MALE GARMENT PATTERNS IN THE TOMB OF PETOSIRIS AT TUNA EL GEBEL

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ABSTRACT

Dress is not only a material for covering the body but can also seen as an artifact. Dress is therefore a cultural and social indicator. Clothing in daily life, in religious or rituals activities contribute to better understanding an important feature of life in the ancient world. It has the potential to deepen our appreciation of the many various roles that dress plays in ancient art and current literature often provide only ‘snapshots’ of this notion. It mainly shows the types of garments in use, but a detailed examination of dress can tell much more. The scenes in the tomb of Petosiris represent a great inspiration regarding the way in which the figures are dressed, giving a great variety of fashion for both males and females. The aim of this study is to highlight the different depictions of men garments in the tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel in Minia through displaying the different representations. Results of this study reveal that the tomb represents a fashion show for all community classes.

KEYWORDS: Men garments, the tomb of Petosiris, Ancient and Graeco-Roman Egypt.

INTRODUCTION

Clothes may deepen our appreciation of the many various roles that dress plays in ancient art. Yet current literature often provides ‘snapshots’ of this appreciation, showing only a few garments in use. A detailed examination of dress can provide more profound insights an ancient garment. The scenes in the tomb of Petosiris represent a great inspiration regarding the ways in which the figures dressed, giving a great variety of fashion for both males and females.
Artistic representations of clothing, supplemented by surviving garments, constitute the main sources of evidence for the clothes worn in ancient Egypt. As in most societies, garment fashion in Egypt changed over time; different clothes were worn at certain occasions, and each type of garment may relate to diverse social class of the community.
This study aims to highlight the depictions of different forms of men clothing at the tomb of Petosiris at Tuna El Gebel through describing and classifying the types of male clothes depicted on the walls of the tomb. Moreover, the article explores the relation of men dress to social status and the activity done by the male figure. The study follows a descriptive and analytical methodology to achieve its aims.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE TOMB OF PETOSIRIS

Tuna el Gebel, Thunis in Greek, is one of the most important archaeological necropolises in Middle Egypt; it is located on the west bank of the Nile and has almost completely preserved funerary houses and temple-like tomb structures in a wealth form, dating from the Graeco-Roman period. Free-standing stairs lead in many cases to a high podium, on which stands a temple-like or house tomb. Built in a mixed Egyptian-Greek style, most of them have a pronaos, behind which is the actual cult chapel with wall recesses, apses and wall paintings. The burial chambers are cut in the rock below. The most important complex is the temple-like tomb of Petosiris.2

The tomb of Petosiris at Tuna El Gebel is one of the most significant tombs of the Late and the Ptolemaic Period in Egypt. This is mainly because the number of decorated tombs with daily life scenes datable to this period is very limited when compared to those of the Ancient Egyptian period. It occupies a special place in ancient art as its scenes combine of the Ancient Egyptian and Greek styles of arts. The tomb dates to the late 4th and early 3rd centuries BCE. It is a family tomb of Petosiris the High Priest of Thoth at Hermopolis Magna, the metropolitan capital of the 15th nome of Upper Egypt (Wmt)3 Petosiris lived at the end of the Ancient

Egyptian period and at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period.\(^6\) Egyptian tombs of the Ptolemaic era embraced the artistic and architectural features of the Late period. The tomb of Petosiris, however, is a remarkable exception,\(^7\) as it shows a mixed iconography between Egyptian and Hellenistic styles which was occasionally unsuccessful.\(^8\) The tomb which also housed the mummies of Petosiris’ father and brother was built in a typically traditional Egyptian style. It consists of a pronaos at ground level with four pillars which is followed by a naos, in the middle of which there is a burial shaft leading down into the burial chamber. The reliefs and texts on the walls are Egyptian, while the style and clothing of the figures are both Egyptian and Greek.\(^9\)

The pronaos of the tomb is decorated with daily life scenes in a hybrid Greek/Egyptian style, while the walls of naos only carry religious scenes represented in traditional Egyptian style.\(^10\) Perhaps with the exception of the lower register which shows offering bearers in a mixed style of art.\(^11\) The pronaos conserved most of basic Egyptian artistic norms that kept the harmony of its whole image. Classical Greek dress and sometimes traditional Egyptian costume were shown. The Egyptian traditional subjects are shown as bull sacrifice, production of wine, metalwork and agricultural contexts that resembled Old Kingdom scenes. Greek style in the details of some scenes can be seen as the frontal poses and the turning and twisting poses of some figures.\(^12\)

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\(^{9}\) Arnold, D. 2003. 249.
\(^{10}\) Dodson, A. 2008. 295.
There are many studies focused on dress and fashion throughout ancient Egyptian time and the Graeco-Roman period. The Ancient Egyptians were extremely interested in fashion, and it seems evident from trends seen in tomb wall scenes where the costumes and styles of the upper classes were soon copied by the lower classes.  

**FABRICS OF CLOTHING**

The main fabric used by the Egyptians for clothing, sheets, towels, soft furnishings, sails, mummy bandages, and shrouds was linen. It was commonly made from a plant called flax, which was the most widely used cloth in ancient Egypt. Sheep’s wool, goat hair and fibers from the bark of palm trees were occasionally used to make fabrics. Wool was less frequently used and was more often made of sheep fleece than of goat hair, although the latter was not known. Wool production is attested at Lahun as well as at the workmen's village at Amarna. Examples of cotton have been found in Ptolemaic contexts, but cotton was commonly produced in Egypt.

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only from the Roman period onwards. Only occasional examples of imported silk have been found from the Ptolemaic period.\textsuperscript{15} Excavations have revealed loom emplacements in Thebes that confirm two- and three-dimensional representations of weaving workshops. The archaeologist Flinders Petrie also found a cloth dyeing workshop dating to the Graeco-Roman period near the temple of Athribis.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{DEVELOPMENT OF CLOTHING STYLE IN ANCIENT EGYPT}

Clothing often has a strong personal value, because it expresses the makings of one’s life, and also sometimes designates certain stages within life. Clothing, as a material representation of an individual’s identity, is often considered part or a representative of the person.\textsuperscript{17} Officeholders, especially the king and priests, had their own special garments. For the general population, clothing was simple, predominantly of linen, and probably white or off-white in color. The most common fabric of clothing for both women and men was linen. Because linen is very hard to dye, most clothes was off-white, so color was added with heavy beaded collars, jewelry and other accessories.\textsuperscript{18} Tomb art was probably meant to be interpreted on several levels. The most basic was for its literal depiction of daily life, scenes of harvest provide details about agriculture. Many details of Egyptian daily life are depicted in the tomb art.\textsuperscript{19}

As time goes on, more voluminous clothing began to appear in the Middle Kingdom. Flowing, elaborately pleated, and transparent robes for women and sometimes men are particular of the late 18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty and the Ramesside period. Decorated textiles also became more common in the New kingdom onwards. In the Roman period, Egypt became known for the manufacture of fine clothing.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Fahim, T. S. “Tunic for all segment of ancient Egyptian society Tunic for All Segments of Ancient Egyptian Society Tunic for all segment of ancient Egyptian society”. \textit{The 16th Conference of the Union of Arab Archaeologists: Studies on Arabic Nation Archaeology. Egypt. October. (2013): 247-70.}
  \item Wilkinson, T. 2005. 140.
\end{itemize}
MEN’S CLOTHES

The most ancient garment worn by men was a kilt that was made of a rectangular piece of linen cloth wrapped rather loosely around the hips, leaving the knees uncovered. As a rule, it was wrapped around the body from right to left so that the edge of the skirt would be in the front. The upper edge was tucked behind the tie or girdle, that held the kilt together, (figure 1). This garment was the standard male attire for all classes from peasants to royal class, though the quality of the linen and the exact style varied according to one’s purchasing power.\(^2^1\)

By the late 4\(^{th}\) Dynasty and early 5\(^{th}\) Dynasty, it became fashionable to wear the kilt longer and wider or to wear it with an inverted box pleat that appeared as an erect triangular front piece. Though styles changed over time, the simple kilt remained the standard garb for scribes, servants, and other minor figures.

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**Fig. 2:** Short under kilt, long over kilt and a sash\(^2^2\) in the tomb of Rekhmeria. (After, Davies, paintings from the Tomb of Rekhmere at Thebes, pl. XXII/1)

CLOTHING IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN PERIOD

After the death of Alexander the Great, Egypt became a part of the Ptolemaic Empire.\(^2^3\) A major change in the period was the large-scale

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\(^2^1\) Brewer, D. 2007.118.
\(^2^2\) Sash is a length of cloth usually worn around the waist, or upper part of the body
\(^2^3\) سليم حسن (2000).مَوْسَعَة مَصر القَدِيمَة,” الجزء الرابع عشر,” الإسكندر الأكبر، ويبداية عهد البطالمة. القاهرة. 60-45.
immigration of Greeks and other Hellenized groups into Egypt, forming a new elite. 

Clothing in ancient Rome generally comprised a short-sleeved or sleeveless, knee-length tunic for men and boys, and a longer, usually sleeved tunic for women and girls. On formal occasions, adult male citizens could wear a woolen toga, draped over their tunic. The toga was considered Rome’s ‘national costume’, but for day-to-day activities most Romans preferred more casual, practical and comfortable clothing; the tunic, in various forms, was the basic garment for all classes, both sexes and most occupations. It was usually made of linen, and was augmented as necessary with underwear, or with various kinds of cold-or-wet weather wear, such as knee-breeches for men, and cloaks, coats and hats. In colder parts of the empire, full length trousers were worn. Most urban Romans wore shoes, slippers, boots or sandals of various types; in the countryside, some wore clogs.

Most clothing was simple in structure and basic form, and its production required minimal cutting and tailoring, but all was produced by hand and every process required skill, knowledge and time. The manufacture and trade of clothing and the supply of its raw materials made an important contribution to Rome’s economy. Relative to the overall basic cost of living. Even simple clothing was expensive and was recycled many times down the social scale.

**TUNICS AND UNDERGARMENTS:**

The basic garment for both genders and all classes were the tunica (tunic). In its simplest form, the tunic was a single rectangle of woven fabric, originally woolen, but from the mid-republic onward, increasingly made from linen. It was sewn into a wide, sleeveless tubular shape and pinned around the shoulders like the chiton, a Greek version of the tunic. It is a long woolen tunic, to form openings for the neck and arms. Most working men wore knee-length, short-sleeved tunics, secured at the waist with a belt. Some traditionalists considered long sleeved tunics appropriate only for women, very long tunics for men as a sign of effeminacy, and short or unbelted tunics as marks of servility.

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27 (Tunic is a modern term, in ancient times it has been called as mss, tunica, chiton, dalmatic, etc. It is a body garment that covers at least the torso and part of the upper legs, has very little tailoring and is not gender specific. The tunic was a very basic garment, worn in Egypt throughout the centuries by men, women and children.)
28 Fahim, T. S. 2013. 247-70
Although essentially simple in basic design, tunics could also be luxurious in their fabrics, colors and detailing. Wool was the most used fiber in Roman clothing. The sheep of Tarentum were renowned for the quality of their wool, although the Romans ceased trying to optimize the quality of wool through crossbreeding. Naturally dark wool was used for the work garments subjected to dirt and stains.\(^29\)

**Garment Depictions in the Tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel**

The tomb of Petosiris is one of the few sources that attempts to show daily life in a relatively realistic way, as documented by Lefebvre, in which we see both craftsmen and fieldworkers and the upper (native Egyptian) class wearing Greek- and Egyptian-style dress. What is fascinating and eye-taking is the variety of types worn by men in this tomb ranging between simple kilts and heavy tunics:

**Type 1: Cloaks (Himation)**

A cloak (himation) pulled up over the head to cover the wearer when they were overwhelmed by emotion. Another type of cloaks was worn in winter, the middle and upper classes wore a heavy cloak extending from neck to ankle\(^30\), which could be wrapped around and folded or clasped in front. Depictions of such cloaks were known from early Dynastic to Ptolemaic times.\(^31\) It can be worn single, without being folded over; such might possibly be put on as the himation was in later time, one end being laid on the shoulder, so that the ass of material would then be drawn across the chest, and the end would be thrown over the shoulder towards the back. This garment could easily be drawn up so as to cover both arms if it is cold, and it might be worn over both shoulders like a shawl.\(^32\) Here in the next figures, we can see different representations of the cloak showing in different situations.

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Fig. 3: Petosiris in front of god Sokar (After, Cherpion, N., Corteggiani, J. P., & Gout, J. F. (2007). *Le tombeau de Pétosiris à Touna el-Gebel: relevé photographique*. Institut français d'archéologie orientale. Scene. 16)

Fig. 4: Djedthotioufankh, brother of Petosiris introduced by Horus and Maat in front of Osiris. Cloak in the figure as a long kilt with a strap33, (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 86b)

33 Strap is a simple length of cloth of varying widths and sizes. In general, a body strap is a narrow piece of cloth which was placed around the upper part of the body, usually one or both shoulders. It could be functional, ornamented or symbolic in nature. (Voglesang, 1993)
Fig. 5: Thotrehk son of Petosiris with a cloak (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 63)

Fig. 6: Djedthotioufankh in adoration to the 12 hours of night (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 86e)
Fig. 7: Djedthotioutioufank in adoration to deities (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 87d)

Fig. 8: Djedthotioufankh wearing a cloak while paying homage to his father (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 96)
Fig. 9: Petosiris and his wife receiving homage from his son Teos (after, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 71)

Fig. 10: Petosiris wear a cloak while he is playing the senet (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 68)

Fig. 11: Petosiris wear a cloak while he is supervising sowing (After, Lefebvre, 1923b: Pl. XIII = Cherpion & others 2007, scenes 65-77)
Fig. 12: Scene of the funeral procession (After, Cherpin & others 2007, scene 92)

Fig. 13: The family of the deceased in front of the tomb. They wear the cloak here and cover their heads to hide their sadness (After, Cherpin & others 2007, scene 86d)

Figure 13: Elaborate cloak with its left end wrapped around the left arm of the male figure (After, Cherpin & others 2007, scene 35)
Figure 15, (a)

Figure 15, (b)  Figure 15, (c)

Figure 15, a, b, and c: Refinement of pieces of gold. A cloak wrapped around with the end folded around the shoulder (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 36)

TYPE 2: THE CHITON

The Greek chiton consists of a rectangular piece of cloth folded in half vertically and belted at the waist that falls in Greek-style folds. As previously mentioned, it is a long woolen tunic was sewn into a wide, sleeveless tubular shape and pinned around the shoulder. This design with openings for the neck and shoulder help the workers in doing their works easily.

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35 Abrahams, E. B. 1964. 100-1.
Fig. 16: A long and medium robes with folds (chiton). (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 34)

Fig. 17: Men wearing the chiton while they are harvesting and making wine (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 56c)

Fig. 18: (1) A cloak wrapped like a shawl. (2) Brewers wearing chiton (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 56a)
Fig. 19: A farmer is wearing a chiton while threshing of wheat, the farmer in the middle of the scene is wearing a characteristic cone-shaped cap (pilos) (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 58d)

**TYPE 3; THE EXOMIS**

A Greek worker’s garment that was fastened over one shoulder, leaving the other arm free for physical labor. These Greek features appeared in most of the garments in the scene of the three smiths with their supervisor. The Greek feature appears in most of the garments worn by two out of three smiths and their supervisor wears Greek-styled chiton. The smiths in the extreme sides of the register wear a Greek garment possibly the exomis. The rhyton maker’s left leg is pushed forward to steady the vessel in his lap, pulls the fabric, which stretches between his legs in a manner taken from Greek representations. The bowl maker’s garment has clearly the Greek folds that can be seen on its back.³⁷

Fig. 20: (1) Goldsmiths The supervisor standing wear exomis, long pleated kilt. (2) A wrap around cloth with a simple sash (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 31)

TYPE 4

THE SIMPLE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN KILT.

Fig. 21: Men wearing kilt while pulling oxen (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 54)
Fig. 22: Neschou in front of Osiris and Isis wearing a high waist kilt (After, Cherpion & others 2007, scene 104)

Fig. 23: The transportation and stocking of jewelry (After, Lefebvre, 1923b, Pl. VIII = Cherpion & others 2007, scenes 33-36).

The scene in figures no. 23 contains the four different types of garments which have been mentioned in the tomb of Petosiris. It shows the transportation and stocking of jewelery, weighing, polishing and tuning of the metals. It has the Greek garments such as an exomis, worn leftmost polisher, and a cloak (himation) which is a long Greek over garment worn by the foreman. The lower part of this latter’s garment hangs in Greek-
inspired omega and zigzag folds. The register above shows the weighing of the manufactured vessels. Here again, the Greek garments are dominant character as the right-hand overseer wear a himation and the other a two-piece garment, with the upper one having a crenelated border. Three standing workers wear Greek chitons while the two other sitting workers wear tunics mostly as the Egyptian kilt.

CONCLUSIONS

Dress is not only a material, but also worn as much as an artifact. Ancient art and literature often provide ‘snapshots’ of this, showing garments in use, but detailed examination can sometimes tell us much more. Dress is as a cultural and social indicator; garment as aspects of gender and sexual presentation; different forms of evidence for dress; the evaluation of garments and clothing attitudes through them; fashion and status. Status, stage costume and the dress of specific groups; and clothing in daily life, in religious or ritualistic performances. Such aspects of clothing contribute to more than an understanding of life in the ancient world. Considering them deepens the appreciation of the many various roles dress plays in lives.

The tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel represents a fashion show for all community classes. In content, the decoration of the pronaos very closely followed that of the New kingdom and earlier tombs, with scenes of daily-life forming the majority of the decoration. However, the scenes were executed in a particular style that combined the Greek with the Egyptian, as can be seen in figure 18. A unique male headdress is depicted in the form of cone-shaped cap worn by a farmer while is thrashing of wheat. This scene is situated in the pronaos. The same style was worn by a male figure on a plate from Apulia in the louvre. The gay light blue color which is a Greek color that appeared for the first time in this tomb.

The Greek-style tunics are easily recognized by their shortness, horizontal slit neckline and bright colours, indicating that they were probably made from wool, which was far easier to dye than flax.

At the tomb of Petosiris, it seems that the adoption of Greek-style clothing was more context depended on than connected to status. Most of the garment portrayals were in frontal view, especially for the tomb owner and his workers. The costumes show a blend of both Egyptian and Greek. Both workers and supervisors wore clothes in a mthat gives them convenience during work. Children appeared simply dressed.

38 Zein, M. and Heragi, M. 2021. 151- 79
The male figures are dressed in Greek tunics and represented with curly hair, or partly bald especially for the worker’s class. Regarding hair styles, men were represented with their real short cut hair, but the elite and high officials were traditionally wearing different styles of wigs in accordance with the various occasions.

After the investigation of the tomb wall scenes, the paper detects three main types of garments which are commonly dressed by male figures in the tomb. These figures are of different social status including Petosiris, the tomb owner himself, priests and other working class. Additionally, the social rank and occupation are characterized by each type of dress code. The first type the cloak was used by the owners of the tomb and the high rank people. It can be worn single, without being folded over or put on as the himation and also as a shawl, while the second and third styles of Greek types of garments were mostly used by workers. The fourth type was another indication of the ancient Egyptian impact on the tomb regarding the style of architecture, art and dress code. The following table will show the different four types of depictions in the tomb of Petosiris.

Table 1: Types of male garments in the tomb of Petosiris

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure No.</th>
<th>Types of dress</th>
<th>Social statues</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Scene- Context</th>
<th>Location of the scene</th>
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<td>3-7</td>
<td>Cloak</td>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>High priest</td>
<td>Adoration positions</td>
<td>Naos</td>
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<td>8-9</td>
<td>Cloak</td>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>Homage</td>
<td>Pronaos</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
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<td>Elite</td>
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<td>Pronaos</td>
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<td>12-13</td>
<td>Cloak</td>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>Funeral procession</td>
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<td>14-16</td>
<td>Cloak</td>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Goldsmiths</td>
<td>Pranoas</td>
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<td>Workers</td>
<td>Farmers &amp; brewers</td>
<td>Pranoas</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>exomis</td>
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<td>Workers</td>
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<td>Farmers</td>
<td>Pranoas</td>
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</table>

Source: The table created by the researcher
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