Object:	Anointing vessel in the shape of a cock (Aryballos)
Museum:	Museum August Kestner Trammplatz 3 30159 Hannover (0511) 168-42730 museen-kulturgeschichte@hannover-stadt.de
Collection:	Ancient Cultures, Vessel ceramics and vase painting
Inventory number:	698

Description

The chicken we are familiar with today as a farm animal originally descended from wild breeds in South Asia. Via India and China, the domestic chicken spread to the Near East in the region of present-day Iran around 1200 BC. Cultural contacts of the Greeks with the population groups living in Anatolia led to the chicken also becoming native to Greece and Sicily in the 6th century BC.
Since that time, the cock in particular has played a special role, mediated by the popular cockfights. Fighting cocks symbolised the will to win that every soldier or participant in sporting competitions should show. Especially after the Persian Wars, cockfights were part of the legally established events in the Dionysus Theatre in Athens. Young men of military age were obliged to attend these games. This is why there are very often depictions of cocks on the so-called Panathenaic prize amphorae.
Especially on the island of Rhodes, where this anointing vessel was produced, the fighting cocks needed for betting games were bred.
Due to its physical characteristic of announcing the approaching sunrise by crowing, the cock was regarded in Persian culture as a symbolic animal of the light deity, which can be equated with Hermes. (AVS)

Former August Kestner Collection, Rome

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Clay / red paint residues; body turned on potter's wheel ; comb, skin flaps and feathers modelled by hand

Measurements: Height: 12.1 cm

Events

Created	When	550-500 BC
	Who	
	Where	Rhodes
Found	When	
	Who	
	Where	Etruria
Collected	When	
	Who	August Kestner (1777-1853)
	Where	Rome

Keywords

- Aryballos
- Chicken
- Productive animal
- Rooster
- Tierfigur

Literature

- Liepmann, Ursula (1975): Griechische Terrakotten, Bronzen, Skulpturen. Hannover, 41 Nr. T 11