 19 and plate 15 no. 12) and vol. 5, London 1975 (esp. plate 51 no. 2 and plate 96 no. 6).

18 The influence of Roman style on the Aachen bust is noted by Hans WENTZEL, Bergkristall, in: Otto SCHMITT (ed.), Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte, vol. 2, Stuttgart 1948, col. 279; and by A. B. TONNOCHY, Catalogue of British Seal-Dies in the British Museum, Oxford 1952, p. xvi (»the style of the portrait shows the influence of imperial Roman coinage of the best period«).

19 On the Roman gem, the twisted pose is indicated by a diagonal line from the lower front of the neck to its mid-back, above the last wide fold of the cloak. On the Aachen seal, the twist is itself partially transformed into a drapery-fold. A diagonal runs from the lower front of the neck (beginning at the circular shoulder-fastener) towards the center-back. This line, however, is the upper edge of a fold which blends into the surface of the neck about 1 mm before it reaches the back. The model's twist and large fold are changed into a partial fold with another regular fold beneath. This transformation results in both anatomy and drapery consistent in style with that of the Susanna group. On the Cini Crucifixion, the similarly-twisted Longinus' neck is reduced to a simple unarticulated cylinder, reinforced in front by another vertical cut. And throughout the group, drapery-folds on a given figure are normally approximately equal in width.

form (fig. 3)[20]. After 841, however, the balance between elements changed. The base of the stone was evidently damaged, the lower part of the torso broken off. It was this damaged stone, with a head now large in proportion to its torso, that was inherited and employed by Lothar II (fig. 4). Use of this specific broken gem as a model would have produced just the abnormal proportions noted on the Aachen seal.

The Roman stone from the seal of Lothar I was demonstrably present in Lothar II's chancellery from 856 to 866 (see Appendix). It was therefore conveniently available to serve as a model for other works commissioned by its owner. It had precisely the figure-type reproduced on the Aachen seal. And it was damaged in exactly the way that the crystal's model must have been damaged. I therefore propose that the gem on the Aachen cross was in fact copied from that very model, the Roman seal-stone of the king and of his father.

Beyond mere availability, there was another reason for Lothar to have his new matrix copied from his old one. The legal importance of a royal seal meant that recognizability was highly valued. The resultant conservatism is easily seen in the use of inherited seals. (Lothar II in fact altered his father's seal as little as possible, changing AVG to REG but preserving even such minute details as the four dots around the inscription's cross.)

Besides providing recognizable imprints, re-use also emphasized the son's position as his father's proper successor. A new matrix modelled on that same Roman gem (retaining, once again, even the dots around the cross) would similarly have been both easily-recognizable as the royal seal and an effective statement of legality.

Why, then, is the Aachen copy not absolutely exact? In my opinion, the small introduced changes were meaningful, slightly altering the figure's iconography. They indicate a shift from the simple laurel-wreath of the model to a more elaborate headdress approximating the contemporary Carolingian crown, making closer the association between the seal and its owner.

The crystal shows four major changes from its probable Roman model (figs. 7 and 3): 1 – Instead of articulated hair, the Aachen figure has a totally smooth head. 2 – The ends of the »laurel wreath« project from the forehead at the proper angles, but the laurel itself is shown as unarticulated bands, without separate leaves. 3 – The »laurel« bands are intersected by a cross (unparalleled on the Roman type) above and just in front of the ear. And 4 – the vertical strip in front of the ear meets the lower edge of this cross, rather than blending with the hair over the forehead, as on the Roman gem[21]. Ninth-century artists were fully capable of engraving hair and laurel-leaves, as is proven by the articulations on other contemporary seals and gems (compare a seal of Charles III the Fat, fig. 9). These changes seem to have specific iconographic significance.

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20 This can be seen on seal-impressions until August 841 (SCHIEFFER [as n. 7] doc. 61, Marburg Staatsarchiv, Reichsabtei Fulda 841 August 20). The lower part of the torso is already broken in an impression of October 843 (SCHIEFFER doc. 142, Paris, Archives Nationales, K 10 no. 6; seal transferred from SCHIEFFER doc. 80).

21 On the Roman stone, the vertical strip probably represents hair grown in sideburns, as seen e. g. on coins of Alexander Severus (American Numismatic Society collection no. MS 44 c. 256, Antioch 224 AD).

The Aachen head-gear cannot be a laurel wreath or a diadem, since it lacks both individual leaves and the diadem's fluttering ribbons and forehead-ornament, and the hair is covered. It could be a helmet, though it lacks the crest normally represented on top. The most likely identification, however, is the crown into which the Germanic helmet was transformed[22].

Some Carolingian rulers wore imitation-Byzantine crowns, with a closed cap and gemmed lower band and some form of *pendilia* hanging to the sides. The character-istic crown of the Carolingian dynasty, however, was the »Bügelkrone« developed for them. This had a band around the temples and one or two bands crossing over the top of the head, and was worn with or without a cap beneath[23]. Representations of these crowns are far from uniform. Either in the physical arrangement of the actual Carolingian crowns' various elements, or in the pictorial representations of those crowns – possibly in both – there was clearly considerable freedom. It seems to have been the presence of certain key elements (cap or bands over the head, edge-bands, and *pendilia*) that identified a Carolingian crown, rather than the precise ordering of those elements.

Each of the Aachen seal's peculiar iconographic features described above can be paralleled in one or another Carolingian crown-image. The unarticulated hair on the crystal seems to indicate some sort of covering. This could be either the cap worn under the Bügelkrone (as shown in the St. Gall Golden Psalter) or the Greek-style enclosed crown (as represented on the Ellwangen casket)[24]. The vertical strip and cross by the ear could easily reflect the pendants and contiguous foliate decoration of Lothar I's crown in a Tours Bible[25]. The unarticulated bands which are not quite

22 The diadem is discussed by P. E. SCHRAMM, Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik, Stuttgart 1955, vol. 2 (M.G.H., Schriften 13), p. 381. Carolingian representations of helmets are usually crested, but see Utrecht Psalter fol. 67v (lower right) for a rounded top. On the connection of the Carolingian crown with Germanic helmets, see SCHRAMM p. 389–92 and 395 ff. – No previous scholar has argued for a particular identification of Lothar's head-gear on the crystal seal. Brief descriptions have varied. J. O. WESTWOOD, Archaeological Notes made during a tour in Belgium, Western Germany, and France, in: The Archaeological Journal 18 (1861) p. 222; and BABELON (La glyptique, as n. 2, p. 410) believe a laurel wreath is represented. A diadem is seen by CAHIER (as n. 2, p. 205), Jules LABARTE (Recherches sur la peinture en émail, Paris 1856, p. 143; ID., as n. 2, p. 104), Charles Rohault de FLEURY (La Messe, vol. 5, Paris 1887, p. 129), Karl FAYMONVILLE (Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Aachen, 1: Das Münster zu Aachen, Düsseldorf 1916 [Die Kunstdenkmäler der Rheinprovinz 10 no. 1], p. 197), and SCHRAMM and MÜTHERICH (as n. 3, p. 125). PAZAUREK identifies a diadem on Babelon's 1894 illustration, which he calls unusable »schon wegen des hinzugedichteten merkwürdigen Diadems« (as n. 2, p. 15 n. 7). C. W. KING (The Handbook of Engraved Gems, London 1866, p. 116–17) and J. Henry MIDDLETON (The Engraved Gems of Classical Times, Cambridge 1891, p. 122) note the presence of a helmet (an identification attributed by BABELON [La glyptique, as n. 2, p. 410 n. 3] to bad illustrations).

23 See SCHRAMM (Herrschaftszeichen, as n. 22) p. 395–401, and ID. (Kaiser, as n. 7) p. 99 ff. (esp. p. 108 on the use of a cap). On Byzantine imitations, see SCHRAMM (Kaiser) p. 116–18.

24 St. Gall psalter: cited by SCHRAMM (Kaiser, as n. 7) p. 108; illustrated by Wolfgang BRAUNFELS, Die Welt der Karolinger und ihre Kunst, Munich 1968, ill. 296. Ellwangen casket: second half of the ninth century; see Fritz VOLBACH, Das Ellwanger Reliquienkästchen, in: Viktor BURR (ed.), Ellwangen 764–1964: Beiträge und Untersuchungen zur Zwölfhundertjahrfeier, vol. 2, Ellwangen 1964, esp. p. 769; and SCHRAMM (Kaiser) p. 116–18.

25 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 266 fol. 1v (Wilhelm KOEHLER, Die Karolingischen Miniaturen 1: Die Schule von Tours, 1930 and 1933; reprint Berlin 1963 [Denkmäler Deutscher Kunst], plate 98a; SCHRAMM [Kaiser, as n. 7] Abb. 12 and p. 100–102). Schramm notes that the pendants on this image

laurels recall the circlets common to both eastern- and western-derived Carolingian crowns.

The crystal's head-gear bears enough resemblance to other contemporary images to indicate that some reference to the Carolingian crown was probably intended. While not certain, this theory would help to explain why the artist, so faithful in other aspects of the copy, altered the appearance of the figure's head.

It has long been recognized that identification of subject and image in an early medieval »portrait« was achieved by depiction of the appropriate insignia of office, rather than by physical resemblance to a particular person[26]. Transformation of the Roman imperial laurel-wreath into a Carolingian royal crown would have greatly strengthened the association of a Roman image with the actual contemporary king. This could well have been a strong enough incentive to change an otherwise carefully followed model.

The preceding analysis suggests two ideas that may be useful in the larger discussion of medieval models and copies. First, the Carolingian artist could take from a model not only composition, inscription, and general iconography, but also elements of style (proportions and shape of head and torso, ear, drapery-folds) normally considered characteristic of regions, workshops, or individual artists. And second, even when such an exact copy was made, the artist could still introduce substantive iconographic change (laurel to crown). The seal of Lothar II in Aachen may, then, serve as both an example and a warning as we analyze the role of the model in medieval art.

could be associated with either Byzantine *pendilia* or the cheek-straps of the Germanic helmet from which the Bügelkrone was derived (p. 108 n. 51). A similar »Einbügelkrone« is represented in the Utrecht Psalter; see Suzy DUFRENNE, Les illustrations du psautier d'Utrecht, Paris 1978 (Association des Publications près les Universités de Strasbourg, fasc. 161), p. 185.

26 The question of portraiture in Carolingian ruler-images is discussed primarily by P. E. Schramm. Referring to the Libri Carolini, he documents a desire for the image to evoke a particular person (ID., Das Herrscherbild in der Kunst des frühen Mittelalters, in: Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg 2 [1922–23] p. 149–50). In SCHRAMM's system of classification, the image on the crystal is a »Trabanten-bild« (p. 177–79). The representation was meant to evoke the king in his official capacity – an expression of state/ruler ideas, not of personality (ID., Die deutschen Kaiser, as n. 3, p. 4–12). Rainer KAHSNITZ notes that portraits were therefore more exact in attributes than in physiognomy (Bildnis V: Siegel, in: Lexikon des Mittelalters 2, Munich and Zürich 1983, cols. 172–73). – Max KEMMERICH believes a physical likeness to be necessary on seals, as a deterrent to forgery (Die frühmittelalterliche Porträtplastik, Leipzig 1909, p. 65). The question of likeness on Carolingian coins is discussed by Philip GRIERSON, who concludes that »Characterized three-dimensional portraiture was in fact too alien to the artistic conventions of the day« to be continued after the reign of Charlemagne (Symbolism in early medieval charters and coins, in: Simboli e Simbologia nell'alto medioevo [Settimane di studio del Centro italiano die Studi sull'alto medioevo 23], part 2 [1975] p. 620–21). – KING believes that Lothar desired physical likeness on his contemporary gem, but, »disappointed ... in the results obtained, he appears finally reduced ... to content himself with the borrowed face of a Roman predecessor« (as n. 22, p. 144–45). KEMMERICH thinks the crystal »ein Jugendbild« of Lothar I (p. 66).

Appendix: Function of the Aachen seal

Beyond the social function implied in the use of a die copied from a previous matrix, the Lothar seal must have had a practical use in the production of imprints. Some scholars have speculated that it was made for use as an ornament, and not as a functional seal[27]. This hypothesis is supported by the lack of surviving documents bearing the crystal's impression[28]. The lack seems particularly significant since Lothar II had an active chancellery during his entire reign.

The intaglio itself provides the best evidence for its legal, and not just decorative function. Its inscription is deeply engraved, to nearly the same depth as the bust. The only other Carolingian crystals so engraved are the remaining two in seal-format, the stones of Radpod and Theodulf. By contrast, the inscriptions on the Susanna crystal and other scenic intaglios are all merely scratched onto the surface of the crystal. This very shallow marking is sufficient for the letters to be read through the stone (from the obverse), but is barely or not at all visible on impressions[29]. It seems most logical to assume that the reason for the unusually-deep inscriptions on the three seal-type gems is consonant with their format – – i.e., that it was needed for legible sealing. The use of crystal would have allowed the gems to serve a double function, as both jewelry or ornament and as matrix, since the inscription would also have been legible through the stone. This does not, however, mean that the intaglio was not used as a seal-die, but rather that its utility could have been extended by an intelligent choice of materials.

The Lothar seal could have been used on documents, despite the lack of known impressions. Recognizable, original wax seals survive on only eight of the documents

27 SCHRAMM (Die deutschen Kaiser, as n. 3, p. 175), SCHRAMM and MÜTHERICH (as n. 3, p. 125), and SCHIEFFER (as n. 7, p. 381) simply note that impressions of the crystal are not known. Dietrich SCHWARZ calls the stone a »Zierstück« (Ein karolingischer Fund aus dem Kanton Zürich, in: Mitteil. des Inst. für Österreich. Geschichtsforschung 62 [1954] p. 96). Georges TESSIER, noting the lack of impressions, thinks the gem an indicator of the appearance of ninth-century seals, but itself »une replique, inspirée des deux matrices dont s'est servi Lothaire II et contemporaine de la croix elle-même« (i. e. late tenth century; Diplomatique Royale Française, Paris 1962, p. 77). Peter LASKO feels the crystal was never intended as a seal, since »the legend is not cut in reverse, but, like the inscription on the large [Susanna] crystal, is to be read from the front, with the engraved images facing the onlooker« (Ars Sacra 800–1200, Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1972 [The Pelican History of Art], p. 49). Hans WENTZEL proposes that the gem was not meant to be a seal, but »wie die meisten der in Halbedelstein geschnittenen Bildnisse des 9. Jahrhunderts, eben nur – der Gepflogenheit der Stein-schneider jener Zeit entsprechend – eine negativ geschnittene Staatskamee« (Alte und altertümliche Kunstwerke der Kaiserin Theophano, in: Pantheon 30 [1972] p. 4). Other scholars have explicitly proposed use as a seal-matrix: see F. v. QUAST, Beiträge zur Geschichte der ältesten Arbeiten in Schmelzwerk in Deutschland, in: Zs. für christl. Archäologie und Kunst 2 (1858) p. 265 and 295; Aus'm WEERTH (as n. 2) vol. 2, p. 131; Xavier BARBIER DE MONTAULT, Le Trésor du Dome d'Aix-la-Chapelle, in: Bulletin Monumental 43 (1877) p. 214 no. 4; and FAYMONVILLE (as n. 22) p. 197.

28 On Lothar's chancellery, see SCHIEFFER (as n. 7) p. 374. Original, sealed documents survive from Feb. 856 on (SCHIEFFER no. 4), copies from Oct. 855 on (about one month after Lothars I's death). Franz Xaver KRAUS believes that the seal on a document of 6 August 858 (SCHIEFFER no. 9) is an imprint of this matrix (Die christlichen Inschriften der Rheinlande, vol. 2, Freiburg 1894, p. 223).

29 Impressions of the Susanna crystal, St. Paul, and Paris Crucifixion are illustrated in Ernest BABELON, Histoire de la gravure sur gemmes en France, Paris 1902, plates II–2, II–4, and III–1.

of Lothar II (dating from 856, 860, 862, 863, and 866)[30]. Although the chancellery was certainly active during the intervals (as can be deduced from later copies of documents and other sources), the seal(s) used then are unknown. It is thus well within the realm of possibility that the crystal was in fact used to authenticate documents.

Impressions could also have been made which, though official, were by nature ephemeral: seals on letters, boxes, or cabinets; seals sent out with a written summons or order; and even seals securing and authenticating wrappings for the ordeals by boiling water and by red-hot iron[31]. These would have left no traces.

Illustrations

(All photos: Genevra Kornbluth)

1 Crystal seal of Lothar; on the Lothar Cross, Cathedral treasury, Aachen. Engraved side 38 × 32 mm.
2 Lothar seal, plaster impression. 42 × 36 mm.
3 Wax seal of Lothar I; on Marburg, Staatsarchiv, Reichsabtei Fulda 841 August 20 (M.G.H. Dipl. Kar. 61). 63 × 60.5 mm, imprint 38.1 × 31.4 mm.
4 Wax seal of Lothar II; on Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS Coll. Bourgogne vol. 75 no. 21 (M.G.H. Dipl. Kar. 19). 60.3 × 57.7 mm, imprint 36.6 × 31 mm.
5 Susanna crystal; London, British Museum M&LA 55, 12–1, 5. Diameter of engraved side 115 mm.
6 Susanna crystal, detail of a face. Head c. 3.8 × 3.3 mm.
7 Lothar seal, Aachen, detail of the figure. 22.5 × 12 mm.
8 Jet seal of Louis II; Zürich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum LM 30 43 9. 40 × 39 mm.
9 Wax seal of Charles III the Fat; on St. Gallen, Stiftsarchiv FF 2 J66 (M.G.H. Dipl. Kar. 60). 59.9 × 59.7 mm, imprint c. 42.3 × 39.5 mm.

30 SCHIEFFER (as n. 7) p. 381; documents 4, 6, 13A', 17, 19, 27, 28, and 29.
31 On these ephemeral uses, see KORNBLUTH (as n. 1) p. 42–44.
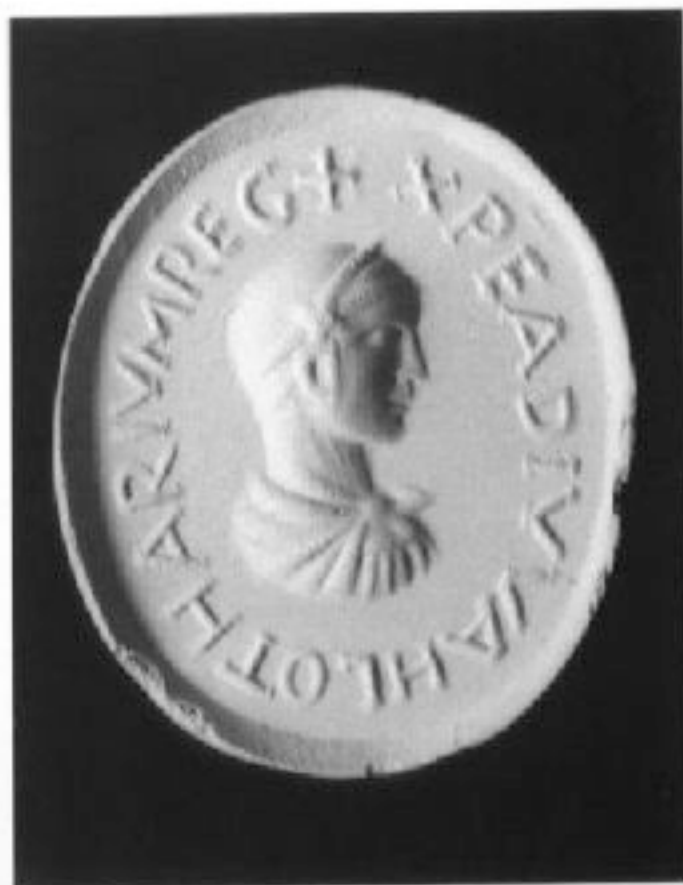
Fig. 1 Crystal seal of Lothar
(Lothar Cross, Aachen)

Fig. 2 Lothar seal, plaster impression

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Fig. 3 Wax seal of Lothar I

Fig. 4 Wax seal of Lothar II

Fig. 5 Susanna crystal
(London)

Fig. 6 Susanna crystal, detail

Fig. 7 Lothar seal (Aachen)

Fig. 8 Jet seal of Louis II (Zürich)

Fig. 9 Wax seal of Charles III the Fat (St. Gallen)