

Magical gem: Harpocrates (A) prayer for Theanous (B)

CBd-Number	CBd-534
ID-Number	GB-BM-MMEu_G 283, EA 56283
Collection	GB_London, The British Museum
Inventory	G 283 (EA 56283)
References	Bonner 1951, no. 33; Michel, BM, no. 134; Michel, DMG, no. 19.3.b_2
Former Collections	Rollin & Feuarent (auction house, 1867-1953)
Material	heliotrope
Dimensions	19 x 24 x 3 mm
Dating	3rd c. AD (Michel)
Iconography	Harpocrates seated with legs extended; Harpocrates sitting on lotus flower; boat, papyrus; side-lock of youth; solar disk; bird: falcons (2); crown, of Lower Egypt; crown, of Upper Egypt



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A: Harpocrates sitting to right on a lotus flower in the middle of a papyrus boat; under the flower two lotus stalks without buds. Two falcons sitting on both ends of the boat and facing each other; wearing the crowns of Lower Egypt (left one) and Upper Egypt (right one). The god's legs are hanging down; he is holding a clarinet-like instrument in front of his face with both hands. A long side-lock of youth is falling to his neck; on the top of his head the solar disk.

B: First line: characteres. Spiral inscription beginning in the second line:

δοσχαριωθεανουτιπροσσεραπαμμωνα → Δός χάριν Θεανοῦτι πρὸς Σεραπάμμωνα. 'Grant Theanous favor in the eyes of Serapammon.'

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. The prayer on the reverse supports this interpretation. A pendant with the Horus-scheme that was presumably also a love charm: [CBd 533](#).

Bibliography

[Bonner 1951 on CBd-534](#)

[Michel, BM on CBd-534](#)

[The British Museum Collection database on CBd-534](#)

Last modified: 2020-12-20 15:01:59