

Some Magical Gems in London

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ON A TRIP to London there came to my attention a number of unpublished magical gems at the British Museum and at the Museum of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London.¹ Of the new gems from the British Museum, three are said to come from Egypt (nos. 38, 40, 49) and one from Crete (no. 42). I also had the opportunity to examine another series of gems in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL, that were published roughly a century ago by Petrie himself and deserve fuller treatment.² Two of these are said to come from Egypt (nos. 10 and 26) and it is likely, but not certain, that the others do as well, but, since Petrie also bought antiquities in Athens, Rome, and London, one cannot be certain. Many of the stones treated below seem to belong to a lower socio-economic level than most magical gems: they are carved from less valuable stones and had suspension holes drilled into them, instead of being shaped for insertion into a ring or a pendent.³

¹ Many thanks to four people for all their help and kindness: Chris Entwistle at the British Museum, and at UCL Steven Quirke and Pia Edqvist at the Petrie Museum and Rachael Sparks at the Institute of Archaeology. Thanks also to Thomas Keith for his help editing this article.

² He published most of them first with white added to the intaglios to enhance the details: *Amulets* p.30 with plates xxi–xxii, nos. 135a–w, and then again without the added white in *ODU* pp.14–15 (nos. 5 and 8a), 20 (no. 235), and 21 (nos. 330–352). Writing decades before the seminal works of Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets* (1950), and Delatte and Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (1964), he made a number of understandable errors that are silently corrected here.

³ All measurements are in centimeters. Abbreviations used: *Amulets*: W. M. F. Petrie, *Amulets, Illustrated by the Egyptian Collection in University*

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1) UCL 1827: mottled green and red jasper (heliotrope) slightly chipped. Top edge may have been trimmed to fit new setting (*fig.* 1a-b).

Measurement: width 3.0 × height 2.4. Shape: oval.

Obverse: eye of Horus flanked by two crowned serpents; Greek letters above (αηχιου) and below (νρκισοι).

Reverse: four lines of symbols⁴ mixed with Greek letters, primarily vowels (asterisk indicates symbol):

ηχω**αιω
ιχ*ιωηι**
*αιυο***αιο
**μωη



Figure 1 a

b

2) UCL 1830: grey-brown schist (*fig.* 2).

Measurement: 1.6 × 2.0. Shape: oval.

Obverse: A common type apparently used in love magic (see Michel 265–266): Eros tied to a pillar atop of which sits a griffin with the wheel of Nemesis under its raised paw. Inscriptions to the left and right: δικάίως δέδεσαι “Justly you have been bound!” The words seem to have been inscribed by two different hands: in the first the letters are regular, more deeply incised, and all have serifs, while in the second

¹ College London (London 1914)

BM: S. Michel, *Die magischen Gemmen im Britischen Museum I–II* (London 2001)

LIM: A. Mastrocinque, *Les intailles magiques du département des Monnaies, Médailles et Antiques* (Paris 2014)

Michel: S. Michel, *Die magischen Gemmen: Zu Bildern und Zauberformeln auf geschnittenen Steinen* (Berlin 2004)

ODU: W. M. F. Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use* (London 1927)

Veymiers: R. Veymiers, *Ἰλεως τῶ φοροῦντι: Sérapis sur les gemmes et les bijoux antiques* (Brussels 2009)

⁴ By ‘symbols’ is meant the many strange signs found on magical gems, which are sometimes called *caractères* in the Greek magical papyri.

the letters have no serifs, are of different sizes, and the horizontal strokes go beyond their expected boundaries—the second letter, for instance, at first glance looks like a *xi* but is in fact an *epsilon*, and there is a similar problem with the *sigma*. There is no crossbar for the *alpha*. Since these kinds of gems are usually engraved with the adverb *δικαίως* alone, we can assume that the verb was thought to be self-evident from the illustration. On this gem, however, a second person (perhaps the owner?) added the verb, albeit oddly in the perfect tense.

Reverse: blank.



Figure 2

3) UCL 1831: hematite cut down or broken on right; badly worn (*fig. 3*).

Measurement: 1.75 × 2.0. Shape: oval.

Obverse: A fairly common type (see Michel 308–309): a lion-headed figure, sometimes called Helioros, facing to his right with a circular object in his right hand (it looks like a wreath, but a globe would be expected). In the left hand sheaves of wheat are held downwards. The inscription to the left is broken and worn and seems to read *λαβλιξιων* or *λαβαξιων*. The first four letters (*λαβα*) appear on the reverse of a gem in Paris (*LIM* no. 279) along with *Ἰάω* and *Φρήν* (= *Re*), suggesting it is a solar name; that *labai* in Coptic means “lion” may also be significant.⁵ The inscription to the right is

⁵ W. M. Brashear, “The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and

even more difficult to read, because the several letters are missing their lower halves. The following seems possible:
 λισγιαυμιηχ.

Reverse: blank and broken.



Figure 3

4) Petrie Museum UC8823 (= *ODU* no. 341 = *Amulets* no. 135q): black steatite.

Measurements: 3.8 × 2.5. Shape: convex heart-shape with suspension tab.

Obverse: A common type used to cure stomach problems (see Michel 287): an ibis with neck tied from behind to an altar and a plant with crescent moon above; below the ground-line we see the ~~-SSS-~~ symbol associated with Chnoubis (but with only two S's)

Reverse: εὐπέπτ(ε)ι (“Have good digestion!”) with two horizontal lines at the bottom.

5) Petrie Museum UC22578 (= *ODU* no. 344 = *Amulets* no. 135m): lapis lazuli(?) with chipped edges and badly corroded surface.

Measurements: 3.0 × 2.5. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type (Michel 269–271): Harpocrates with a circular nimbus intersected by six double rays on the sides and some kind of disk and feathers on top. He sits frontally, probably on a lotus flower, in a reed boat, with outstretched

Survey,” *ANRW* II 18.5 (1995) 3380–3684, at 3590.

arms, and on either side stand winged figures, probably Isis and Nephthys (the one on the right is badly weathered). The impression suggests that there was text below the boat.

Reverse: Σαβαωθ Αδωναι.

6) Petrie Museum UC22579 (= *ODU* no. 345 = *Amulets* no. 135o): blue-green glass slightly worn (*fig.* 4a-b).

Measurements: 2.5 × 1.9. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: two facing canopic jars topped with busts of Isis and Osiris.

Reverse: ἡ χάρις (“charm” or “grace”) within a thinly drawn border. Apparently a request that physical charm be granted to the owner.⁶



Figure 4

a

b

7) Petrie Museum UC52223 (= *ODU* no. 338 = *Amulets* no. 135c): brown limestone or steatite; suspension hole broken and then polished smooth; the designs, inscriptions, suspension hole, and type of stone belong to a common type used to protect mothers and their infants (see Michel 297–298).

Measurements: 2.9 × 2.3. Shape: flat oval.

⁶ C. A. Faraone, “Notes on Some Greek Magical Gems in New England,” *GRBS* 53 (2013) 326–349, at 333–334.

Obverse: Isis Lactans, surrounded by $\alpha\theta\lambda\theta\alpha\theta\theta\lambda\beta$; the two *lambdas* may be *alphas* with faint crossbars, which is what we usually find on the parallels cited by Michel. The engraving of the figure is schematic, but detailed, especially the folds of Isis' robe.

Reverse: a standing frontal Bes (schematic, almost abstract) surrounded by $\tau\alpha\sigma\beta\epsilon\rho\beta\epsilon\rho\epsilon\tau\epsilon$.

8) Petrie Museum 5 (UC52224 = *Amulets* no. 135d): green-black steatite (*fig.* 5a-b).

Measurements: 1.8×2.4 . Shape: flat oval without bevel or hole for suspension.

Obverse: $\mu\omicron\rho\mu\omicron\rho\omicron \nu\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron\beta\beta\alpha\iota$; the second half seems to transliterate an Egyptian acclamation elsewhere rendered as $\nu\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron \nu\beta\alpha\iota$ ("you are lord of the soul!"). This acclamation appears on a number of Neolithic axes used to protect people and places from lightning, some of which are of the same type of stone.⁷

Reverse: eight symbols; the middle three resemble Greek $\beta\omicron\beta$.



Figure 5

a

b

9) Petrie Museum UC52225 (= *ODU* no. 337 = *Amulets* no. 135f): yellow-greenish chalcedony (*fig.* 6a-b).

Measurements: 1.5×1.25 . Shape: double convex oval.

Obverse: Chnoubis serpent with twelve rays emanating from his head, behind which is inscribed a small ~~SSS~~ symbol.

Reverse: $\omicron\theta\mu\omicron\upsilon\eta\rho \chi\nu\omicron\upsilon\mu\iota\varsigma \zeta\mu\chi$. A gem in London (*BM* no. 336) has on its obverse Chnoubis with eleven rays and on its re-

⁷ C. A. Faraone, "Inscribed Greek Thunderstones as House- and Body-Amulets in Roman Imperial Times," *Kernos* 27 (2014) 251–278.

verse $\chi\nu\omicron\mu\iota\varsigma$ $\omicron\theta\mu\omicron\upsilon\eta\rho$ (separated by a space). The letters $\zeta\mu\chi$ appear on a gem in Vienna (*Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien* III no. 2224).



Figure 6 a

b

10) Petrie Museum UC52226 (= *ODU* no. 333 = *Amulets* no. 1351): durite with suspension hole, from Tell Yehudiyeh, Egypt (*fig.* 7a-b).

Measurements: 3.9×2.75 . Shape: large flat oval.

Obverse: bird- (Petrie says “serpent-”) headed mummy with profile feet, surrounded by a *logos* that Petrie transcribed as $\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$ - $\pi\iota\sigma\iota\delta\alpha\omicron\upsilon\theta\iota\beta\rho\iota\mu\psi$ $\alpha\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\omega\iota$ spiralling inwards. In so doing he wrongly understood that the *alpha* that seems to be the first letter in the *logos* (albeit slightly distanced from the *theta*) was added later above the letters $\mu\psi$ as an insertion. This *logos*, then, probably begins with $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$. A similar *logos* has been called (e.g. Michel 485) the “Lerthemeinô-Logos”: $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$ $\pi\iota\sigma\iota\delta\alpha\omicron\upsilon\theta$ $\epsilon\iota$ $\beta\rho\iota\mu\psi$ $\alpha\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, which is quite close to the *logos* under discussion, except for the important variation in the first term: $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$ on our gem and $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$ on *BM* no. 336. The word $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega$ or $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega\theta$ has been understood as Hebrew (“pluie ou rosé du Dieu”) and does show up with other Hebrew terms.⁸ The

⁸ See e.g. *PGM* I.155 $\alpha\beta\rho\alpha\sigma\alpha\zeta$ $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\nu\omega\theta$; IV.3255–3262 (inscribed on

first word in the *logos* on our gem, however, clearly begins with $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon$ -, for which there are parallels that suggest an Egyptian background: two magical words $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\beta\omicron\nu\nu\iota$ and $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota$ that have been interpreted as Egyptian for “Hathor, Herrin von Dendera” and “Hathor-Stärke der Isis.”⁹ See no. 23 below for a similar *logos*.

Reverse: Petrie: “four blundered cartouches, among them those of Ramesses II and Merneptah”; also a ladder, asterisk, palm-leaf(?), and *alpha*.



Figure 7 a

b

11) Petrie Museum UC52227 (= *ODU* no. 342 = *Amulets* no. 135p): rather worn green-black steatite.

Measurements: 4.6 × 3.2. Shape: oval convex on obverse and flat on reverse (with suspension tab above)

a drawing of an ass) $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\omega$ (on back) $\sigma\alpha\beta\alpha\omega\theta$ (on breast) $\alpha\beta\rho\alpha\sigma\alpha\zeta$ (under hooves). And then (3268–3270) “ $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\omega$... O great, great Typhon $\lambda\epsilon\rho\theta\epsilon\mu\iota\omega$.”

⁹ Both of these names appear at the start of a *logos* on the back of a hematite gem with the womb-and-key design (*LIM* no. 216: $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota$ $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\beta\omicron\nu\nu\iota$); $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota$ begins a *logos* on one gem in London (*BM* no. 493: $\alpha\sigma\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\varsigma$) and ends a *logos* on another that also carries the womb-and-key design (*BM* no. 353: $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota$). In a protective prayer while burning incense (*PGM* VII.490–504), the pair $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\chi$ $\alpha\theta\epsilon\rho\nu\epsilon\beta\omicron\nu\nu\iota$ appear in an invocation that ends with Isis Sothis. For discussion see Brashear, *ANRW* II 18.5 (1995) 3578, and Michel 193 n.1003.

Obverse: A common type, see no. 4: an ibis with altar and plant behind and star(?) above; small S-shaped serpents rise up on either end of the scene; Ἰάω below the ground-line.

Reverse: A common type used for gynecological problems (see Michel 334–335): womb-and-key, on top of which sits Chnoubis without the usual radiant crown, surrounded by badly effaced letters (among them *iota*, *lambda*, *tau*?) and then by an *ouroboros*.

12) Petrie Museum 9 (UC52228 = *Amulets* no. 135t): half of a steatite gem, broken edge roughly refinished (*fig. 8*).

Measurements: 1.8 × 1.7. Shape: flat oval (originally).

Obverse: τασβεβερετε, a magical word often found next to images of the Egyptian god Bes used to protect mothers and children.

Reverse: blank.



Figure 8

13) Petrie Museum UC52229 (= *Amulets* no. 135v): badly worn steatite.

Measurements: 2.2 × 1.9. Shape: double convex oval.

Obverse: same as no. 11.

Reverse: blank.

14) Petrie Museum UC52230 (= *Amulets* no. 135w): badly worn steatite.

Measurements: 2.3 × 2.0. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: same as no. 11.

Reverse: blank.

15) Petrie Museum UC52232 (= *ODU* no. 9 = *Amulets* no. 136b): thick black limestone, pierced at top for suspension (*fig. 9a-d*).

Measurements: 3.9 × 2.9 × 1.9. Shape: isosceles triangle standing on a rectangle.

Obverse (triangular): nude man holding branch downwards in one hand and tiny bow in the other, above an ox couchant (Petrie).

Reverse (triangular): palm tree with roots from which three smaller trees sprout.

Sloping rectangular sides: (c) branching tree with three sprays rising from the ground and below two lines of symbols; (d) Petrie: “mountain like Mt. Argaeus with head of ibex(?) near the top” and below two lines of different symbols.

Rectangular bottom: four lines of symbols within rectangular border.



a



b



c



d

Figure 9

16) Petrie Museum UC52235 (= *Amulets* no. 136g = J. Spier, *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems* [Wiesbaden 2007] no. 662): worn steatite with chip in top left corner and suspension hole. The lower end seems to have been broken off or shortened in antiquity (*fig.* 10a-b).

Measurements: 4.5 × 3.8. Shape: shrine-shaped.

Obverse: a roughly drawn anguipede (rooster-headed man with two snake feet) between two palm branches, with seven-pointed star to left of suspension hole.

Reverse: distorted Greek(?) letters: ...ελς . θε εχεοε νσλμυ ...; seven-pointed stars on either side of suspension hole.



Figure 10 a

b

17) Petrie Museum UC58370 (= *ODU* no. 346): much-worn hematite, especially on bottom (*fig.* 11a-b).

Measurements: 1.6 × 1.3. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: snake-headed man holding spear in right hand and in left an *ankh*-sign(?); star near left knee and crescent moon near right shoulder. Ground line.

Reverse: Μιχαηλ



Figure 11 a

b

- 18) Petrie Museum UC58371 (= *ODU* no. 347): thick hematite, worn away on bottom left corner (*fig.* 12).
 Measurements: 2.4 × 2.0. Shape: flat oval.
 Obverse: poorly scratched image of two men facing each other over a small table (or altar?) and surrounded by a circle or wreath.
 Reverse: blank (badly cut or chipped).



Figure 12

- 19) Petrie Museum 17 (UC58372 = *ODU* no. 348): brown jasper (*fig.* 13a-b).
 Measurements: 2.0 in diameter. Shape: flat circle.
 Obverse: Anubis wearing kilt and boots(?), drawing a bow and arrow.
 Reverse:

ερζε
 ναρθου
 ρκαροφ
 ρησω
 ρ

A unique *logos* that has several Greek-sounding parts (ερζε, ναρθ-, ρησωρ), but nothing coheres. The last five letters (ρησωρ) appear as a separate unit on a copper plaque that

appears to be a pattern-book for producing magical gems.¹⁰ My colleague Robert Ritner is preparing a detailed study of the images of Anubis the archer, including this one.



Figure 13 a b

20) Petrie Museum UC58373 (= *ODU* no. 352 = *Amulets* no. 135h): hematite, broken: bottom half (*fig.* 14a-b).

Measurements: 1.7 × 1.8. Shape: flat oval (originally).

Obverse: falcon standing in profile on a base with at least two rows of Greek letters behind him, ending in $\alpha\theta\alpha$ (one of the letters in the previous row appears to be an *alpha*); below the ground line five symbols, four of which look like Greek letters (*lambda*, *theta*, *xi*, and *beta*), with a vertical dash added to the bottom.

Reverse: $\omega\rho$ (with at least one row of letters above).



Figure 14 a b

¹⁰ C. A. Faraone, “A Copper Plaque in the Louvre (inv. AD 003732): Composite Amulet or Pattern-Book for Making Individual Body-Amulets?” (in preparation).

21) Petrie Museum UC58374 (= *ODU* no. 340): slightly worn lapis lazuli (*fig.* 15a-b).

Measurements: 2.3×1.9 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: Isis with her throne-crown sitting on the ground and holding a stemmed cup(?) and surrounded by an *ouroboros*.

Reverse: $\pi\rho\iota\mu\omicron\nu$, perhaps the Roman name Primus in genitive. A charm-spell worn by a woman especially “for Primus” or a curative amulet for him? Lapis is often used in amulets for charm or charisma towards another person.¹¹



Figure 15 a

b

22) Petrie Museum UC58376 (= *ODU* no. 332 = *Amulets* no. 135b): durite (*fig.* 16a-b).

Measurements: 2.5×1.9 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: Aphrodite Anadyomene, with her hair so oddly rendered that it looks like a pair of wings.

Reverse: $\sigma\psi$

23) Petrie Museum UC58377 (= *ODU* no. 334): durite (*fig.* 17).

Measurements: 3.0×2.7 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: *uraeus* serpent walking right on human legs and wearing a kilt, squared off by four words: clockwise from the right, $\theta\epsilon\rho\mu\iota\nu\theta\iota\nu\omega$ $\pi\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\omicron\iota\beta$ (?) $\iota\rho\mu$ $\alpha\nu\sigma\lambda\epsilon\rho$. A gem in Paris (*LIM* no. 271) in a similar medium has a similar design and

¹¹ Faraone, *GRBS* 53 (2013) 333.

inscription: a serpent-headed god facing left in a kilt (also holding a staff and *ankh*-sign) and an inscription broken into three squared-off parts: λερθεμινω αους πισιδαουθις, which seems to be a version of the “Lerthemeinô-Logos” (see no. 10). Petrie thought this *logos* was a corrupted version of the inscription in no. 10, and certainly both gems (and also the one in Paris) have a central animal-headed figure in profile surrounded by text.

Reverse: blank



Figure 16 a

b



Figure 17

24) Petrie Museum UC58378 (= *ODU* no. 335 = *Amulets* no. 135k): durite (*fig.* 18a-b).

Measurements: 3.5 × 2.6. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: half-length bust of Harpocrates with radiant nimbus and right index finger to his mouth. In his left hand he holds a cornucopia, as he hovers above a rampant lion facing left with a star overhead.

Reverse: (δός?) εὐκαίριον (“[give?] prosperity!”) with wreath above and ivy leaf above.



Figure 18 a

b

25) Petrie Museum [not located] (= *ODU* p. 14-15 no. 8a): hematite (*non vidi*; description below based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: reaper (in portrait layout, not the usual landscape) with conical hat and beard; tree behind him and three uncut sheaves before him. An *ouroboros* surrounds the scene. A common type used to heal sciatica (see Michel 329 and no. 41 below).

Reverse: <ι>σχίων “for the hips” (the initial *iota* is always missing) preceded and followed by paired symbols that look like Latin E’s and inverted E’s.

26) Petrie Museum UC34708 (= *ODU* no. 5): steatite, from Koptos (*fig.* 19a-b).

Measurements: 3.8 × 2.4. Shape: roughly carved scarab.

Underside: field enclosed by a line along the circumference and then divided by a horizontal line about one-third of the way down. The text inscribed within these fields is difficult to make out. Above the dividing line: $\tau\epsilon\mu(?)$ or $\pi\epsilon\mu(?)$. Below: $\nu\gamma\xi\upsilon(?)$ / $\sigma\zeta\upsilon\omicron$ or $\pi\upsilon\nu(?)$ / $\sigma\zeta\upsilon\omicron$ (the *zeta* looks more like a roman S); an upside-down *ankh*-sign rests at the very bottom, perhaps with an *iota* to its right.



Figure 19 a

b

27) Petrie Museum UC22448 (= *ODU* no. 330): thin light-blue glass (*fig.* 20a-b).

Measurements: 2.1×2.6 . Shape: flat oval, chipped at top.

Obverse: Isis Pharia on a couch facing left, extending a sail in her right hand (Petrie); below her are three letters connected with ligatures: $\eta\sigma\eta(?)$.

Reverse: $\upsilon\eta\lambda$



Figure 20 a

b

28) Petrie Museum UC22449 (= *ODU* no. 331 = *Amulets* no. 135a): thin opaque black glass (*fig.* 21a-b).

Measurements: 2.0×2.5 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: Sarapis seated between facing and slightly smaller images of Isis Fortuna (on the right, with cornucopia) and Nephthys(?) (on the left).

Reverse: $\nu\kappa\tilde{\alpha}\ \eta\ \epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$, “Isis conquers!”



Figure 21 a

b

29) Petrie Museum UC58379 (= *ODU* no. 336 = *Amulets* no. 135g): durite with horizontal suspension hole (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: 3.1×2.1 . Shape: convex upside-down teardrop.

Obverse: Seth standing and facing left with whip and *ankh*-sign, encircled by an inscription beginning at bottom left near his foot: $\omega\ \sigma\eta\tau\ \omega\ \omega$ (perhaps “Hail, Seth, hail, hail!”)

Reverse: $\iota\alpha\epsilon\omega/\beta\alpha\phi\rho\epsilon/\nu\epsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon\nu$ and then around the sides $\omega\ \epsilon\rho\beta\eta\tau\iota\ \pi\alpha\kappa\epsilon\rho\beta\pi\iota$. The first is the first part of a well-known palindromic *logos* (Michel 484); the second is a combination that is elsewhere associated with Seth, e.g. *PGM* IV.2213–2226 ($\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta\ \pi\alpha\kappa\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ and $\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta\ \omega\ \pi\alpha\kappa\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$).¹² The $\omega\ \epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ has been interpreted variously as Hebrew “Jahweh + four” or Egyptian “ass + evil.”¹³

30) Petrie Museum UC22450 (= *ODU* no. 343 = *Amulets* no. 135n): blue glass with one-third broken off at lower left.

Measurements: 3.9×2.6 at widest part. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type (see Michel 273–275, who describes this gem at no. 19.4f). The gem surface is divided into sections: a center oval, in which Harpocrates on the lotus is

¹² See R. Martín Hernández, “More than a *Logos*: The $\omega\epsilon\rho\beta\eta\theta$ Formula in Context” (in preparation).

¹³ Brashear, *ANRW* II 18.5 (1995) 3589.

adored by triplets of animals, of which we can see only the three scarab beetles on top and the three ibexes on the right side. The perimeter of the gem is divided into eight individual sections in which what were originally four pairs of different animals face the center: lions left and right on top, then down along the right side Seth, Anubis, and a scorpion, all three of which probably had identical facing images in the missing part of the gem.

Reverse: φρηθ βαυ[χ]ωωι[. .] and then three lines of symbols.

31) Petrie Museum (*ODU* no. 349 = *Amulets* no. 135e): red and green jasper with chipped edges (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type (see Michel 314): embalming scene of Anubis stretching out his hands over the Osiris mummy, which lies on the back of a lion walking left.

Reverse: αβρα/σαξ

32) Petrie Museum (*ODU* no. 350 = *Amulets* no. 135j): hematite (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: womb-and-key device surmounted by mummiform Anubis and Isis Fortuna with cornucopia and surrounded by inscription ορωριουθ Ἰάω and then an *ouroboros*; see Michel 335–336.

Reverse: on flat back αφρενισμβηλμεχτυψαρ ειμι χαωχαλα ηοθλχεωυχ followed by four symbols, transliterated by Petrie (*Amulets*) as Aphreni Sumbêl Mekhtu Pskhr (= Sokar?) eimi Ikhankhala Eoulkheôukh. Presumably this is an “I am” formula, a common type, followed by a series of divine names including, perhaps, Sokar and Bal.

33) Petrie Museum (*ODU* no. 316): impression on clay (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat square.

Obverse: two seated figures with Greek(?) inscription below.

Reverse: none.

34) Petrie Museum (*ODU* no. 351 = *Amulets* no. 135s): black steatite or hematite (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: a common type, for which see no. 11: the womb-and-key device surmounted by Chnoubis serpent and flanked by matching rampant animals(?).

Reverse: unknown.

35) Petrie Museum UC58466 (= *ODU* no. 235 = *Amulets* no. 135u, bibl. in Veymiers no. I.AB 103): black jasper.

Measurements: 1.8 × 1.5. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type used for protection (Michel 326, who mentions this gem): profile head of Sarapis facing left, surrounded by the inscription διαφύλασσε (“Protect entirely!”)

Reverse: blank.

36) Petrie Museum (*Amulets* no. 136h): black steatite (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: standing long-haired male(?) facing left, holding circular or spherical object in both hands; behind his back two *sigmas* and a symbol.

Reverse: blank.

37) Petrie Museum 35 (*Amulets* no. 135r): black steatite (*non vidi*; description based on thumbnail photo in Petrie and his notes).

Measurements: unknown. Shape: double-convex heart-shape with suspension tab above.

Obverse: same as no. 11.

Reverse: Chnoubis with doubled-radiant crown and ~~SSS~~ sign below (only two S's).

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38) Inv. 1895, 5-18 19: much-worn hematite from Egypt.

Measurements: 2.01×1.59 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type, see no. 11: womb-and-key device surmounted by four Egyptian gods and surrounded by an *ouroboros* and the *soroor* formula, $\sigma\omicron\rho\omicron\sigma\mu\epsilon\rho\phi\epsilon\rho\gamma\alpha\rho\beta\alpha\rho\mu[\dots]$ $\iota\omicron\upsilon\rho\iota[. . .]$.

Reverse: $\omicron\rho\omicron\rho/\iota\omicron\upsilon\theta$

39) Inv. 1993, 2-6, 1 = 1814, 7-4-1637: poor-quality black stone with large chip in upper left (*fig.* 22a-b).

Measurements: 1.48×1.4 . Shape: flat circle.

Obverse: roughly engraved tri-form deity like Hekate.

Reverse: $\beta\lambda\eta\sigma/\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$ (first letter corrected from a *kappa*(?); final letter misshapen and could be *rho*).



Figure 22

a

b

40) Inv. 1993, 2-6, 3 = 1939 3-21: tan-brown stone (*fig.* 23a-c).

Measurements: 1.60×1.20 . Shape: oval.

Obverse: trophy on a horizontal thunderbolt with two stars and crescent moon above (see Michel 333).

Reverse: $\alpha\beta\lambda\alpha\nu\alpha\cdot\theta\cdot\alpha\nu\alpha\lambda\beta\alpha$

41) Inv. 1993, 2-6, 4 = 1947, 9-26-33: poorly engraved hematite, from Crete.

Measurements: 2.2 in diameter. Shape: nearly round.

¹⁴ These gems entered the collection after the publication of *BM* (2001).

Obverse: reaper with tree behind and three ears of wheat ahead, a common type (see no. 25).

Reverse: (i)σχίων

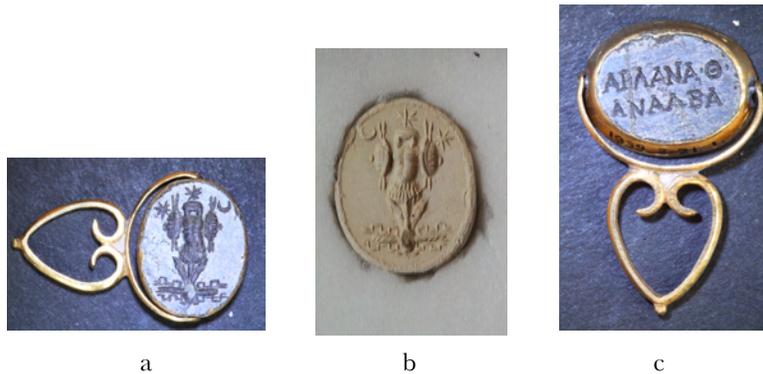


Figure 23

42) Inv. 1993, 2-6, 6 = Michel 325, 383, pl. 13.1 = Veymiers no. VI.DA 4, whose description is summarized here: brown jasper with large chip; disk pierced transversally on top.

Measurements: 3.5 in diameter. Shape: thick circular gem with muffin-shaped bottom.

Top: Zeus Sarapis stands facing left with a scepter in his left hand and gesturing with his right; encircled by Ζεὺς Σάραπ[ις].

Side: two scenes of three standing figures: (i) Harpocrates, Hermanubis (with dog), and Demeter; and (ii) Isis, male figure, and Tyche/Fortuna.

Bottom: Sarapis standing and facing left, a scepter in his left hand and a small ball in his raised right hand.

43) Inv. 1993, 2-6, 2: brownish-black stone (“albite” according to the BM laboratory), found in Egypt.

Measurements: 2.0 × 1.92. Shape: circular.

Obverse: ibis and altar; common type, see no. 4.

Reverse: πεπ πεπ πεπ

44) Inv. 1959, 2-9, 46): banded tan-brown chalcedony (*fig. 24*).

Measurements: 3.41 × 2.42. Shape: oval.

Obverse: κεβοσι

μιολαη

αχωχφι
λαη
Reverse: blank.



Figure 24

45) Inv. 1959, 2-9, 51: dappled green and red heliotrope (fig. 25a-b). This gem appears in Michel 311 under no. 39.1a, where it is described as black jasper.

Measurements: 2.22 × 1.65. Shape: oval.

Obverse: standing Osiris mummy with *atef*-crown.

Reverse: αθωμυ
χαβελθω
ηρηριψα
μενε
χθωφι

Michel without comment divides these letters as follows:
αθωμυ / χαβελθωηρηριψ / αμενεχθωφι



Figure 25 a

b

46) Inv. 1986, 5-1, 129: hematite missing one quarter of its right side (*fig.* 26a-b).

Measurements: 3.4×1.0 . Shape: narrow oval.

Obverse: frontal female figure with face turned to the right and wearing a trident crown; she holds an *ankh*-sign(?) in her right hand.

Reverse: ὕγιᾶ (“Hygieia” or “Health”) inscribed in two lines (the right edges of both serifs of the *iota* are still visible); below a reversed swastika with a small circle between each of its arms; symbol on bottom edge.



Figure 26 a

b

47) Inv. 1986, 12-2, 2: large hematite; shallow drill hole on bottom side just before inscription (*fig.* 27a-d).

Measurements: 2.1×2.5 . Shape: like a garden slug(?) with markings at one end.

Top: angel names: Μιχαηλ Σουρ/ιηλ Ραφαη/λ Ιστραηλ (short bars placed above each *lambda*, as if marking word end)

Rounded sides: 3-4 symbols (each larger than the Greek letters) on each side.

Flattened bottom: βαχνας

48) Inv. 1877, 5-15, 9: blue glass gem with chipped edges, found in Egypt.

Measurements: 1.85×1.56 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: A common type used for gaining affection (see Michel 250): Aphrodite Anadyomene with the standard inscription to her right (αρρωρι) and left (φρασις).

Reverse: blank.



Figure 27

49) Inv. 1877, 5-15, 10): black stone (*fig. 28*).

Measurements: 1.6 × 1.22. Shape: single convex oval.

Obverse: standing lion-headed figure facing left, right hand raised toward open mouth, wearing a radiant crown with seven rays (the left hand may be holding some curved object behind the back).

Reverse: blank.



Figure 28

50) Inv. 1884, 5-9, 11): chipped greyish-black steatite (*fig.* 29).

Measurements: 2.77×2.09 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: poorly rendered version of a common scene (see no. 31) of Anubis holding a flail in his left hand and stretching his right hand toward the head of the Osiris mummy, which lies on the back of a lion which walks to the left. Star to the left of Anubis' head and key(?) to the right.

Reverse: blank.

51) Inv. 1884, 5-9, 17 = O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Early Christian Antiquities ... in the British Museum* (London 1901) 14, no. 89; *Catalogue of Engraved Gems ... in the British Museum* (London 1915) no. 555 (non vidi): large onyx(?) cameo (*fig.* 30).

Measurements: 3.45×3.69 . Shape: single convex, nearly circular.

Obverse: two facing helmeted men grasping a cross-headed staff between them and each holding a rod (sword?) behind their backs. The base of the staff is surrounded by four seemingly nonsense letters (a *sigma* on its back, a *lambda* on its side pointing left, a *lambda* on the other side pointing right, and an upright *iota*). These same letters (along with *zeta* and *chi*) appear in a circle along the edge of the gem in various rotated forms.

Reverse: blank.



Figure 29



Figure 30

52) Inv. 1916, 11-8, 4: yellow-grey jasper with red flakes (*fig.* 31).

Measurements: 1.73×2.49 . Shape: flat oval.

Obverse: two facing and poorly rendered helmeted figures: on the left a pear-shaped figure sitting on a throne(?) and holding a scepter(?) behind his back with his left hand, while accepting or offering a bowl or inverted helmet(?) containing some substance; on the right a standing figure, who accepts or gives the bowl with his right hand. In the field: a thin rod intersecting a palm frond behind the standing figure; an *iota* behind the throne; a *pi* above the bowl, and below it a reversed *nu* and then another *iota*.

Reverse: blank.



Figure 31

53) Inv. 1917, 5-1.654 = F. H. Marshall, *Catalogue of the Finger Rings ... British Museum* (London 1907) no. 654: ring of bluish-white chalcedony.

Measurements: external diameter 3.5; internal diameter 1.4; height of bezel 1.5. Shape: finger-ring with protrusion in the shape of a Sarapis-headed snake, the top of which was broken off and flattened in antiquity to accommodate text. For similarly shaped rings see Veymiers 262–267, nos. 1.AC 1–46, which are almost always metal, but see no. 1.AC 22, apparently a Sarapis-bust broken off a lapis-lazuli ring of this sort.

Inscriptions (Marshall renders last six letters as $\beta\iota\beta\alpha\lambda\eta$):

Top of head:

$\sigma\alpha\beta\alpha\omega$
 $\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon$
 $\alpha\delta\omega$

Below back of head:

σισινγευπ
 ανφαρανγη¹⁵
 νεισουχ

Below front of head:

ναιαιχω
 αι
 μειχαη
 ρ βιελ
 λη

54) Inv. 1926, 11-11, 40: yellow-green stone with depression in back (fig. 32a-b).

Measurements: 2.0 × 3.10. Shape: almond-shaped, double convex.

Obverse: within a border a long-beaked bird(?) faces right, while an inscription begins at the tail and curves over the head: νεαριενχια (oddly shaped *alphas*; top of *rho* is missing).

Reverse: fat ten-legged scorpion(?) facing left within a border.



Figure 32 a



b

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¹⁵ “Sisingenpharanges *logos*”: Michel 486.