

GEM TESTING, 10th Edition

By Basil W. Anderson, revised by E. Alan Jobbins, 390 pp., illus., publ. by Butterworths, London, 1990. US\$49.95*

Gem Testing was first published in 1942, and Basil Anderson was exceptionally well qualified to write it. He was a pioneer in establishing what is probably the first commercial gem-testing laboratory, but, more than that, he was an exceptionally creative scientist. During his many years as director of the Precious Stone Laboratory of the London Chamber of Commerce, he added significantly to the gem tester's arsenal. Before Basil Anderson, the spectroscope was not regarded as a gemological instrument. His long series of articles on spectroscopy in the *Gemmologist* magazine was a classic, and added materially to the literature on gemology and to the effectiveness of the gemologist in all kinds of identification problems.

Not only was Basil Anderson an exceptional scientist, but he was also an outstanding teacher and a gifted writer. Most of his writings were highly technical in nature, but they were written to be easily assimilated by most gemologists, and often they were written with a twinkle. From time to time, when using *Gem Testing*, one encounters the light touch that characterized Anderson's writing.

Gem Testing was a beautifully written and very lucid text in Anderson's day. Alan Jobbins, editor of the *Journal of Gemmology* and former curator of Gems and Minerals at the Geological Museum in London, is an excellent writer and communicator in his own right. He has added chapters on gemstone enhancement and on the manufacture of synthetics and other substitutes, and he has updated the text where new developments warranted. But he has not made changes in Anderson's text where they were not essential.

For those few gemologists and students of gemology who are not

BOOK REVIEWS

Elise B. Misirowski and
Loretta B. Loeb, Editors

already familiar with Anderson's great classic, *Gem Testing* approaches identification with the question: "Is this a diamond?—or a ruby?, or an emerald?" After 11 chapters on the properties of gemstones and the equipment available to detect or quantify them, Anderson wrote 17 chapters on specifics of how to identify all of the major and many minor gems and substitutes. His observations, accumulated over a lifetime in the gem laboratory, make available to everyone the experience of an especially insightful, meticulous, intelligent, and creative scientist.

I commend Alan Jobbins for updating a classic work very effectively, enhancing rather than detracting in any way from the qualities that have made *Gem Testing* a must for every gemologist's—and gemmologist's—library.

RICHARD T. LIDDICOAT
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ENGAGEMENT AND WEDDING RINGS: The Definitive Buying Guide for People in Love

By Antoinette Matlins, Antonio Bonanno, and Jane Crystal, 269 pp., illus., publ. by Gemstone Press, South Woodstock, VT, 1990. US\$14.95*

The authors have distilled a great deal of information into this book's large-size paperback format, and

they present it to the layperson in a manner that is lively and well organized. While very little of the information will be new for the gemologist, others may find the book a useful reference guide.

Although the subtitle might lead potential readers to think that the book focuses only on diamonds, the eight parts actually contain a wealth of information for the consumer on many additional subjects, including colored stones, jewelry history, design, appraisals, and insurance. The difficult topics of grading reports and pricing are handled in a balanced, instructive fashion, with the advantages of shopping at a reputable jeweler clearly discussed.

The diamond sections cover everything from size and shape to the effects of clarity and color on price. They also explain the importance of cut and proportion. Unfortunately, some of the information may be excessive for the average consumer, and the inclusion of current price charts will date the book prematurely.

However, the part on colored stones includes notes on the more common gem materials and some of the more exotic stones seen on the market today, and, therefore, enables the book to be more than a one-time reference. Careful, accurate explanations of synthetics, simulants, misnomers, and treatments are also presented.

The book includes a good index, a bibliography, and a series of appendices detailing gemological associations and laboratories; many of the latter appear to be jewelry stores with Certified Gemologist Appraiser (CGA) or Master Gemologist Appraiser (MGA) titleholders on staff.

Although the text of *Engagement and Wedding Rings* is well

*This book is available for purchase at the GIA Bookstore, 1660 Stewart Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404. Telephone: (800) 421-7250, ext. 282.

illustrated with line drawings and black-and-white photos, the color section is disappointing. It consists mainly of badly reprinted advertising material, which is properly credited but does very little to enhance the usefulness of this volume.

Overall, this is a book for the interested consumer rather than the gemologist, but, because it is both accurate and well written, it makes an enjoyable guide for everyone.

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ISLAMIC RINGS AND GEMS—THE ZUCKER COLLECTION

*Edited by Derek J. Content, 551 pp., illus., publ. by Philip Wilson Publishers, London, 1987. US\$115.00**

This massive tome covers a topic that hitherto seems to have been overlooked: Islamic goldwork and gem carving from the seventh to the 19th centuries. While there have been several articles written on various aspects of this subject, as well as passing references in many books peripherally related to it, this seems to be the first book to concentrate on this specific area.

Essentially, the work is a detailed description of a personal collection of Islamic gems and rings assembled by Benjamin Zucker. Derek Content and Ludvik Kalus prepared the descriptive catalogue of each jewel, which makes up the body of the book. The section that follows the catalogue, titled "The Craftsmen and Their World," analyzes the significance of the collection in four chapters. The first, Ralph Pindar-Wilson's excellent historic account of "Seals and Rings in Islam," is followed by Jack Ogden's "Islamic Goldsmithing Techniques in the Early Medieval Period" and Joseph Saden's "The Art of the Goldsmith Reflected in Medieval Arabic Literature." The fourth chapter is a glossary of Medieval Judeo-Arabic goldsmithing terms by Hadassa Shy.

Every aspect of the text is presented in English, Arabic, and Hebrew, undoubtedly a tremendous

task. Each chapter is footnoted and has its own bibliography, making the book a very useful reference for future scholars. Black-and-white photos of the rings and gems are taken from various angles to show important features. A very important note concerning the orientation of the photographs is found on the publisher's page. Several of the pieces are also depicted in color, often magnified to show details of the spectacular workmanship and apparent quality. The only complaint that these reviewers had was that the quality of the photographs did not meet expectations in relation to the other qualities of the book.

The gems, frequently inscribed or carved as ring stones, seals, or talismans, include carnelian and other chalcedonies, lapis, turquoise, and malachite. Regrettably, fewer than one-third of the gem pieces described are shown in the 14-page color section, leaving these reviewers feeling teased and wanting more. Otherwise, this book is a milestone work on the subject and would be a welcome addition to the library of any appraiser, gem collector, or jewelry lover who is interested in the subject matter.

MICHAEL and PAT GRAY
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OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

The Diamond Ring Buying Guide, How to Spot Value and Avoid Ripoffs, by Renee Newman, 140 pp., illus., publ. by International Jewelry Publications, Los Angeles, 1989, US\$12.95.* This highly informative guide is intended for the first-time shopper who knows very little about evaluating diamonds or jewelry craftsmanship, but it could also appeal to the enthusiast craving more information about diamonds. The scope of the book ranges from general facts about diamonds to more technical grading terms. It also contains pertinent information on different cutting styles, as well as on gold and other alloys, to help the consumer make intelligent purchasing decisions.

Other topics covered include how to select the right setting, the pricing of quality, and how to choose a personal jeweler. The author uses photos to explain clarity and cut grades, as well as the different tests involved in identifying diamond simulants. Self-tests at the end of every chapter prompt the reader to focus on the significant points covered.

The Diamond Ring Buying Guide is a useful book for the first-time diamond purchaser, the gemologist who needs a good review on diamonds, and the retailer seeking more information to give to customers.

KAREN BABCOCK STARK

Le Lapis Lazuli, Son Histoire, Ses Gisements, Ses Imitations (Lapis Lazuli, Its History, Deposits, and Imitations), by Claire da Cunha, 139 pp., illus., publ. by Le Rocher, Monaco, 1989. This attractive study of lapis lazuli as a gem material is the first book entirely dedicated to this gem. It is structured into three main parts. In the first, Ms. da Cunha concentrates on ancient sources and uses of lapis lazuli. In the second part, she provides detailed descriptions of the modern sources of lapis, an exhaustive study of the structure and chemistry, as well as an extensive review of identification procedures, from classic gemological methods to such sophisticated techniques as electron microprobe analysis and Raman and cathodoluminescence spectroscopies. The author concludes the volume with a complete list and description of the various lapis lazuli treatments, synthetics, and imitations.

Several useful experiments and observations that have never been previously published are of particular note. Although the book is written entirely in French, it is illustrated by numerous informative figures (e.g., color photographs, detailed maps, and spectra) that will be useful to all gemologists. The author's thoroughness in describing this fascinating gem reflects her many years of experience teaching gemology.

EMMANUEL FRITSCH