



**ENiM**

*Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne*

**Équipe Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne  
UMR 5140 « Archéologie des Sociétés Méditerranéennes »  
Cnrs – Université Paul Valéry (Montpellier III)**

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The lost statue of the god Hermes-Triptolemus from the former  
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## **Ptolemy III Euergetes in Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam)?**

### **The lost statue of the god Hermes-Triptolemus from the former Fouquet collection (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45)**

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**I**N 1885 FELLAHIN found a group of objects in the ruins of Tell el-Moqdam<sup>1</sup>. Tell el-Moqdam can be identified with the ancient Egyptian site *t3-rmw*, “Land of the fish”, which was known as Leontopolis, “The city of the lions” in the Ptolemaic Period.<sup>2</sup> The oldest archaeological remains date back to the Middle Kingdom; Cults of Sobek, Osiris and Amun are documented since the Middle and New Kingdom. From the Third Intermediate Period onwards the worship of lion gods begins to have greater importance in Tell el-Moqdam, probably through the influence of the rise of the Bubastite dynasty. The written sources of the Late Period reveal an important cult of the goddess Bastet<sup>3</sup> and together with her one of her sons was especially worshipped, the lion god Mahes, *M3j-ḥs3*, “the fierce lion”. From the Ptolemaic Period onwards, and perhaps due to the influence of the Persians, the cult of the god Mahes will flourish in Leontopolis.<sup>4</sup>

#### **The archaeological site: a favissa in Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam)**

The antiquities dealer Souliman Abd es-Samad<sup>5</sup> bought the objects found by the fellahin in Tell el-Moqdam in 1885. Later those items were purchased by the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, by the Egyptian Museum in Berlin<sup>6</sup>, and by the French doctor and collector Daniel Marie

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<sup>1</sup> É. CHASSINAT, *Les antiquités égyptiennes de la collection Fouquet*, Paris, 1922, p. 6-9; P. PERDRIZET, “Antiquités de Léontopolis”, *MonPiot* 25, 1921-1922, p. 351-350.

<sup>2</sup> H. GAUTHIER, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques* 6, Le Caire, 1929, p. 26; G. DARESSY, “Léontopolis métropole du XIX<sup>e</sup> nome de la Basse-Égypte”, *BIFAO* 30, 1931, p. 625-649; P. MONTET, *Géographie de l'Égypte ancienne* I, Paris, 1957, p. 129-136; J. YOYOTTE, “La ville de ‘Taremou’ (Tell el-Muqdâm)”, *BIFAO* 52, 1953, p. 179-192.

<sup>3</sup> It seems that in Leontopolis two different aspects of the goddess Bastet were worshipped in different cult complexes, C. BENAVENTE VICENTE, *Untersuchung zum Gott Mahes (M3j-ḥs3 / Miysis) und seiner Bedeutung im Alten Ägypten* (doctoral thesis - forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> C. DE WIT, *Le rôle et le sens du lion dans l'Égypte ancienne*, Leiden, 1951, p. 230-234; H. BONNET, *Reallexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1952, p. 468; L.V. ŽABKAR, *Apedemak, Lion God of Meroe: a study in Egyptian-Meroitic Syncretism*, Warmister, 1975, p. 52-62. L.V. ŽABKAR, *LÄ* IV, 1982, s.v. Miysis, p. 163-165. Chr. LEITZ (ed.), *LGG* III, s.v. *M3j-ḥs3*, p. 211-212; C. BENAVENTE VICENTE, *Untersuchung zum Gott Mahes* (doctoral thesis - forthcoming).

<sup>5</sup> About the person of Souliman Abd es-Samad see F. HAGEN, K. RYHOLT, *The Antiquities Trade in Egypt 1880-1930. The H.O. Lange Papers*, Copenhagen, p. 264-265.

<sup>6</sup> Some of the objects were acquired by the Egyptologist Adolf Erman during his trip to Egypt in 1885.

Fouquet.<sup>7</sup> The objects were made of bronze, stone and faience and they are dated between the Late Period and the Ptolemaic Period. Most of the artefacts are in the shape of a lion or decorated with lions. For this reason, in the past scholars believed that the fellahin discovered a kind of favissa with the temple inventory of the lion god Mahes.<sup>8</sup>

However, the fellahin found four objects which at first glance do not belong to this homogeneous group of “the temple inventory of Mahes”; namely four Hellenistic bronzes purchased by Daniel Marie Fouquet: a sphinx on a basis [Fig. 1],<sup>9</sup> an oinochoe in form of a child’s head [Fig. 2],<sup>10</sup> a figure of a fisherman [Fig. 3]<sup>11</sup> and a statue of the god Hermes [Fig. 4].<sup>12</sup> All these bronzes were published by the French archaeologist Paul Perdrizet in his book *Bronzes grecs d’Égypte de la Collection Fouquet* in 1911.

### Research history of the statue: Paul Perdrizet and Hans Peter Laubscher

The statue of Hermes is 29 cm high and represents a young standing male with an athletic body naked except for a chlamys [Fig. 4]. The body is slightly swaying left, left leg backwards and the head is turned to the right. The hair is indicated in curly locks. The god wears a headband, which is decorated in the front with a lotus leaf flanked by two wings. His eyeballs are inlaid in silver; the pupils are no longer preserved. The chlamys is stapled on the right shoulder and covers part of the torso as well as the left shoulder and arm of the god. In his left hand the god holds the end of his short chlamys. The object he is holding in his right hand is broken. Only the bottom part, whose end bent inwards, is preserved. He also steps slightly forward with his right leg and wears wings on both sides of his ankles.

Because of the headdress and the wings attached to the feet, Perdrizet interpreted the statue as the god Hermes. He also thought that Hermes was holding a cornucopia in his right hand.<sup>13</sup> By holding the chlamys with the left hand, a fold is created between the body of the god and the left arm. Perdrizet believed that maybe a part was missing on the chlamys and proposed a figure of an infant Dionysus.

An incident happened during the publication of “*Bronzes grecs d’Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*”, which had important consequences for the study of this statue. Unfortunately, the photographer omitted the base of the statue on the published plate. Perdrizet could make one

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of biographical information about Daniel Marie Fouquet, see P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs d’Égypte de la collection Fouquet*, Paris, 1911, p. VIII-X; T. CHARMASSEN, “Les collections du Dr. Fouquet et la publication des Bronzes grecs d’Égypte de la collection Fouquet et des Terres cuites d’Égypte de la collection Fouquet par Paul Perdrizet”, *Proceedings of Colloque International Paul Perdrizet, savant européen et industriel lorrain (1870-1938)*, 7-9 November 2018 (forthcoming).

<sup>8</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *MonPiot* 25, p. 349-350, p. 371-385.

<sup>9</sup> The location of the sphinx is still unknown. P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 39, No. 63, Pl. XIV. *Catalogue première vente, Collection du Dr. Fouquet du Caire Art Égyptien et Égypto-Arabe, Art Grec et Romain*, Paris, 1992, p. 32, No. 196.

<sup>10</sup> The oinochoe is still missing but my research has shown that this is the vessel that was sold in 2019 at the auction house Pierre Bergé & Associés under “Balsamaire à la tête de Nubien”. Unfortunately, my inquiries to the auction house were not answered. *Catalogue vente aux enchères publiques Paris. Pierre Bergé & associés. Archéologie. Vendredi 30 Novembre 2012. Drouot-Richelieu*, Paris, 2012, p. 175, No. 555. P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 57, No. 94, Pl. XXV. *Catalogue première vente*, p. 27, No. 151. Pl. VII.

<sup>11</sup> Louvre Br 4640. P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 60-62, No. 98, Pl. XXVI. *Catalogue première vente*, p. 28, No. 155, Pl. XXVI. A. PASQUIER, “Figures antiques de pêcheurs : du grotesque au sublime ?”, *CRAIBL* 156.4, 2012, p. 1529-1563.

<sup>12</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30-31, No. 40, Pl. XVII. *Catalogue première vente*, p. 25, No. 137, Pl. X.

<sup>13</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30.

drawing of the base before printing the publication and interpreted it as a “fleur ouverte” [Fig. 5].<sup>14</sup>

The next study of the statue did not appear until seventy-seven years after Perdrizet’s publication. The German archaeologist Hans Peter Laubscher analysed representations of Ptolemaioi as the Greek agrarian heros Triptolemus in his article “Triptolemos und die Ptolemaer” in 1988.<sup>15</sup> Laubscher assumed that Fouquet’s statue probably represents a Ptolemaic king.<sup>16</sup> He interpreted the base of the statue as a red lotus flower and the broken object in the right hand as a cornucopia like Perdrizet. He considered the unusual way the god is holding the chlamys as a “Sätuch”, a kind of seed cloth or sowing cloth. He also concluded that the statue depicts the god Hermes-Horus-Triptolemus<sup>17</sup> and assigned it to Ptolemy III or Ptolemy IV. He could not determine it more precisely because his research was exclusively based on the plate of Perdrizet’s publication and a photo printed in the auction’s catalogue of Fouquet’s collection in 1922.<sup>18</sup>

### **The search for the statue: From Paris to Lisbon (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45)**

Laubscher also had no other opportunity than to examine the statue from photographs, because the statue was offered in the auction of the collection Fouquet at the Galerie Drouot in Paris in June of 1922 and since its sale, it could not be located.<sup>19</sup>

After four years of research on the objects of the Fouquet collection, I was able to localize the statue in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon under the number 45 [Fig. 6-10].<sup>20</sup> Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1869-1955) was a businessman and a passionate art collector. He developed his enthusiasm for art in his early years leading him to form one of the most valuable private art collections with objects from antiquity to the early twentieth century. His cosmopolitan character and taste for high quality art objects is reflected in the repertoire of his collection.<sup>21</sup> His first ancient Egyptian acquisition was a breccia bowl dated to the Ptolemaic

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>15</sup> H. P. LAUBSCHER, “Triptolemos und die Ptolemaer”, *JMKG* 6, 1988, p. 11-40.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> For more information about the agrarheros from Eleusis see G. SCHWARZ, *Triptolemos. Ikonographie einer Agrar- und Mysteriengottheit*, Berger, Horn, 1987; G. SCHWARZ, “Triptolemos am Nil”, in E. Böhr, W. Martini (eds.): *Studien zur Mythologie und Vasenmalerei. Konrad Schauenburg zum 65. Geburtstag am 16. April 1986*, Mainz, 1986; H. TETSUHIRO, *Bedeutung und Wandel des Triptolemosbildes vom 6. - 4. Jh. v. Chr.*, Würzburg, 1992; H.-G., NESSELRATH, “Triptolemos – ein mythischer Kulturheld im Wandel der Zeiten”, in A. Zgoll, R.G. Kratz (eds.), *Arbeit am Mythos. Leistung und Grenze des Mythos in Antike und Gegenwart*, 2013, p. 195-216.

<sup>18</sup> The complete statue was photographed for the auction catalogue of the collection Fouquet. However, on the photo it is not possible to identify the basis. *Catalogue première vente*, Pl. X, 137.

<sup>19</sup> The statue was auctioned as Mercure Enagonios under the number 137. *Catalogue première vente*, p. 25, No. 137.

<sup>20</sup> I am very grateful to the curator Jorge Rodrigues from the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum for his support. This research would not have been possible without his help. I would like to thank him for all the information and all the photographs that he provided me with.

<sup>21</sup> J. DE AZEREDO PERDIGÃO, *Calouste Gulbenkian Collectionneur*, 1969, Lisbon, p. 155-168; L.M. DE ARAUJO, *Calouste Gulbenkian Museum. Egyptian art*, Lisbon, 2006, p. 49-55; J. CASTEL-BRANCO PEREIRA, “The collector and his taste”, in J. Carvalho Dias (ed.), *The Collector and his Taste: Calouste S. Gulbenkian 1869-1955*, 2006, p. 17-35; M.L. BIERBRIER (ed.), *Who was who in Egyptology*, Norwich, 2012, p. 231-232; J. COLIN, *Mr. five per cent. The many lives of Calouste Gulbenkian the world’s richest man*, London, 2019, p. 77-80, 154-159, 185-190.



Period.<sup>22</sup> The Exhibition of Ancient Art in 1921 at the Burlington Fine Arts Club had a great influence on the acquisition of Egyptian objects by Gulbenkian. From the 1920's onwards, his antiquities collection started to grow incorporating new objects from the most prestigious collectors, such MacGregor or Fouquet. To enlarge the collection, he commissioned various experts and art dealers to purchase special objects of the highest quality. At the auction of the William Macgregor collection the Egyptologist Howard Carter bid for him.<sup>23</sup>

How the statue of Fouquet was acquired by Gulbenkian can also be seen from a note that is still at the red support base [Fig. 11]:

*Mercure Enagonios*  
*travail hellénistique.*  
*A<sup>t</sup> Graat V<sup>te</sup> C<sup>ion</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Fouquet*  
*Le Caire, 12 juin 1922*  
*n<sup>o</sup> C. 45*

The art dealer Graat was an associate with Madoulé at the Galerie de Peinture Graat et Madoulé based at the rue de Séze 12 in Paris. He bought the statue as middleman for Gulbenkian, along with other objects at the auction of the Fouquet collection in June of 1922. Graat also bought an applique of a lion walking to the right made of bronze from Leontopolis, which was inventoried under the number 47.<sup>24</sup>

The provenance of the Hermes statue in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum was marked as unknown. The reason for this is probably that the provenance “Tell el-Moqdam” was not mentioned in the auction catalogue, only in the publication by Perdrizet. In the auction catalogue, however, it was described as “alexandrine”.<sup>25</sup> In the catalogue, the statue was also described with the sentence: “C’est de telles œuvres qu’est issu le génie de Michel-Ange”. The statue was kept in the depot of the museum and has never been exhibited.

### **A re-discussion of the statue: Hermes with Dionysus vs. Hermes-Horus-Triptolemus**

By locating the statue, it is possible to re-discuss it and to review the previous claims and questions of Perdrizet and Laubscher. The wings of the head with the lotus leaf and the ankles make this statue to be attributed to the god Hermes. The lotus leaf was interpreted as a reference to the Egyptian god Thot, who is associated with the god Hermes in Hellenistic times. On the other side, some scholars suggest that originally the lotus leaf was not a purely Egyptian motif, but rather the symbol of victory as understood in Greece.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Gulbenkian bought the bowl (Inv. No. 1064) in 1907.

<sup>23</sup> The cooperation with Carter lasted until at least 1929. Howard Carter also sold him two objects of his own private collection: a scarab and a granite head (Inv. No. 218); L.M. DE ARAUJO, *Calouste Gulbenkian*, p. 50, p. 72-73; N. VASSALLO E SILVA, “The first acquisitions”, in J. Carvalho Dias (ed.), *The Collector and his Taste: Calouste S. Gulbenkian 1869-1955*, 2006, p. 44; T. HARDWICK, “Five Months Before Tut. Purchasers and prices at the MacGregor sale 1922”, *JHC* 23.1, 2011, p. 179-192.

<sup>24</sup> A study of the objects that Graat bought for Gulbenkian at the auction in 1922 is being prepared by the author and Susanne Martinssen-von Falck. *Catalogue première vente*, p. 20, No. 114, Pl. VII; L. M. DE ARAUJO, *Calouste Gulbenkian*, p. 159, No. 47.

<sup>25</sup> *Catalogue première vente*, p. 25, No. 137.

<sup>26</sup> See with further bibliography: R. FOERSTER, “Hermes mit Lotosblatt”, *MDAIR* 29, 1914, p. 168-185; H. KYRIELEIS, “ΚΑΘΑΠΕΡ ΕΡΜΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΩΡΟΣ”, *AntPl* 12, 1973, p. 133; D. SVENSON, *Darstellung hellenistischer Könige mit Götterattributen*, *ArchStd* 10, Frankfurt am Main, 1995, p. 54-67; R. THOMAS, *Eine postume*

The god is holding a round rod-shaped object in his right hand, which the fingers grasp from above. It is broken off just above the hand. Its preserved lower end consists of a ring and a knob. Perdrizet and Laubscher considered that this object was a cornucopia.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Laubscher speculated with the tempting idea that the object was originally straight and thus the deity held a kerukeion.<sup>28</sup> Regardless of whether the god holds a kerukeion or a cornucopia here, there are no signs that the missing top of the object was fixed to the body or upper arm of the statue.

Furthermore, the key to the statue's analysis lies in the interpretation of the chlamys. Perdrizet suggested that something was missing on the chlamys and proposed a figure of Dionysus.<sup>29</sup> This idea is based on the similarity of the statue to a well-known iconographic composition: Hermes and the infant Dionysus. The most famous is the replica of Praxiteles discovered in 1877 at Olympia. This motif has its origins in the birth myths of Dionysus, which is known in various variants. Dionysus is given to Hermes, who protects him and takes him to the nymphs in Nysa. Numerous representations of Dionysus transported by Hermes are present on various media.<sup>30</sup> Siebert also classified this statue into the same iconographic group and, like Perdrizet, assumed that Dionysus as a child was sitting on Hermes' chlamys.<sup>31</sup> Bonnefoy and Feugère discussed this statue within the group of Hermes Dionysophore and do not propose any alternative interpretations.<sup>32</sup>

One problem of this interpretation is that there is no indication that there was a figure standing or fixed on the chlamys. Furthermore, Hermes and Dionysus normally interact with each other in this composition (they look at each other, Hermes plays with the child showing him grapes). If the Hermes of Fouquet has been carrying a child in his arms, he would show himself uninterested because he turns his head to the other side. Moreover, the statue shows movement and gives the impression that Hermes starts to fly at any time.<sup>33</sup> In this case, the child would not be safe in the arms of Hermes, which does not seem to fit with a representation of a child protector.

Laubscher chooses another interpretation and connects the statue with the Eleusinian heros Triptolemus. According to the myth, the goddess Demeter gives him ears of grain and a snake chariot to spread the grain all over the world and to instruct people how to grow grain. Besides his function as grain dispenser, he is considered the founder of ploughing. In the Ptolemaic Period, Triptolemus was worshipped in Alexandria. His cult was closely related to

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*Statuette Ptolemaios' IV. und ihr historischer Kontext: zur Götterangleichung hellenistischer Herrscher*, TrWPr 18, Mainz, 2002, p. 50-52; W.A. CHESHIRE, *The Bronzes of Ptolemy II Philadelphus*, ÄAT 77, Wiesbaden, 2009, p. 200-201.

<sup>27</sup> Perdrizet's indication that it is not a typical attribute of the god Hermes is outdated. P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30-31; H.P. LAUBSCHER, „Ein Ptolemäer als Hermes“, in H. Froning, T. Hölscher, H. Mielsch (eds.), *Kotinos. Festschrift für Erika Simon*, 1992, p. 319-320.

<sup>28</sup> H.P. LAUBSCHER, *JMKG* 6, p. 17.

<sup>29</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> About this composition see with further bibliography: A. DANICOURT, „Hermès et Dionysos“, *RevArch* 4, 1884, p. 72-75; R. CARPENTER, „Two Postscripts to the Hermes Controversy“, *AJA* 58.1, 1954, p. 1-12; G. SIEBERT, *LIMC* V, s. v. *Hermes*, p. 319-321; A. BONNEFOY, M. FEUGÈRE, „Hermès Dionysophore: Le bronze Lormier“, in J. Bodzek (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 21, 2017, p. 143-172.

<sup>31</sup> „Le main g. écarte la chlamyde qui drape l'épaule et forme un creux où l'enfant Dionysos a pu se tenir assis“ G. SIEBERT, *LIMC* V, p. 321, No. 398.

<sup>32</sup> A. BONNEFOY, M. FEUGÈRE, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 21, p. 147.

<sup>33</sup> This aspect will be explained later in the paragraph on the interpretation of the statue base.

the cult of Demeter.<sup>34</sup> However, it is difficult to determine if the Eleusinian mysteries were transferred to Alexandria.<sup>35</sup> In Egypt he is equated with Osiris or Horus, to whom the invention of the plough is attributed.<sup>36</sup> Under the Ptolemaic dynasty Triptolemus becomes important in the ruler's cult.

As reference for the iconography of the chlamys as "Sätuch" Laubscher mentioned the "Tazza Farnese" from the Museo Nazionale at Naples.<sup>37</sup> On the Tazza Farnese Triptolemus is shown standing in the middle of the picture composition. He holds in his right hand a plough; with his left hand he holds a knife. Wrapped around the left arm hangs a bag, which certainly carries the seed. It is obvious that the iconography of the god in the Tazza Farnese varies from the statue in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum because the Triptolemus on the Tazza carries an extra bag and does not use his chlamys as seed cloth. Nevertheless, the iconography of the god with his chlamys as "Sätuch" or "Sätasche" is also well documented on gems and coins.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> A district in Alexandria was named Eleusis and there existed a temple of Demeter and a Thesmophorion: S. SROWNEK, B. TKACZOW, "Le culte de la déesse Déméter à Alexandrie" in L. Kahil, Ch. Augé (eds.), *Mythologie Gréco-Romaine. Mythologies périphériques*, 1981, p. 131-135; M. PARCA, "Worshipping Demeter in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt", in M. Parca, A. Tzanetou (eds.), *Finding Persephone. Women's rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 2007, p. 192-194; S.Th. SCHIPPORIT, "Kulte und Heiligtümer der Demeter und Kore in Ionien", *BYZAS* 16, 2013, p. 346.

<sup>35</sup> The discussion about the introduction of the mysteries in the Alexandrian cults is based on two written sources: The Histories of Tacitus (*Histories* IV, 83) and the papyrus of Antinoopolis. Tacitus reports that Ptolemy had invited a priest from Eleusis to Alexandria. This is understood as proof of the introduction of the Eleusinian mysteries. In the papyrus from the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD, which had been found in Antinoopolis, the word "mysteries" and an invocation to Triptolemus are mentioned. Some scholars think that the words of Tacitus were misunderstood and that the mysteries can be explained rather with Egyptian celebrations. For the discussion of the Triptolemus' cult and the Eleusinian mysteries in Alexandria see P. PERDRIZET, "Objets d'or de la période impériale au Musée Egyptien du Caire", *ASAE* 36, 1936, p. 5-14. C.H. ROBERTS, *The Antinoopolis papyri* I, London, 1950, p. 39-40; A. DELATTE, "Le Papyrus d'Antinoopolis relative aux mystères", *BAB Ser.5*, 1952, p. 194-202; A. Delatte, "Le Papyrus d'Antinoopolis relative aux mystères", *CRAIBL* 96-2, 1952, p. 251-8; M.P. NILSSON, "Royal Mysteries in Egypt", *HTR* 50, 1957, p. 65-66; P.M. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I, Oxford, 1972, p. 198-201; G. SCHWARZ, *Triptolemos*, p. 5-6; S. SROWNEK, B. TKACZOW, "Le culte de la déesse Déméter", p. 135-137; D.J. THOMPSON, "Demeter in Graeco-Roman Egypt", in W. Clarysse, A. Schoors, H. Willems (eds.), *Egyptian religion the last thousand Years I. Studies dedicated to the memory of Jan Quaegebeur*, Leuven, 1998, p. 701-702; J.J. HERRMANN, "Demeter-Isis or the Egyptian Demeter? A Graeco-Roman sculpture from an Egyptian workshop in Boston", *JDAI* 114, 1999, p. 65-123; S.Th. SCHIPPORIT, *BYZAS* 16, 2013, p. 346-349.

<sup>36</sup> G. SCHWARZ, *Triptolemos*, p. 25, SQ65.

<sup>37</sup> The interpretation of the figures represented as deities on the Tazza Farnese is still discussed today. F.L. BASTET, "Untersuchungen zur Datierung und Bedeutung der Tazza Farnese", *BABesch* 37, 1962, p. 1-24; R. MERKELBACH, "Die Tazza Farnese, die Gestirne der Nilflut und Erathosthenes", *ZÄS* 99, 1972, p. 116-127; H.P. LAUBSCHER, *JMKG* 6, 19-34, fig. 9-15; D.B. THOMPSON, L. KOENEN, "Gallus as Triptolemos on the Tazza Farnese", *BASP* 21 1984, p. 111-156; E. J. DWYER, "The temporal Allegory of the Tazza Farnese", *AJA* 96, 1992, p. 255-282; C. VOLLMER, "Die Tazza Farnese. Versuch einer neuen Datierung und Gesamtinterpretation", *NAC* 41, 2012, p. 151-178.

<sup>38</sup> Ptolemy V and Cleopatra I as Triptolemus and Ceres (Camée.123 at Médailles et Antiques de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France). M.-L. VOLLENWEIDER, *Camées et intailles I. Les portraits grecs du Cabinet des Médailles*, Paris, 1995, p. 99-100, No. 84. Claudius and Messalina as Triptolemus ad Ceres in a chariot drawn by snakes (Camée.276 at Médailles et Antiques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France). M.-L. VOLLENWEIDER, M. AVISSEAU-BROUSTET, *Camées et intailles II. Les portraits romains du Cabinet des Médailles*, Paris, 2003, p. 98-99, No. 105. Coins show the emperor sowing corn in a car drawn by serpents: A. GEIBEN, *Katalog alexandrinischer Kaisermünzen der Sammlung des Instituts für Altertumskunde der Universität zu Köln*, *ARWAW* 5.1, 1974, Augustus: p. 152, No. 512, No. 513, No. 514, p. 160, No. 541; A. GEIBEN, *Katalog alexandrinischer Kaisermünzen der Sammlung des Instituts für Altertumskunde der Universität zu Köln*, *ARWAW* 5.2, 1978, Hadrian: p. 120, No. 1087, p. 138, No. 1143, p. 158, No. 1211, No. 1212; Antoninus Pius: p. 256, No. 1489, p. 320, No. 1661, No. 1662, p. 322, No. 1663; Faustina: p. 418, No. 1958.

The Roman sarcophagus from the Louvre Museum, decorated with the myth of Triptolemus, clearly shows the god holding his chlamys, filled with ears of grain.<sup>39</sup>

### A problem with the base: a “fleur ouverte” as red lotus

The interpretation of the base also poses a problem. The statue was part of a larger composition and the fragment to which the plant base was attached to is still missing. The base was omitted in the photograph of Perdrizet’s publication. Perdrizet describes it as an opened flower and added a drawing before printing [Fig. 5].<sup>40</sup>

There is no question that the god is standing on a leaf of a plant. To give stability to the statue, the left foot had to remain connected to the leaf. This connecting piece looks like some kind of wedge, and from certain points of view it is not noticeable and makes the impression that Hermes will start to fly at any moment. In the auction’s catalogue photo, the statue could only be seen from the front.<sup>41</sup> This perspective creates an optical illusion believing that each foot of the god is on a separate part of the base, such as on two leaves. This optical illusion and the description of Perdrizet as “fleur ouverte” makes Laubscher think that the god was on top of two petals and interpreted it as red lotus.<sup>42</sup> But in fact, the god is standing only on one leaf of a plant that is curved downwards. This curvature can only be perceived in profile. The leaf is very stylized and on the outer side a groove is worked in, which should represent the primary vein. The leaf is reed shaped and wide at the base where the left foot is located. At this point the leaf narrows to almost half its width and extends to the leaf apex, which is rounded.

Because of these characteristics I would not claim at first sight that the plant can be “easily” determined as a red lotus like Laubscher declared.<sup>43</sup> The petals of the red lotus “*Nelumbo nucifera*” are rather ovate and usually ended in a pointed apex.<sup>44</sup> One possibility would be that the plant shown here is not a specific plant, but rather a somewhat stylized leaf as a general indicator of vegetation. On the other hand, if it represented a particular plant, there should be a connection to the god or to Egypt and an interpretation as lotus would be appropriate. This special form of the leaf can perhaps be explained by the fact that the sculptor was trying to artistically reproduce the bending of the leaf under the weight of the god.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Perdrizet already mentioned that the base seems like the lotus leaf on the head of the god,<sup>46</sup> which supports Laubscher’s claim that the base was a red lotus. Maybe the god stood on the petals or sepals of the nelumbo. The god on the lotus flower is an ancient Egyptian concept of regeneration and rebirth of the sun god since the New Kingdom. In the Ptolemaic Period the

<sup>39</sup> The Louvre sarcophagus is dated 160 A.D. Another Triptolemus Sarcophagus at Wilton House is probably dated ten years later. F. BARRATTE, “Le sarcophage de Triptolème au Musée du Louvre”, *RevArch* 2, 1974, p. 272, 1; E. ANGELICOUSSIS, “The triptolemos Sarcophagus of Aurelius Epaphroditus at Wilton House”, *BonnJb* 208, 2008, p. 52.

<sup>40</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> *Catalogue première vente*, Pl. X, 137.

<sup>42</sup> H. P. LAUBSCHER, *JMKG* 6, p. 16.

<sup>43</sup> “Dank ihrer charakteristischen Form lassen sie sich unschwer bestimmen: als Blütenblätter des roten Lotos (*Nelumbium speciosum*)”; H.P. LAUBSCHER, *JMKG* 6, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> R. GERMER, *Flora des pharaonischen Ägypten*, *SDAIK* 14, 1985, p. 39-40

<sup>45</sup> An attempt to reproduce the weight of a god on a lotus flower in an artistic way is shown by the statuette of a Harpocrates sitting on a lotus flower from the Vatican Museum dated to the Ptolemaic Period: J.-Cl. GRENIER, *Les Bronzes du Museo Gregoriano Egizio*, Città del Vaticano, 2002, p. 225, No. 454, Pl. LXIII.

<sup>46</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *Bronzes grecs*, p. 30.

god Harpocrates is represented sitting on a lotus and Harpocrates is also associated with Triptolemus.<sup>47</sup>

### **A statue of Ptolemy III Euergetes as Hermes-Triptolemus in Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam)**

After an iconographical study and considering the interpretations of Perdrizet and Laubscher, the statue can certainly be interpreted as the god Hermes-Triptolemus. I also agree with Laubscher that the statue represents a Ptolemaic king. The face of the king is somewhat corroded, which makes it difficult to recognise some facial features. Nevertheless, typical characteristics of the portraits of Ptolemy III Euergetes can be distinguished, namely: a round total face shape, a full lower face, an arched cheek that surfaces slightly towards the corners of the mouth and nostrils. Despite the corroded surface, a sloping forehead, slightly sunken in the middle, can also be seen. Another characteristic for the portraits of Ptolemy III is that the forehead with a flat bulge leads into the fine, slightly curved nose and that the angles of the small mouth are slightly pointing downwards under a short upper lip. Another typical feature in Euergetes' depictions is the execution of the mouth, which is small and full-lipped. A long and almost straight nose with a slightly thickened back in the middle is also characteristic for the portraits of Ptolemy III.<sup>48</sup>

In academic research it is still problematic to identify portraits of Ptolemy III. The reason for this is the wide stylistic and iconographic variation offered by the portraits of the king, which is highly dependent on the place of production.

Among the existing marble busts of Ptolemy III, those which most resemble the statue of Lisbon are the bust of Alexandria Inv. No. 3270 and Durham Inv. No. DCC 1996.1.<sup>49</sup> While the provenance of the first one is secured as Alexandria, the provenance of the second one is only presumed. Both, the head from Alexandria and the statue from Calouste Gulbenkian Museum have a round shaped face, the forehead is slightly sunken in the middle and show a long, almost straight nose. Compared to the Durham's head the similarity of the eye area cannot be overlooked: The eyes are sloping outwards with accentuated eyelids and slightly drooping orbital folds [Fig. 12-13].<sup>50</sup>

Stylistically, the statue of the Hermes-Triptolemus is probably closely related to three other bronze statuettes of Ptolemy III: A group of wrestlers from Istanbul (Inv. No. 190, Provenance Antakya – Ancient Antiochia),<sup>51</sup> the Hermes figure from Bonn (Inv. No. C 301, Provenance Egypt) [Fig. 14]<sup>52</sup> and a statue of Ptolemy III from the Antikensammlung in Berlin (Inv. No. 1993.2, Provenance Alexandria).<sup>53</sup> In all three examples, Euergetes has the

<sup>47</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *ASAE* 36, p. 5-14; H. KYRIELEIS, "Die Porträtmünzen Ptolemaios' V und seiner Eltern", *JDAI* 88, p. 244-245; R. THOMAS, *TrWPr* 18, 42.

<sup>48</sup> For the dating criteria of the portraits of Ptolemy III, see H. KYRIELEIS, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer*, *ArchForsch* 2, 1975, p. 25-42; I. JUCKER, "Zum Bildnis Ptolemaios III. Euergetes I.", *Antike Kunst* 18, 1975, 17-25; W.D. HEILMEYER, "Ptolemaios III. Murray. Eine Neuerwerbung der Antikensammlung Berlin", *JBM* 39, 1997, p. 19-22; H. KYRIELEIS, *JDAI* 88, p. 213-246.

<sup>49</sup> H. KYRIELEIS, *ArchForsch* 2, p. 167, C1, pl. 18, 1-3. 168, C5, pl. 22, 1-2.

<sup>50</sup> I would like to thank the associate register and visual resources manager Lee Nisbet from the Nasher Museum of Art for providing me with photos of the marble bust Inv. No. DCC 1996.1.

<sup>51</sup> P. DEVAMBEZ, *Grand bronzes du Musée de Stamboul*, *MIFAI* 4, 1937, p. 87-96, pl. XXVI-XXVIII.

<sup>52</sup> I would like to thank the curator Kornelia Kressirer from Akademisches Kunstmuseum in Bonn for the photos of the figure C 301.

<sup>53</sup> W.D. HEILMEYER, *JBM* 39, 1997, p. 7-22.

same hairstyle as the statue of Hermes-Triptolemus. He wears short curly hair, which is decorated by a twisted hair band. The figures from Lisbon, Istanbul and Bonn also carry two small wings and a pointed lotus leaf on their forehead. The figure of Ptolemy III from Berlin, on the other hand, wears an ivy wreath. All statues also wear sideburns. The figure from Bonn was even reconstructed by Laubscher as Hermes-Triptolemus based on the statue of Fouquet.<sup>54</sup> He claimed that the figure from Bonn probably held the chlamys in his left hand in the same way as the Fouquet statue. In contrast, Svenson reconstructed the statue from Bonn after a bronze figure from Ionnina so that he would not carry a sowing cloth in his left hand and thus the aspect of the Triptolemus would be missing.<sup>55</sup>

All these statues show the Ptolemaic king as saviour and benefactor, but in different ways. The statues from Istanbul and Berlin represent an Euergetes who is a warrior, fighter, destroyer of enemies, guardian of the law and truth. In contrast, the other bronzes from Lisbon and Bonn show him as the provider for the country. In all versions Ptolemy III Euergetes is the guardian of the good par excellence and the divine power of order.

The reason why Ptolemy III chose to be represented as the heros Triptolemus might be found in a written source from his ruling days: The Decree of Canopus. The agrarian heros Triptolemus was regarded as a provider, bearer of corn and grain distributor for the population.<sup>56</sup> From the Decree of Canopus, we learn that this is exactly the task Ptolemy III and Berenice II take over because of the absence of the Nile flood and the threatening famine.<sup>57</sup> The decree states that the royal couple is caring for the people in the temples as well as for the other inhabitants of Egypt. The document sets out in detail the measures taken by the king and queen to supply Egypt: Tax remission and the import of cereals from other Ptolemaic territories:

“als der Fluß einmal nur ungenügend anstieg und alle im Lande wegen dieses Ereignisses niedergeschmettert waren und an die frühere Vernichtung dachten unter einigen, die früher König waren, unter denen es sich ereignete, daß die Einwohner des Landes von einer Dürre heimgesucht wurden, fürsorglich eintraten für die in den Heiligtümern und die anderen Einwohner des Landes, indem sie für vieles im voraus Sorge trugen und einen großen Teil der Steuereinkünfte erließen um der Errettung der Menschen willen, indem sie aus Syrien und Phönizien und Zypern und aus mehreren anderen Gegenden Getreide zu hohen Preisen in das Land herbeiholen ließen, haben sie die in Ägypten Lebenden bewahrt”.<sup>58</sup>

In this text Ptolemy III acts as divine sower for the prosperity of the land: A mission of the heros Triptolemus. In return for saving the country, maintaining its prosperity and restoring the order, the royal couple achieves honour and expansion of the rulership's cult by increasing

<sup>54</sup> H. KYRIELEIS, *ArchForsch* 2, p. 170, C 15, pl. 26, 6-8. pl. 27, 1-4; S. SCHMIDT, *Katalog der ptolemäischen und kaiserlichen Objekte aus Ägypten im Akademischen Kunstmuseum in Bonn*, München, 1997, p. 58-49, No. 40, pl. 17; H.P. LAUBSCHER, *JMKG* 6, p. 17.

<sup>55</sup> D. Svenson reconstructed the statue from Bonn based on a figure from Dodona (Archaeological Museum Inv. No. 4906): D. SVENSON, *ArchStd* 10, p. 63-64, No. 183 248-249, pl. 29. However, Thomas discusses them within the group “Die Ptolemäer und Harpokrates-Triptolemos”: R. THOMAS, *TrWPr* 18, p. 42.

<sup>56</sup> G. SCHWARZ, *Triptolemos*, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> For another evidence of a famine in Egypt at the time of Ptolemy III, see: J. VANDIER, *La famine dans l'Égypte ancienne*, *RAPH* 7, 1936, p. 33; S. PFEIFFER, *Das Dekret von Kanopos (238 v. Chr.): Kommentar und historische Auswertung eines dreisprachigen Synodaldekretes der ägyptischen Priester zu Ehren Ptolemaios' III. und seiner Familie Kanopos*, *APF-B* 18, 2004, p. 209.

<sup>58</sup> Translation of the Greek text according to Pfeiffer: Section from the Greek text line 13-20: S. PFEIFFER, *Das Dekret von Kanopos*, p. 93-94.

the cult of the royal couple and the Ptolemaic dynasty in the temples of Egypt and by establishing new celebrations in their honour.

The statue from the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum expresses exactly this idea of rulership in the Decree of Canopus: A divine sower who acts for the prosperity of the people in catastrophic situations, a provider and guarantor of abundance, prosperity and peace. Indeed, it has been speculated whether the representations of the Ptolemaic kings as Triptolemus were caused by a crisis like drought periods and the threat of famine.<sup>59</sup>

The question about the function of the statue is difficult to answer because the statue is not complete, and the archaeological context is not given. However, it was probably a votive statue or a temple statue. In the decree of Canopus, it was arranged that the priests would carry an additional title: *j3w.t hm(.w)-ntr n ntr.wj mnḥ.wj*, “Office of the prophets of the two benefactor-gods”. This office, however, was not an independent priesthood, nor was it attached to the other offices. The priests have extended their previous duties for the deity of their respective temple to the benefactor gods, in other words, an introduction of the ruler cult in the Egyptian temple.<sup>60</sup>

If the statue of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum is a documentation that the ruler cult was introduced in the Egyptian temples, it would mean that the cult statue of the king would then be kept in a shrine with the other main deities or placed in the publicly accessible temple courtyard in Tell el-Moqdam.<sup>61</sup> However, neither written<sup>62</sup> nor archaeological<sup>63</sup> sources from Leontopolis can confirm this claim.

<sup>59</sup> “Unter dem Aspekt, dass die Triptolemosangleichung eines Ptolemäers auf den Münzenmissionen erst unter Ptolemaios V. propagiert wird und darüber hinaus die historische Gegebenheit der in seiner Regierungszeit überlieferten Dürreperiode eine solche Angleichung nicht nur verständlich, sondern sogar besonders erforderlich erscheinen lassen, wäre in Erwägung zu ziehen, ob nicht alle Ptolemäerdarstellungen in Angleichung an Triptolemos erst durch diese Phase der Not ausgelöst wurden” (R. THOMAS, *TrWPr* 18, p. 43). The figure of Triptolemus is also connected with the Nile floods: R. MERKELBACH, *ZÄS* 99, p. 119-121.

<sup>60</sup> S. PFEIFFER, “*ntr.wj mnḥ.wj* – θεοὶ εὐεργεταί: das dritte Ptolemaierpaar im Kanoposdekret. Eine ‘ganzheitliche’ Betrachtung”, in M. Eldamaty, M. Trad (eds), *Egyptian museum collections around the world* 2, Cairo, 2002, p. 937-947; S. PFEIFFER, *Das Dekret von Kanopos*, p. 234-238.

<sup>61</sup> Whether the statue was part of a larger composition, including a figure of queen Berenice II, cannot be proven. Thus, the royal couple as a group monument would be understood and represented as the *ntr.wj mnḥ.wj*, “the two benefactors gods”, who guarantee the prosperity of the land. An example for this kind of statue could be the bronze figures from the British Museum of Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II (EA 38442, EA 38443), which are interpreted as a group statue: W.A. CHESHIRE, *ÄAT* 77, p. 64-146. For the location of the king statue in the Egyptian temple see: D. FISHWICK, “Statues taxes in Roman Egypt”, *Historia* (W) 38, 1989, p. 342-344; S. PFEIFFER, *Herrscher- und Dynastikulte im Ptolemäerreich: Systematik und Einordnung der Kultformen*, *MBPF* 98, 2008, p. 55-58, 79-81, 85-89, 109-111; D. THOMPSON, *Ptolemaic oinochoai and portraits in faience: aspects of the ruler-cult*, Oxford, 1973, p. 120-124.

<sup>62</sup> Written sources from Leontopolis mention Ptolemaic kings but they give no reference about the ruler cult at the site: P. PERDRIZET, “Une fondation du temps de Ptolémée épiphane, le temple du dieu lion, à Leontopolis”, *CRAIBL* 66.4, 1922, p. 320-323; É. BERNAND, “Le culte de lion en Basse Égypte d’après les documents grecs”, *DHA* 16.1, 1990, p. 63-94; W. CLARYSSE, H. YAN, “Two ptolemaic Stelae for the Sacred Lion of Leonton Polis (Tell Moqdam)”, *CdE* 82, 2007, p. 77-100; W. CLARYSSE, “A royal journey in the Delta in 257 B.C. and the Date of the Mendes Stele”, *CdE* 82, 2007, p. 201-206; J. YOYOTTE, “Sites et cultes de Basse Égypte: les deux Leontopolis”, *AEPHE* 92, 1983, p. 156-162; B. BOYABAL, “Huit stèles inédites d’Égypte”, *CdE* 41, 1966, p. 368-369.

<sup>63</sup> For excavations in Tell el-Moqdam (Leontopolis) see: J.J. RIFAUD, *Voyage en Égypte, en Nubie et des lieux circonvoisins*, Paris, 1830, pl. 142; J.J. RIFAUD, *Tableau de l’Égypte, de la Nubie et des lieux circonvoisins*, Paris, 1830, p. 145, 369; A. MARIETTE-BEY, *Monuments divers recueillis en Égypte et en Nubie*, Paris, 1872, pl. 63 (c); E. NAVILLE, *Ahnas el Medineh*, *EEF-Mem* 11, 1894, p. 27-31, pl. IV (A, C), pl. XII (C); H. GAUTHIER, “À Travers La Basse-Égypte II. Un Tombeau de Tell Moqdam”, *ASAE* 21, 1921, p. 21-27;

### Re-discussion of the Provenance: No favissa in Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam)

Until now, research has divided the finds from 1885 in Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam) into two groups: A homogeneous group of objects in the shape of lions or decorated with lions interpreted as “favissa find” and the four Hellenistic bronzes. There has never been any doubt about the provenance of these objects despite coming from the antique trade. Daniel Marie Fouquet was told about the provenance of this statue by the seller, the antique dealer, Souliman Abd es-Samad. In the case of objects that came from antique trade, whose provenance has been handed down orally by the seller and there are no other indications to confirm it (e.g. inscriptions on the item), it is necessary to question the indicated provenance. So, did the fellahin discover in 1885 in the ruins of Tell el-Moqdam a favissa? And did these Hellenistic bronzes belong to it?

The reason why I find this question relevant is because there are several clues regarding this favissa find that cast doubt on the provenance of some of the objects found there<sup>64</sup>. While the place of production of the four Hellenistic bronzes can certainly be identified as Alexandria<sup>65</sup>, the bronzes from the first group could have been produced in Leontopolis<sup>66</sup>. The oinochoe in form of a child's head and the figure of a fisherman also have one more thing in common, namely that they do not necessarily have a cultic function.<sup>67</sup> The function of fisher statuettes has long been discussed in the scientific community because hardly any of them was found in situ. In the case of the statues in large format only Roman copies have been preserved. These certainly had served a decorative purpose in connection with thermal baths and fountains. However, it is difficult to reconstruct the function of the Hellenistic originals. It is still being discussed whether they are votives or have a more decorative function;<sup>68</sup> the evidence supports arguments for both theories.<sup>69</sup>

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C. REDMOUNT, R. FRIEDMAN, “Tell el-Muqdam, City of the Lions”, *EA* 3, 1993, p. 37-38; C. REDMOUNT, R. FRIEDMAN, “The 1993 Field Season of the Berkeley Tell el-Muqdam Project, Preliminary Report”, *NARCE* 164, 1994, p. 1-10; C. REDMOUNT, R. FRIEDMAN, “No Lions in the Delta: Tell el-Muqdam 1995”, *ARF Newsletter* 3.1, 1995; C.A. REDMOUNT, R. F. FRIEDMAN, “Tales of a Delta Site: The 1995 Field Season at Tell el-Muqdam”, *JARCE* 34, 1997, p. 57-83; M. E. MORGENSTEIN, C. REDMOUNT, “Mudbrick Typology, Sources, and Sedimentological Composition: A Case Study from Tell el-Muqdam, Egyptian Delta”, *JARCE* 35, 1998, p. 129-146. Unfortunately, not all the results of the American team from Berkeley University have been yet published.

<sup>64</sup> A reconstruction of the finds from Tell el-Moqdam from 1885 known as “*Trouvailles des lions*” or “*Löwenfund*” is a focus of the author's doctoral thesis, see note 3.

<sup>65</sup> A. PASQUIER, *CRAIBL* 156.4, p. 1540; D. E. L. HAYNES, “Bronze bust of a young negress”, *BMQ* 21, p. 19.

<sup>66</sup> The American team found a metal-smelting-complex in Tell el-Moqdam, where bronze has been processed dated in the Ptolemaic Period: C.A. REDMOUNT, R. F. FRIEDMAN, *JARCE* 34, p. 59-61.

<sup>67</sup> The Sphinx could not be located so far. A study based on the short description and photo of Perdrizet's publication makes its evaluation difficult.

<sup>68</sup> Himmelmann thinks they are votive figures while Laubscher believes that the function has not changed with time and these figures served a decorative purpose as the Roman copies. Kunze interpreted the fisher figures as votive sculptures, which can be connected to the traditions of Greek votive gifts: N. HIMMELMANN, *Über Hirten-Genre in der antiken Kunst*, *ARWAW* 65, 1980, p. 87. H. P. LAUBSCHER, *Fischer und Landleute. Studien zur Hellenistischen Genreplastik*, 1982, 88-97; Ch. KUNZE, “Verkannte Götterfreunde. Zur Deutung und Funktion hellenistischer Genreskulpturen”, *MDAIR* 106, 1999, p. 53-69.

<sup>69</sup> Bayer-Niemeier names three small figures whose location is certain. They are Terracotta figures and were found in a temple depot, a tomb, and a house: E. BAYER-NIEMEIER, *Fischerbilder in der hellenistischen Plastik*, Bonn, 1983, p. 187-193, KP 77, p. 274, fig. 29, KP 62 p. 269-270, KP 68 p. 271.



The interpretation of the function of the oinochoe in the shape of a child's head, is also problematic. The ointment vessel has a few parallels whose provenance are unknown.<sup>70</sup> Roman bronze ointment jars have been studied and they were used as vessels for perfumes or ointments during banquets.<sup>71</sup> It is also possible that these ointment vessels from the Hellenistic period had the same function as luxury goods that were used in the household.<sup>72</sup>

The group of objects that allegedly came from a favissa with the temple inventory of Mahes does not seem to be so homogeneous after all. A good example is a statue of Amun and Mut sitting on the throne (Walters Art Gallery 22.65), that also belonged to the finds from Leontopolis bought by Fouquet in 1885. Its provenance was certainly not the temple of Mahes, but probably the area of *Jh̄nw*, which was related to the cult of the god Amun and was located in the Leontopolitan Nome.<sup>73</sup> Other objects from this group seem to come from other cult sites in Leontopolis.<sup>74</sup>

Still a cause for concern is the provenance of the several lion appliques made of bronze found in the "favissa" and which are interpreted as decorative fragments of a naos or temple furniture for the lion god Mahes. The Louvre Museum owns an applique of a lion striding to the left from the former Collection Fouquet (E 14690) which was sold at the auction under No. 117 of the lot from Tell el-Moqdam.<sup>75</sup> Thanks to Fouquet's private archive, it is possible to determine the original provenance of the object and this is not Leontopolis, Tell el-Moqdam.<sup>76</sup> On an old picture, Fouquet wrote that he bought it from the antique dealer Kyticas and that its provenance was Memphis [Fig. 15].<sup>77</sup> This casts doubt not only on the provenance

<sup>70</sup> BM 1955,1008.1, HAYNES, *BMQ* 21, p. 19-20; Firenze Inv. No. 2288 and a vessel from the former collection F. Ortiz, A. ADRIANI, "Di un vasetto bronzeo del Museo archeologico di Firenze, e di altri", *BollArt* 61, 1976, p. 54-58.

<sup>71</sup> V. MARTI, "De l'usage des balsamiques anthropomorphes en bronze", *MEFRM* 108.2, p. 979-1000.

<sup>72</sup> During the excavation in El-Qantarah, Petrie found an oinochoe in the form of a female head (CG 27.743) in the fortified town: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Tanis* 2. 1886 - *Nebesheh (Am) and Defenneh (Tahpanhes)*, *MEEF* 4, 1888, p. 98-99; C.C. EDGAR, *Greek Bronzes*, CGC 27631-28000 et 32368-32376, p. 27, No. 27.743, pl. VII.

<sup>73</sup> The *Jh̄nw*-area is associated with the lion necropolis in Leontopolis: P. MONTET, *Géographie de l'Égypte Ancienne* I. *La Basse Égypte*, Paris, 1957, p. 133; H. GAUTHIER, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques* I, Le Caire, 1925, p. 31; É. CHASSINAT, *Collection Fouquet*, p. 19; J. YOYOTTE, *BIFAO* 52, p. 186, note 1; C. BENAVENTE VICENTE, "Lost Art" aus Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam): Die Sammlung Fouquet. Die Provenienz der Statue von Amun und Mut (Walters Art Museum 22.65)", *SAK* 49, 2020, p. 1-6.

<sup>74</sup> So far, the author was able to verify the provenance of 76 items as objects that were found in 1885 on the site of Tell el-Moqdam. 13 of these objects do not seem to come from the temple of the lion but from other areas of Tell el-Moqdam documented in written sources. Among them are the statue of Amun und Mut (Walters Art Museum 22.65), two lion thrones of the former collection Fouquet, which are still missing, and a statuette of a priest carrying a figure of Osiris (Egyptian Museum Berlin, ÄM 9258). The provenance of the last one was even questioned in the past. Roeder mentions that it probably comes from Thebes although this statuette was bought with two other objects by Erman through the middleman and Dutch consul Ernest Daniel Jean Dutilh on December 11, 1885 with provenance "Löwenfund": G. ROEDER, *Ägyptische Bronzefiguren: Text und Tafeln*, MÄSB 6, 493-494, §666b-c; C. BENAVENTE VICENTE, *Untersuchung zum Gott Mahes* (doctoral thesis - forthcoming).

<sup>75</sup> *Catalogue première vente*, 10, No. 117.

<sup>76</sup> I owe special thanks to Thérèse Charmasson from CTHS Paris for her cooperation and for providing information and photos of Fouquet's private archive. I greatly appreciate the exchange of information about the research results of the Fouquet collection. Her support enables me to study and reconstruct the collection of Fouquet, for which I am deeply grateful.

<sup>77</sup> Panayotis Kyticas was one of the main antiquities dealers in Cairo. The name crossed out before "Kyticas" on the photo is "Cassira". Michel Casira was another antiquities dealer in Cairo, who has a shop around the corner from Sheppard's Hotel: F. HAGEN, K. RYHOLT, *The Antiquities Trade*, p. 206, p. 229-230; M.L. Bierbrier (ed.), *Who was who*, p. 304.

of all appliques allegedly found in Leontopolis in 1885, but also on appliques in museums, which are attributed to this finding by parallelism.

How the purchase of these objects took place has been reported by the archaeologist Paul Perdrizet through direct testimony by Fouquet himself:<sup>78</sup>

“Il y a une quarantaine d’années, le marchand d’antiquités le plus actif du Caire était Soliman Abdel-Saman, du village des Bédouins, aux Pyramides. Un dimanche de juillet 1885, le Dr Fouquet, établi depuis peu en Égypte, le rencontrant à la gare du Caire qui descendait du train de Tantah, une lourde valise dans chaque main, l’emmena chez lui. Les deux valises contenaient environ quatre-vingts objets, presque tous en bronze.”

This was not a spontaneous purchase. The buyer did not go to the antique store just to see what the seller had to offer. On the contrary, the meeting was arranged and Souliman had enough time to prepare it, knowing the reputation of the buyer. Daniel Marie Fouquet was known for buying what he liked without considering the price. Even Maspero complained in a letter to his wife that he could not accomplish an order from Mrs. Raffalovich, who wanted to buy bronze objects for 300 francs because Fouquet was raising the prices.<sup>79</sup>

“Pour finir avec les antiquités, dis à Madame Raffalovich que je ne lui trouverai rien pour trois cents francs. Le moindre bronze se vend de sept cents à huit cents francs : cela tient au Dr. Fouqué, qui achète à tout prix et a fait doubler la valeur des antiquités”.

This meeting had to be lucrative for Souliman and therefore he surely tried to compile as many artifacts as possible and maybe he mixed different objects with different provenances in the process, since the goal was to make the biggest possible profit. To get the biggest profit from the sale of the objects from Leontopolis, the seller used some tricks. Souliman also offered Daniel Marie Fouquet four bases decorated with lions for Abydos-standards, which were made of bronze and had been found in Leontopolis (Louvre No. E33393.1-4). Fouquet only bought two of them in July of 1885. The other two Souliman sold to the antiquities dealer “Dinglé”.<sup>80</sup> Fouquet bought them years later from him on advice from Vladimir Golénischeff.<sup>81</sup> It appears today that only one of the four is authentic, the other three being overmouldings, made to complete a so-called furniture set. Souliman presumably interpreted the standard-base as a furniture foot and made the other three to sell the whole furniture set to Fouquet to increase the profit.<sup>82</sup> If Souliman has had made new objects it is possible that he also mixed artefacts with different provenances.

<sup>78</sup> P. PERDRIZET, *MonPiot* 25, p. 349.

<sup>79</sup> This letter was written on December 14, 1885, four months after Daniel Marie Fouquet purchased the Leontopolis items: É. DAVID, *Gaston Maspero Lettres d’Égypte : correspondance avec Louise Maspero*, Paris, 2003, p. 86.

<sup>80</sup> The name “Dinglé” probably refers to the antiquities dealer Alexandre Dingli. This assumption is also made by Paul Perdrizet. I am very thankful to the co-director Samuel Provost of the Department of Art history and Archaeology of the Université de Lorraine for sharing information about Paul Perdrizet correspondence: P. PERDRIZET, *MonPiot* 25, p. 377; F. HAGEN, K. RYHOLT, *The Antiquities Trade*, p. 207-208. For more information about the project “Archives Perdrizet” see <http://perdrizet.hiscant.univ-lorraine.fr/>.

<sup>81</sup> The exact purchase date of the other two Abydos-standards cannot be determined. However, there are indications in the private archives of Dr. Fouquet that allow to determine with certainty the date of purchase after the year 1895.

<sup>82</sup> *Catalogue Voyage en Orient : L’intérieur oriental de Monsieur F. et divers. Salle des ventes Rossini. Mardi 1<sup>er</sup> mars 2016 à 14 h 30.*, Paris, 2016, p. 9, No. 102.

Therefore, it can be said that probably the seller mixed and sold objects from different provenances and this makes the idea of the favissa doubtful. Maybe the seller just mixed objects from different areas of Tell el-Moqdam (cultic and profane – temple, necropolis, town). But it must also be considered that the seller had offered for sale several items from different cities in the Delta. In fact, neither correspondence nor other private documents from Fouquet support the theory that the fellahin found all the objects in a single storage location. The designation used for these finds is always “Trouvaille des lions”, “Trouvaille de Léontopolis”, “Trouvaille de Tell el-Moqdam” or “Löwenfund”.<sup>83</sup> The first one to talk about a favissa was Perdrizet and probably this was based more on his conclusion but not on the facts because he interpreted this finding as a temple inventory of Mahes.<sup>84</sup> Chassinat, however, is more reserved and explains that the objects from Tell el-Moqdam are cult objects, ex-votos and ornaments for the temple furniture of the lion god but there are a few objects that do not seem to come from this temple.<sup>85</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the archaeologist Hans Peter Laubscher was right with his theories about the statue. Although he only had old photographs of the statue, which were not even showing the complete artefact, he recognized very well that a Ptolemaic king is represented as Hermes-Triptolemus. The finding of the statue, lost for almost 100 years, allow us to refine Laubscher's theories and develop new ideas.

The identification of the statue as Ptolemy III Euergetes as Hermes-Triptolemus leaves many questions unanswered regarding its function and provenance and opens the debate about the discovery in 1885 in the ruins of Tell el-Moqdam by fellahin.

It would be also interesting to do further research on the statue to learn more about its material composition or manufacturing process. A microscopic examination, X-rays, and results of computer tomography (CT) could perhaps provide new insights for the study of Hellenistic bronzes in Egypt.

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<sup>83</sup> Even the first time these objects were exhibited there is no mention of a favissa: *Catalogue Exhibition of art of Ancient Egypt at the Burlington Find Arts Club*, London, 1895, p. 43. Chassinat even alleges that fellahin found the items in the whole site of Tell el-Moqdam (the date of the discovery of the find mentioned by him is wrong): “Ces antiquités furent découvertes par des paysans, au mois de février 1884, dans l’immense champ de ruines qui porte le nom de Tell el-Moqdam”: É. CHASSINAT, *Collection Fouquet*, p. 8.

<sup>84</sup> Probably it was also the reason why he omitted some items like the statue of Amun and Mut or the statuette of a priest carrying Osiris in his article. They did not fit into his idea of temple inventory of the lion god Mahes.

<sup>85</sup> É. CHASSINAT, *Collection Fouquet*, p. 17, 19.



Fig. 1. Sphinx from Leontopolis published by P. Perdrizet in *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*, Pl. XIV.



Fig. 2. Oinochoe from Leontopolis published by P. Perdrizet in *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*, Pl. XXV.



Fig. 3. Figure of a Fisherman from Leontopolis published by P. Perdrizet, *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*, Plate XXVI.



Fig. 4. Statue of Hermes published by P. Perdrizet in *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*, Pl. XVII.

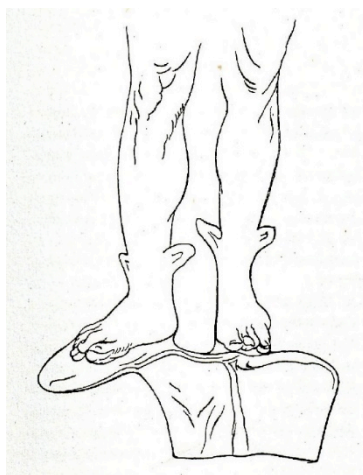


Fig. 5.: Drawing of the base of the Hermes statue published by P. Perdrizet in *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*, p. 31.





Fig. 6. Front side of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).



Fig. 7. Backside of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).





Fig. 8. Diagonal view of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Founder's Collection.  
photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira)

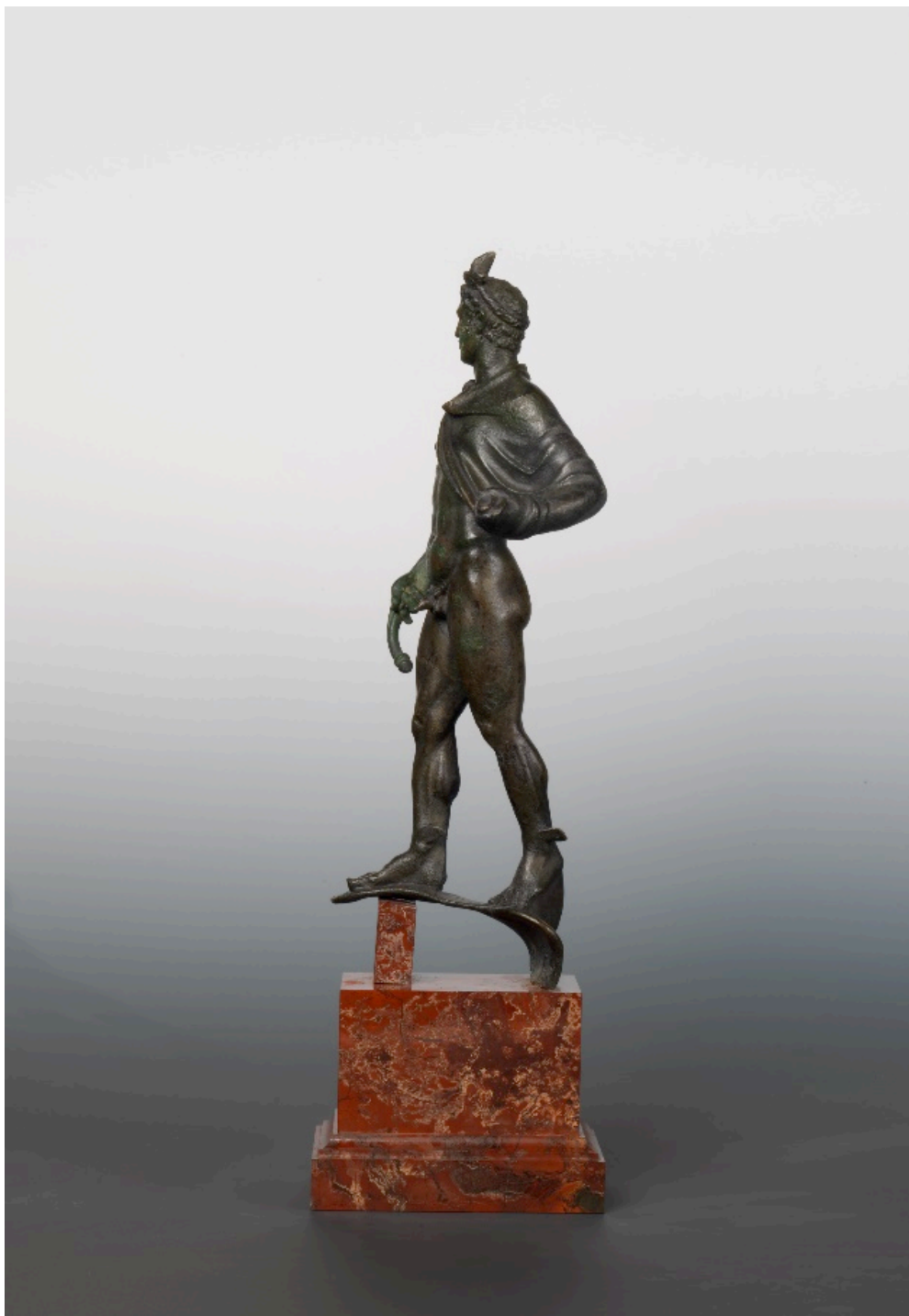


Fig. 9. Left side of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).



Fig. 10. Right side of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).

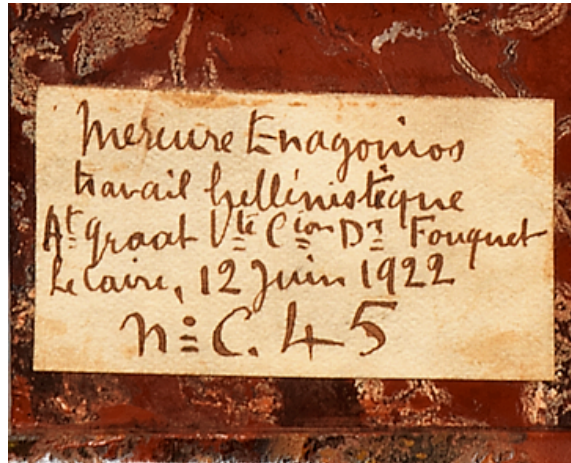


Fig. 11. Note at the red support base of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).



Fig. 12. Egyptian/Greek, Portrait of Ptolemy III, c. 225-200 BCE. Marble,  $5\frac{1}{16} \times 3\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{16}$  inches ( $13.5 \times 9.5 \times 28.4$  cm) (© Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. The Duke Classical Collection, DCC1966.1. Photo by Peter Paul Geoffrion).

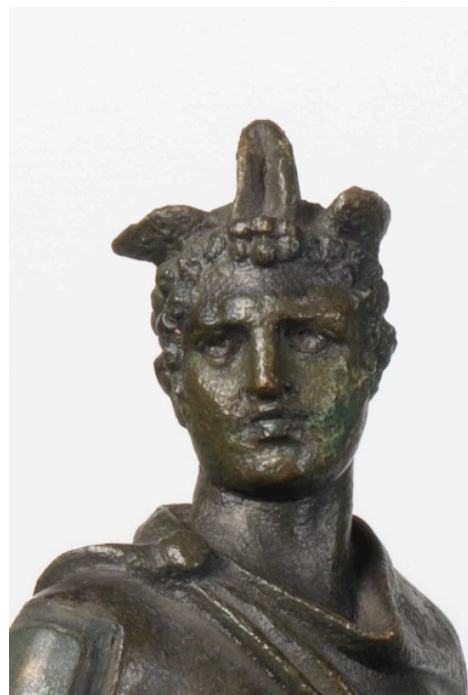


Fig. 13. Face of the statue Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 (© Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum – Founder's Collection. Photo: Catarina Gomes Ferreira).



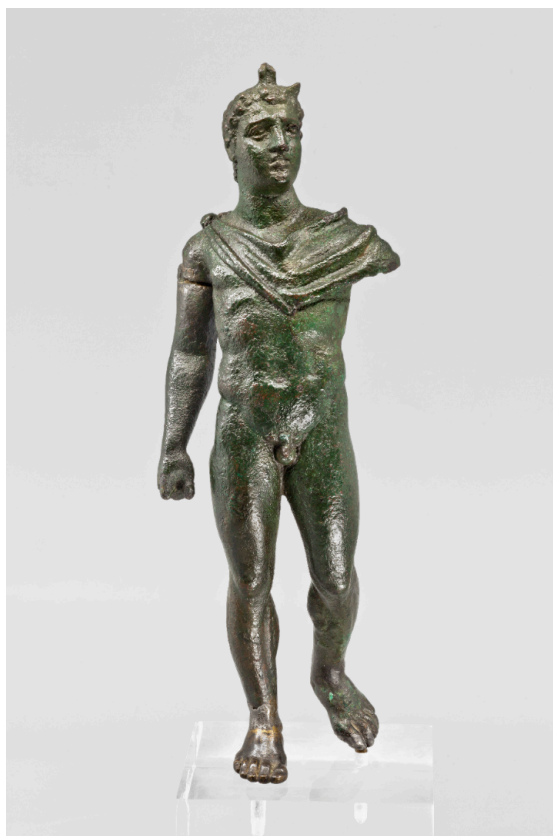


Fig. 14. Hermes figure, Akademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn Inv. No C 301 (© Akademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn, Photo: Jutta Schubert).



Fig. 15. Privat archives of Daniel Marie Fouquet (Carton 22) (Privat collection).

## Résumé :

En 1885, le médecin et collectionneur français Daniel Marie Fouquet acheta chez l'antiquaire Souliman Abd es-Samad un groupe d'objets provenant des ruines de Tell el-Moqdam, l'ancienne ville de Léontopolis. Cette découverte est connue sous le nom de « Trouvaille des lions ». Parmi ces objets il y avait également quatre bronzes hellénistiques : un sphinx, un oinochoé, une figure de pêcheur et une statue du dieu Hermès. Tous ces bronzes ont été publiés en 1911 par l'archéologue français Paul Perdrizet dans son livre *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet*. Quelques années plus tard l'archéologue allemand Hans Peter Laubscher reprit l'étude de la statue d'Hermès et il l'interpréta comme étant un roi ptolémaïque en tant que dieu Hermès-Horus-Triptolemus. L'étude de Laubscher était fondée uniquement sur les photos prises pour la vente aux enchères de 1922 de la Collection Fouquet à Paris, car le lieu de conservation de la statue était inconnu. L'auteur a pu identifier la statue d'Hermès au Musée Calouste Gulbenkian de Lisbonne sous le numéro 45.

Grâce à cette identification il a été possible de la rediscuter et de revoir les affirmations de Perdrizet et Laubscher. Il a été également possible d'explorer pour la première fois toute la composition de la statue puisque les photos publiées ne montrent pas sa base. D'après l'étude iconographique qui tient en compte les interprétations de Perdrizet et Laubscher, la statue doit certainement être interprétée comme Ptolémée III Évergète représenté en tant que dieu Hermès-Triptolème. Elle montre Ptolémée III comme semez divin, pourvoyeur et garant de l'abondance, de la prospérité et de la paix. La fonction de la statue permet de remettre en question le prétendu contexte archéologique de sa découverte grâce aussi aux résultats de la recherche sur la provenance de tous les objets issus des ruines de Tell el-Moqdam en 1885.

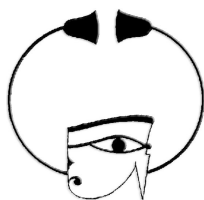
## Abstract:

In 1885 the French doctor and collector Daniel Marie Fouquet bought from the antique dealer Souliman Abd es-Samad a group of objects found in the ruins of Tell el-Moqdam (Leontopolis). This find is known as "Trouvaille des lions". Among the objects purchased by Dr. Fouquet there were four Hellenistic bronzes: a sphinx, an oinochoe, a figure of a fisherman and a statue of the god Hermes. All these bronzes were published by the French archaeologist Paul Perdrizet in his book *Bronzes Grecs d'Égypte de la Collection Fouquet* in 1911. The German archaeologist Hans Peter Laubscher took up the study of the statue of Hermes found in Leontopolis and interpreted it as a Ptolemaic king depicted as the god Hermes-Horus-Triptolemus. Laubscher's study was based only on photos of the statue because it had been missing since 1922, when it was auctioned as part of the Fouquet collection in Paris. The author was able to localize the statue of Hermes in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon under the number 45.

By locating the statue, it is possible to re-discuss it and to review the previous claims of Perdrizet and Laubscher. It is also possible to explore the entire composition for the first time since the published photos of the statue do not show its base. After an iconographical study and considering the interpretations of Perdrizet and Laubscher, the statue can certainly be interpreted as Ptolemy III Euergetes depicted as the god Hermes-Triptolemus. The statue of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum Inv. No. 45 shows Ptolemy III as divine sower, provider and guarantor of abundance, prosperity, and peace. The function of the statue as temple statue allows a re-discussion about the archaeological context by questioning the provenance of all the objects found in 1885 in the ruins of Tell el-Moqdam (Leontopolis).

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ISSN 2102-6629