Figs. 12a-b. The female statue, photographs taken on site directly after its excavation.

The woman's posture mirrors that of the male: her weight is on the opposite right leg, and an implement or object, more difficult to identify, is held in the hand on the left side (fig. 14). The excavators identified the object as a type of wreath commonly depicted on Egyptian and Egyptianizing figurines.[39] Their plausible hypothesis was that it provides a clue to identity in the form of an Egyptian connection, but damage to the hand and the object held makes this identification uncertain. It seems more likely that the object was a funerary garland which commonly appears in Roman funerary art, often in the hands of women; this would more convincingly match both the fragment of a handle in the woman's hand and the fragment of vegetation shown at the top of the statue support. A near-contemporary sarcophagus panel, now in the J. Paul Getty Museum, depicts (fig. 15 overleaf) a woman holding a garland of roughly the same size as that which the Yasmina would have held.[40]

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39 Norman and Haeckl (supra n.1) 244 n.13, citing C. Ewigleben, "Götter, Gräber und Grotesken," *Bilderhefte des Museums fur Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg* 25 (1991) 73 n.66.

40 J. Paul Getty Museum inv. no. 86.AA.701. On this sarcophagus panel, see P. J. Holliday, "The sarcophagus of Titus Aelius Evangelus and Gaudenia Nicene," *GettyMusJ* 21 (1993) 85-100. For garlands on sarcophagi, see H. Sichtermann, *Späte Endymion-Sarcophage* (Baden-Baden 1966) 30 n.7.

Fig. 13. The somewhat-unfinished back of the female statue, photograph taken directly after its excavation.

Fig. 14. Detail of the right hand of the female statue grasping a garland, above the support in the form of a lute.

Fig. 15. Front panel of a sarcophagus with the names Titus Aelius Evangelus and Gaudenia Nicene, late 2nd c. A.D. (J. Paul Getty Museum inv. no. 86.AA.701).

In her left hand the woman held a small, round object; it is probably a ball of wool, a common attribute of Roman matrons, but is largely missing along with the hand. Her clothing is rendered in the same manner as the male's tunic, with broad and deep folds of a type often found on statues of the period; the folds are particularly visible on the upper body, on the sleeves near the *fibulae*,

and on either side of the belt just below the chest. Her arms are held slightly away from the body, with each elbow bent. The base and the statue's back, feet and lower legs are only partially finished, suggesting that it was displayed at a similar elevation to that of the male.

Next to the woman's right leg is a support with a musical instrument in low relief (fig. 16). The support is battered on the side closest to the body but is polished on the far side. The instrument does not appear finely finished, perhaps suggesting that work was still on-going when it was installed. This long-necked lute with an ovoid body is incised to indicate at least five strings. Although the body of the lute does not have the same shape, the proportions roughly match an example in New York's Metropolitan Museum.[41] A close parallel can also be found on the lid of a Calydonian Hunt sarcophagus in the Musei Capitolini.[42]


Fig. 16. Support in the form of a lute.

Collectively, the attributes of the female emphasize traditional Roman matronly virtues. The wool and musical instrument have a long history of association with feminine domestic labour and education,[43] while the funerary garland is a common and powerful indication of her piety exhibited in her mourning for the deceased male. The combination of attributes portrays an educated, industrious and virtuous woman in mourning.

The very similar quality of execution suggests that the statues were made by the same workshop, perhaps even by the same hand. The chief difference lies in their relative size: the charioteer is just over life-size, the female portrait just under. Were the head of the female statue in place, it would just reach the male's shoulders. The difference in size may relate to where the female was placed. Perhaps the shape or location of the niche necessitated a smaller statue? Or might the difference in heights be the result of differences in social status and a perceived relative importance?

The late-Severan context

Close comparisons for the portraits, both as a group and individually, are elusive. Of the family portrait groups known to date to the late Severan dynasty and the first of the soldier-emperors, monuments for private family groups are rare.[44] Of this small subset, even fewer are funerary and

41 Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. no. 12.182.44a,b.

42 Musei Capitolini, inv. no. MC 917.

43 The trope of the woman as weaver finds frequent parallels in literature and art, from Livy's depiction of Lucretia (1.57.9) to funerary art at the edges of the empire (e.g., the portrait of Regina, *RIB* 1065).

44 Private family groups are sometimes attested by inscriptions where no fragments of the portraits themselves survive, as in the inscription made for a group belonging to the Vedius family of Ephesos that dates to roughly the same period: A. Kalinowski, *Memory, family, and community in Roman Ephesos* (Cambridge 2021) 166. On the social context of 3rd-c. sculpture, see T. M. Kristensen and L. M. Stirling (edd.), *The afterlife of Greek and Roman sculpture: late antique responses and practices* (Ann Arbor, MI 2016) 1-24; S. Birk, "Using images for self-representation on Roman sarcophagi," in S. Birk, T. M. Kristensen and B. Poulsen