

KATA ENDREFFY · ÁRPÁD M. NAGY · JEFFREY SPIER

MAGICAL GEMS IN THEIR CONTEXTS



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Kata Endreffy – Árpád M. Nagy – Jeffrey Spier

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«L'ERMA» di BRETSCHNEIDER

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Magical Gems in their Contexts

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On the Cover:
Magical gem with the lion-headed Chnoubis
Chrysoprase, 13.2 x 9.6 x 5.2 mm
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 53.155
Photo: László Mátyus
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In memoriam David Jordan
(1942–2018)

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	IX
Foreword.....	XV
SHUA AMORAI-STARK and SHIMON ILANI: Magical Gem Amulets from Caesarea Maritima: ‘Intact’ and ‘Broken’ Hematite Intaglios	1
GIDEON BOHAK: The Use of Engraved Gems and Rings in Ancient Jewish Magic	37
VÉRONIQUE DASEN: One God May Hide Another: Magical Gems in a Cross-Cultural Context ...	47
KIRSTEN DZWIZA: Magical Signs: An Extraordinary Phenomenon or Just Business as Usual? Analysing Decoration Patterns on Magical Gems	59
CHRISTOPHER A. FARAONE: Magical Gems as Miniature Amuletic Statues.....	85
FELICITY HARLEY-McGOWAN: Jesus the Magician? A Crucifixion Amulet and its Date.....	103
DESPINA IGNATIADOU: Two Magical Gems from the Roman Cemetery in Thessaloniki	117
GENEVRA KORNBLUTH: Pilulae and Bound Pendants: Roman and Merovingian Amulets	125
SONIA MACRÌ: The Gems of Greco-Roman Literature: Real Features and Symbolic Recon- figuration.....	135
ATTILIO MASTROCINQUE: Iconographies of Ialdabaoth.....	149
SIMONE MICHEL-VON DUNGERN: Vom Erhellten des Verdunkelten und Sichtbarmachen des unsichtbar Gedachten: Zur Ausstellung als Medium der Wissenschaftskommunikation	161

ÁRPÁD MIKLÓS NAGY: Figuring out the Anguipes Gems, <i>bis</i> : A Statistical Overview	179
MARIA NILSSON and JOHN WARD: Mason or Priest? A Comparison between Graeco-Roman Signs on Magical Amulets and Symbols in Egyptian Quarries	217
JOACHIM FRIEDRICH QUACK: From Egyptian Traditions to Magical Gems: Possibilities and Pitfalls in Scholarly Analysis.	233
VĚRA ŠLANCAROVÁ and DANIELA URBANOVÁ: Magical Gems from Collections in the Czech Republic	251
JEFFREY SPIER: Solomon and Asmodaios on Greco-Roman Magical Amulets and Rings	259
ELENI TSATSOU: Uterine Amulets: Amulets that Protect the Uterus or that Reinforce Erotic Desire?	271
PAOLO VITELLOZZI: The Sword of Dardanos: New Thoughts on a Magical Gem in Perugia	283
ERIKA ZWIERLEIN-DIEHL: Dating Magical Gems	305
List of Contributors	339
Plates	341

ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviated format of journals and standard reference works in the notes to this volume follow the abbreviations used by the American Journal of Archaeology. The list below contains abbreviations of works closely related to the study of magical gems and referenced by multiple authors.

AGDI

E. Brandt, *Antike Gemmen in Deutschen Sammlungen I. Staatliche Münzsammlung München* (München, 1968–1972)

AGDII

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Antike Gemmen in Deutschen Sammlungen II. Staatliche Museen preussischer Kulturbesitz: Antikenabteilung Berlin* (München, 1969)

AGDIII

P. Zazoff et al., *Antike Gemmen in Deutschen Sammlungen II. Braunschweig, Göttingen, Kassel* (Wiesbaden, 1970)

AGDIV

P. Zazoff et al., *Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen IV. Hannover, Kestner-Museum, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe* (Wiesbaden, 1975)

Amorai-Stark, *Engraved Gems and Seals*

S. Amorai-Stark, *Engraved Gems and Seals from Two Collections in Jerusalem*, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Museum 11 (Jerusalem, 1993)

Barb, "Magica Varia"

A. A. Barb, "Magica Varia," *Syria* 49 (1972), 343–370.

Betz, *GMPT*

H. D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago, 1986)

Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*

G. Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic. A History* (New York, 2008)

Bonner, in *Hesperia* 20

C. Bonner, "Amulets chiefly in the British Museum," *Hesperia* 20 (1951), 301–345.

Bonner, *SMA*

C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor, 1950)

Brashear, *GMP*

W. M. Brashear, "The Greek Magical Papyri: an Introduction and Survey. Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994)," in *ANRW* II 18, 5 (1995), 3380–3684.

CBd

Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (classics.mfab.hu/talismans), developed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, ed. Á. M. Nagy et al. (Budapest, 2010–)

Dasen, "Représenter l'invisible"

V. Dasen, "Représenter l'invisible: la vie utérine sur les gemmes magiques," in *L'embryon humain à travers l'histoire. Images, savoirs et rites*, ed. V. Dasen (Gollion, 2007), 41–64.

Dasen, "Le secret d'Omphale"

V. Dasen, "Le secret d'Omphale," *RA* 46 (2008), 268–270.

Dasen, in 'Gems of Heaven'

V. Dasen, "Magic and Medicine: Gems and the Power of Seals," in 'Gems of Heaven', 69–74.

Dasen, *Le sourir d'Omphale*

V. Dasen, *Le sourire d'Omphale. Maternité et petite enfance dans l'Antiquité* (Rennes, 2015)

Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia*

A. Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, I (Liège–Paris, 1927)

Delatte, "Etudes"

A. Delatte, "Etudes sur la magie grecque, III–IV," *MusB* 18 (1914), 5–96.

Delatte and Derchain, *Intailles magiques*

A. Delatte and Ph. Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes* (Paris, 1964)

Dembski, *AGCarnuntum*

G. Dembski, *Die Antiken Gemmen und Kameen aus Carnuntum* (Wien, 2005)

Elgavish, *Shiqmona*

J. Elgavish, *Shiqmona: On the Seacoast of Mount Carmel* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1994)

Entwistle and Adams, 'Gems of Heaven'

C. Entwistle and N. Adams, eds, 'Gems of Heaven'. *Recent Research on Engraved Gemstones in Late Antiquity c. AD 200–600*. British Museum Research Publications 177 (London, 2011)

Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses*

C. A. Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (Oxford and New York, 1992)

Faraone, *Love Magic*

C. A. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, 1999)

Faraone, "Stopping Evil"

C. A. Faraone, "Stopping Evil, Pain, Anger and Blood: The Ancient Greek Tradition of Protective Iambic Incantations," *GRBS* 49 (2009), 227–256.

Faraone, in 'Gems of Heaven'

C. A. Faraone, "Text, Image and Medium, The Evolution of Greco-Roman Magical Gemstones," in 'Gems of Heaven', 50–61.

Faraone and Obbink, *Magika Hiera*

C. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds, *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York, 1991)

X Abbreviations

- Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*
 D. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt. Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton, 1998)
- Gesztelyi, *Pannoniai vésett ékkövek*
 T. Gesztelyi, *Pannoniai vésett ékkövek* (Budapest, 1998)
- Gesztelyi, *Antike Gemmen*
 T. Gesztelyi, *Antike Gemmen in Ungarischen Nationalmuseum, Catalogi Musei Nationalis Hungarici, Series Archaeologica III* (Budapest, 2000)
- Gordon, in 'Gems of Heaven'
 R. Gordon, "Archaeologies of Magical Gems," in 'Gems of Heaven', 39–49.
- Gordon and Marco Simón, *Magical Practice in the Latin West*
 R. Gordon and F. Marco Simón, eds, *Magical Practice in the Latin West: papers from the International Conference held at the University of Zaragoza, 30 Sept. – 1 Oct. 2005, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 168* (Leiden–Boston, 2010)
- Graf, "Prayer"
 F. Graf, "Prayer in Magical and Religious Rituals," in Faraone and Obbink, *Magika Hiera*, 188–213.
- Halleux and Schamp, *Lapidaires grecs*
 R. Halleux and J. Schamp, *Les lapidaires grecs* (Paris, 1985)
- Hamburger, "Caesarea Maritima"
 A. Hamburger, "Gems from Caesarea Maritima," *Atiqot* 8 (Jerusalem, 1968), 1–38.
- Jackson, *The Lion Becomes Man*
 H. M. Jackson, *The Lion Becomes Man. The Gnostic Leontomorphic Creator and the Platonic Tradition*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 81 (Atlanta, 1985)
- Kotansky, *GMA*
 R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets: The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze Lamellae. Part I: Published Texts of Known Provenance*, Papyrologica Coloniensia 22/1 (Opladen, 1994)
- Maaskant-Kleibrink, *Hague*
 M. Maaskant-Kleibrink, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems in the Royal Coin Cabinet, the Hague: the Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Collections* (Den Haag, 1978)
- Mastrocinque, *Studi sul mitraismo*
 A. Mastrocinque, *Studi sul mitraismo (Il mitraismo e la magia)* (Rome, 1998)
- Mastrocinque, *Gemme Gnostiche*
 A. Mastrocinque, ed., *Gemme gnostiche e cultura ellenistica. Atti del Convegno, Verona, 22–23 ottobre 1999* (Bologna, 2002)
- Mastrocinque, *From Jewish Magic to Gnosticism*
 A. Mastrocinque, *From Jewish Magic to Gnosticism*. Studien und Texte zur Antike und Christentum 24 (Tübingen, 2005)
- Mastrocinque, *SGG I*
 A. Mastrocinque, ed., *Sylloge Gemmarum Gnosticarum parte I*, Bollettino di Numismatica, Monografia 8.2.I (Rome, 2003)

- Mastrocinque, *SGG II*
 A. Mastrocinque, ed., *Sylloge Gemmarum Gnosticarum parte II*, Bollettino di Numismatica, Monografia 8.2.II (Rome, 2007)
- Mastrocinque, *Kronos, Shiva, & Asklepios*
 A. Mastrocinque, *Kronos, Shiva, & Asklepios. Studies in Magical Gems and Religions of the Roman Empire* (Philadelphia, 2011)
- Mastrocinque, in 'Gems of Heaven'
 A. Mastrocinque, "The Colours of Magical Gems," in 'Gems of Heaven', 62–68.
- Mastrocinque, *Intailles magiques*
 A. Mastrocinque, *Les intailles magiques du département des Monnaies, Médailles et Antiques* (Paris, 2014)
- Merkelbach, *Isis regina*
 R. Merkelbach, *Isis regina – Zeus Sarapis: die griechisch-ägyptische Religion nach den Quellen dargestellt* (Leipzig, 2001²)
- Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*
 M. Meyer and P. Mirecki, eds, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 129 (Leiden, 1995)
- Michel, *BM*
 S. Michel, *Die magischen Gemmen im Britischen Museum* (London, 2001)
- Michel, *Bunte Steine*
 S. Michel, *Bunte Steine – Dunkle Bilder: „Magische Gemmen“* (München, 2001)
- Michel, *DMG*
 S. Michel, *Die Magischen Gemmen. Zu Bildern und Zauberformeln auf geschnittenen Steinen der Antike und Neuzeit*, Studien aus dem Warburg-Haus 7 (Berlin, 2004)
- Michel-von Dungern, in 'Gems of Heaven'
 S. Michel-von Dungern, "Studies on Magical Amulets in the British Museum," in 'Gems of Heaven', 82–87.
- Mouterde, "Glaive"
 R. Mouterde, "Le glaive de Dardanos. Objects et inscriptions magique de Syrie," *MelBeyrouth* 15.3 (1930), 53–137.
- Nagy, in 'Gems of Heaven'
 Á. M. Nagy, "Magical Gems and Classical Archaeology" in 'Gems of Heaven', 75–81.
- Nagy, "Gemmae magicae selectae"
 Á. M. Nagy, "Gemmae magicae selectae. Sept notes sur l'interprétations des gemmes magiques," in *Gemme Gnostiche*, 153–179.
- Nagy, "Daktylios Pharmakites"
 Á. M. Nagy, "Daktylios Pharmakites. Magical healing gems and rings in the Graeco-Roman world," in *Ritual Healing: Magic, Ritual and Medical Therapy from Antiquity until the Early Modern Period*, ed. I. Csepregi and C. Burnett, *Micrologus' Library* 48 (Firenze, 2012), 71–106.

Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae*

J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae* (Jerusalem, 1993)

Neverov, "Gemmes, bagues et amulettes magiques"

O. Neverov, "Gemmes, bagues et amulettes magiques du sud de l'URSS," in *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren II*, ed. M. B. de Boer and T. A. Edridge, ÉPRO 68 (Leiden, 1978), 833–848.

Pannuti, *Napoli I*

U. Pannuti, *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli: Catalogo della Collezione Glittica I* (Rome, 1983)

Peleg-Barkat and Tepper, in 'Gems of Heaven'

O. Peleg-Barkat and Y. Tepper, "Engraved Gems from Sites with a Military Presence in Roman Palestine. The cases of Legio and Aelia Capitolina," in 'Gems of Heaven', 99–104.

Petrie, *Amulets*

W. M. F. Petrie, *Amulets, Illustrated by the Egyptian Collection in University College London* (London, 1914)

PGM

K. Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri I–II* (Leipzig, 1928 and 1931; 2nd ed. A. Henrichs, Stuttgart, 1973–1974).

Philipp, *Mira et Magica*

H. Philipp, *Mira et Magica. Gemmen im Ägyptischen Museum der Staatlichen Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin–Charlottenburg* (Mainz, 1986)

Quack, in *Aegyptus et Pannonia III*

J. F. Quack, "The so-called Pantheos. On Polymorphic Deities in Late-Egyptian Religion," in *Aegyptus et Pannonia III. Acta Symposii Anno 2004*, ed. Hedvig Györi (Budapest, 2006), 175–190.

Ritner, "Uterine Amulet"

R. K. Ritner, "A Uterine Amulet in the Oriental Institute Collection," *JNES* 43/3 (1984), 209–221.

Ross, *Dumbarton Oaks Collection*

M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. II Jewelry, Enamels, and Art of the Migration Period* (Washington DC, 1965)

Sfameni Gasparro, *Culti orientali*

G. Sfameni Gasparro, *I culti orientali in Sicilia*, ÉPRO 31 (Leiden, 1973)

Smith, "Relations"

M. Smith, "Relations between Magical Papyri and Magical Gems," in *Actes du XV^e congrès international de Papyrologie, troisième partie. Problèmes généraux – papyrologie littéraire*, ed. J. Bingen, *Papyrologica Bruxellensia* 18 (Brussels, 1979), 129–136.

Spier, *Ancient Gems and Finger Rings*

J. Spier, *Ancient Gems and Finger Rings. Catalogue of the Collections. The J. Paul Getty Museum Malibu, California* (Malibu, 1992)

Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets"

J. Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition," *JWarb* 56 (1993), 25–62.

Spier, *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems*

J. Spier, *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems* (Wiesbaden, 2007)

Vikan, "Art, Medicine, and Magic"

G. Vikan, "Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984), 65–86.

Waegeman, *Amulet and Alphabet*

M. Waegeman, *Amulet and Alphabet: Magical Amulets in the First Book of Cyranides* (Leiden, 1987)

Walters, *Engraved gems and cameos*

H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the engraved gems and cameos: Greek, Etruscan and Roman in the British Museum*, rev. ed. (London, 1926)

Weitzmann, *Age of Spirituality*

K. Weitzmann, ed., *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century* (New York, 1979)

Zazoff, *Die antiken Gemmen*

P. Zazoff, *Die antiken Gemmen. Handbuch der Archäologie* (München, 1983)

Zwierlein-Diehl, *Glaspasten Würzburg I*

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Glaspasten im Martin-von-Wagner-Museum der Universität Würzburg I* (München, 1986)

Zwierlein-Diehl, *AGWien III*

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien, III. Die Gemmen der späteren römischen Kaiserzeit, 2. Masken, Masken-Kombinationen, Phantasie- und Märchentiere, Gemmen mit Inschriften, christliche Gemmen, magische Gemmen, sasanidische Siegel, Rundplastik aus Edelstein und verwandtem Material, Kameen* (München, 1991)

Zwierlein-Diehl, *Köln*

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Magische Amulette und andere Gemmen des Instituts für Altertumskunde der Universität zu Köln. Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Papyrologica Coloniensia XX* (Opladen, 1992)

Zwierlein-Diehl, *Siegel und Abdruck*

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Siegel und Abdruck. Antike Gemmen in Bonn. Akademisches Kunstmuseum – Antikensammlung der Universität Bonn. Sonderausstellung vom 18. September 2002 bis 31. Januar 2003* (Bonn, 2002)

Zwierlein-Diehl, *AGN*

E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Antike Gemmen und ihr Nachleben* (Berlin and New York, 2007)

FOREWORD

The papers in this book derive from a workshop held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest between 16–18 February 2012. It has taken unusually long to publish the proceedings of the conference – the various reasons are irrelevant and the responsibility of the editors. The delay, however, has given the authors the opportunity to update their findings before publication, which might perhaps make up for the loss caused by the lengthiness of the process.

The Budapest workshop was the second conference solely dedicated to research on magical gems¹. It is worth putting this in context and giving an overview of the achievements that took place in the period between these two events. During these years, there has been a radical change in the scope of our knowledge on magical gems.

It has been noted before that magical gems occupy a unique place among the material remains of classical antiquity. Through much of the history of classical studies magical gems have been relegated to the things not worthy of knowing – an approach encountered in all of the disciplines involved². Despite this, there has been some exceptional scholarship on magical gems, notably the work of three scholars: Armand Delatte, Alphonse A. Barb, and, most importantly, Campbell Bonner, the author of the still fundamental monograph³. It is quite telling that in the two decades following the publication of the first catalogue of magical gems in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris in 1964 only a few studies were written on the subject⁴. The change came in the mid-1980s, heralded by the catalogue of the Berlin gems by Hanna Philipp (1986), which was the first monograph to describe a collection of magical gems using the tools of classical archaeology⁵. The past decades have seen the publication of works that will define research on magical gems for a long time to come. Catalogues of the largest museum collections have been compiled⁶, enlarging the known corpus of magical gems to an enormous extent. Studies written with never before seen thoroughness focused on individual pieces and iconographical types⁷. Comprehensive works have also appeared⁸, the most momentous being

¹ The first one was organized in Verona, in 1999. For the proceedings, see Mastrocinque, *Gemme gnostiche*.

² For a typical example, see R. Gordon, 'The power of stones: Graeco-Egyptian magical amulets,' *JRA* 21 (2008), 714.

³ See note 7 below.

⁴ For example P. J. Sijpesteijn, 'Magical and semi-magical gems in a private collection,' *BABesch* 49 (1974), 246–250; D. Wortmann, 'Neue magische Gemmen,' *BJb* 175 (1975), 63–82.

⁵ Philipp, *Mira et Magica*.

⁶ The most important publications are Zwierlein-Diehl, *Köln*; Michel, *Bunte Steine*; Michel, *BM*; Mastrocinque, *SGG* II, J. Śliwa, *Magical Gems from the Collection of Constantine Schmidt-Ciążyński and from other Polish Collections* (Kraków, 2014); Mastrocinque, *Intailles magiques*.

⁷ For an overview of the bibliography of magical gems, see Michel, *DMG*, 531–539; Mastrocinque, *Intailles magiques*, 244–247.

⁸ Erika Zwierlein-Diehl gave a systematic survey of the deities appearing on magical gems in her Cologne catalogue (Zwierlein-Diehl, *Köln*). Note also her chapter on magical gems in Zwierlein-Diehl, *AGN*.

Simone Michel's 2004 overview⁹, the second monograph after Bonner's to include all the gems known at the time, 2800 items (to compare: Bonner's book was based on a catalogue of 389 pieces). Importantly, this period has also been characterised by a shift in the scope of research beyond ancient gems, thus creating the necessary conditions for studying the post-antique chapters in the long history of magical gems¹⁰.

Two new aims in the research on magical gems have also been formulated during this period: the organisation of an international exhibition of amulets, and the creation of an online database of magical gems. The first is yet to be accomplished, although it has come close to realization on four occasions since 2000¹¹, and Simone Michel has successfully organized two exhibitions on a smaller scale, relying on the collection of Wolfgang Skoluda and the material kept in German museums. Her achievements are a clear indication of the potentials of the concept¹².

The second objective was met with success in Budapest, where the Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (CBd) is now maintained by the Collection of Classical Antiquities of the Museum of Fine Arts. Since its launch in 2010, the database has made more than 2700 amulets from over seventy collections worldwide openly accessible, and is continuously expanding. The description of the corpus follows a unified protocol, making the database an indispensable research tool in the field¹³.

It is worth highlighting here an important trait which has characterised research in the past decades, and played a crucial role in the success of the database. A unique synergy has developed among scholars in the field, and research on magical gems has been characterised by cooperation rather than rivalry. CBd would be poorer without the photographs of Christopher Faraone and Attilio Mastrocinque, the advice of Jeffrey Spier, and the work of the Fribourg branch directed by Véronique Dasen, just to name a few of the participants.

The workshop in Budapest was an important event during this productive research period. The various disciplines represented by the participants – there were philologists, Egyptologists, archaeologists, historians, scholars of religious history and Jewish studies – clearly show that magical gems have found their place in the classical tradition, and that one of our most important objectives is now to put this material in context. This fact is alluded to in the title of this book, and is also mirrored by the studies here published.

The papers fall into four loose groups. The first one undertakes the important task of publishing new material. Shua Amorai-Stark and Shimon Ilani introduce magical gems from a private collection in Israel: the scientific value of these pieces is greatly enhanced by the fact that all of them come from the same site, Caesarea Maritima, which the authors identify as a major center in ancient Palestine for the production of magical intaglios, raising the possibility that workshops in Caesarea may even have been responsible for the creation of the so-called reaper scheme. The analysis of the material characteristics of the pieces has provided the authors with

⁹ Michel, *DMG*.

¹⁰ As a starting point, see Mastrocinque, *SGG I; Les savoirs magiques et leur transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*, ed. V. Dasen and J-M. Spieser (Firenze, 2014); and most recently E. Zwierlein-Diehl, "The Snake-legged god on the Magical Gems: Reflections on Nature, Greek, Egyptian and Jewish Influences, and the Afterlife," *Kölner und Bonner Archaeologica* 6 (2016), 248–256.

¹¹ The first attempt is alluded to by Simeone Michel-von Dungen in the present volume. For the second, see Gordon, in *'Gems of Heaven'*, 39.

¹² See her paper in the present volume.

¹³ The database is accessible at classics.mfab.hu/talismans.

new arguments to support the theory first proposed by Erika Zwierlein-Diehl that haematite gems were broken into two halves for medicinal purposes¹⁴. Despina Ignatiadou presents two magical gems that were unearthed at the Roman cemetery of Thessaloniki in 1972. The survey of the excavation archives allowed the reconstruction of the contexts of the two pieces: they formed part of the funerary equipment of a wealthy woman, probably buried in the third century AD. These are the first magical gems from excavation contexts in Greece ever to be published. Věra Šlancarová and Daniela Urbanová introduce magical gems preserved in Czech collections, which had previously been by and large inaccessible for scholars. Thanks to their efforts all the pieces can now be consulted in CBd. Genevra Kornbluth compares two rock crystal magical gems with a considerable corpus of undecorated rock crystal spheres of a similar size. Her meticulous observations categorize the chief groups dating from the Hellenistic period to the early Middle Ages and suggest that the *voces* and *characteres* were secondarily engraved on the two pieces. Her microarchaeological method may serve as a model to follow for the examination of other amulets as well.

Studies in the second group provide various methodologies for research on magical gems. One of the most important contributions in this volume is given by Erika Zwierlein-Diehl, who has created a framework for dating magical gems. She has surveyed and systematized the methods by which the gems can be dated and collected all the available evidence. Her results are the first to provide confirmation that the production of magical gems started in the late Hellenistic period and lasted until the end of the Roman imperial period. Sonia Macri examines the ancient books describing the properties of stones known as *lithika* and asserts that the ancient classification of precious stones does not rest on mineralogical data but rather on their symbolic interpretation. Her study provides new directions for further research on magical gems to see if there is a correspondence between the names of precious stones, the motifs they bear, and the function of the gems. Kirsten Dzwiza analyses the decoration patterns of magical signs engraved on gems, based on a survey of 1075 pieces. Her paper is a step towards the important task of the systematic survey of *characteres* engraved on magical gems – one of the crucial *desiderata* in the field, which can only be accomplished by a comprehensive survey of magical signs that also includes other groups of ancient *magica*.

Most papers in this volume fall in the third group. They share the aim of integrating magical gems in the ancient religious tradition, and use various methods to place them in their religious historical contexts. Gideon Bohak gives an overview of the use of engraved gems and rings in ancient Jewish magic, and calls attention not only to the paucity of ancient magical gems that are “demonstrably Jewish” but also to the dearth of Jewish texts that reference such gems. Engraved gems thus played only a marginal role in ancient Jewish magic. Véronique Dasen provides a cross-cultural interpretation of two amulet types. The vessel-like shape of the womb engraved on uterus-gems recalls the cupping device used in traditional Graeco-Roman healing, but the background is Egyptian. Similarly, both Greek and Egyptian elements are found on a gem with the name Thoeris beside the image of Athena protecting two children. Christopher A. Faraone focuses on magical gems bearing a miniaturized image of a famous cult statue, often without additional *voces magicae* and *characteres*, arguing that these powerful images were miniaturized to make them portable and used for protective and healing purposes. The pieces he analyses show the close parallels between the Greek magical papyri, magical gems, and ritual elements known from other sources, and contribute to the deconstruction of

¹⁴ Zwierlein-Diehl, *Köln*, 50.

the category of magical gems. Árpád M. Nagy also deconstructs the category: through a comprehensive statistical analysis of the corpus of Anguipes amulets, he aims to justify his earlier hypotheses that the scheme of the snake-legged deity is inseparable from Deus Israel. The makers of the Anguipes amulets attempted to integrate the God of Israel into their creations from a “pagan”, cross-cultural perspective, within a magical koine that regarded Deus Israel as a mighty deity, but not as God Almighty. His study only seemingly contradicts that of Gideon Bohak: while the latter discusses *Jewish* magic, the former focuses on *Judaizing* magic. Joachim Friedrich Quack uses two case studies to highlight an always topical question in research on *magica*: the tension between its comprehensive scope and scholarly specialization. From an Egyptological perspective, the interpretation of the Pantheos scheme usually encountered in the literature is inaccurate, whereas in the case of the Anguipes scheme, the Egyptian tradition provides no basis for interpretation. Drawing on the Jewish magical tradition that regarded King Solomon as having the power to control demons, Jeffrey Spier considers a unique gem that names Asmodaios, known as the “King of Demons” in Jewish texts. This gem and related rings show that complex Jewish beliefs that are rarely mentioned in the magical papyri were sometimes known to pagan magicians and found their way into early Christian magic as well. Paolo Vitellozzi analyses a case where a direct relationship exists between magical gems and a magical recipe: a piece in Perugia closely follows the prescriptions of a praxis known as the Sword of Dardanos (*PGM* IV 1716–1870), and a number of further gems (such as CBd-1555) can also be connected to the rite. His detailed analysis comparing the gem and the *PGM*-text paints a vivid picture of an amulet that was surely created after an archetypal model, and was the joint work of a *magos* and a *daktyliographos*.

Some papers in this group present radically new approaches in the study of magical gems, providing fertile ground for further discussions. The study of Attilio Mastrocinqe relates to the much debated question of the relationship of Gnosis and magical gems. He argues that Ialdabaöth is not only represented on a single gem, but also on other amulets. Ialdabaöth, who is the creator of the world in the Gnostic tradition, appears as a lion-headed deity. Elements of Gnosis undoubtedly appear among the motifs on magical gems, and the problem certainly merits further research. Eleni Tsatsou gives a radical reinterpretation of uterine gems, a large group within the corpus. Going against the *communis opinio* since at least Armand Delatte’s 1914 paper that these pieces serve gynaecological purposes, she contends that they aimed at enhancing sexual desire, thus arriving at a conclusion in opposition to that of Véronique Dasen. Maria Nilsson and John Ward compare quarry marks from Gebel el-Silsile in Egypt with *characteres* that appear on magical gems at least 200 years later, arguing that these signs are not simply masons’ marks of a practical function, but may also have had symbolic significance.

A fourth group of papers focuses on the connection of magical gems with later tradition. Felicity Harley-McGowan surveys ancient representations of the Crucifixion, and brings convincing arguments to show that the jasper gem from Gaza in the British Museum (CBd-816), usually dated to late antique times, was created much later, in the Middle Byzantine period. This result is important not only because it gives a clearer picture of the late antique representations of Jesus on the cross, but also because it underscores the continuing amuletic efficacy of gemstones that feature the name and image of Jesus crucified into the Middle Byzantine period. Simone Michel-von Dungern, who has played a crucial role in renewing research on magical gems, surveys recent attempts at displaying them in museum exhibitions and gives a detailed description of the scientific concept and educational experience of the second magical gems exhibition she staged at Malerwinkelhaus, Marktbreit in 2012.

To sum up, this volume is an important step ahead on the road we started three decades

ago. The studies presented here provide a rich illustration of the complexity of the archaeological group known as magical gems, which are gradually being integrated among other types of amulets and which reveal new aspects of the religious tradition commonly known as ancient magic.

We take this occasion to thank all the people and institutions, without whose help the conference and the publication could not have been realised. Ildikó Csepregi played a decisive role in organizing the conference. The Greek texts appearing in the book have been proofread by Katalin Bélyácz. The conference was hosted by the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, which also manages the Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database. The conference and the proceedings have been generously sponsored by Vacheron Constantin in Geneva.

The sad news of the passing of David Jordan was received when this manuscript was prepared to go to print. With him, one of the greatest *symmagoi* is gone. This book is dedicated to his memory.

THE EDITORS