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PHILIPP VON STOSCH (1691-1757) AND THE FORGERY OF ANCIENT ENGRAVED GEMS[1]

Abstract: Philipp von Stosch (1691-1757) was one of the most prominent connoisseurs and collectors of ancient engraved gems. He assembled an extensive collection of approximately 3,500 pieces and published the pioneering book *Gemmae antiquae caelatae* in 1724. Despite this, Stosch has frequently been accused of practices that would tarnish his image as an exceptional collector and learned scholar, such as supporting the production of fake intaglios and glass gems. These claims have continued to circulate to this day, and this article examines and evaluates evidence for and against his possible conscious/direct and unconscious/indirect involvment in the creation of counterfeit gems in the eighteenth century. The discovery of Stosch's substantial archive of gem drawings, a detailed analysis of his collecting habits, and a close examination of his collabortaions with contemporary gem engravers, among others, allow us to conclude that his activities were often misunderstood. His primary goal was to study and comprehend the techniques and styles of engraving employed by ancient artists.

Keywords: ancient engraved gems, fake antiquities, forgery, glass gems, glass pastes, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Lorenz Natter, Philipp von Stosch, proto-archaeology, signatures on gems

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Introduction

Philipp von Stosch (1691-1757) was one of the most distinguished connoisseurs and collectors of ancient engraved gems. He created a vast cabinet numbering approximately 3,500 pieces, published by Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1760) and acquired by Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, in 1764 (now in the *Antikensammlung* in Berlin). He published the ground-breaking book *Gemmae antiquae caelatae* in 1724 (Stosch 1724) and also compiled an extensive collection of around 28,000 gem casts and impressions. He established a leading position in the trade, collecting and researching engraved gems initially in Rome (until 1731) and subsequently in Florence during the first half of the eighteenth century (Justi 1872; MacKay Quynn 1941; Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 3-67; Hansson 2014; Gołyźniak *et al.* 2025, 3-15).

Stosch was an unquestioned authority in this and many other fields, best exemplified by two drawings of Pier Leone Ghezzi (1674-1755), one of his closest collaborators, depicting a gathering of the principal antiquarians of Rome in his house (Pl. 1: 1) (Kanzler 1900; Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 9-11). Yet, he is often described as a multifaceted figure, not merely because the breadth of his interests. Stosch was both admired and disliked; he was eccentric keeping a domesticated boar, owl, Maltese cats and a hawk as pets (MacKay Quynn 1941, 340; Hansson 2014, 14). It was his involvement in secret diplomatic missions and espionage, in particular, that exposed him to criticism and at times to unfounded accusations of things that could have jeopardized his career and reputation as a learned antiquarian and scholar. Furthermore, Stosch's long-standing and close friendship with Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692-1779), the foremost collector of his era, especially of ancient marbles and engraved gems, but also the leading figure in exploitation and export of antiquities outside Italy, fuelled concerns regarding his intentions and activities (Guerrini 1971, 28-30; Haskell and Penny 1981, 63-65; Guerrieri Borsoi 2009, 168; Ridley 2017, 211-212; Borchia 2019; Claridge and Dodero 2022, 1684).

Stosch was notoriously accused of involvment in the production of forged gems. However, a careful examination of these claims, together with the recent rediscovery of his extensive *Paper Museum of Gems* – an archive of documentary gem drawings that reflects Stosch's scholarly ambition in organising a studio for artists to document thousands of engraved gems and produce accurate copies of selected pieces – proves that he deserves, at least in part, rehabilitation regarding his collaboration with talented contemporary gem engravers.

The accusations

Stosch was born on 22 March 1691 in Küstrin, Brandenburg, and from a very young age, he displayed interest in antiquity and collecting. His father, Philipp Sigismund, along with the Berlin antiquary Johann Carl Schott (1672-1717), encouraged him to collect coins. After two years of studying theology and classical philology in Frankfurt, in 1709 Stosch embarked on his *grand tour*, travelling first across Germany and later through the Netherlands. Upon arriving in The Hague, he was introduced to the local political, diplomatic and intellectual circles by his cousin Freiherr Wolfgang von Schmettau (1648-1711), a prominent Brandenburg envoy to the Dutch States General. Among his most significant connections was that François Fagel (1659-1746), the registrar of the States General, who became both his mentor and patron, sending him on diplomatic missions and employing him as an agent in the procurement of coins and medals as well as drawings and prints of which he was an avid collector.

Throughout his life, Stosch pursued parallel antiquarian and diplomatic careers. He travelled to England, London and Cambridge specifically, where he networked with leading collectors and intellectuals such as Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753), Sir Andrew Fontaine (1676-1753) and Richard Bentley (1662-1742). Later, in Paris, he entered the circles of Philippe II, Duke of Orléans (1674-1723), Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741), Pierre Crozat (1661-1740), Wilhelm Homberg (1652-1715) and Jean-Paul Bignon (1662-1743), among others. In 1715, he started a longer sojourn in Italy, residing in Rome until 1717. During this period, he established connections with the papal court of Clement XI Albani (1649-1721) and solidified his major position within the local antiquarian community (Lang 2007). In 1717, he continued his travels first to Vienna, where he was introduced to Emperor Charles VI (1685-1740) and renewed his acquaintance with Prince Eugene de Savoy (1663-1736), whom he had first met in London. He then moved to Dresden and was appointed royal antiquary to August II the Strong (1670-1733). As the envoy of Saxony-Poland, he returned to The Hague, where he reminded until 1722. There, John Carteret (1690-1763), British Secretary of State for the Southern Department, whom Stosch had previously met in London, recruited him as a spy on the exiled court of the Stuart Pretender, James Francis Edward Stuart, in Rome.

Stosch returned to Rome in 1722, enjoying a productive and distinguished period of antiquarian activity until 1731, when his espionage was unmasked, forcing him to flee to Florence (MacKay Quynn 1941, 334-335). He contin-

ued his antiquarian pursuits there until his death in 1757. By this time, he had secured his reputation as an "Oracle for Collectors" and was an active participant of the Republic of Letters and in academic societies such as the *Accademia Etrusca* at Cortona and *Società Colombaria* in Florence.

The *Museo Stoschiano*, organised by Stosch in the Palazzo Ramirez-Montalvo in Florence, was described by the leading Florentine antiquarian and scholar of the day, Anton Francesco Gori (1691-1757), as "*one of the greatest jewels of the city and a compendium of the most select museums*" (Gori 1742, CCXXXVII-CCXXXVIII; Hansson 2021a, 113). It became a central hub of antiquarian culture and an intersection point for extensive networks of connoisseurs and collectors across Europe. Visitors came not only to see the diverse and voluminous collections, but most importantly, to meet Stosch, who had by that time become the foremost antiquarian authority, opening doors and facilitating the careers of emerging scholars, as exemplified by Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Although the two likely never met, they corresponded, and Stosch's recommendation to Cardinal Albani proved decisive for the subsequent trajectory of Winckelmann's career (Justi 1956, vol. 2, 279-288).

While Stosch's antiquarian activities flourished, he struggled to remain a useful informant for the British, which guaranteed steady income, crucial for enlarging his collections. To achieve this, he relied on his extensive network of contacts and agents in Rome, which remained efficient in obtaining intelligence on the Stuart court. In this regard, Cardinal Alessandro Albani proved particularly useful. Yet political and personal interests often intertwined, as both Stosch and Albani exploited their connections with the British to traffic antiquities outside Italy via the port of Livorno, notably with the assistance of the British minister plenipotentiary Sir Horace Mann (1706-1786) (Lewis 1961, 54 and 61). Some contemporaries, like Pier Leone Ghezzi, lamented this uncontrolled exploitation of antiquities and their sale abroad (Cod. Ott. Lat. 3100, Fol. 126; Dorati da Empoli 2008, 17, No. 40). Althought the Papal States had established one of the most advanced and rigorous legal frameworks to protect Roman cultural heritage, enforcement of legal and administrative measures aimed at limiting illicit trafficking of antiquities remained largely ineffective until Benedict XIV's edict of 1750 (Ridley 2017, 52-55; Mannoni 2021, 7).

One must also take into account more subtle forms of antiquities' "export". At the time, engraved gems ranked among the most desirable and valuable antiquities. Evidence indicates that Stosch advised Pope Clement XI and Cardinal Alessandro Albani on how to gain the favour of Prince Eugene de Savoy and

Emperor Charles VI by selecting exceptional cameos, including the famous Althorp Leopard, and presenting them as diplomatic gifts (Hansson 2021b, 66, No. 45 (letters Nos. 109 and 111)). Generally speaking, Stosch was well-known for his strategic gifts and sales, sometimes extravagant like his persona. For example, as a strategic courtesy, Stosch offered to sell the famous *Tabula Peutingeriana* along with a cache of valuable letters by the thirteenth-century jurist Pietro della Vigna to Prince Eugene during a visit to Vienna in 1717. He presented King Frederick Wilhelm I with a rare book for which the king had long sought in vain, and he managed to return a valuable Chinese manuscript, allegedly stolen from the Royal Library by the Protestant clergyman Jean Aymon, to the Regent of France (MacKay Quynn 1941, 334). Even the anticlerical Gian Gastone de Medici (1671-1737) received a pocket thermometer from Stosch upon his arrival in Florence (Stosch 1754, 28).

Among Stosch's most remarkable transactions were several involving engraved gems. In 1722, Henry Davenant, the British Envoy Extraordinary in Florence, visited Rome to discuss diplomatic matters with Stosch. To gain his favour and secure the backing of his case as an informant, Stosch gifted or sold him a sardonyx intaglio set in an ancient gold ring featuring Diomedes ascending from an altar with the Palladion and sword in his hands, signed by Gnaeus (ΓΝΑΙΟΥ), now in the Devonshire collection at Chatsworth (Gołyźniak 2020, 215, No. 10.5, Fig. 777). Further evidence of Stosch's efforts to maintain his pension from the British government comes from his unpublished correspondence with William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire (1673-1729) from the years 1727-1729, preserved at Chatsworth (Chatsworth, the Devonshire Archives, Inv. No.: CS1/188.0-8). Effectively, Stosch became an agent of the duke, acquiring highly desirable pieces on his behalf, particularly signed ones, like the intaglio with Nike slaughtering a bull (Pl. 1: 2) (British Museum Inv. No.: 1890,0601.50; Dalton 1915, No. 770; Vollenweider 1966, 36, pl. 27.2 and 8; Zwierlein-Diehl 1986, No. 156; Borbein *et al.* 2019, No. II.1099 (with full bibliography); Gołyźniak 2020, 215, No. 10.1, Fig. 773). In the case of a carnelian intaglio depicting the head of Socrates signed by Agathermos (ΑΓΑΘΗΜΕΡΟC), Stosch made it explicit that he was selling it to the duke for the same price he bought it (e.g. adding no commission whatsoever), apparently to gain his favour (A letter, dated Rome 24 July 1728 – Chatsworth, the Devonshire Archives, Inv. No.: CS1/188.1; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, 276; Lang 2012, No. So29).

While preparing a sequel to his book on cameos and intaglios signed by ancient masters, Stosch encountered an exceptional garnet intaglio depicting

a nude athlete standing frontally and pouring oil from an alabastron into his lowered hand, signed by Gnaeus (ΓΝΑΙΟΥ) (Pl. 1: 3) (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, Inv. No.: 42.109; Vollenweider 1966, 45 and pl. 42.5; Platz-Horster 1993; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, ill. 476; Boardman *et al.* 2009, No. 429). Stosch purchased the gem in 1739 from Apostolo Zeno (1668-1750), the Venetian poet, librettist, journalist, man of letters and collector of engraved gems. He had a particular admiration for this piece, like many contemporaries, including Horace Walpole (1717-1797), the British writer, art historian and politician and son of the first British Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford (1676-1745). He offered Stosch the opportunity to buy it from him at any price. In his letters exchanged with Horace Mann, Walpole writes: "*I find I cannot live without Stosch's intaglia of the Gladiator with the vase*" (Letter from Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, 26 November 1749 – Toynbee 1903, 131; Walpole 1954, 232-233). Stosch, however, was reluctant to sell it and instead, in 1750, strategically offered the intaglio to William Ponsonby, 2nd Earl of Bessborough (1704-1793), in an effort to secure the continuation of the British government pension that Walpole had denied him (MacKay Quynn 1941, 340; Henig *et al.* 1994, XIV). Walpole was left deeply disappointed: "*I still think it one of the finest things I ever saw and am mortified at not having it*" (Walpole 1960, 157).

Yet not all of Stosch's gifts of gems were strict tactical movements. Some appear to have carried a more personal or "sentimental" dimension, such as the carnelian intaglio featuring Mercury and signed by Dioscurides (ΔΙΟCΚΟΥΡΙΔΟΥ), which he gifted in 1726 to François Fagel, his preceptor, patron and friend (Pl. 2: 1) (Cambridge, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Inv. No.: CG 165 (S 25 (CM)), 16mm x 12mm, last quarter of the 1st century BC). Nevertheless, in a letter to William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire, dated Rome 24 July 1728, Stosch pointedly mentioned this act of generosity, suggesting that even ostensibly sentimental gifts could be mobilised for strategic self-presentation (Chatsworth, the Devonshire Archives, Inv. No.: CS1/188.3).

Stosch's authority in antiquarian scholarship and collecting was generally held in high regard, but his complex, and at times controversial character, coupled with his radical views, connections with the masonic movement and especially his political and diplomatic entanglements, generated an equal number of admirers and critics. These detractors attacked him for motives ranging from personal rivalry to ideological opposition. For example, Charles de Brosses (1709-1777) spread a rumour that during Stosch's visit to Versailles in 1739-1740, he attempted to steal one of the masterpieces of the French royal collec-

tion, the so-called "seal of Michelangelo", by swallowing it (De Brosses 1861 [1768]; MacKay Quynn 1941, 343-344; Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 188). Francesco de'Ficoroni (1664-1747), one of the leading antiquarians and *cicerone* of Rome, denounced Stosch as an arch-imposer, while Giovanni Gaetano Bottari (1689-1775) quipped that he would like to see a list of the books Stosch had promised to write, along with another list of the things he claimed to have discovered and a third list of the items he had stolen (MacKay Quynn 1941, 336). Others considered Stosch overly positive in his assessments, particularly regarding the authenticity of certain engraved gems (Justi 1871, 337; Justi 1956, vol. 2, 306).

Several almost certainly apocryphal stories about Stosch circulated due to Horace Mann and Horace Walpole, who intended to undermine and harm his reputation as a collector, scholar and art expert in Florence. In Walpole's case, personal resentment may have played a role, particularly after Stosch ultimately refused to sell him the garnet intaglio mentioned above. In his correspondence with Mann, Walpole repeatedly characterised Stosch as scheming, unreliable and dishonest, in both commercial transactions and his intelligence work (MacKay Quynn 1941, 339-340; Lewis 1961, 54 and 61). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) likewise dismissed him as an "infamous character" (MacQuynn 1941, 341). Jean Jacques Barthélemy, the French numismatist who visited *Museo Stoschiano* in 1755, reported to Comte de Caylus that Stosch had plundered all of Italy and although eager to display all his collections, he gave him nothing (Barthélemy 1802 [1801], 24-26: "*Il a dépouillé toute l'Italie et la tient encore asservie par ses correspondants (…) il m'a tout montré et ne m'a rien cédé, je me suis abaissé jusqu'aux prières*; Justi 1956, vol. 2, 282). Even allowing for the possibility that both Walpole and Barthélemy felt personally slighted, Stosch's poor reputation is clear.

This adverse press intensified after his death. When Cardinal Domenico Passionei (1682-1761) purchased a substantial portion of Stosch's manuscript collection from his heir, Heinrich Wilhelm Muzell-Stosch (1723-1782), it turned out that a good many items had once been stolen from the Vatican Library. Although there is no convincing evidence that Stosch himself was involved in the theft, the association cast a shadow on his reputation (MacKay Quynn 1941, 341-434). Kanzler even suggested that the true reason for Stosch's departure from Rome in 1731 was that his frauds were beginning to leak out (Kanzler 1900, 8). Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that Stosch was eventually accused of supporting and even directly commissioning fake gems cut by leading contemporary artists like Lorenz Natter (1705-1763), Carlo Costanzi (1705-

1781), Tommaso Costanzi (1700-1747), Flavio Sirletti (1683-1737), Francesco Maria Gaetano Ghinghi (1689-1762), Giuseppe Torricelli (1722-1789), Lorenzo Masini (1713-?), Felice Bernabé (1720-?) and Antonio Pichler (1697-1779), which were subsequently placed on the art market.

Scholars have largely reiterated this long-standing view with little critical scrutiny since the eighteenth century. The charge resonated in part becasue the production of counterfeit gems was indeed considerable at the time. Pier Leone Ghezzi even remarked that trading in fake gems at Rome's Piazza Navona had effectively become a *Roman tradition* (Justi 1956, vol. 2, 307). Some of the earliest insinuations regarding Stosch's illicit activities in this regard came from Domenico Augusto Bracci (1717-1795). In 1784 and 1786, he published his own study of gems signed by ancient masters, adding forty-four examples to those catalogued by Stosch in 1724. He criticised Stosch for alleged incompetence in identifying forgeries. For instance, Bracci considered an amethyst intaglio depicting Hermaphrodite surrounded by three Cupids and inscribed *ΔOIC*, to be a modern fake carved by Flavio Sirletti (Bracci 1784-1786, vol. 2, 25-27). Stosch regarded it as an ancient work by the celebrated Dioscurides, yet this attribution was widely accepted in contemporary antiquarian circles, for example by Gori and Zanetti, and Stosch never owned the piece (Gori and Zanetti 1750, 115-116, pl. LVII).

Bracci's judgement is compromised by its speculative nature - he insinuated, without evidence, that Sirletti had added signatures to several ancient gems from the Medina collection in order to enhance their value (Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 188). After all, his criticism was not disinterested because it served to justify his own revision of Stosch's research, which, in fact, ultimately proved unsuccessful. Of the forty-four additional gems with potential signatures included in Bracci's two-volume book, only fourteen were later confirmed to be genuinely ancient (Justi 1956, vol. 2, 329-333; Furtwängler 1900, vol. 3, 419-420; Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 122-127; Fileti Mazza 1996; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, 280).

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, increasingly severe critiques of eighteenth-century archaeological practices forstered direct accusations of Stosch's involvement the production and circulation of counterfeit gems. Justi asserted that Stosch collaborated with several best gem engravers of his time, such as the Costanzi brothers, Flavio Sirletti, Antonio Pichler and Lorenz Natter. Due to his supervision and analysis of the technical skills of the ancient masters, they advanced significantly in the imitation of genuine engraved gems. Unfortunately, the engravers ultimately compromised their craft by carrying out

fraudulent work for art dealers, and Stosch, Justi says, was not scrupulous about cleanliness in the trade, soon employing them in the same way for his purposes (Justi 1871, 335-336; Justi 1956, vol. 2, 306). Köhler (1851) went further, claiming that Stosch sold forgeries to Gabriel Medina of Livorno (?-?) in Florence, François Sevin (1682-1741) and a certain Masson in Paris, as well as to several Dutch collectors.

In 1895, Reinach noted that Stosch maintained close conections with the leading gem engravers of his time and suggested that the precise nature of these professional relationships remained ambiguous (Reinach 1895, 148). He also claimed that Carlo Costanzi, one of the artists associated with Stosch, copied numerous gems from the renowned Strozzi collection (Reinach 1895, 37). Similar to Bracci before him, he implicitly transferred any suspicion regarding Costanzi's potential dishonesty onto Stosch. Subsequent scholars readily conflated the production of ancient-style copies by individual artists with Stosch's commissions, condemning this as a purposeful production of fakes. In 1912, Osborne (like Bracci before) accused Stosch of collaborating with Flavio Sirletti, and that the two operated a studio in which counterfeit gems were produced and the value of ancient ones was enhanced by adding spurious signatures. He suspected, for instance, that an amethyst intaglio representing a cow, signed by Apollonides and sold by Stosch to the Duke of Devonshire for a vast sum of £1,000, was a sophisticated forgery executed by Sirletti (Osborne 1912, 181-182). The authenticity of this gem is no longer questioned, however, and Stosch's correspondence with the duke at Chatsworth (see above) indicates that he supplied him with exceptional pieces in recognition of latter's support of his position as a British informant. Dalton, writing in 1915, described a general trend in the rise of fake gem production, and remarked that artists like Sirletti, Natter, Ghingi and the Costanzi brothers created forgeries or "improved" existing intaglios by adding signatures. He ultimately attributed these practices to Stosch as well, accusing him of running a large-scale forgery studio within his own household (Dalton 1915, XLVIII).

Defending Stosch

In the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Stosch's associations with contemporary gem engravers continued to be viewed with suspicion (Eggers 1926, 222; Borroni Salvadori 1978, 583 and 595-596; Heringa 1981, 103; Za-

zoff and Zazoff 1983, 188-189; Cremer 1997, 144-145; Arnold-Rutkiewicz 2005, 52 and 63; Breckenridge 1979, 11; Campbell and Nesselrath 2006, 36; Tassinari 2010a, 31-32; 2019a, 230-243; Hansson 2014, 16; 2020, 66; Pietrzak 2018, 124). Gross articulated this hostility in particularly severe terms, describing Stosch as "*highly esteemed and consulted on all disputed questions of ancient art, but otherwise an infamous and debauched character, perhaps the most notorious example of a foreigner who profited from Europe's greed for the treasures of ancient Rome by dubious means*" (Gross 1990, 318-319). Further doubts were raised by the report, highlighted by Spier and Kagan, that according to Bernardo Sterbini (active 1718-1751), in 1735 Stosch purchased the tools and remaining coins of the notorious forger Nicolò Dervieux (?-1735), whom he personally knew. Although the purpose of this acquisition is not explicit, it has been frequently cited as further evidence of his alleged complicity in the production of fakes, in this instance counterfeit coins (Spier and Kagan 2000, 70-71). There were also conflicting views, such as those expressed by Brunn (1889, 315-317), who perceived Stosch as a victim of the practices of gem cutters, a sentiment echoed by Furtwängler (1900, vol. 3, 410).

Whether Stosch was in fact involved in the deliberate production of forgeries or not will likely never be established with certainty. Nonetheless, close inspection of works by Sirletti, Natter, Costanzi and Masini together with the rediscovery of Stosch's extensive archive of gem drawings leads one to think of him in a more favourably way today than in the past. Even though, as noted above, Justi believed Stosch to have participated in the manufacture of fakes, he simultaneously acknowledged that Stosch's collaborations with gem carvers concerned, in principle, technical aspects of the craft. MacKay Quynn likewise made a valuable observation that his contemporaries seem never to have directly accused Stosch of forging ancient cameos and intaglios. While this assertion is not entirely unproblematic, given, for example, the accusations raised by Capponi (see below), it remains broadly accurate. MacKay Quynn also argued persuasively that, had Stosch engaged in activities compromising his scholarly authority, he would have taken great pains to conceal them: his reputation was essential not only for sustaining his access to elite social circles, but also because the papal government maintained vigilant oversight against frauds of all kinds (MacKay Quynn 1941, 336).

Let us first refer to Justi's observation. Stosch indeed undertook considerable efforts to develop a holistic understanding of the art of gem engraving. He collected thousands of originals and was intrigued by the technical dimensions

of the craft. He had a modern, art-historical approach and wanted to show that the aesthetic quality of engraved gems was inseparable from the distinctive styles of individual carvers. This intention is clearly articulated in his letter to Cuper (Rome, 8 August 1716), in which he explained that in his forthcoming book, the plates in particular, would reveal the beauty of ancient engraving techniques and persuade readers that ancient engravers differed markedly in their stylistic principles (Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Inv. 72H25 – Heringa 1976, No. 41). As a matter of fact, Stosch discussed techniques, the engraving process and the tools employed by ancient artists in the introductory essay to his book *Gemmae antiquae caelatae* (Stosch 1724, XV).

A particularly revealing piece of evidence in support of Stosch's good faith concerns the production of his never-completed second volume of *Gemmae antiquae caelatae*. In a letter to William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire, dated Rome 28 August 1728, Stosch remarks upon the proliferation of mediocre gems inscribed with dubious Greek and Latin signatures of purported ancient engravers. He deliberately collected examples of every kind, including obvious forgeries, and had them reproduced in sulphur, wax and glass impressions, as well as in drawings. These he kept in his house in Florence specifically to educate visiting antiquarians, allowing them to examine the differences first-hand. Moreover, in order to alert collectors ("*les curieux*") of the omnipresent fraud and trickery in the gem market, in his future book, he was to have one plate illustrating fake gems bearing the names of renowned ancient masters, both those copied in modern times and those recently invented (Chatsworth, the Devonshire Archives, Inv. No.: CS1/188.3).

Apparently, a poor artist and craftsman himself, Stosch relied on skilled artists to reproduce gems for him in various media, particularly in the form of drawings. He employed a number of distinguished artists including Pier Leone Ghezzi, Girolamo Odam, Johann Justin Preisler, Carl Marcus Tuscher, Georg Abraham Nagel and Johann Adam Schweickart to document gems from his own collection as well as from major European cabinets. Working for his archival, research, and publication projects, these artists produced thousands of drawings, substantial portions of which have recently been rediscovered in the Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow (Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 2500-4746 (drawings) and R. 24430-24451 (prints)) and in the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin (Inv. No.: OS4270a – Pierres gravees du roi avec figures, Vols. I-VI) (Gołyźniak *et al.* 2025). Those artists worked under Stosch's close supervision, and he devoted considerable attention to ensure that their drawings were as faithful to

the original gems as possible. They were executed according to a very well-thought-out system that recorded essential information on the reproduced gems (material, provenance, subject matter, etc.) and and they were often produced at an enlarged scale to facilitate detailed analysis of iconography, technique, and style (Pl. 2: 2). Collectively, this corpus stands as important evidence of the high standards Stosch applied to the documentation, study, and publication of intaglios and cameos.

It is also noteworthy that Stosch learnt to produce sulphur impressions of intaglios and cameos and collected 28,000 of them taken from all the major and minor European cabinets. In this endeavour he was assisted by Christian Dehn (1696-1770). Stosch's brother Heinrich Sigismund (1699-1747) also contributed significantly, aiding in the organisation of the gem collection and in the preparation of the *Atlas* project. In addition, the French mineralogist, Joannon de Saint-Laurent (1714-1783), collaborated with Stosch, advising him on the identification of gemstones used for his intaglios and cameos. Finally, Francesco Valesio (1670-1742) ghostwrote entries on the gems selected for Stosch's book. Taken together, these collaborations demonstrate that, while Stosch made substantial efforts to study glyptic art in his own right, he also assembled around himself a network of individuals whose expertise significantly enhanced the scholarly and technical quality of his work.

Analysis of the careers of the draughtsmen who worked for Stosch reveals that several of them not only documented gems in visual form, but were also encouraged by him to experiment with cutting gemstones. Ghezzi, who was interested in gems from both mineralogical and artistic points of view, was himself a gem engraver and a pupil of Flavio Sirletti [sic!] in this craft (Justi 1956, vol. 2, 307; Coen and Fidanza 2011). Similarly, Tuscher, who first worked in Stosch's household in Rome and later followed him to Florence, was encouraged by Stosch to cut intaglios. He even executed Stosch's portrait on a gem (Kagan 1985, 10). Stosch "infected" others with his enthusiasm for the exploration of glyptic art, inspiring several artists in his circle to engage more deeply with the technical aspects of the craft.

One of the key figures in this regard was Johann Lorenz Natter, who arrived in Florence in 1732, and whose talent Stosch immediately recognised (Nau 1966; Boardman *et al.* 2017; Rambach 2025). He employed him to make copies of ancient gems from his own and other cabinets. Natter resided in Stosch's house until 1735 and later reported, prior to this stay, he had never attempted to copy an ancient gem (Natter 1754, XXXXII-XXXIII; Nau 1966, 24; Borroni

Salvadori 1978, 583; Zazoff and Zazoff 1983, 187; Cremer 1997, 143; Hansson 2014, 22; Tassinari 2018, 39). Natter's testimony has often been simplified or misinterpreted as evidence that Stosch operated a profitable forgery workshop. However, Natter makes clear in his treatise on gem engraving (1754) that his work for Stosch centred on technical study and stylistic experimentation. He admits that: "*I am not ashamed to own that I continue still to make such Copies as often as I am ordered. But I challenge any Man to prove that I ever sold one of them for an Antique*" (Nau 1966, XXVIII-XXIX). He further emphasises that the copying of ancient gems was a crucial aspect of training in the art of gem carving (Natter 1966, XXXII-XXXIII and XXXVII-XXXVIII).

Among the gem drawings rediscovered in Krakow, one finds Natter's documentary or study drawing of the celebrated rock crystal intaglio featuring a bust of Athena/Minerva signed by Eutyches, son of Dioscurides (Berlin, Antikensammlung, Inv. No.: FG 2305, 37mm x 29mm, *c*. 20-10 BC), as well as another drawing, which is a project for making a copy of that gem in pale amethyst, which Natter executed afterwards (Baltimore, the Walters Art Museum, Inv. No.: 42.1028, 37mm x 28mm, *c*. 1730s) (Pl. 2: 3-4, 3: 1-2). Analysis of Nau's catalogue of Natter's oeuvre reveals that he copied or cut very close to the originals pastiches of several signed gems that Stosch published in his book *Gemmae antiquae caelatae* (1724) (Nau 1966, Nos. 5-7 = Stosch 1724, pl. XIII; No. 18 = pl. XLVI; No. 19 = pl. XXIII; Nos. 27-28 = pl. LXV; No. 29 = pl. LXIII; No. 35 = pl. XXII; No. 41 = pl. XXXV; No. 48 = pl. XXXV; No. 52 = pl. IV; No. 69 = pl. LXVII.). None of these copies could have deceived informed viewers, as their ancient prototypes were already well known. Instead, they appear to have been produced for study, comparison, and technical experimentation.

It further appears that Stosch commissioned Natter to copy specific gems from his own collection, and instructed to sign them with the initials *L.N.*, presumably to prevent ambiguity and avoid any potential confusion between originals and modern replicas. A good example of that is a banded agate intaglio in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden, featuring Achilles (Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Inv. No.: GS-10342), which directly copies a sardonyx intaglio once owned by Stosch (Pl. 3: 3) (Zwierlein-Diehl 1986, No. 366; Borbein *et al.* 2019, vol. 2, No. III.214; Gołyźniak 2020, 107, No. 8.56, Fig. 203). Another case is a carnelian, said to have once been in Lord Bessborough's collection, and now also in Leiden, representing Bonus Eventus with a patera also signed with Natter's initials *L.N.*, barely visible due to the repolishing of the intaglio (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden, Inv. No.: GS-10576). In this instance, Natter

may have taken inspiration from one of the glass gems in Stosch's collection (Furtwängler 1896, No. 1084; Borbein *et al.* 2019, vol. 1, No. II.1830).

According to Winckelmann, who catalogued Stosch's gem collection (1760), Natter engraved many "ancient" stones in Stosch's extensive holdings (Hansson 2014, 22). If accurate, these must have been unsigned, which would explain their difficulty of identification after Stosch's death. During his residency in Stosch's house, Natter had access not only to the original gems but, perhaps more crucially, to the vast corpus of drawings and impressions that Stosch had amassed (Cremer 1997, 144-145). These materials provided him with ample models from which to produce copies. A telling example concerns the rare carnelian intaglio depicting Theseus lifting the rock to discover his father's sword and sandals, now in the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg (Pl. 3: 4). Stosch possessed a drawing of this gem by Odam, preserved today in the Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow (Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 3724). The original intaglio has been published by Vollenweider (1966, 44-45, pl. 40.3 and 5), Neverov (1976, No. 100) and Kagan and Neverov (2000, No. 63/35). According to Philipp Daniel Lippert (1702-1785), Natter made a copy of it (Lippert 1755, No. 34).

Further evidence that Natter copied ancient gems to understand the techniques of engraving of ancient masters under Stosch's supervision comes from his own recently published drawings (Boardman *et al.* 2017). A pertinent example is the carnelian intaglio in Leiden, representing Apollo, half-nude and playing the lyre, placed on the head of a small female figure with a patera of fruits (a Hore or a herm?) (Pl. 4: 1) (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden, Inv. No.: GS-10339). This stone is Natter's copy of a Hellenistic carnelian, formerly in the Medici collection and now in Florence (Gori 1731-1732, pl. LXVI.3). Stosch possessed multiple reproductions of the Medici gem: a glass paste (Borbein *et al.* 2019, vol. 1, No. II.1129) and a remarkably close ancient sardonyx replica (now in Berlin), which he asked Odam to draw for him (Furtwängler 1896, No. 926; Borbein *et al.* 2019, vol. 1, No. II.1128; Odam's drawing – The Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow, Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 3137). Unless Natter had direct access to the original, he may have used the resources gathered in Stosch's house to produce his preparatory drawing and subsequently execute the carved copy (Boardman *et al.* 2017, No. 410). In this respect, Stosch appears to have been not only a patron commissioning copies, but also a formative intellectual influence, encouraging Natter to develop a systematic portfolio of visual reproductions—particularly drawings—as a means of analysing and understanding ancient glyptic practice.

In 1735, after relocating to Rome, Natter was challenged by Girolamo Odam to copy a gem with Venus playing with Cupid, signed by Aulos (London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1913,0307.189; Vettori 1739, 10-13; Dalton 1915, No. 643; Rudoe 2003, 138, Fig. 122). Almost certainly drawing on Stosch's practice of testing engravers through demanding exercises, Odam sought to determine whether Natter was truly capable of emulating the techniques and stylistic nuances of Aulos. Natter made a very faithful copy, including replicating Aulos's signature, but he turned the subject into Danae. Importantly, he later sold that gem to Karl Maximilian, 6th Prince of Dietrichstein (1702-1784) as his own work, not as an ancient piece (Cremer 1997, 143; Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, 300-302). This carnelian copy is now in the British Museum and was acquired in 1867 from the collection of Louis Charles Pierre Casimir, Duc de Blacas d'Aulps (1815-1868) (London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1867,0507.12; Gołyźniak 2023, 189, Fig. 6).

Natter was not the only engraver to copy ancient gems as a means of refining his own skills under Stosch's guidance, but he is by far the best documented example and apparently far from any mischievous reasons for the production of copies. Antonio Pichler is also reported to have engaged in this practice, replicating many notable ancient intaglios (Tassinari 2010a, 33-43). In the case of Flavio Sirletti, Stosch is said to have recommended the use of the diamond point for finishing his works, a technique that enabled him to engrave particularly hard gemstones and ultimately to become one of the most accomplished engravers in the entire industry (Osborne 1912, 183; Borroni Salvadori 1978, 568; Kagan 1985, 10). Similarly, Stosch assisted the young and talented gem engraver and sculptor Giuseppe Torricelli in developing his craft by exposing him to ancient gems, explaining various aspects of glyptic art, and subsequently supervising his copies of these works (Tassinari 2019b, 37).

Another significant case is that of Lorenzo Masini. In the early 1750s, he cut Stosch's portrait on an intaglio, but he also made a copy of the ancient garnet signed by Gaios (ΓΑΙΟC ΕΡΟΙΕΙ) depicting a facing head of the dog star (Sirius) (Boston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Acc. No.: 27.734; Boardman *et al.* 2009, No. 293) (Pl. 4: 2). The copy, executed in rock crystal, was signed by Masini, in the presence of Stosch, on the dog's collar in the same location where Gaios had inscribed his name (MACINOC ΕΠΟΙΕΙ) (Kagan 1985, 14; Tassinari 2010a, 32). Masini also replicated another signed gem, a carnelian portraying Sextus Pompey, signed by Agathangelos, which he marked as ΑΓΑΘΑΝΓΕΛΟΥ MACINOC ΕΠΟΙΕΙ (London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1867,0507.476; Tassi-

nari 2022, 154). Masini is also credited with inventing machinery for gemstone engraving (Borbein *et al.* 2019, vol. 1, No. II. 295). Interestingly, Natter copied this very same gem twice in garnet and topaz. In his treatise, he discussed his experiments on these projects, detailing how he achieved the depth of carving while preserving the minute details of the original, and illustrated the gem (Natter 1754, Fig. 47). The topaz copy was later sold to the Russian collector, Prince Paul Petrovic, along with other works by Natter, and is now considered lost. The garnet copy, signed L.NATTH EII on the collar, survives in London in the British Museum (Pl. 4: 3) (London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1978,1002.1069; Gere *et al.* 1984, No. 828). Crucially, both Natter and Masini inscribed their own names on these copies rather than merely replicating the ancient signatures, underscoring that the works were intended as exercises in skill and study rather than for deceptive purposes.

Reassessment

Stosch was not unique in employing the services of contemporary gem engravers, whatever the purpose. For example, Alessandro Gregorio Capponi (1683-1746), a distinguished collector of gems and other antiquities (Ubaldelli 2001), purchased items from engravers and jewellers like Flavio Sirletti, Giuseppe Rospigliosi, Domenico Landi, Carlo and Tommaso Costanzi – some of the same figures with whom Stosch collaborated (Ubaldelli 2001, 88-89). Capponi is reported to have used their services to restore and rework certain gems in his collection, a practice whose ethical character could be questioned (Tassinari 2010b, 94). Furthermore, he traded gems with Stosch and complained that Stosch was an unreliable seller. In one instance, Stosch sold him a cameo signed by Aulos (now lost), which was purportedly ancient; upon receipt, Capponi recognized it as the work of a modern engraver. His frustration was compounded by Stosch's claim that the piece had formerly belonged to the notable Andreini collection (Ubaldelli 2001, 113). Mistakes of this kind were understandable: Stosch may have been unaware that Andreini possessed a copy or a modern pastiche and may have trusted the provenance based on the previous owner's reputation.

Pier Leone Ghezzi recounts a particularly instructive episode concerning a carnelian intaglio featuring two fighting warriors, found in Baia near Naples. The gem, admired for its exquisite workmanship, was copied in carnelian by Girolamo Rosa of Livorno. The engraver added a third warrior committing sui-

cide to the design and since then, impressions of that copy were sent to various collectors, including Stosch. Impressions of Rosa's copy circulated among collectors, including Stosch, who, admiring the scene and unaware of the forgery, purchased it on behalf of Marchese Giovanni Pietro Lucatelli (fl. 1747-1750). As Ghezzi writes, neither Stosch nor Lucatelli were aware that the original gem had always been with Girolamo Odam in Rome.[2]

Returning to Andreini, Stosch published in his book a substantial group of five signed gems from his collection, which was highly praised at the time (Stosch 1724, pls V, XLV, XLVI, LIV, LXVIII). However, many of Andreini's gems had already been copied before Stosch arrived in Italy. For example, Stosch included in his publication a sardonyx from the Arundel collection, originally from Andreini, which in fact was a copy of the famous Felix gem now in Oxford. (Stosch 1724, pl. XXXV; Boardman *et al.* 2009, No. 165). These cases illustrate the centrality of reputation in collecting, dealing, and research: whether accurate or not, Capponi's accusations against Stosch had the potential to significantly damage his standing.

At this point, it is important to emphasise that not all copies were intended to deceive. There is much truth in the words of Natter, who wrote in his book that: "*Most Lovers of this Art [glyptics] prefer a good Copy of an Engraving which they like, to an Engraving newly designed, however perfect*" (Natter 1754, XXVI). Indeed, major collectors wished to have high-quality copies of famous gems that were either inaccessible or prohibitively expensive. A notable example is Frans Hemsterhuis (1721-1790), whose collection comprised sixty-two intaglios and four cameos, many of which were modern copies of ancient originals (Zadoks-Josephus 1952; Maaskant-Kleibrink 1978, 34-39). Hemsterhuis was acquainted with contemporary gem engravers, and according to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), Lorenz Natter assisted him in assembling his cabinet (Maaskant-Kleibrink 1978, 36). Documentary evidence confirms that Natter produced copies of ancient gems for Hemsterhuis and his clients (Letter from Lorenz Natter to Frans Hemsterhuis (London, 24 November 1752), Weimar, Das Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, Inv. No.: GSA 33/509; FINA No. 8759). The broader phenomenon of the production of fake gems in the eighteenth century,

[2] Cod. Ott. Lat. 3107, Fol. 51: "(…) *Mà come che opera di si degnio Artefice fù creduta degnia d'esser copiata il S. Girolamo Rosa Livornese la copiò in una Corneola, mà vi aggiunse di più una figura in piedi che si uccide da le stessa, il di cui impronto essendo venuto alle mani del Baron Stosè in Firenze fece de gran sforzi per possederla al Marchese Lucatelli che ne fece acquisto, non sapendo ne esso, ne il Baron Stosè, che fosse copia ad alterata di più dal suo vero originale che si conserva frà gli intagli eruditi dal mio amico Cav. Odam. Nel mese d'Aprile del 1740.*"

however, remains complex and challenging to evaluate (Tassinari 2010a, 23-43; 2010b, 93-94).

On the other hand, there is evidence that some artists did produce fakes intended to be sold as ancient gems, or that dealers who purchased their works, originally not intended for deception, resold them as ancient, as in the case of Benedetto Pistrucci and the dealer Angiolo Bonelli (Dalton 1915, LIV). Occassionally, modern artists added signatures in Greek to their works, a common practice at the time, but one that could mislead inexperienced and less knowledgable buyers. Among the gem engravers associated with Stosch, Flavio Sirletti sometimes signed his works with the Greek name ΚΑΡΠΟΥ, ΦΛΑΒΙΟΥ, or simply the initials ΦΣ (Osborne 1912, 183; Dalton 1915, XLIX; Tassinari 2010b, 108). Lorenz Natter employed Greek signatures as well, including a direct translation of his surname ('water snake'): ΝΑΤΤΕΡ, ΝΑΤΤΗΡ, ΥΔΡΟΣ or ΥΔΡΟΥ (Raspe and Tassie 1791, XXXVI). At times, artists copied ancient gems, including the original signatures, like Carlo Costanzi, who reproduced the famous Strozzi Medusa with the signature of Solon (Walters 1926, No. 1829; Vollenweider 1966, 47-48, pl. 45.1-2; Zwierlein-Diehl 1986, No. 153; 2007, 410, Fig. 446). Natter criticised such practices, noting that they could easily be mistaken for authentic ancient pieces (Dalton 1915, p. LIV). In some cases, artists like Giovanni Pichler openly admitted that they allowed buyers to take their own works as ancient to demonstrate that they had achieved the same level of expertise as ancient masters (Dalton 1915, LIV; Trube and Trube 1999; 2001; Tassinari 2012). Furthermore, Pichler undertook restorations of ancient gems, for example, at the commission of William Hamilton (1730-1803), which he did not always disclose (Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 104).

Lastly, it is noteworthy that a surprisingly high number of eighteenth-century glass pastes and intaglios in Stosch's collection, catalogued in 1760 by Winckelmann, warrant particular attention (Winckelmann 1760). In section VIII, Winckelmann listed modern gems, some cut by Natter, Sirletti, Costanzi and Toricelli (Winckelmann 1760, class VIII; Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 95; Tassinari 2010a, 32 (with a comprehensive list of the gems cut by these artists and their present locations)). However, in the nineteenth century, Ernst Heinrich Tölken (1795-1878) and later Adolf Furtwängler (1853-1907), while cataloguing the collection of gems in the Antikensammlung in Berlin, detected many more glass pastes and modern intaglios (887 out of 3444 pieces) among Stosch's gems than Winckelmann had. The scale of this discovery was alarming, and Furtwängler criticised Stosch suggesting that he had purposefully included modern

works to enlarge his collection and to intermingle false gems with genuine ones (Furtwängler 1896, Nos. 8831-9422 – hardstone intaglios and Nos. 9423-10055 – glass pastes).

This theory appears far-fetched because at least up to 1747, Stosch systematically inventoried his gem collection with the assistance of his brother, Heinrich Sigismund. Together, they catalogued about 2,500 specimens, although their inventory has since been lost (Stosch 1757, 257-301 and 268-270; Letter from Winckelmann to Hagedorn 13 January 1759 – Winckelmann 1952-1957, vol. 1, 444-449, No. 262); Description of Stosch *museo* in Florence by Winckelmann to Mr. L.R.v.H. in Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste 5, 1759, 23-33 – Borbein *et al.* 2013, 363-365; Hansson 2014, 27). When Heinrich Wilhelm Muzell-Stosch inherited the collection, he attempted to complete that inventory list by adding roughly 1,000 remaining gems and to sell the collection promptly, but he failed to do this on his own (Borbein *et al.* 2013, XIV-XVI). Consequently, he asked Winckelmann, who had already been invited by Stosch shortly before he died, to compile a *catalogue raisonnée* of the collection. Winckelmann worked on this project for only eight months, primarily in Florence and later in Rome, relying mostly on sulphur impressions, drawings and other reproductions rather than the original gems. As a result, modern gems and glass pastes were intermixed with genuine ones, which led Winckelmann to make numerous errors in his catalogue (Furtwängler 1896, V).

Furtwängler was justified in suggesting that Winckelmann failed to identify many modern glass pastes among Stosch's gems, as their extraordinary craftsmanship made them highly convincing. He observed that they were covered with very cleverly made artificial corrosion, rendering them nearly indistinguishable from genuine ancient glass gems (Furtwängler 1900, vol. 3, 416-417). Today, only a few of Stosch's glass pastes remain accessible housed in the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin (Figs. 15-16), while the majority were looted by the Russians during WWII and are now in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (Zwierlein-Diehl 2007, 275; Borbein *et al.* 2019, VII-VIII, No. 4). These surviving examples nevertheless demonstrate that their fidelity to the originals was remarkable; however, they lack artificial patina and were produced in colors not typically used by ancient glass gem artisans. While some of the patina may have disappeared over time, Furtwängler's critique appears overly harsh toward both Stosch and Winckelmann. There may, however, be some validity in François Hemsterhuis's remark to Adelheid Amalia von Schmettau, written from The Hague on 28 September 1783, that the King of Prussia was badly fooled in

the purchase of Stosch's gems in 1764 (Letter of François Hemsterhuis to Adelheid Amalia von Schmettau sent from The Hague, 28 September 1783 – FINA No. 8801). Hemsterhuis likely referred to the fact that the cabinet sold to the king contained hundreds of modern gems and glass pastes alongside ancient pieces. Importantly, this situation reflects the efforts of Stosch's heirs to maximize the monetary value of the inherited collection, rather than any intentional deception on Stosch's part.

In conclusion, despite the persistence of opinions formulated after Stosch's death and repeated into the present, there is no substantive evidence that he engaged in the deliberate or large-scale production of counterfeit ancient gems with the intention to deceive. On the contrary, Stosch exercised careful supervision over the artists who collaborated with him and explicitly required them to sign their works to avoid any confusion with genuine antiquities (Masini also copied for Stosch the famous amethyst with Diana of the Mountains signed by Apollonides – Winckelmann 1760, class II, No. 295, p. 77; Tassinari 2022, 153). Stosch's almost obsessive accumulation of gems and their visual reproductions whether sulphur and glass impressions, drawings, or direct copies of intaglios, stemmed from his systematic approach to collecting and studying all forms of glyptic material (Borroni Salvadori 1978, 595-596). Because the fundamental techniques of gem engraving changed little from antiquity, Stosch's close observation of contemporary engravers provided valuable insights into ancient working methods. His collaboration with modern artists thus enhanced his ability to distinguish authentic ancient pieces from recent creations, expertise he intended to articulate in his never-completed treatise. In turn, this knowledge significantly contributed to the reputation he cultivated as an expert, and it supported his activities as a collector, dealer, and scholar (Tassinari 2010a, 31).

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Plate 1

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Pl. 1: 1 – Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No.: 1266, Pier Leone Ghezzi, Baron Stosch disputing over gems and coins with antiquarians in his house, Pier Leone Ghezzi in the background, pen and brown ink, 270mm x 353 mm, ©The ALBERTINA Museum, Vienna

Pl. 1: 2 – London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1890,0601.50, carnelian intaglio, 12mm x 9mm, *c.* 20 BC, ©The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Pl. 1: 3 – Baltimore, the Walters Art Museum, Inv. No.: 42.109, garnet (almandine) intaglio, 18mm x 15mm, second half of the 1st century BC, ©The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

Plate 2

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Pl. 2: 1 – Cambridge, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Inv. No.: CG 165 (S 25 (CM), carnelian intaglio, 16mm x 12mm, last quarter of the 1st century BC, photo ©The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Pl. 2: 2 – Attributed to Lorenz Natter, pencil, 143mm x 125mm, *c.* 1732-1735, The National Museum in Krakow: Collections of The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 2889, photo by the author

Pl. 2: 3 – Girolamo Odam, pen and brown ink with grey wash, 180mm x 152mm, *c.* 1718-1726, The National Museum in Krakow: Collections of The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 3073, photo by the author

Pl. 2: 4 – Berlin, Antikensammlung, Inv. No.: FG 2305, rock crystal intaglio, 37mm x 29mm, *c.* 20-10 BC, ©Johannes Laurentius

Plate 3

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Pl. 3: 1 – Attributed to Lorenz Natter, pencil, 205mm x 142mm, *c.* 1732-1735, The National Museum in Krakow: Collections of The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 2890 (Photo by the author)

Pl. 3: 2 – Baltimore, the Walters Art Museum, Inv. No.: 42.1028, amethyst intaglio, 37mm x 28mm, *c.* 1730s attributed to Lorenz Natter, ©The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

Pl. 3: 3 – Lorenz Natter, banded agate intaglio, 17mm x 13mm, *c.* 1730s, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. GS-10342 (Photo in public domain)

Pl. 3: 4 – Girolamo Odam, pen and brown ink with grey wash, 120mm x 156mm, *c.* 1718-1726, The National Museum in Krakow: Collections of The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Inv. No.: MNK XV Rr. 3724 (Photo by the author)

Plate 4

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Pl. 4: 1 – Lorenz Natter, carnelian intaglio, 16mm x 11mm, first half of the 18th century, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. GS-10339 (Photo in public domain)

Pl. 4: 2 – Boston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Acc. No.: 27.734, garnet intaglio, 21 x 15mm, *c.* 100 BC, signed by Gaios (ΓΑΙΟC EPOIEI), ©2024 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Pl. 4: 3 – Lorenz Natter, topaz intaglio, signed L.NATTH EII, London, the British Museum, Inv. No.: 1978,1002.1069, 22mm, *c.* 1732-1735? ©The Trustees of the British Museum, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Pl. 4: 4 – Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Inv. No.: 9818, glass paste, ©SMB Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Photo: Sandra Steiß)

Pl. 4: 5 – Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Inv. No.: 9863, glass paste, ©SMB Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Photo: Sandra Steiß)