



A Neoclassical carnelian intaglio set in an 18k gold ring. Zeus Labraundos, after the Hekatomnid coinage of Halikarnassos.

Intaglio 15 × 21 mm;

18k gold mount – ring size EU 53 (US 6½ / UK M½) — open hoop, adjustable; gross weight 7.46 g.

Neoclassical intaglio, late 18th – early 19th century, after a Carian coin type of the 4th century B.C.

Very good condition; crisp engraving; hoop opened at the back for adjustment; eagle's head hallmark (French 18k guarantee mark)

An 18k gold ring with closed oval bezel, set with a large carnelian intaglio depicting Zeus Labraundos, the Carian Zeus of the double axe.

A bearded male figure standing on a ground line, seen from behind in slight three-quarter view, the head turned in profile to the left. He wears a close-fitting cap; the mantle does not cross the shoulders: held at both forearms, it runs behind the hips and leaves back and torso entirely bare, its ends falling on either side to the calves. The right hand raises a spear with leaf-shaped point; the left hand holds, resting on the ground, the long-hafted double axe, the labrys. Broad, assured engraving, a modelled muscular back, drapery in long supple folds: the vocabulary of the Neoclassical engravers, here placed in the service of a learned iconography.

Historical context - Ancient Numismatic

The silver tetradrachms and didrachms struck at Halikarnassos by the Hekatomnid dynasts of Caria — Maussollos (377–353 B.C.), then Pixodaros (341–336 B.C.) — show on the obverse the facing head of Apollo and on the reverse **Zeus Labraundos standing, draped, double axe over the shoulder and**

long sceptre in hand.

The Neoclassical engraver kept the god's attributes and stature but reversed the viewpoint (figure seen from behind), set the axe on the ground and bared the torso: the hieratic coin formula becomes a *back study all'antica*. This dialogue between gem and coin is characteristic of the engravers active in Rome and London in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, fed by the numismatic corpora (Pellerin, Eckhel) that introduced "Jupiter Labrandeus" to connoisseurs.

Iconography and symbolism

Zeus Labraundos is the god of the sanctuary of Labraunda, in the mountains north of Mylasa, patronised by the Hekatomnids. His double axe is one of the oldest emblems of power in Anatolia: Plutarch records that Herakles took it from the Amazon queen Hippolyte and gave it to Omphale; kept by the kings of Lydia, it was carried to Caria and placed in the hand of the god's statue, who was named Labraundos, "labrys" being the Lydian word for axe (Greek Questions, 45). Herodotus and Strabo refer to the same god as Zeus Stratios, Zeus "of the armies". Spear and axe together make him a sovereign and warrior god, guarantor of the Carian confederation — a rare subject in glyptic, betraying a learned patron.