

Magical gem: Magna Mater, Danubian riders (A) ritual scene (B)

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| Cbd-Number | CBd-686 |
| ID-Number | GB-BM-MMEu_G 244, EA 56244 |
| Collection | GB_London, The British Museum |
| Inventory | G 244 (EA 56244) |
| References | Michel, BM, no. 300 |
| Former Collections | Schmidt, C. |
| Material | carnelian (colour unspecified) |
| Dimensions | 29 x 22 x 6 mm |
| Dating | 2nd c. AD (Michel) |
| Iconography | Magna Mater; balance; headband; altar; shoes, unspecified; weapon: armour?; weapon: helmet; scepter, unspecified; plant: tree; candlestick; bread (3 loaves); clothing: garment; plant: pine cone; animal, sacrificial; kline; scene, sacrifice; head, of bull; torch; throne; figure, male; Danubian riders (2); clothing: mantle; gesture, lying; moon, crescent; Selene; Helios; rays (6); stars (3); clothing: tunic; table; fish; animal: ram; bird: cock; clothing: cap, Phrygian; snakes (2); figure, female; scepters (2) |



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A: In the centre, frontal view of a standing female figure, clad in peplos and kolpos, holding two horses, represented in profile, by the reins (Magna Mater). The horses face each other, and raise one foreleg, while trampling over a lying figure. Their riders wear Phrygian caps, armour (?) and chlamys, one arm raised. Above each raised arm, an eight-pointed star, behind the riders, a snake coiling vertically. Above this group, the bust of Helios with six rays on the head (on the right) and the bust of Selene with a lying crescent on the head (on the left) facing each other, between them, an eight-pointed star. In the lower segment of the image, on the sides, two sitting figures in profile, facing each other. Between them, from left to right: a throne, a table with fish and three loaves of bread, a candlestick. At the bottom, on the left: a ram in profile to right, and a cock in profile to left, lowest part damaged (perhaps with further animals).

B: In the upper part of the image, a male and female figure to front, facing each other. The female wears peplos and headband, right hand raised high and holding onto a tall torch, left arm lowered beside the body, and holding a balance (?). The man wears shoes, tunic and armour (?), originally with helmet, and rests his right foot upon the head of a bull, left hand holding onto a tall scepter, right hand outstretched and holding a pine-cone above the small, cylindrical altar in the middle, with fire burning on the top. In the lower part, a man disembowelling a sacrificial animal hung upon a tree with two leafy branches.

Bibliography

[Michel, BM on CBd-686](#)

[The British Museum Collection database on CBd-686](#)

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