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ANCIENT ROMAN MARBLE SHOULDERS FROM A PORTRAIT BUST OF A MAN DRESSED IN AN IMPERIAL TOGA

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A LATIN INSCRIPTION TO THE PEDESTAL 'TRE…. VSLID… DOMAM'

2ND - 3RD CENTURY A.D

SIZE: 48CM HIGH, 51CM WIDE, 27CM DEEP - 19 INS HIGH, 20 INS WIDE, 10¾ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

DERIVED FROM AN ANCIENT TRADITION OF MAKING FUNERARY EFFIGIES, PORTRAIT SCULPTURES WERE ONE OF THE GREATEST ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. EACH SCULPTURE WAS PLACED UPON TOGATED SHOULDERS OR TORSO WHICH WAS OFTEN REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR POSITION IN LIFE.

THE TOGA WAS THE DISTINCTIVE DRESS OF THE ROMAN CITIZEN WHEN APPEARING IN PUBLIC. ITS USE WAS FORBIDDEN TO EXILES AND TO FOREIGNERS. IT WAS INDISPENSABLE ON ALL OFFICIAL OCCASIONS EVEN IN IMPERIAL TIMES WHEN MORE CONVENIENT GARMENTS HAD BEEN ADOPTED FOR ORDINARY USE. IT CONSISTED OF A WHITE WOOLLEN CLOTH OF SEMI-CIRCULAR CUT ABOUT FIVE YARDS LONG BY FOUR WIDE, A CERTAIN PORTION OF WHICH WAS PRESSED INTO LONG NARROW PLAITS. THE BROAD FOLDS IN WHICH IT HUNG OVER WERE GATHERED TOGETHER ON THE LEFT SHOULDER AND THE PART WHICH CROSSED THE BREAST DIAGONALLY WAS DEEP ENOUGH TO SERVE AS A POCKET FOR SMALL ARTICLES. THE COLOUR OF THE TOGA AS WORN BY MEN WAS WHITE, A DARK BROWN OR BLACK COLOURED TOGA WAS ONLY WORN BY THE LOWER CLASSES OR IN TIME OF MOURNING. A PURPLE STRIPE WOVEN INTO

THE CLOTH IN IMPERIAL TIMES WAS THE DISTINCTIVE MARK OF THE EMPERORS AS WELL AS THE STATE PRIESTS WHEN ENGAGED IN PERFORMING THEIR FUNCTIONS. IT WAS KNOWN AS THE 'TOGA PRAETEXTA', AND ANOTHER GARMENT ADORNED WITH GOLDEN STARS WAS KNOWN AS THE 'TOGA PICTA' AND THIS WAS WORN BY MAGISTRATES GIVING PUBLIC GAMES, BY TRIUMPHANT VICTORIOUS GENERALS AND BY THE IMPERIAL EMPERORS ON FESTAL OCCASIONS.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTION

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