

Magical gem: Harpocrates sitting on lotus, snake (A) Ἰάω (B)

CBd-Number	CBd-507
ID-Number	GB-BM-MMEu_G 85, EA 56085
Collection	GB_London, The British Museum
Inventory	G 85 (EA 56085)
References	Goodenough, JS, III, no. 1103; Michel, BM, no. 107; Michel, DMG, no. 19.1.b_2
Material	heliotrope
Dimensions	13 x 10 x 2 mm
Dating	2nd-3rd c. AD (Michel)
Iconography	plant: stalks of grain; crown, lotus; primeval mound?; side-lock of youth; snake; gesture, hand raised to mouth; cornucopia; Harpocrates seated with knees drawn up; Harpocrates sitting on lotus flower; plant: lotus buds (2)
Divine Names & Voces	Ἰάω



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A: Horus-Harpocrates sitting to right on lotus with knees drawn up. On both sides of the lotus flower a stalk of grain, under the flower two lotus stalks without buds. Baseline indicating primeval mound? Horus' left hand raised to his mouth, his right holds a cornucopia. A long side-lock of youth is falling to his neck, on the top of his head a crown. On the right side of the gem a bearded snake facing Horus.

B: ἰάω → Ἰάω.

A praxis known from a papyrus (PGM LXI 1-38) specifies that love charms had to be incised with the image of Horus on a lotus flower and the magical name Abraxas. Pieces with the Horus-scheme used as love charms: [CBd-533](#), [CBd-534](#).

S. Michel points to the similarity between the Horus-snake composition on the gem and Egyptian decan-representations (see link below).

Bibliography

[Michel, BM on CBd-507](#)

[The British Museum Collection database on CBd-507](#)

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