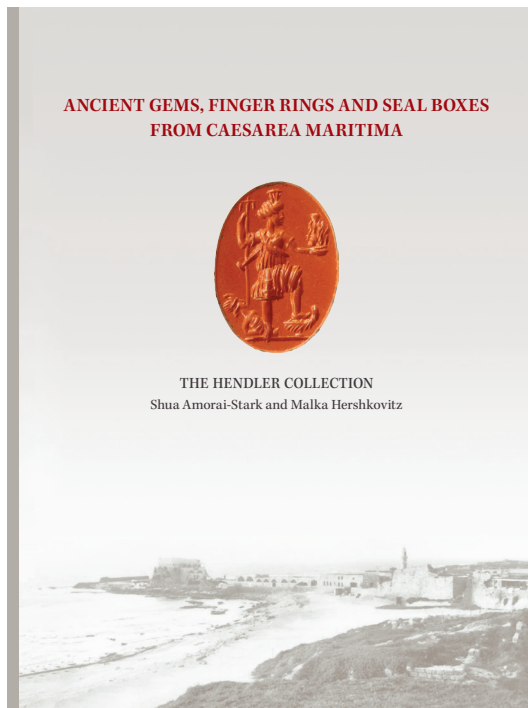




Bookmark

Ancient Gems, Finger Rings and Seal Boxes from Caesarea Maritima. The Hendler Collection

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To date, this impressive publication is the only book dealing with ancient gems, finger rings and seal boxes from an ancient site in Roman-Byzantine Palestine. It presents the private Collection of Johanan Hendler who gathered the objects together with his sons between 1950 and the early 1970's. The Collection was authorized for publication by the Israel Antiquities Authority.

All the items are surface finds from a single site in Israel: Caesarea Maritima. This important city was built by Herod the Great in honour of Augustus Caesar and Rome. Caesarea, located at the Mediterranean, was built on a Hellenistic town, and became the capital and administrative centre of Roman-Byzantine Palestine. It is one of the largest ancient cities, with an important harbor, its own aqueduct, theatres, hippodrome, circus, odeum, palaces, bath houses, commercial streets and industries, temples, a synagogue, and churches. It was surrounded by agricultural areas and connected by roads to the close regions and important cities in the province.

This publication is an all-inclusive annotated catalogue. Its extraordinary material is divided into categories according to generic types. All object categories are preceded by their own introduction. These present the relevant ancient and modern terms regarding each category, the finds from other sites in the province and the formerly published and unpublished excavated similar items from Caesarea. The number of finds from Caesarea in all the categories, that is, from the Collection as well as from previous publications, is the largest and most



Fig. 1: Onyx gem in silver ring depicting enthroned Zeus/Jupiter, 1st – 2nd c. CE.

diverse in comparison to similar finds from other sites in the Levant.

The first category is of engraved gems: 195 intaglios and cameos of the late Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods. They are classified according to subject, type and cultural affiliation. The conclusions of this chapter discuss the typology and the overall thematic subjects. 179 cut and polished jewelry precious stone and glass plain gems are presented in the second chapter. They are classified by material, color, size and shape. The materials and their possible origins are discussed in the

conclusions. 110 finger rings from these cultures are presented in the third chapter. They are classified according to their material, bezel device and ring shape. The evidence regarding the gems' and finger rings' distribution, patrons (their ages, economic status and probable religions) are evaluated in the conclusions. Seal boxes, a Roman phenomenon, contained wax sealing imprints from gems and finger rings. Chapter four deals with the 11 seal boxes in the Collection. They are classified according to major formal types. The conclusions discuss the possibility that in Roman Caesarea not only pagans but also Jews used seal boxes. This research shows together with further 70 pieces from the Collection that Caesarea Maritima was an important manufacturing centre for jewels, such as gems, cameos, finger rings and seal boxes in Roman and Byzantine times, and possibly also during the early Islamic periods.

Indexes, statistics and a broad bibliography appear at the end of the book. Images of the actual size of every piece as well as enlarged photos accompany each item. They add much to the delight of jewel lovers and to academic knowledge and research.

541 pages; 565 items; 1630 photos: 1179 coloured, actual sizes of the objects and enlarged by 1.5, 2.3, 3.5 or 5 percent, 451 black and white enlarged photos; 5 Fig. Plates: 1 black and white, 4 coloured, indexes, statistics and an extensive bibliography. Hardcover: length 32 x width 24 x thickness 4 cm.; ISBN: 978-965-555-911-B

Link to information, cost of book and buying it from Europe and USA: <http://syype.biz/hendler>
Direct link to publisher for receiving the book from Israel: malishai@netvision.net.il



Fig. 2: Jasper gem with amphoriskos, 2nd–1st c. BCE and probably not later than 1st c. CE.