

## **A Collection of Some Unpublished Funerary Stelae in the Ismailia Museum**

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### **Abstract:**

The subject of this study is a group of limestone tombstones that were discovered through forced excavations during the Israeli occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, which was carried out by Moshe Dayan, the Israeli Defense Minister at that time. This happened without a scientific method and he was keen to keep it in a group of other possessions in a personal capacity until it came to being known by his name, but Egypt succeeded in recovering it and it is currently preserved in the Ismailia Museum. It is worth noting that the area of Tel Al-Khwainat area in which this group was discovered has not received scientific attention since then and is known only as Greek and Roman tombs.

The research deals with studying and analyzing a set of four tombstones that had not been previously published. Since they were recovered with the group of antiquities recovered from Israel at the end of December 1994, no researchers have studied them. Perhaps what gives special importance to this study is the fact that these tombstones are made of local material and have in their general artistic style what resembles the human body in its simplest form, which is a head and body in a rare style that has not yet been found.

The aim of the study is to identify the meaning and significance of depicting tombstones in a symbolic or primitive manner, by studying the relationship between a source in which these four evidences were found and their impact on the Christian pagan conflict during the era of persecution, wherever modern Christians fled to the desert.

The collection of artistic features of tombstones found at Tel Al-Khwainat in North Sinai provides a unique example among all other tombstones in Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman eras. These tombstones provide some of the data imposed by the nature of the place, its location, the material used in the industry, the inscriptions and writings as a field for analytical study, although it is not possible to have peer examples for comparison with them.

### **Keywords:**

Unpublished, Funerary ,Stelae