



An 18k massive gold ring set with a Roman agate intaglio. Fortuna standing with rudder and cornucopia.

Intaglio 12 × 6 mm

18k gold ring – ring size EU 53 (US 6½ / UK M½); gross weight 10.15 g.

Intaglio Roman, 1st–2nd century AD; ring modern.

A massive 18k gold ring with a plain hoop and a broad oval bezel, set in a closed collet with a Roman convex agate intaglio of unusually generous size, depicting Isis-Fortuna standing.

The goddess stands frontally, head turned to the right, draped in a long chiton and himation whose folds fall in parallel lines to the feet. On her head the Isiac crown. To the left, a long rudder on which her hand rests; to the right, a cornucopia held against the shoulder. Groundline. The stone is a banded agate with a pale outer zone and red-orange spots.

Beneath the stone, at the lower edge of the setting, traces of ferrous oxidation point to a former iron mount.

Historical context

Roman glyptic Fortuna is the most frequent subject of Roman ring-stones from Augustus to the Severans, and her fusion with Isis is one of the great religious facts of the Empire. Isis, mistress of the sea and of destiny, was worshipped at Alexandria as Isis Tyche; in Italy the type appears at Pompeii, at Praeneste and in the Isea of Rome, and on gems and coins from the 1st century AD. The Isiac crown on a Fortuna with rudder and cornucopia is the mark of this syncretism. On a seal, the goddess who steers, gives plenty and holds the keys of fate was the natural emblem of a life placed under protection — worn

by sailors, merchants and freedmen alike. Pliny records agate among the stones most sought for engraving and describes its spots and veins as its chief beauty (Nat. Hist. 37, 139–142).

Iconography and symbolism

The rudder is the instrument of direction: Fortune governs the course of things as a helmsman governs a ship. The cornucopia, the horn of Amaltheia, is plenty that flows without measure. The crown of horns and disc brings a third power: Isis, who reassembled Osiris and holds sway over fate itself — the goddess who, in Apuleius, tells Lucius that she alone can lengthen the thread of his life beyond what Fortune has spun. Together the three attributes express the Roman idea of fortune — not blind chance but a power that may be steered, and therefore propitiated. The spotted stone suits her: a goddess whose gifts are uneven.