

Magical gem: Helios on column surrounded with animals (A) Greek inscription (B)

Cbd-Number	Cbd-1098
ID-Number	US-NY-MMA-GRA_74.51.4299
Collection	US_ New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Greek and Roman Art
Inventory	74.51.4299
References	Bonner, SMA D. 102; Michel, DMG, no. 37.B.4_3
Former Collections	Cesnola Collection
Material	haematite (black)
Dimensions	33 x 17 x 4 mm
Dating	ca. 2nd-3rd c. AD (MM Coll. website)
Iconography	Helios; gesture, protective; clothing: tunic; bird: swallows (2); snakes (2); scorpions (2); scarab, with outstretched wings; clothing: mantle; crabs (2); animal: crocodile; column; gesture, greeting



Credits: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The
Cesnola Collection, Purchased by subscription,
1874-76 (74.51.4299)

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A: Human figure (Helios) standing atop a column, six rays around the head, to right, left hand raised in greeting, right arm slightly extended. Above the figure: a scarab with outstretched wings. Below, on the two sides: pairs of swallows facing inwards, scorpions and crabs crawling to top, snakes with 'hands' raised protectively. At the bottom: crocodile, with head to left. (For an interpretation, cf. [Cbd-2](#).)

B: Indistinct inscription in six lines, suggesting that the engraver had miscalculated the placing of the text, which resulted in a confusion of the letters: [.]τ[.]αχεταιδεχηπεπτε. → ...? πέπτε. 'Digest!'

Bibliography

[Bonner, SMA on Cbd-1098](#)

[Nagy 2012, comm. ad Bonner IV 60-61](#)

[The Metropolitan Museum Collections website on Cbd-1098](#)

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