

Unpublished Statue in the Graeco-Roman Museum

تمثال غير منشور بالمتحف اليوناني الروماني

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Abstract:

This study will focus on the publishment of a limestone statue preserved in the Greco-Roman Museum of unknown provenance of a life-Size earring a cloak.

The research will address a descriptive study of the statue, followed by an analytical study of all available elements, with an attempt to explain these features through comparisons and previous studies with the aim of revealing the identity of the owner of the statue and his social status, through the most important features that appeared on the statue and the most important features that distinguish it: the shape and type of the cloak, the stance, and the position of the hand.

Keywords:

Roman – intellectuals - Greek cloak - Muses - Smyrna

الملخص:

تقوم هذه الدراسة على نشر تمثال محفوظ بالمتحف اليوناني الروماني مجهول المصدر من الحجر الجيري لرجل بالحجم الطبيعي يرتدى العباءة .

سوف تتناول الورقة البحثية دراسة وصفية للتمثال تعقبه دراسة تحليلية لكافة العناصر المتاحة مع محاولة لتفسير هذه السمات من خلال المقارنات والدراسات السابقة بهدف الكشف عن ماهية صاحب التمثال ومكانته الاجتماعية وذلك من خلال أهم المخصصات التي ظهرت على التمثال وأهم ما يميزها شكل ونوع العباءة والوقفه ووضع اليد.

الكلمات الدالة: الروماني – المتقنين – العباءة اليونانية – ربات الفنون – سميرونا

Introduction:

This study is based on the publication of a preserved statue in the Greco-Roman museum of unknown origin, made of limestone. The statue depicts a life-sized man wearing a cloak. The research paper includes a descriptive study of the statue, followed by an analytical study of all available elements, with an attempt to interpret these features through comparisons and previous studies in order to uncover the identity and the social status of the statue owner. This is discerned by examining the most prominent technical

characteristics displayed by the statue, such as its shape, the type of the cloak, the posture, and the hand position.

Research hypotheses:

What is the identity of the statue owner? Was he one of the emperors? Was he a public figure? What was his position and can we reach conclusions through comparison with different artworks that share similar artistic features? Can we determine the historical period of this artwork?

I- The descriptive study:

Object name: Statue of male

Figures: Figs.1 (from a to i)

Inventory number: Greek and Roman Museum of Alexandria, Inv. No. 1126.

Provenance: Unknown.

Material: Limestone.

Dimensions: H. 156 cm.

Preservation: The head and both feet with parts up to above the ankles legs are missed.

Technique: The back is worked out.

Bibliographic references: unpublished.

Description:

The statue represents a man standing with his weight on his left leg while his right leg is bent. The right knee is slightly forward. The lower part of the garment reveals a cloak that hangs from the right shoulder, covering and wrapping around the left arm before draping down on the left side until it reaches the end of the statue (Fig.1a, b, c). The folds in this cloak are clearly visible in the front part but not as much in the back part (Fig.1d).

The statue stands on a modern square base. A part of it is visible from the left side of the statue, while it disappears under the cloak on the right side. At the top of the statue, there is a hole in the middle through which the upper part, including the head, was attached separately from the body of the statue (Fig.1g). The cloak reveals the right arm up to the elbow. The hands are crossed on the abdomen, with the left hand placed on top of the

right hand. Much care was given to the back of the statue, indicating that it was placed and displayed in a location where it could be seen from all directions.

II- The analytical and the comparative study:

The statue represents a figure wearing a Greek cloak that wraps around his body and covers both shoulders. The end of it hangs from his right shoulder to cover his left arm. The hands are stacked on top of each other - as mentioned before - with the left hand above the right hand (Fig.1h,i). The details of the fingers were carefully sculpted, but due to the poor condition of the statue, many of their features have been erased. The right hand is covered by the cloak and only a part of it is visible, possibly fingers or edges wrapped in cloth due to poor condition.

The crafting of the folds of the cloak asserts that the artist was highly skillful as the folds appear deep and realistic, expressing the thickness of the fabric. The draped part on the right shoulder has five clear folds, while the left shoulder has only three that are clearly visible. The rest of the cloak has shallow folds that are only visible below the right arm and slightly at the bottom near the end of the statue.

There are important and specific points that are presented in the analytical study in order to understand the nature of the statue and to approximate its time period, given the absence of some important elements that are needed for precise dating, such as the head and feet.

First , the design of the cloak despite its simple details. **Next**, the position of the statue's hand, which is a non-widespread shape among statues with cloaks worn by intellectuals and thinkers.

From the first glance and through the careful observation of its cloak, it indicates that it represents an important figure with a high status. It could represent a thinker, a poet, a philosopher, or an orator.

Worth mentioning that monumental statues have been spread since late Republican times in public squares to immortalize historical figures. Most of these statues depict figures wearing cloaks since the mid-second century B.C.

This type of statues were found in various provinces in Egypt, some of which were of known origins and others were unknown¹ (fig.2) . Of course, there were many secondary

¹ - Dr. Salwa Bakr mentioned a number of *published and unpublished models that fall under this type of statues for more details, see: Bakr, S., " The Orator Statue ",Tanta Museum -

differences, such as the posture or the shape of the feet and their sandals, hands position, cloaks style and their coverage of the body and the shoulders.

These statues are considered part of the artistic and cultural heritage of the Roman Empire as they document both the lifestyle and the fashion prevailed in that historical periods, as well as they reflect the social status and the influence enjoyed by the represented individuals. These statues were studied through a number of specific features and angles; such as hands and arms position, chest opening, the papyrus roll which was found with most of this type of statues, the chest of papyrus (copsa) and its position beside the statue and its style, the cloak design, pleats and folds execution, feet shape and style of sandals and finally the posture of the statue, as they were all examined in order to explain the identity of the statue and define its period.

As mentioned above, these statues represent thinkers, orators or philosophers - all were an important class in the Roman society, especially philosophers who were highly respected due to their intellectual efforts and their important role in shaping the cultural, political and social perspectives at that time.

In the Roman period, the impact of intellectuals was culturally and intellectually strengthened as they played an effective role in the formation of the Roman thought, and their influence extended to wider segments of society. As for orators, they enjoyed a significant and prestigious status because of their ability to speak and deliver messages eloquently. They had an effective role in influencing public opinion, they were also able to express political and social opinions. Also, they had an important role in political affairs during the Roman Republic. Politicians used orators to promote their ideas and agendas. Orators continued to be of a great influence in political decision making in the Senate during the age of the empire, and their status rose even more higher, and they were giving speeches in the imperial palaces and acting as advisers for emperors and political leaders.

One of the most well-known statues of orators and thinkers are the Roman copies of the statues of **Demosthenes** (322-383 BC), which are preserved in the Vatican, wearing a cloak and holding a papyrus roll in his hand, a usual form of this type of Statues² (fig. 3)

Analytical Archaeological Study - Proceedings of the Tenth Conference of Arab Archaeologists Union, Cairo, 2007, page 3, footnote 4

also, see: Sobhy, A., Representation of Male Officials and Craftsmen in Egypt during Ptolemaic and Roman Ages.: Helwan University, 2007. pp.604-12 cat.nos.263-79.

² - Richter, G. M. A, The Portraits of the Greeks II, London, 1965, p 216, ca.num.1

(the cloak):

The statue, the target of study, wears a cloak that covers the shoulders and hangs its right end to cover the left arm and almost reaches Feet.

The cloak is of the Greek Himation style, which was worn by prominent and prestigious personalities, and it corresponds to the pallium and the Roman Toga, those clothes that were worn in solemn celebrations and events³.

³- Harlow.M.,A ,Cultural History Of Dress & Fashion in Antiquity, London, 2017,p.54

***Himation**: It is the Greek chlamys robe, also known as **chalamis**. Initially, it was used by men and then women started using it around 520 BC. It was worn over the chiton or tunic and had various ways of wearing it. It later became **pallium** in the Roman age and can easily be distinguished from the toga and the Roman pallium by its rectangular shape, while the Roman cloak took a semi-circular shape. For more details, see: Cleland, L., Davies, G., and Jones, L., Greek and Roman Dress A to Z, New York, 2007, p92.

* **Toga** : It is the Roman national costume that Roman citizens take pride in wearing during official celebrations and events. Only Roman citizens would wear it; it started as a practical outer garment but then became a symbol of Roman citizenship and later a symbol for celebrations and events. The toga went through several stages of development in terms of colours and usage; different colours had different meanings. The way it was worn reflected the time period in which it appeared; each time period had its own style and pattern for wearing and executing the toga. The Republican period differed from the imperial period which also had various styles that differed from one century to another.

For more details, see: *ibid.*, pp190-197, also see : Stone, S., "The toga from national to ceremonial costume", in Sebesta and Bonfante , 1994, pp. 13-4

* **Pallium**: It is equivalent to the Greek himation robe; it is the everyday life cloak. When Romans mixed with various peoples and civilizations, they adopted wearing pallium as a result of cultural interaction with Greeks. The toga became the official national costume while pallium became the practical everyday life costume that quickly spread due to its ease of wearing and care compared to the toga which required special care for preservation. Despite its initial use -----being limited to daily life and specific social classes rather than others until its ease of use led to its spread where important figures began wearing pallium but not emperors themselves; it remained unused in official events until Emperor Tiberius (14-37 AD) wore it publicly at one official event. As for artistic application for those who wear pallium, there are several works depicting emperors wearing pallium as well as artistic models for some public figures, intellectuals, and thinkers; for Romans, pallium was considered their formal attire for writers and philosophers who were classified as "palliati" category usually associated with high levels of culture and knowledge. For more details see: Kleiner, D., Roman Sculpture, Yale University press, New Haven & London,1992, p.175, Fig.143.

(The pose of the statue's hands)

The position of hands of the statue represents an unusual shape for most statues with a cloak that represent a category of Thinkers, philosophers and orators, and most of the previous studies which published this type of artworks dealt with the usual forms of orators who were raising their right hand in the speech position.

In addition to this form, appeared the position of the papyrus roll holder, which depicted the statue holding in his left hand one of the papyrus rolls while the right hand is raised during the speech, which is the form adopted by several emperors' statues, among them is a statue of the Emperor Titus, dated back to the end of the first century A.D from the Vatican museum, which represents Titus wearing a cloak and holding a papyrus roll in his left hand while his right hand is raised as he was giving a speech. (fig.4). Also a statue of Emperor Hadrian, from the Capitol Museum, appeared wearing the cloak, and also in his left hand a papyrus roll, but the right hand is not too high from his body⁴ (fig. 5), or the form who represents Demosthenes holds the papyrus roll with both hands (as already mentioned) and all the models appear next to them *cospa* (the papyrus chest). There are also some statues whose right arm shows only the fingers as the arm is suspended in the chest opening of the cloak⁵.

As for the posture of the studied statue, it did not appear on any of the statues of the category mentioned in most museums or previous studies, which stood as an obstacle that hindered defining the identity of the statue. The statue of Demosthenes appeared in Copenhagen without papyrus scroll, but the hands are intertwined with fingers⁶, and not on top of each other like the studied model (fig.6). Some figures of the statue of the Orator or the seated thinker also appeared in a number of models, but arms were on top of each other⁷ (fig. 7).

The position of the hand represented by the statue has only been found in two places for sculptural works; **firstly** : sarcophagi and **secondly**: the tombstones of Smyrna in Asia Minor.

⁴ - Kleiner, D., Roman Sculpture, p.240, Fig.202.

⁵ - Cleland, L., Davies, G. & Jones, L. 2007, p.192.

-As an example similar to those two statues published in Tanta Museum & Al-Ashmonion Museum, for more details, see: Bakr, 2007 pp. 13 Fig.1, pp. 16 Fig.8

⁶ - Ridgway, B.S, Hellenistic Sculpture I, University Of Wisconsin press, 2001, pp.107.

⁷ - An example of this is one of the models from the National Archaeological Museum in Naples, dating back to the late Hellenistic period, made of terracotta. For more details, see: Von Rohden, H, Die Terrakotten von Pompeii, 1880, p. 44 f., fig. 32.

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Thinkers and intellectuals were represented on a number of sarcophagi with Muses⁸, and there are various depictions which represent the intellectual with the Muses so that we can see those who hold a papyrus roll⁹ (fig.8) or others who read an open one, and as an example there is a sarcophagus which belongs to the end of the 3rd century B.C in Vatican museum¹⁰ (fig.9) .

As for the most important examples in which the appearance of the intellectual or sage is similar to the studied statue, it is the coffin that dated back to the second half of the third century AD and is preserved in the Capitol Museum¹¹. It is a side part of a coffin that depicts two of the Muses, with an intellectual figure between them. This is the common style mentioned earlier, and we notice the position of his hand. The man matches the studied statue in terms of his left hand on his right hand, which is not clearly visible on the coffin (fig. 10). It is worth noting here that the Muse, on the left side of the man, holds a lyre, so she could be either Calliope, the epic poetry goddess who was sometimes

⁸ - Saeed, A., the Roman sculpture from the early beginnings until the end of the fourth century A.D., Alexandria (n.d.), p. 174.

* the spread of Muses sarcophagi in Roman funerary art began in the second century and continued until the fourth century AD. They often depicted the nine Muses on the sarcophagus, either individually or accompanied by Apollo or Minerva. Each Muse was portrayed with their specific artistic attributes. The symbolic meaning of these sarcophagi is generally agreed upon to be associated with immortality according to ancient Greek beliefs. Those who followed the life of the Muses and practiced literature, philosophy, and wisdom would be blessed with immortality and an easy passage to the afterlife, ensuring spiritual salvation. Some scholars believe that these sarcophagi were favored by most intellectuals, poets, and philosophers:

Wegner M., Die Musensarkophage, Berlin, 1966, p. 36.

Beazley J.D., Sarcophagi and Symbolism, A.J.A., vol. 50, number 1, 1946, pp144-149.

⁹ - An example of two sarcophagi from the second half of the third century can be found in the National Museum of Rome. On the front side of the sarcophagus are depicted five Muses and two intellectuals on each side panel with only a difference in appearance between them; for example, one shows a philosopher holding a scroll with his left hand while his other hand is next to his head standing with the Muses in a shell-shaped arcade. On the far left is Clio (goddess of history) holding a tablet while on the other side stands Calliope (goddess of poetry) holding a scroll; they are epic poetry muses. Therefore we can conclude that there is a poet standing between them . If we look at another example we find the same shape of sarcophagus with all its details but with a different appearance for the intellectual figure where Urania(Goddess of Astronomy) stands on the left side & writes on the Earth with a pen, and on the right stands Polyhymnia (Goddess of fame & glory) leaning on a pillar , and so it can be deduced that the standing person, between both goddesses, is a scientist or a sage .

¹⁰ - Wegner M., Die Musensarkophage, cat num. 116, pla. 64b.

¹¹ - Wegner M., Die Musensarkophage, p 49, cat.num 123. pl. 139

depicted with a lyre, or Erato, one of the elegiac poetry goddesses who also appeared with a lyre. On the right side of the man appears Euterpe, the lyrical poetry goddess, indicated by her holding a flute in her hand. Therefore, it can be concluded that this man is surrounded by Muses and is definitely one of the poets taking an attentive and listening position to what they convey. This was the first example of the appearance of the hand position for one of the intellectuals.

The other examples are the tombstones of Smyrna¹², in which the image of the deceased appeared multiple times on the tombstone in the same hand position mentioned in the research (fig.11 A,B).

The cities of eastern Greece and the Ionian coast witnessed great prosperity from the 2nd century B.C until the 1st century A.D. They received attention from several kings and rulers who competed in building several important architectural structures such as gymnasiums, theatres, and halls. The inhabitants of those areas enjoyed a luxurious life, and one of the distinguishing features of these areas is a collection of tombstones left by their inhabitants. They were distinguished by their designs, details, and most importantly, the engravings they contained. Smyrna engravings form are one of the most comprehensive collections with their homogeneous nature and several features of **stelai** that make it different from other cities ¹³.

Perhaps what distinguishes Smyrna tombstones is what helps us in this study: body position, arm position, and head position. These were the main elements used to interpret the nature of scenes depicted on those tombstones. Most figures on these tombstones were depicted according to classical style prevailing during the 4th century B.C, where clothes and methods of depicting the position of the arms, which varied in their forms, but all of them have one common symbol, which is *stillness* , as most of the characters are depicted in serenity and calm positions. The arms are either next to the body or inside the cloak and only the fingers are visible from them, even the elderly were photographed seated.

Zanker explains this symbolism as following the same approach that was taken in depicting the statue of Demosthenes (with intertwined hands) where the sculptor wanted

¹² - Zanker, P., The Hellenistic Grave Stelai from Smyrna, Identity and Self-image in the Polis, in (Images and Ideologies ,Self-definition in the Hellenistic World,) Bulloch A., Gruen E. S, Long, A. A. and Stewart A., part3, self-definition in Hellenistic art . University of California press,1993,

¹³ - Zanker, P., The Hellenistic Grave Stelai from Smyrna,p.213-214

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to explain that although the Demosthenes was active and energetic and that it was difficult for him to remain still, but thanks to the strength of his will he can take a position of stillness while listening to those who were speaking to him¹⁴. Despite his activity, energy and eloquence, he was also good at listener, and not only a public speaker, the qualities that should be of a thinker or an intellectual, so sobriety, calmness and listening to others with due respect and appreciation were important behaviours, and thus the position of the left hand on the right hand appeared on a number of these tombstone¹⁵, as if it represents a state of stillness, listening and respecting the sayings and teachings of the gods in the other world. Another point that we notice in the tombstones of our Smyrna is that a large number of them are depicted above a wreath or two with a word inside them **ὁ δῆμος** followed by the name of the deceased in (the genitive case) and this is a form of a popular honour for the deceased¹⁶, and consequently he was portrayed in the form of intellectuals and thinkers, even if he was not one of them, as a symbol of reverence, and these artistic and symbolic details date back to the middle of the second century B.C, and this form of the thinker or intellectual continued to be depicted until the third century A.D as it appeared to us on the sarcophagi of the Muses.

Conclusion :

Through comparisons and evidence, the identity of the statue owner became likely known as he might be an intellectual, a poet or a philosopher, and he was of considerable position that his statue was made in a life-sized shape so that it could be placed in one of the public squares, parks or palaces. Also, it approximately goes back to the period between the 2nd and the 3rd century A.D, and one of the clear evidence that asserts its identity and chronology is its posture and the position of hands, which imply dignity and sobriety, a known qualities among intellectuals, poets, orators and philosophers, also the

¹⁴ - Zanker, P., The Hellenistic Grave Stelai from Smyrna,p217

¹⁵ - There is a tombstone preserved in Getty Museum under the number .288AA71. From the collections of tombstones of the Smyrna region dates back to 150 BC, where it is depicted a man, a woman and their children, the lady called Herophanta, one of the priestesses of the goddess Demeter and her husband Posideos they were portrayed as intellectuals and philosophers.It's worth mentioning that this monument is considered distinctive in the Smyrna collections, because, unlike most of the evidence, it includes not only Herophanta, but also her family. By 100 BC, when this tombstone was made, the familial focus on the previous tombstones had largely disappeared and been replaced by forms that stand in front like statues without interaction. (fig.11 B.)

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103SSM>

¹⁶ - Zanker, P., The Hellenistic Grave Stelai from Smyrna ,p.214.

monumental statues were well spread in the public squares, moreover the style and the shallow folds of the cloak were almost like those of the poet's depicted on the sarcophagus of the Muses mentioned before. Conclusively, the studied statue is of one of the intellectuals, and he was most probably a poet who went back to the period between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries.

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Fig(1.a→ i) The unpublished statue of Graeco- Roman museum



Fig.1.a



Fig.1.b



Fig.1.c



Fig.1.d



Fig.1.e



Fig1.f



Fig1.g

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Fig.1.h

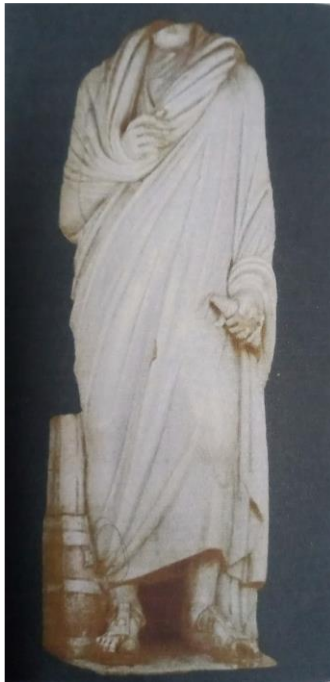


Fig.1.i

fig. 2



Statue of Tanta Museum



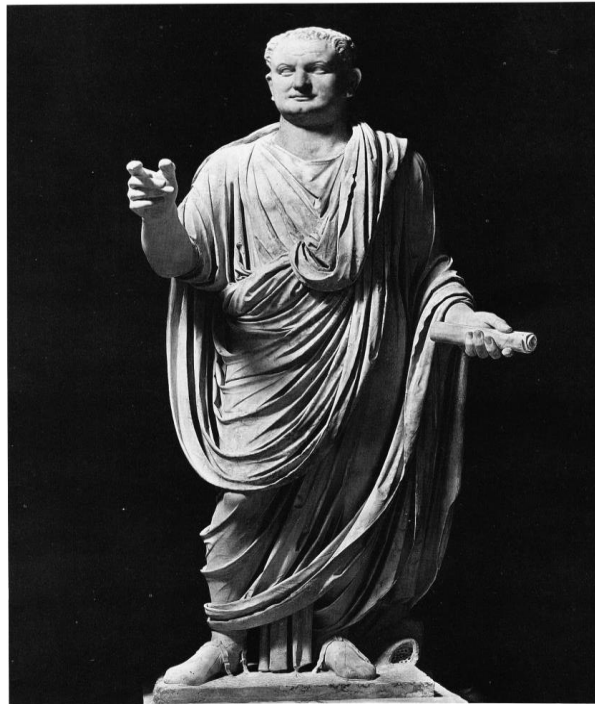
Statue of Al-Ashmonion Museum

fig.3



the statues of **Demosthenes**

fig.4



Statue of Emperor Titus

fig.5



Statue of Emperor Hadrian

fig.6



Statue of Demosthenes

fig.7



Some figures of the statue of the Orator

fig.8



The intellectual with the Muses who hold a papyrus roll

fig.9



The intellectual with the Muses who read an open roll

fig.10



A side part of a coffin that depicts two of the Muses with an intellectual figure between them

fig.11

A.



B.



Stelai of Smyrna