

A ROMAN IMPERIAL TORSO FROM the MUSEUM of ANATOLIAN CIVILIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines a naked torso from the Roman Imperial Period exhibited in the garden of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. The torso was made of white marble and is slightly over life sized. It was found at an unspecified date in the vicinity of the ancient city of Iuliopolis/Juliopolis in the district of Nallıhan, 122 kilometers northwest of Ankara, Turkey and delivered to the Anatolian Civilizations Museum. There is no context for the artifact due to the uncertainty of the place of discovery. It also lacks arms, legs, head, and inscription. Therefore, it is impossible to determine its exact location and identity. Nevertheless, rest of the body is well preserved. The rear side of the torso is roughly worked, an indication that it might have been placed on a niche. Based on the clues of the work and comparison with similar examples allow us a partial interpretation of the sculpture. Accordingly, it is thought that it was for a *euergetes* who made important contributions to the Juliopolis and that his sculpture was probably exhibited in a public building. In addition, the stylistic features indicate that the work may have been made in parallel with the development of the city during the Augustan Period. The present study focuses on the introduction, identity, location of display, and the period to which it may belong.

Keywords: *Anatolian Civilizations Museum, Juliopolis, Roman Imperial statue, period of Augustus, Benefactor.*

ANADOLU MEDENİYETLERİ MÜZESİNDEN BİR ROMA İMPARATORLUK DÖNEMİ TORSOSU

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi bahçesinde sergilenmekte olan ve Roma İmparatorluk Dönemi'ne ait çıplak bir torsoyu konu almaktadır. Beyaz mermerden yapılan ve normal boyutlardan büyük olan eser belirsiz bir tarihte Ankara'nın 122 kilometre kuzey batısında, Nallıhan ilçesinde yer alan Iuliopolis/Juliopolis antik kenti civarında bulunmuş ve Anadolu Medeniyetleri

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Müzesi'ne teslim edilmiştir. Eserin buluntu yerin belli olmadığı için konteksti bulunmamaktadır. Ayrıca kol, bacak, baş ve yazıtı sahip değildir. Bu nedenle bulunduğu mekânın ve kimliğinin tam olarak anlaşılması olanaksızdır. Ancak gövdesi iyi korunmuştur. Torsonun arka tarafı ise kabaca işlenmiştir. Bu durum onun bir nişe oturtulmuş olabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Eserin verdiği ipuçlarından yola çıkarak benzer örneklerle yapılan karşılaştırma, konu hakkında kısmi de olsa yorum yapılmasına imkân sağlamıştır. Bu doğrultuda torsonun kente önemli katkılar yapmış bir hayırsever olabileceği ve heykelinin olasılıkla bir kamu yapısında sergilenmiş olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Stil özellikleri ise eserin Augustus Dönemi'nde kentin gelişimine paralel olarak yapılmış olabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Çalışma eserin tanıtımına, kimliğine, nerede sergilenmiş ve hangi döneme ait olabileceğine odaklanmıştır.

***Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi, Iuliopolis, Roma İmparatorluk Dönemi Heykeli, Augustus Dönemi, Hayırsever.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nude portraiture in Roman era is distinguished into two basic kinds: fully nude figures and figures which wear a large cloak draped around the waist (Hallett, 2005: 102). The first is the fully nude portrait and the latter is referred to as Hüftmantel or hip mantle (Hallett, 2005: 102). This study examines the fully nude portrait in which the figure is standing and depicted completely naked with a cloak bunched on the left shoulder and lowered arm.

The earliest surviving portrait of a nude Roman goes back to the republican period and was from the island of Delos. It was discovered in 1880 during the excavations on the Italian Agora (Queyrel, 1991: 400). The inscription states that it was set up by the Italians for the merchant (negotiator) C. Ofellius Fesus. It is presumed he was an important benefactor (Fejfer, 2008: 202-203).

Surviving material, particularly during the Roman imperial period, indicates that other segments of society, such as merchants, officials, politicians, and emperors can also be depicted with nude statues (Hallett, 2005: 102). It is to be assumed that the same condition can also be admissible for the subject of this study.

This study aims to introduce the torso exhibited in the Anatolian Civilizations Museum and attempts to identify it, its date of production, and possible location of display by comparing it with similar examples.

1.1. Description and Condition

The male sculpture is made of white marble and is missing the right arm, head, part of the left wrist (including the left hand), and the legs

below the patella. Despite the missing parts, its height is 143 centimeters, indicating that it was originally over life-size – perhaps little more than 2 meters. Apart from lost limbs and head, the base of the sculpture is also missing. Therefore, it is now standing on a modern concrete plate (Fig. 2). What is left of the body seems to be well- preserved, except its surface is weathered due to sun exposure and fresh chisel marks on the chest and lower abdomens. The body is robust, with well-delineated muscular masses and highlighted abdominals. The figure seems to rest on his left leg and displays a powerful physique. The rear side of the statue is roughly worked. It might have been placed in the niche of a public building (Fig. 3).

The figure is depicted completely naked except for a trimmed cloak or chlamys, which he carries over his left shoulder and bent left arm. The position of the shoulder and the remains of the right arm suggest that it may have been raised in an *adlacutio* gesture or carried a spear. The remains of the neck muscles show that the head might have been turned to his left.

Final comments about the torso's condition should consist of its restored parts. The body was delivered in two pieces. The left leg was found separated from the body and then restored at an unknown date. The torso was placed on a concrete slab to prevent it from falling over. It is perhaps originally standing on a round pedestal as in the nude portrait of Lucius Caesar in the Julian Basilica at Corinth (Hallett, 2006: 173).

1.2. Juliopolis/Juliopolis

Located at the border of present-day Ankara, Juliopolis was a small town rarely mentioned by ancient sources (Map 1). Its form name was Gordiucome and it dates back before the Roman period (Devecioğlu, 2024: 20; Onur, 2014: 67). The ancient Greek philosopher and geographer Strabo stated that a former ally of Mark Antony, Cleon, had enlarged and renamed the city Juliopolis after deserting his master for Caesar Octavian. He was then honored more than he deserved and became a very influential priest of Zeus Abrettenus (Strabo: Geographica: 12.8.9). Further information comes from Pliny the Younger. In his letter to Emperor Trajan, he mentions Juliopolis as being “extremely small” and asks the emperor to send a legionary centurion to the city as he had done for Byzantium. However, his request was denied by the emperor on the grounds that it would set a precedent for other small cities (Plinius: Epistulae, X. LXXVII-LXVIII). Pliny's letter is important as it shows us the city did not seem to have been improved much after spending nearly a century under the empire.

Archaeological evidence and historical sources offer limited evidence. Due to the construction of Sarıyar Dam in the 1950s, a considerable part of the city was submerged beneath the water (Onur, 2014: 66). Recent excavations then have been carried out in the necropolis area that was not flooded. The first excavation was carried out by the Anatolian Civilizations Museum as a rescue operation in 1991 (Günel et al., 1992: 29-70). Further excavations were carried out between 2009 and 2020 under Melih Arslan, the former directorate of the Anatolian Civilizations Museum (Arslan et al., 2011: 271-278). Present excavations are ongoing with the Anatolian Civilization Museum's directorate and are mostly focused on graves in the necropolis. Consequently, archaeological evidence relating to Roman activities in the region is scarce.

1.3. Nude Sculptures in the Roman Imperial Period

The extant material during the Roman Imperial period is abundant. There are two types of nude portraits: Hüftmantel or hip mantle and fully nude. The hip-mantle was popular in Rome, Italy and the west whereas the fully nude was common in the east as Asia Minor (Hallett, 2005: 161). In stage building of the theatre of Arles or the western part of the empire, the emperor Augustus (27 BC – 14 AD) was represented with a hip mantle (Hallett, 2005: 161, Pl. 91). In one of the reliefs in Julio- Claudian Sebasteion in Aphrodisias, however, Augustus is depicted as fully naked wearing chlamys around his left shoulder (Smith, 2013: 128- 129). His adopted sons, Gaius and Lucius, are also represented in a similar fashion. Examples of their portraits were found at the Julian Basilica in Corinth. In these portraits, the princes are fully nude except for the cloak bunched on the left shoulder and lower arm (Scotton, 2016: 10, Pl. 10). Another sculpture of Augustus was revealed in Alabanda in 2003, in which the emperor was again depicted fully nude (Yener and Yener, 2018: 209-216).

Archaeological evidence indicates that heroic portraits are not restricted to the emperor and his family members. Non-imperial young men were sometimes represented in fully nude fashion as well – as in the case of Formia. The massive body displays a powerful standing individual with highlighted abdomens and wearing a cloak bunched on the left shoulder like the sculpture found in Juliopolis (Hallett, 2005: 190- 191, Pl. 110).

There were times when the emperor himself was represented with divine attributes. The earliest example goes back to the last years of Augustan principate in a cameo named the Gemma Augustae. The hip-mantled princeps on the upper register is sitting on a throne, depicted in

the center and seated next to the goddess Roma. The eagle of Jupiter appears below his throne. The scene is striking, representing Augustus as the wielder of Jupiter's authority on earth (Kleiner, 1992: 69-71).

Another known example is probably the full-length statue of Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD) as Jupiter from Lanavium. Claudius is represented as a mature man in his fifties with bags under his eyes and furrows on his forehead, which is totally the opposite of the Augustan fiction representing eternal youth (Kleiner, 1992: 131). Another famous portrait belongs to a later period of Emperor Commodus (180-192 AD). This is probably the best-known depiction of him, in which he is depicted as nude with a club and weapons of Hercules (Hekster, 2002: 121).

Attributes of divinity were not restricted to the emperor and his family. Probably starting in the Neronian Period (54-68 AD), private individuals also began to portray themselves as gods and goddesses (Hallett, 2005: 199). A life-sized man with the attributes of Mercury was found on the Via Appia in southern Italy, holding the god's caduceus and a moneybag (Hallett, 2005: 200). Another example is the statue of a man depicted as the demi-god Diomedes in Herculaneum (Fejfer, 2008: 223). The women represented themselves as Venus, the Greek equivalent of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. A statue of Marcia Furnilla, a noblewoman possibly from the Flavian court, was found near Lake Albano, 20 kilometers southeast of Rome. She is depicted in a realistic fashion as a middle-aged Roman, with her arms positioned to cover her nude body (Kleiner, 1992: 178). Consequently, the examples above clearly show that depiction nudity as a form of god was not restricted to the emperor and his dynasty. The public seems to follow the fashion trend established for the princeps and his dynasty.

2. DISCUSSION

The torso lacks a head, base, and context, so it is futile to determine its exact date, identity, and where it was displayed. Nevertheless, current excavations at Juliopolis and the comparable examples mentioned above can provide a hypothetical suggestion. The weight is on the left leg and the body is slightly bent, left shoulder is elevated and the chlamys is placed on the left shoulder. Neck muscles indicate that the head might have been turned to his left. This composition offers an insight for derived modelling as seems to have been an adopted version of Hellenistic heroic body scheme and the closer parallel is probably the Hermes of Andros. The over-life size statue of Hermes was found in the island of Andros in 1832 beside the ruins of a tomb (Karasu, 1969: 146-147) and dated to second half of the 1st century or the late republic (LIMC V.1: 367, No. 950). The body is

naked, chlamys is dangling over the left shoulder and wrapped around the left forearm (LIMC V.2: No. 950a-b-c). The only difference may have been the supporting log, but commentary is not possible here because that part is missing in our sculpture. A Hermes Andros type Roman from Chitei also resembles our torso except the sword belt on the chest (Özgan, 2013a: 63, Fig. 31). Examples can be expanded as another close composition might be G. Ofellius Ferus from the island of Delos, found in the Agora of the Italians in 1880. It is a heroic over life sized sculpture, naked and the right arm is raised to shoulder, chlamys is placed over the left shoulder and wrapped around the left forearm (Queyrel, 1991: 389, 391, Fig. 1). Final example is located Magnesia ad Maeandrum (Magnesia on the Meander) in Asia Minor. Over life-sized sculpture's upper body from the abdomen missing but the composition represents a naked male in which fragment of the chlamys is twisting the left arm and hanging down to the level of the knees (Mendel, 1914: 335- 336, No. 601; Yener and Yener, 2018: 214).

This composition had continued to be used in imperial era and there are sufficient examples to demonstrate. Perhaps the most noteworthy example was the portrait of Augustus, found in Alabanda in 2003 excavation season and brought back to Aydın Museum. The portrait was presented by Barış and Emin Yener in 2013 (Yener and Yener, 2018: 208-219, Fig. 1). The composition and style fits with our torso and the engraving of the chlamys on the left shoulder is almost identical. Only remarkable difference seems to be the lowered right arm (Yener and Yener, 2018: 218, Fig. 1). Further example can be Augustus's relief in Julio-Claudian Sebasteion at Aphrodisias in which the emperor is depicted naked, wearing a chlamys in his left shoulder and turned his head to left (Smith, 2013: 128-129).

Other imperial examples worth mentioning are in Corinth in Greece, Misenum in Italy and Pergamon in Asia Minor. In the Julian Basilica at Corinth, statues of Gaius and Lucius, the imperial heirs of Augustus were discovered. The portraits are well preserved despite only the upper part of Lucius's body was recovered. They provide the best evidence for the portraiture of Gaius and Lucius in young manhood. Both statues have similar style and manner of representation, they are naked with only a chlamys draped over the left shoulder and wrapped around the forearm (Pollini, 1987: 19).

Remaining examples are in Misenum and Pergamon and belonged to later periods, respectively the last quarter of the 1st and the second quarter of the 2nd centuries AD. Portraits of Vespasian (69-79 AD) and Titus (79-81 AD) were found in the building of the Collegium of the

Augustales (Wohlmayr, 2004: 99-100). Final example is the well-preserved portrait of Hadrian, found in Asclepieion during the excavations at Pergamon (Özgan, 2013b: 148-149, Pls. 154a-b, 155a-b). The composition is similar to our torso but the posture is different. It should only be taken into consideration to indicate that fully nude portraits had a wide dating range that might seem like an obstacle for dating the torso but the closest parallel should be the ones belonging to the age of Augustus.

In the portrait of Vespasian, the right foot of the work is upright, and the left foot is slightly bent. Therefore, the body is shaped accordingly and slightly tilted to the left. The left shoulder is slightly bent, and accordingly, the left arm appears low. In addition, the left arm is slightly opened and bent from the wing. On the right side, the shoulder is raised, and the arm is bent. The right hand touches the hip, and the cloak hangs down, draped over the wrist. A similar situation applies to the portrait of Titus (Wohlmayr, 2004: Pls. 137-138). The statue at Juliopolis, on the other hand, shows an upright posture. The posture of the arms and the way the cloak hangs are also different (see. Description and Condition).

The portrait of Hadrian in Pergamon resembles Vespasian and Titus in posture. However, the chlamys is fastened with a buckle. The lower veil hangs straight instead of being wrapped around (Özgan, 2013b: 148, Pl. 144a-b). Sculptures from the Augustan period seem to bear a closer resemblance to the portrait found at Juliopolis. An example is the emperor himself found in Alabanda. Both the composition, posture of the body and the way the chlamys is depicted seem to be closer to the work evaluated in this study. Therefore, the Augustan period can be suggested as the date for this work.

It is difficult to comment on who the portrait might be. During the Roman Imperial period, heroic nude portraits were not only a privilege granted to the emperor and his family. On the contrary, people from other segments of society, such as merchants, soldiers, and politicians, were also portrayed. Therefore, we cannot say for certain whether the sculpture is of the emperor or a male member of the dynasty. The statue may depict one of the city's dignitaries, such as Cleon or a businessman. It is also not possible to say anything about where it was located. However, a significant number of similar sculptures were found in public buildings in other provinces (Hallett, 2005: 162, 173, 177, 180- 181). Based on this, we can assume that the statue at Juliopolis may also have been placed in a visible place or niche in a public building.

3. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the torso sculpture found in Juliopolis and transferred to the Anatolian Civilizations Museum and analyze its identity, the period to which it may belong, and the location where it was displayed. The limitation of the study was that the data on the artifact were limited, and parts of the statue, such as the arms, legs, and head were missing.

The sculpture found in Juliopolis seems to be an important reflection of the development of the newly renamed city. Therefore, the sculpture must have been made during the early Roman Imperial period. The stylistic features of the sculpture also support this conclusion. The posture of both the torso and the chlamys are similar to the Augustan examples. The person portrayed in the sculpture probably belonged to a benefactor such as Cleon, who had influence in the city. Finally, given the presence of other similar examples, modern excavations in the city are likely to uncover public buildings from the Roman Imperial period.

Figure 1: The torso, frontal view³.



Source: The archive of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations.

³ Current Location: Anatolian Civilizations Museum, Garden Inventory Number: Unknown Location Discovered: Possibly Juliopolis, Ankara Material: White marble Height: 143 cm. (Excluding head and legs, the original sculpture was probably over life-size) Width: 100 cm.

Figure 2: The torso, frontal view without base and support.



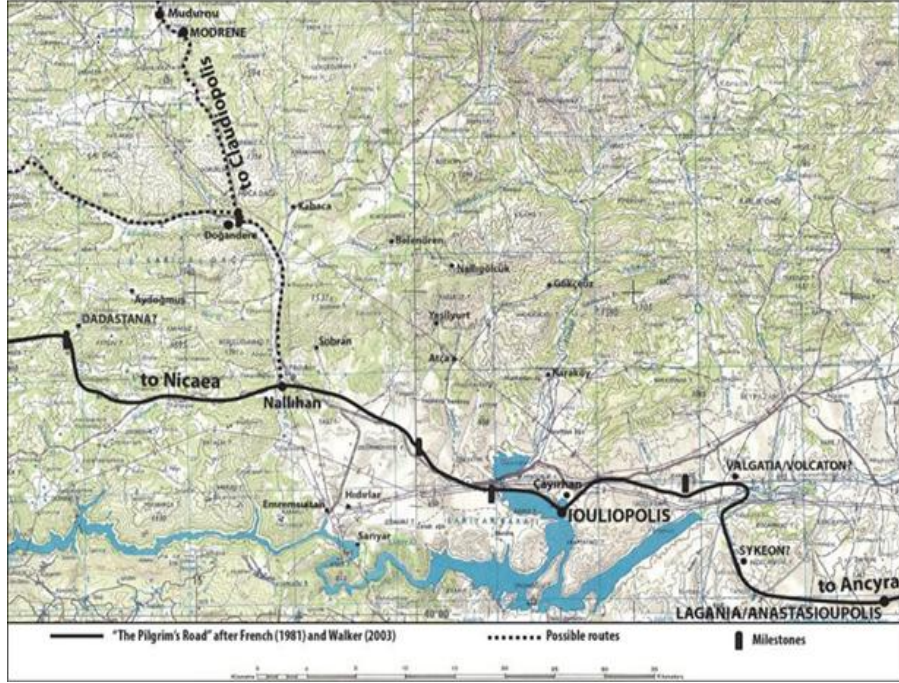
Source: The archive of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations.

Figure 3: The torso, posterior view.



Source: The archive of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations.

Map. Juliopolis and its Surroundings.



Source: F. Onur, Epigraphic Research Around Juliopolis I: A Historical and Geographical Overview. *Gephyra* 11, 2014, p. 65-83.

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