

	<p>Object: Hecate, so called magical gem</p> <p>Museum: Museum August Kestner Trammplatz 3 30159 Hannover (0511) 168-42730 museen- kulturgeschichte@hannover- stadt.de</p> <p>Collection: Ancient Cultures, Gemmen, Kameen und Glaspasten. Die Sammlung geschnittener Steine</p> <p>Inventory number: K 450</p>
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## Description

Hecate is considered the divine mediator between the supernatural and the subterranean. Since the 5th century BC, she has been equated with the goddess Artemis, to whom she is also related by family, according to Hesiod (theog. 409-411), and with Persephone as well as with Ereschkigal, the Sumerian mistress of the underworld, or the moon goddess Selene. In this trinity, which is also taken into account in the iconography, the parts referring to Artemis and Selene stand for the above, Persephone for the below.

Because of her affinity with the lower, the realm of the dead, Hecate was attributed demonic traits from this time onwards, which consolidated her role as the "mistress of ghosts" and later gave her negative character traits herself.

As a protective goddess, she was worshipped in places where evil spirits and demons were suspected, e.g. entrances to houses or crossroads. Here the statuettes of the goddess with three heads and three bodies, known since classical times, were erected, expressing the trinity of her being (Hekateia).

Hecate, who is important for magical gems, is usually also depicted in this object genre in this triform type.

A popular motif attributed with evil-preventing qualities was the head of Medusa, the only mortal among the three Gorgon sisters. In combination with the three-figure Hecate and the Gorgoneion, the chthonic and ghostly side of the moon is expressed. (AVS)

Former collection August Kestner, Rome

## Detailed description

Vs: Dreigestaltige Hecate in langem, hochgegürtetem Gewand mit Überfall, auf jedem Kopf ein Modius, in den Händen (von oben nach unten) zwei Dolche, zwei Fackeln und zwei

Peitschen. - Rs: Medusenhaupt in Vorderansicht. Ein Schlangenpaar mit hochgereckten Köpfen über der Stirn, ein anderes, das unter dem Kinn verknotet ist. Grundlinie. An der Kante Umschrift. - Beiderseits flach, Kante zur Vs. abgeschrägt.

## Basic data

Material/Technique: Jasper / carved  
Measurements: Height: 1.68 cm, width: 1.28 cm

## Events

Created	When	2.-3. century CE
	Who	
	Where	Mediterranean Basin
Collected	When	
	Who	August Kestner (1777-1853)
	Where	Rome
[Relation to person or institution]	When	
	Who	Hecate
	Where	
[Relation to person or institution]	When	
	Who	Medusa
	Where	

## Keywords

- Engraved gem

## Literature

- Schlüter, Margildis - Platz-Horster, Gertrud (1975): Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen IV. Hannover, Kestner Museum, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe. Wiesbaden, 310 Nr. 1706
- Siebert, Anne Viola (2010): Eine magische Gemme aus dem Museum August Kestner in Hannover. Gedanken zu einem Tagungsplakat. Seng, Helmut - Tardieu, Michel (Hrsg.), Die Chaldaeischen Orakel (Heidelberg), 9-17