

Magical gem: Scarab, Sarapis, mummy, lion, crocodile (A) Horus sitting on lotus (B)

Cbd-Number	CBd-663
ID-Number	GB-BM-MMEu_G 568, EA 56526
Collection	GB_London, The British Museum
Inventory	G 568 (EA 56526)
References	Bonner 1951, no. 5; Michel, BM, no. 277; Michel, DMG, no. 45.1.a_4
Former Collections	Gefon, Collection
Material	heliotrope
Dimensions	37 x 28 x 4 mm
Dating	3rd c. AD (Michel)
Iconography	Sarapis; Harpocrates seated with knees drawn up; plant: lotus buds (2); gesture, hand raised to mouth; side-lock of youth; solar disk; flail; crown, Isis-; clothing: bandage; Osiris; Harpocrates sitting on lotus flower; star; throne; Ouroboros, human-headed; clothing: mantle; scepter, unspecified; scorpion; scarab, with outstretched wings; animal: crocodile; animal: lion; moon, crescent; gesture, lying
Divine Names & Voces	voces, unidentified; vocales, αηιουω
Logoi	Ἰαεω-palindrome



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A: Enclosed within a human-headed Ouroboros, wearing a crown with horns and solar disk (Isis-crown), and winding inward: Sarapis sitting enthroned to left, his right hand touching a scorpion at his feet, his left hand resting on a tall scepter. Above his head, a scarab with outstretched wings. The throne of Sarapis rests on the back of a crocodile, facing left. Below the crocodile: lying Osiris-mummy with atef-crown, head to left, carried by a roaring lion walking also left. In the free field to the right of Sarapis, a small lying crescent, and an eight-pointed star above it. Below these, inscription in three lines: αηη|ουω|ω → vocales including the Greek vowel series. Inscription around the edge, outside the Ouroboros, beginning at the top:

ιαεωβαφρενεμουνοθιλαρικριφιαεσεαιφικραλιθουνομενερφαβ → Ἰαεω-palindrome.

B: Harpocrates sitting with knees drawn up, facing left, on a lotus flower with two buds. Baseline indicating primeval mound? Head crowned with the sun disk, side-lock of youth falling on the neck, right hand raised to mouth, left hand holding a flail. In front of him, an eight-pointed star, behind him, another eight-pointed star and a crescent. Inscription around the edge, consisting of characteres and some Greek letters, beginning to the right of the flail: ωχηχουζελ → unidentified voces.

Based on similar representations, in which Sarapis leans on a scepter with an ibis at the top, and a passage in the Greek Magical Papyri (PGM V 446ff.), S. Michel raises the possibility of Sarapis being identified with Thoth here, also mentioning the deity's possible identification with Zeus/Hades and Kronos.

On the other hand, the representation of Harpocrates on a lotus flower connects the gem with love charms. 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](#).

Bibliography

[Bonner 1951 on CBd-663](#)

[Michel, BM on CBd-663](#)

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