

Ancient art



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The aim of this paper is to compare and contrast two works from any ancient culture and compare and contrast them in terms of style, meaning, symbolism and other aesthetic features. The first is Aphrodite Untying Her Sandal is a small bronze statue located in the Roman Imperial period maybe in the first century CE. It is a Roman replica of a famous work of Praxiteles in the Hellenistic period. The second work is The Tyche of Antioch, also a bronze statue located in the first to second century CE in Syria, during the Roman Period. Sculpted by Tartus it is also a Roman replica of the work of the Greek sculptor Eutychides of Sikyon. The statues being both Roman replicas represent goddesses.

Aphrodite is most probably an amulet; protector of women and marriage in Syria and Egypt, many wedding contracts in the first centuries CE included a small statue as part of dowry. The statue being entirely nude provides the pretext for observation of the female body, the perfect body of a goddess for that matter. She wears only gold bracelets and is about to remove her sandal leaning on a pillar. Holding either an apple or a ball of makeup in her hand she is gracefully leaning to depict the balance and elegance of the goddess Aphrodite and the beauty of her naked body. Being a gift prior to marriage the statue represents the beauty and charm of the female body and might be considered a charm of reproduction for healthy and beautiful babies. Tyche, being the goddess of good fortune and strongly tied to Antioch is the protector of the city. Gracefully sited on a rock with crossed legs and a crown of crenulated towers to represent the city walls she is dressed with a lavish drapery, a symbol of abundance. She is holding a sheaf of corn in her right hand to symbolise wealth and welfare. The sculpture is thought to have been created for the celebration of the city of Antioch

besides the river Orontes in the third century BCE. The river is represented in the statue with a young swimmer who emerges from the water right in front of Tyche's feet.

Aphrodite's is a small 8, 7 inches, completely nude with gold bracelets in her hands, leaning statue. Tyche on the other hand is a 6 inches, lavishly dressed, with a crown on her head and holding a sheaf of corn, gracefully seated goddess. They are both bronze, lavishly crafted, goddess-depicting statues representing abundance. They are also crafted with detail and meticulous depiction of the body and head, gifted with jewellery to add to their royal origin. They are both placed in a natural context; Aphrodite is leaning on a pillar and Tyche is sitting on a rock, they are both therefore naturalistic. Despite the common element the goddesses exhibit many differences in style.

Aphrodite is nude, exhibiting full breasts and a round body as symbol of abundance, she is therefore naturalistic and organic. She is leaning to remove her sandal and exhibit the beauty of the perfect female body through firmness of the muscles she is therefore idealistic.

Tyche is also a representation of a goddess dressed lavishly she is idealistic also therefore. She is nonetheless lavishly dressed covering all of her body. She is represented firmly sitting on a rock with a straight stiff and rigid body to represent royalty and permanence. She is also depicted in dark color to add to the permanence of the goddess.

To sum up, both statues reflect the religious beliefs of ancient cultures and represent the ideal. Aphrodite concentrates serves as a talisman for the newly wed female and reflects the perfection and of the female body, whereas Tyche brings good fortune to the city of Antioch and is a

representation of wealth.

References

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