

## BEARDED HERACLES DEPICTIONS FROM ANCIENT TLOS

### TLOS ANTİK KENTİ'NDEN SAKALLI HERAKLES BETİMLEMELERİ

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**Abstract:** The two different material groups recovered from the excavations carried out in the ancient city of Tlos, with common iconographic narratives, consisting of busts of the bearded Heracles, are the subject of this study. The first of these works is a black glazed ceramic piece decorated in the appliqué technique that was recovered from the filling layer in front of the rock tomb number KM-2 in the city's acropolis in 2005. The second is a carved gem found in a tomb in the Karaveliler area, to the northeast of the city center. In this study both works are evaluated in terms of dating criteria of their own material group, e.g. technique of production, stylistic features and find context. A general evaluation of the bearded busts within the iconographies of Heracles, popularly employed in the visual narratives of the Greek and Roman periods is made, based around the Tlos examples. And, in addition, apart from the use of Heracles as a motive, its presence within the Lycian religious system and his relationship with local deities is examined in this same section concerning iconography.

**Keywords:** Heracles • Lycia • Tlos • Gem • Hellenistic Pottery

**Öz:** Tlos Antik Kenti'nde yürütülen kazılardan ele geçen iki farklı malzeme grubu, üzerlerindeki sakallı Herakles büstünden oluşan ortak ikonografik anlatımlarıyla bu çalışmanın konusunu oluşturur. Eserlerden ilki 2005 yılında kent in akropolünde bulunan KM-2 numaralı kaya mezarının ön alanındaki dolgu tabakasından ele geçen aplike tekniğiyle bezeli siyah firmisli seramik parçasıdır. İkinci eser ise kent merkezinin kuzey doğusundaki Karaveliler Mevkiindeki lahitte ele geçen bir gemme buluntusudur. Çalışma içerisinde her iki eser kendi malzeme grubunun tarihlendirme kriterlerine göre, örneğin yapım tekniği, stil özellikleri ve buluntu konteksti doğrultusunda değerlendirilecektir. İkonografi başlığı altında ise Tlos örneklerinden yola çıkarak Yunan ve Roma Dönemlerinin görsel anlatımlarında sevilerek kullanılan Herakles ikonografileri içerisindeki sakallı büstlerin genel bir değerlendirmesinin yapılması amaçlanmıştır. Ayrıca Herakles karakterinin motifsel kullanımı dışında Likya inanç sistemi içerisindeki varlığı ve yerel tanrılarla ilişkisi aynı bölümde irdelenecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Herakles • Likya • Tlos • Gemme • Hellenistik Seramik

The two different material groups obtained from the excavations carried out in the Tlos, with common iconographic narratives that consist of bearded Heracles bust, form the subject of this study. Tlos located in the Xanthus Valley to the east of Fethiye was one of major six cities in Lycia (Fig. 1)<sup>1</sup>. The first of the findings with bearded Heracles bust is a black glazed ceramic fragment decorated with the appliqué technique, which was recovered from the deposit in front of the rock tomb numbered KM-2 in the city's acropolis in 2005. The other is an engraved gem found in a tomb in Karaveliler area to the northeast of the city center. In this study, both finds have been evaluated within the dating criteria of their own material group, e.g. construction technique, style features and context. Under the title of iconography, it was aimed to make a general evaluation of the bearded busts

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<sup>1</sup> For ancient city of Tlos in general see. Korkut 2016.



Fig. 1. *The Location of Tlos* (Korkut – Uygun 2017, fig. 6. 1).

within the Heracles iconographies, which were popularly used in the visual narratives of Greek and Roman periods, based on the examples from Tlos. In addition, apart from the use of the character Heracles as a motive, its existence within the Lycian religious system and its relationship with local deities will be examined in the same section.

### Description, Style and Dating

**Ceramic Fragment Decorated with Applique Technique** (Tlos 2005, Acropolis KM 2, Clay: 7.5 YR 6/6 Slip: 7.5 YR 2.5 /1)

A small fragment of black glazed ceramic was found in the deposit in front of the rock tomb numbered KM-2 in the acropolis of Tlos during the excavation season of 2005. It is difficult to understand its vase type from protected fragment. However, the fact that there is no slip in the interior of the ceramic suggests a closed container form such as *lagynos*, *oinochoe* or *olpe*. Black glaze on the exterior of the fragment was damaged due to coating by lime. In spite of this, it may be seen that there is a bearded male bust in profile, faced right, in an oval frame on the fragment (Fig. 2-3). The hair of the figure, depicted as a thick and flat strip, curls in the temple and joins with the beard. The eyes are hollow, and the forehead is protuberant. The nose is flat, while the wing section is raised. The lip contour that is depicted closely to nose can not be observed clearly due to the erosion of the ceramic surface. As far as it can be traced from the end of the chin, the beard is combined with the hair by forming a thick strip. The bust ends with a short, thick neckline.

With its decoration technique, the fragment falls under the black glazed ceramics group, popularly used during the Hellenistic Period as ceramic replicas of expensive metal vases decorating the tables of aristocrats in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC<sup>2</sup>. Bright and homogenous black glazed ceramics were used as quality tableware since the beginning of the Hellenistic Period in a wide area including the coasts of Italy, Greece, Anatolia and the Mediterranean. In addition to the open and closed black glazed tableware, the lamps, containers of cosmetics, liturgical pottery are decorated with figures in relief using the mold or appliqué techniques. Figurative and plantal reliefs usually adorn the joints

<sup>2</sup> Burn 2004, 30-31 fig. 10; Bothmer 1982, 14-15 cat. no 850, 853.

of the tondo, body and handle, as in the case of metal vases<sup>3</sup>. Other decoration techniques used in black glazed plates and bowls were stamping and polychrome painting, which were used initially in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>4</sup>. Repertoire of decorations on black glazed ceramics is mostly figurative, vegetative and linear compositions. In figurative depictions, mythological characters and scenes from everyday life are the most frequently preferred themes, while in plantal decorations themes such as ivy leaves, palmettes, and rosette motifs are common<sup>5</sup>.

The representation of a male bust in the black glazed ceramic fragment found in the Tlos is also made with the applique technique. Since the bust and its oval frame stick out from the ceramic surface, it gives the impression of a three-dimensional image. The position of the head, which has a high relief effect, the thick and strong neck structure, the flattened nose and the protruding eyebrow physiognomy are identical to those of the weary Heracles type of the Hellenistic Period, both in terms of style and iconography. Small differences in detail can also be observed in a detailed comparison between the example from Tlos and weary Heracles heads, which are generally dominated by a baroque face structure with curly short hair, fluffy long beard, flattened nose, deep eyes and any other detail accentuated. For example, there is no wreath or diadem was put on the head contrary to Heracles depictions. Instead of this he was depicted bare headed and with a wavy hair in the front and straight hair in the back<sup>6</sup>. The difference of the hair can be explained by the detailed processing of the prominent parts of the subject, due to the quality of high relief, and more superficial processing of the parts that remain in the background. On the other hand, the lack of lip detail and the schematic processing of the beard in three rows of strips are another evidence of poor workmanship. The reasons for the absence of diadem and wreath, which were the usual elements as seen in other similar busts, should be sought in the preferences of the craftsman<sup>7</sup>.

The Heracles bust on the ceramic from Tlos bear the characteristics of the Hellenistic Period since it belongs to the black glazed ceramics group and the head is depicted in the style of the epoch. Terracotta<sup>8</sup> and sculpture<sup>9</sup> heads of Heracles figures dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC help the dating of this specimen from Tlos. On the other hand, finding context is not effective in dating because it was obtained from a deposit with different chronological ceramics dating from the Classical Period to the Byzantine Period. The most important production centers of applique-decorated ceramics with



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Richter 1987 fig. 476, 486, 488.

<sup>4</sup> Rotroff 1997, 37-38.

<sup>5</sup> Zhuravlev 2014, 141 fig. 12.

<sup>6</sup> LIMC IV 2, 171, 177-178.

<sup>7</sup> For busts without wreath see. LIMC IV 2, 169.

<sup>8</sup> Thomson 1987 pl. 504a, T 2297.

<sup>9</sup> Wakeley – Ridgway 1965, 156-160 pl. 43, 1-4.



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

black or red glaze in Anatolia during the Hellenistic Period are Pergamon<sup>10</sup>, Ephesos<sup>11</sup> and Knidos<sup>12</sup> workshops. The production of these centers can be distinguished by clay color and texture. In this context, it can be thought that the fragment from the Tlos is a closed vase as an *olpe* or jug and imported from Pergamon due to its clay-color and texture.

**Engraved Gem** (Tlos 2015, Alexandros Tomb, Onyx, Height: 1.1 cm Width: 0.9 cm)

The other bust addressed in this study is an engraved gem with gray-vein over black, made of onyx stone<sup>13</sup> (Fig. 4-5). The engraved gem was found during the excavations a sarcophagus at Karaveliler, which is a part of the Classical Period settlements belonging to the ancient city of Tlos<sup>14</sup>. This sarcophagus bears the features of a Lycian type, such as its rectangular coffer body crowned by a gabled lid. Name of the owner of the sarcophagus is "Alexandros" as the Greek inscription on its smoothed northern side reads. It is understood from the archaeological and anthropological data obtained from the excavations on the interior and external surroundings that the sarcophagus was used from the Classical Period up to the Early Byzantine Period<sup>15</sup>. Most of the archaeological finds, the date of which vary from the Hellenistic to the Roman period, like the engraved gem that is introduced below, were found outside the sarcophagus.

The head depicted on the engraved gem is tilted to the left. Its wide forehead is surrounded by short bangs, a protruding eyebrow and a deep eye structure. Enclosed with the upper and lower eyelids, the left pupil is depicted in the middle of whole face and the right pupil is depicted close to the nose. Other details observed on the engraved gem are protruding cheekbones, the downwardly rounded nose, the small but fleshy lip almost disappearing between the moustache and the beard and the half-moon shaped ear contour. On the head there is a wreath with two rows of laurel leaves. The tenea of the wreath tied like a bowknot flows with mild waves down from the back of the figure's neck.

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Gem, which comes from the Latin word *gemma*, is the name given to precious or semiprecious stones shaped by carving<sup>16</sup>. In addition to its use as a decorative element, gems designed as personal seals are placed in rings made of gold, silver, and iron for ease of carrying and aesthetic value. The use of a seal to secure a possessed object or a written letter dates back to 6<sup>th</sup> millennia BC such as the

<sup>10</sup> Zhuravlev 2014, 129-150.

<sup>11</sup> Peloschek, Lätzer – Lasar 2014, 59.

<sup>12</sup> Kögler 2014, 164-166.

<sup>13</sup> Özdemir 2016, 57 kat. no 24 lev. 8, 21; Korkut – Uygün 2017, 118 fig. 6. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Korkut 2016, 122-125.

<sup>15</sup> Korkut – Uygün 2017 fig. 6. 9-11.

<sup>16</sup> Konuk – Arslan 2000, 11.

cylinder-shaped examples in Mesopotamia<sup>17</sup>. The development of stone carving industry enriched with Egyptian scarabs, which were not only seals, but also in the function of amulet in the Bronze Age. Engraved gem production went on with variously iconography in Greece and the Islands during the Iron Age and later on.

As far as it may be seen from a few publications, iconographical depictions can be found in Anatolian engraved gems under the influence of Greek, Persian and Roman cultures. The example from Tlos is in the iconography of Farnese Heracles, with its thick neck depicted from  $\frac{3}{4}$  sides, muscular facial expressions and a strongly tilted head, just like the black glazed ceramic piece described above. The protruding eyebrows, prominent cheekbones, and the beard-mustache structure engraved in threads remind the baroque style of the Hellenistic Period. On the other hand, instead of the short curly hair tufts seen in the heads of other copies of Farnese Heracles –dated 4<sup>th</sup> century BC– in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the example from Tlos represents a hair structure with short straight forelocks, slightly curved in the tips, peculiar to the Julio-Claudian Period. In Heracles busts, which were used in the engraved gems of the Hellenistic and Roman periods as was also the case in previous periods, the beard is depicted with curls<sup>18</sup>, while hair is also depicted with curls but in short straight lines<sup>19</sup>. Bearded Heracles busts with similar curly or linear depicted hair on engraved gems and bullas are preserved in the İzmir Museum Collection<sup>20</sup>, the Gaziantep Museum Collection<sup>21</sup>, the Yüksel Erimtan Collection, and are also found in Doliche<sup>22</sup> and Zeugma Excavations<sup>23</sup> in Anatolia. These engraved gems and bullas dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD are the Roman Period interpretations of bearded Heracles busts produced in the Hellenistic Period. It is somewhat difficult to determine the date of some engraved gems with Heracles busts, on which the Hellenistic style is presented successfully in Julio-Claudian Period, though they lack of finding context. For the example from Tlos it could be suggested a dating to Julio-Claudian period because of the hair model on his forehead. Further, the type of the glass unguentarium, which was obtained with engraved gems of Tlos in the surroundings around the sarcophagus supports a dating in the Julio-Claudians Period in terms of finding context. Another significant aspect of the engraved gem from Tlos is that it is an example whose place of finding is known that can be dated based on the context among similar engraved gems found in museums or private collections. Additionally, as far as it is seen in the literature, it is the only example of a gem with bearded Heracles iconography in the Lycia region.

### Iconography

Heracles depicted in a common iconography on two different material groups from Tlos excavations, as one of the most famous characters of Greek mythology, is a semi-mortal hero, son of mortal Alcmene and Zeus<sup>24</sup>. The name Heracles, which means "Hera's Glory" or "Heros (Hero)", took precedence over the hero's real name Alcides, given after his grandfather Alcaios. The fact that shaped the life of Heracles', who was raised by his mortal father Amphitryon and expert trainers in

<sup>17</sup> Gates 2015, 76-77.

<sup>18</sup> Richter 1971, 59-60 cat. no 263-267; Konuk – Arslan 2000 kat. no 200-205; Lafli 2015, 89 abb. 33.

<sup>19</sup> Greifenhagen 1975 taf. 30, 5; LIMC IV 2, 167-168; Spier 1992, 99 cat. no 234.

<sup>20</sup> Lafli 2015, 89 abb. 33.

<sup>21</sup> Yinesor-Demir 2008, 110 kat. no 12.

<sup>22</sup> Maaskant-Kleibrink 1971 fig. 110-111 no. 99-100.

<sup>23</sup> Önal 2010, 40 kat. no 41.

<sup>24</sup> Erhat 1989, 148-151; Grimal 2007, 245-271; Graves 2012, 599-762; Howatson 2013, 378-380.

their field, is actually the jealousy of Zeus' sister and also of his wife Hera for her husband. Amongst the half-mortal heroes such as Perseus, Theseus and Achilles, Heracles was entitled to ascend to mount Olympus and to be among the gods after he fulfills 12 difficult labors and wins several tough struggles. He continues his life in Olympus by marrying the goddess Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Hera, as seen on the Corinthian aryballos dating back in the 6th century BC<sup>25</sup>.

Heracles had to struggle with many difficulties since his childhood because of Hera's wrath. His disciples were mostly athletes because he overcame these struggles with his physical powers resulting from his semi-deity origin. Because of this feature, the hero can be characterized as the gymnasium god, and he has received great respect in the cities of Greece, Italy and Anatolia, and so in his name games were organized and sanctuaries were created<sup>26</sup>. Heracles was worshiped in the cities of Ionia, Pisidia, Lycia and Pamphylia<sup>27</sup> either directly as a Greek god or by being identified with the local deity of the region<sup>28</sup>. An example that reflects this is the mergence of Heracles and the mounted local god Kakasbos deified in Telmessos and its vicinity in the Lycian region<sup>29</sup>.

The ancient writers were not indifferent to the hero; Homer, Herodotus, Diodorus and Pausanias gave information about the life and cult of Heracles in their works. His life was used in the political propaganda of prominent people such as Peisistratos, one of the Archaic Period tyrants of the city of Athens, and as a result he became a figure frequently used in architectural sculpture works of the period<sup>30</sup>. Heracles' struggles that required superhuman power were used as propaganda in the friezes of Athens<sup>31</sup> and Siphnos<sup>32</sup> Treasury Buildings in Delphi, the Selinus C. Temple<sup>33</sup> in Italy, and Assos Athena Temple<sup>34</sup> in Anatolia in the Archaic Period. The role of the bond between Athena and the hero is of great importance among ruler Heracles as a model. As the main goddess of the city of Athens protected Achilles in the battle of Troy, she was beside Heracles during these nearly impossible labors, and their relationship was reflected in both architectural sculptural works<sup>35</sup> and vases<sup>36</sup>.

Heracles is considered by some scholars to have been Phoenician in origin, identified with Melqart, the chief god of the city of Tyros<sup>37</sup>. His representation in Greek visual art actually began in the second half of 8<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>38</sup>. The hero is often depicted in sculptures, terracotta, engraved gems, and especially in vase paintings<sup>39</sup>, during the Archaic and Classical Periods. The hero presented with a beard and muscular body on the vase paintings has two depictions as young and bearded Heracles,

<sup>25</sup> LIMC V 2, 163, 3331.

<sup>26</sup> Stafford 2012, 176-194; for the Heracles cult in Anatolia see. Özdemir 2016, 56.

<sup>27</sup> Korkut 2004, 199.

<sup>28</sup> Özdemir 2016, 56.

<sup>29</sup> Özdemir 2016, 56-57; Akyürek-Şahin 2016, 537-538, 541-542; Schürr 2016, 105-106.

<sup>30</sup> Boardman 2013, 168-169 res. 192, 194, 196.

<sup>31</sup> Boardman 2013, 177-178 res. 213.

<sup>32</sup> Richter 1987, 88 fig. 106.

<sup>33</sup> Richter 1987, 74 fig. 80.

<sup>34</sup> Baykan 2008, 139-144.

<sup>35</sup> For Olympia Zeus Temple, see Richter 1987, 108-109 fig. 133.

<sup>36</sup> For red figure vase depictions, see Mertens 1987, 49-51 kat. no 34.

<sup>37</sup> For Herakles-Tyros city relationship, see Stafford 2012, 191-193. This relationship continues in the Hellenistic Period as Alexander the Great arranged festivals and sport events in the name of Heracles in the city of Tyros, albeit with an intention of announcing Alexander's own victory. See. Özgan 2016, 27.

<sup>38</sup> Boysal 1979, 13; Fuchs – Floren 1987, 33 taf. 5. 1, 8.

<sup>39</sup> Picon 2007, 86 cat. no 89.

in accordance with the absence and presence of the beard respectively. On the eastern pediment of the Aphaia Temple in Aegina dated in the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>40</sup>, is represented young Heracles addressing the athletes in a gymnasium. The popular depiction of bearded Heracles of the Archaic Period continues in the Late Classical-Early Hellenistic Period style in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. With a strong head structure and facial muscles, it is differentiated from the mature male pattern symbolizing the father or the husband, on the grave stelae of the period<sup>41</sup>.

Heracles has been one of the heroes, whom Alexander the Great took as a role model, and he depicted himself with the hide of the Nemea lion in his coins<sup>42</sup>. The bearded Heracles group were preferred in the Heracles depictions of the Hellenistic Period within the compositions known as "Farnese Heracles"<sup>43</sup> or "Heracles Epitrapezios"<sup>44</sup>, which express the "weary" state of the hero during the process in which he completed his challenging labors. The bearded head looking to the right, and the strong facial structure dominated by the weary expression are characteristic in both compositions, which became famous through the interpretation of the famous sculptor of the period, Lysippos, which were replicated in large numbers during the Roman Period.

Another prominent group among the depictions of Heracles consists of the busts the lower ends of which are aligned at the neck or chest. These busts, which were generally preferred in small objects such as ring stones, medallions and coins depending on the surface of the carved area, are categorized under two main groups: bearded and beardless, as this case is observed also in the depictions of the whole body. Over this long course of time from the Archaic Period to the Roman Period, Heracles busts were depicted on engraved gems, coins and ceramics in frontal look with short hair and without beard<sup>45</sup>. In Roman art that contains the artistic elements of Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, Heracles busts appear in archaic style combined with the head of Hermes on a herm<sup>46</sup>. It is possible to see the Heracles busts with or without skin of Nemean lion, with small differences in detail on engraved gems from Classical Period or classically influenced gems from Roman Period<sup>47</sup>. In the Hellenistic Period, the Heracles busts were either depicted from the side or  $\frac{3}{4}$  front, imitating the head of the Farnese Heracles of Lysippos, or in front like the images of Medusa. This composition, which we can be defined as a pattern for the Heracles busts of the Hellenistic Period, is also found in the iconographies of the Hellenistic kingdoms in the east, as is seen in the depiction on the obverse of the Bactrian King Euthydemus I's coin<sup>48</sup>. In addition to coins, the bearded Heracles iconography is also used in sculpture and appliqué ceramic ornaments<sup>49</sup>. The Heracles busts on the appliqué decorated ceramic piece and on the engraved gem, both being found in the excavations at Tlos, are two examples of Heracles Busts produced under the influence of Farnese

<sup>40</sup> Richter 1987 fig. 113.

<sup>41</sup> Bald-Romano 2006, 50-52 cat. no 31. When it is compared to the statue head found in Samsun dated between 300-100 BC and to the old mortal figures on the grave stelae in Hellenistic Period, the difference becomes obvious.

<sup>42</sup> Mertens 1982, 11 S37-S41.

<sup>43</sup> Vermeule 1975, 323-332.

<sup>44</sup> Wakeley – Ridgway 1965, 157-160; Doksanaltı 2016, 467-480.

<sup>45</sup> LIMC IV 2, 734, 4-6, 11-15.

<sup>46</sup> Bald-Romano 2006, 179 cat. no 88.

<sup>47</sup> LIMC IV 2, 86-89, 92, 97.

<sup>48</sup> Stančo 2012, 147 1 (209) fig. 198.

<sup>49</sup> Stančo 2012, 152 10 (218) fig. 218; 155 20-21 (228-229) fig. 227, 229.

Heracles statue during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods.

### Conclusion

In this study, bearded Heracles busts on two different materials, one a black glazed appliqué ceramic fragment and the other an engraved gem onyx stone, found in the ancient city of Tlos, were described in terms of characteristics both in style and in iconography. Black glazed ceramic fragment was found on the eastern side of the acropolis, in the deposit in front of the tomb numbered KM-2. This piece, which has no feature of profile except for its form of a closed container having no slip inside, is one of the examples of Hellenistic Period, in the group of black glazed ceramics decorated with the appliqué technique produced since 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Bearded Heracles bust was produced copying the “Farnese Heracles” iconography of the famous sculptor Lysippos. Protruding forehead, hollow eyes, short and thick neck structure are characteristic features of this type defined as the weary Heracles. These characteristics can be dated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and it was produced in Pergamon atelier as its clay color and texture indicate. Pergamon was one of the important production center like Ephesos and Knidos in Western Anatolia during the Hellenistic Period.

A bearded Heracles bust was also depicted on the onyx engraved gem found in the Alexandros sarcophagus at the Karaveliler locality where traces of the Classical Period settlement belonging to the ancient city of Tlos are found. This bust in the iconography of Farnese Heracles, bears the stylistic features of the Julio-Claudian Period with its short forelocks falling on the forehead, besides its facial physiognomy under the baroque influence of the Hellenistic Period. For this reason, it is dated between the Augustan Period and the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

Heracles, who was presented in a common iconography on two different material groups in the ancient city of Tlos and belonging to different periods, was a popular figure used in visual narratives in Greece from the Geometric Period. With his semi-divine character, having a life with arduous tasks and labors, and finally ascending to Olympus, he is a hero admired and taken as a role model by large groups of people from ordinary athletes to Alexander the Great. This attribute was not limited to Greek cult and art, and it was continued in Roman art as “Hercules” used in the depictions of Emperor Commodus and later Caracalla under the influence of iconography of Heracles<sup>50</sup>. Heracles considered amongst the gymnasium gods through the competitions held in his name, is one of the Greek gods respected in Greece, Italy, Anatolia, and even Afghanistan. It is also shown in the depiction on a block in the theater of Tlos that gladiators were also respected Heracles who was depicted with a club in his hand and a skin of the Nemean lion on his back and who was identified with the local deity Kakasbos<sup>51</sup> in Lycia during the Roman Period –although still controversial<sup>52</sup>.

Two of the Heracles depictions that were identified in three pieces found in the excavations in the ancient city of Tlos, are styled in “Farnese Heracles” of Hellenistic Period origin, while the third one is the description, seen in Southern Italy red figure vases dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, with the club and the skin of the Nemean lion<sup>53</sup>. Both compositions were popularly used primarily in plastic arts, as well as on engraved gems and coins during the Roman Period<sup>54</sup>. Iconographical preferences

<sup>50</sup> Kleiner 1992, 276, 323 fig. 243, 285.

<sup>51</sup> For Kakasbos/Herkales/Maseis relationship see. Delemen 1999, 4-38.

<sup>52</sup> Özdemir 2016, 57-58.

<sup>53</sup> LIMC IV, 2, 271.

<sup>54</sup> LIMC IV, 2, 476, 479.



were depended on personal tastes and inclinations in some cases, like the case of the ceramic and engraved gem found in the ancient city of Tlos, while in some cases the concept in public structure, in which gladiator fights took place, was taken into consideration, like the case of the relief found in the cavea. On the other hand, it should be answered if the findings, on which the bearded Heracles busts were depicted and the relief found in the theater, might have been associated with a Heracles cult in the city, as an important question at this point. In order to say something definite on a possible concept of such a cult in the region, epigraphic data is required beside the visual narratives. There is no related information, for example, on an agon held in the name of Heracles or no attestation for the employment of the hero as the fine collection agent for tomb violations in the funerary inscriptions.

However, the appearance of Heracles in the iconography of the local god Kakasbos in Lycia during the Roman period and his depiction on the reverses of the coins from Korydalla, Arykanda and Akalissos can be taken as the evidence for the importance of the hero in the region of Lycia. Moreover, the inclusion of Heracles amongst the gods, who were worshiped as the gymnasium deities in the ancient city of Tlos, also supports the reverence for him in this region. In conclusion, in this paper is shown the importance of the hero in the city through archaeological finds introduced in terms of their iconography. The question on whether he also had a cult in Tlos or not, can only be answered through the epigraphic evidence and visual narratives, which might be discovered in gymnasium.

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