



Gebr. Mann

Cynthia Hahn and Avinoam Shalem (eds.)

# Seeking Transparency

Rock Crystals Across the Medieval Mediterranean

Like the sea, and the watery medium with which rock crystal is identified in the Middle Ages, the history of its production during the Middle Ages ebbs and flows. From Late Antiquity to the age of the great Portuguese expansion, specific knowledge about carving the hard material, was kept a closely guarded secret in just a few centers of production.

All the while, royal courts and wealthy churches were eager patrons for the luxurious objects given that rock crystal was valued as one of the most desirable and precious of all materials, ascribed mysterious origins and powers, and renowned for both rarity and clarity. This collection of essays reveals the global and cross-cultural histories of rock-crystal production in and even beyond the lands of the Mediterranean Sea. It investigates many objects and varied aspects of rock crystal such as: the physical nature and legendary as well as actual origins of the material; its manufacturing techniques and affiliations to other luxurious objects, such as cut glass and carved precious stones; legends and traditions associated with its aesthetic qualities; as well as issues concerning its varied functions and historiography.



336 pages | 56 colour illustrations  
and 126 b/w illustrations

Text in English

21 × 27 cm, hardcover

€ 49,00 (D)

ISBN 978-3-7861-2843-4

## The editors

Cynthia Hahn ist Professorin für Kunstgeschichte am Hunter College, CUNY.

Avinoam Shalem ist Professor für die Kunst des Islam an der Columbia University, New York.

## With contributions by

Zainab Bahrani, Isabelle Bardiès, Farid Benfeghou, Brigitte Buettner, Patrick R. Crowley, Beate Fricke, Marisa Galvez, Stefania Gerevini, Cynthia Hahn, Jeremy Johns, Geneva Kornbluth, Jens Kröger, Ingeborg Krueger, Elise Morero, Bissera V. Pentcheva, Marcus Pilz, Stéphane Pradines, Venetia Porter, Hara Procopiou, Avinoam Shalem, Gia Toussaint, Roberto Vargiolu und Hassan Zahouani.

**Dietrich Reimer Verlag GmbH · Gebr. Mann Verlag · Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft**

Berliner Straße 53, 10713 Berlin · Phone +49 30 700 13 88 50 · Fax +49 30 700 13 88 55

www.reimer-mann-verlag.de · vertrieb@reimer-verlag.de