

PART OF A LARGER WHOLE:  
RECONTEXTUALIZING THE CHARLESTON MUMMY PORTRAIT

by

JORDAN ALEXIS DOPP

(Under the Direction of Mark Abbe)

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a female portrait painted on a wooden panel of unclear provenience from the corpus of over one thousand so-called Fayum mummy portraits created during the Roman period of Egypt (1<sup>st</sup>-mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE). The naturalistic, encaustic painting measures 36 x 16.2 cm, and depicts the woman wearing metropolitan clothing and jewelry in a three-quarter bust format. This thesis argues that the Charleston portrait dates from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE and likely originates from the Fayum basin, specifically either Ankyropolis or Hawara. The distinctive iconography of the laurel wreath suggests an intimate association with Isis, and further, suggests that the now-lost cartonnage was likely of the red-shroud type painted with Hellenic costume.

INDEX WORDS: Roman Egypt, Fayum portrait, mummy portrait, mummy cartonnage,  
ancient panel painting, cult of Isis

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### **Mummy Portraits and the Charleston Portrait**

This thesis examines a painted panel portrait of a woman from the Charleston Museum in South Carolina (fig. 1). One of over one thousand so-called Fayum mummy portraits, this panel painting was produced in the Roman period of Egypt (1<sup>st</sup>-mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE). Painted on a 36 x 16.2 cm wooden panel, the portrait depicts a woman in a bust format dressed in colorful clothing and jewelry. Archer M. Huntington, a wealthy art philanthropist and son of a railway industrialist, donated the painting to Charleston Museum in 1929 without provenience or additional documentation; it has previously not been thoroughly examined likely due to its isolated location.<sup>1</sup> This thesis first seeks to accurately determine the date of production of the portrait and to propose its probable origins as well as its larger decorative cartonnage program. The ancient receptions and meanings of the portrait will be examined within its historical and cultural contexts in light of recent scholarship.

Mummy portraits are images of men, women, and children painted in tempera, encaustic, and mixed media on either linen or wooden panels. The panel or linen paintings were wrapped with linen to embalmed bodies of the dead and were entombed, leading to their exceptional preservation.<sup>2</sup> Though the conventional name, “Fayum mummy portraits,” suggests that the paintings originated from the Fayum basin and was a small provincial phenomena, in fact,

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<sup>1</sup> Publication history: Thompson 1976, 5-6. Thompson 1974, 42. Parlasca 1997, N. 280, Fig. 5. Concurrent with this thesis, the portrait is being scientifically analyzed by Dr. Abbe at UGA as part of the APPEAR (Ancient Panel Portrait Examination, Analysis, and Research) project facilitated by the J. Paul Getty Museum. Scientific data on this portrait, as well as approximately 250 other portraits, will be reported on a public-access platform by the end of 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Borg 1995, 229. Walker 1997, 3.

portrait production spread throughout Egypt, as excavations in provincial capitals including Ankyropolis, Antinoopolis, and Philadelphia have also revealed portrait paintings. Men and women share relatively equal levels of production for the portraits, as about 50% of the corpus represent men and 40% represent women, suggesting the burial practice was not gender specific. Mummy portraits feature Hellenic costuming including chitons, himatia, crowns, jewelry, and metropolitan hairstyles.<sup>3</sup> These costuming elements and hairstyles help to date the portraits, and the highest rise in portrait production occurred during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. Most of the visages are youthful, with few depicting infancy or old age, and their largely homogenous physiognomic features reveal standardized cultural ideals of beauty including dark hair, bushy eyebrows, enlarged eyes, long noses, and high cheekbones. Most individuals are represented from the chest up in an undefined three-dimensional space with a plain gray-blue or solid gold-leaf background.

The paintings reflect Greco-Roman values in mimetic naturalism well represented in private portrait busts or funerary effigies discussed, for example, by Pliny in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, and could have been commissioned for public display or commemoration. Most of the portraits, however, were discovered wrapped with linen over the face of embalmed bodies in mummy cartonnages, and therefore served funerary functions in traditional Egyptian funerary ritual.<sup>4</sup> Mummies featuring portraits are called portrait mummies to distinguish them from other Roman-period examples. Often, no continuity of styles exists between the naturalistic painted portraits

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<sup>3</sup> Riggs 2005, 12-16.

<sup>4</sup> Scholars debate on the so-called “primary” function of the mummy portraits, specifically if they had an original display prior to wrapping (supporters include Parlasca 1997, 127, Uytterhoeven 2009, 46-55 and Schenke 2001, 284.) or if their primary function was in the funerary wrapping context (supporters including B. Borg 1997, 26-32, D. Montserrat 1997, 33-44, and C. Riggs 2005, 2-6). In most cases there is not enough extant evidence to determine if specific portraits were displayed outside of the portrait cartonnage. However, there are some examples, as in portraits painted directly onto stretched linen shrouds (Aline and her children), where scholars know the paintings were executed after death exclusively for the funerary ritual. Some portraits have been found in tombs in original frames. As the evidence is limited for prior displays, this paper will mostly be concerned with the mummified remains.



and the cartonnages, with most either wrapping the bodies in net-like, or honeycomb, casings or decorating the exterior with traditional pharaonic narratives. Some mummy cartonnages from Hawara and Ankyropolis, cities in the Fayum basin, depict the metropolitan clothing elements from the panels onto the cartonnage which establishes a visual continuity and relationship between the paintings and the cartonnages. Evidence of the original display of these mummies remains scant, as most of the Roman period tombs found at Hawara and Ankyropolis are recognized to be late-antique deposit sites.<sup>5</sup> It is, however, clear that the portraits were left exposed within the cartonnages, and thus their iconography likely played a vital role in the visual experience of the funerary mummies. The aesthetic and funerary relationship between the portraits and cartonnages were intimately linked, but our understanding of this remains significantly limited, as approximately 90% of the over one thousand portraits no longer survive with their larger mummies.<sup>6</sup>

### **Description and Condition**

The woman in the Charleston portrait actively turns to her right in a striking three-quarter pose, immediately engaging the audience (fig. 1). She is depicted with curled, dark-brown hair that is parted in the middle and pulls into a small, tightly plaited bun at the top of her head. Over her hair she wears a glittering, gold-leaf laurel wreath with a prominent emblem at center that aligns with the bridge of her nose. Thick, bushy eyebrows that form a unibrow frame her

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<sup>5</sup> Germer 1997, 80. Germer claims that mummies were kept in a special place, like a cubby-like cavity, until “the mummy ceased to be of interest to the family.” Recent discoveries at the necropolis Marina el-Alamein near Alexandria may reveal a primary display tomb grouping in a hypogeum (1<sup>st</sup> century CE) where bodies were inhumed in niches around a banqueting hall, perhaps in the ritual “Feasting of the Dead,” and 17 portrait mummies were discovered, one of which maintained its portrait. Daszewski 2008, 421-456. Ancient authors on Egyptian funerary customs, specifically in the context of feasting with the dead: Silius Italicus *Punica*, 13.475, Lucian *On Mourning*, 21, Cicero *Tusculan Disputations*, 1.108, and Diodorus Siculus *The Library of History*, 1.92.6. Family chapels and ancestor cult: Borg 2000, 622. Montserrat 1997, 33-44. Thompson, 1982, 24–27, 46–51;

<sup>6</sup> Corcoran 1995, 1-16. Walker 1997, 1-6.

enlarged, almond-shaped brown eyes that glance to her right with a gaze intensified by her heavy eye lids. Light skin-colored cheeks contrast with her deep red lips that have highlights of bright pink. She has a small, youthful face with a heart-shaped jaw-line and an indented chin with blemish-free, healthy skin of a light overall tone. The woman is depicted wearing a dark purple chiton with a golden clavus and a white himation, and pearl double-ball earrings and a pearl-and-emerald cloisonné necklace with gold-leaf. The flat background transitions from a dark gray on the right to a lighter gray, and her pose evokes a sculptural bust format by ending at her chest.

Like other contemporary portraits, the Charleston portrait was likely painted with a combination of tempera and encaustic techniques.<sup>7</sup> Tempera uses a binding agent, like egg yolk, mixed with minerals or organic pigments and usually creates more blended and flat brush strokes. Encaustic medium combines heated beeswax with minerals or organic pigment and is applied while hot to the surface where it dries quickly, leaving little time for blending on the panel. The artist used small, built-up brush strokes to create a nuanced coloring of the face, and fine, intricate lines to indicate wisps of curly hair and individual eyebrow hairs. Large, sweeping brush strokes create the shadows and highlights in her himation. These larger strokes leave a quick, sketch-like impression at the bottom of the panel.

Though the painted visual impact of the visage is mostly preserved, the panel is in poor condition. Three vertical fissures in the length of the panel along the wood grain are likely the result of the thin and flexible panel having been bound over the convex head of the mummified body. Bituminous embalming or resin material from the original linen wrappings is preserved on the right edge and the bottom fourth of the panel. Some portions of the panel, including the curved top edge, right and left sides, and bottom fourth were covered by linen which protected

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<sup>7</sup> Corcoran and Svoboda 2010, 34-37. Refer to research in the APPEAR project.

the panel from the elements. When the portrait was given to the Charleston museum, it was adhered to a modern, two centimeters-thick wooden board to help stabilize the cracked wood.<sup>8</sup> Many areas of the paint are flaking due to the deterioration of the binding agent in the pigment, and as a result the portrait has not recently been on display. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the portrait was displayed within an untreated glass and wood frame.<sup>9</sup>

### **State of the Scholarship**

Petro della Valle, an Italian explorer, introduced European audiences to mummy portraits in the 17<sup>th</sup> century after he found Roman period mummies for sale in Saqqara-Memphis.<sup>10</sup> Structured excavations, funded by the Egypt Exploration Function during British occupation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, lead to the discovery of more mummy portraits.<sup>11</sup> Theodore Graf, an amateur British Egyptologist on one such excavation, discovered the first cache of mummy portraits in Er-Rubayat in the 1880s, and held the first exhibition of mummy portraits in 1887 at the Egyptian Hall in London.<sup>12</sup> That year, Sir W. M. Flinders Petrie excavated sixty-five portrait mummies from Roman period tombs in Hawara, the necropolis of the Ptolemaic city Arsinoë.<sup>13</sup>

While Petrie was scientifically minded and recorded many of the tombs for the portraits, due to their heavily deteriorate condition he was able to principally preserve only panels during his two Hawara excavations (1887, 1910-11). Of Petrie's 146 excavated mummies, thirty bodies

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<sup>8</sup> Thompson 1974, 42.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Doxiadis 1995, 122-125. Bierbrier 1997, 23. Parlasca 1966, 18-22. Uytterhoeven 2009, 41.

<sup>11</sup> Fagan 2004, 221. MacDonald 2000, 69.

<sup>12</sup> Roberts 2007, 14-16.

<sup>13</sup> On Petrie's excavation practices: Fagan 2004, 221. MacDonald 2000, 69. Roberts 2007, 21. On Hawara: Uytterhoeven 2009, 44. Hawara was of interest to many archaeologists, including Petrie, because it was thought to be the location of the "Great Labyrinth" mentioned by Herodotus in *The Histories* (2.148).

were preserved, and the remaining portraits were removed.<sup>14</sup> Other excavators and grave robbers, encountering similar issues with the physical remains of the mummies, also removed most of the panels from their cartonnages. Many have suggested various theories of why the portraits were removed from their cartonnages, including deterioration of the linen and selling the carbon-rich bodies as fuel. Like his contemporaries, Petrie certainly valued the portraits due to their naturalistic representations of human features which aligned with contemporary western portrait aesthetics.<sup>15</sup> The portraits spread to many collections in Europe, the United States, and Egypt, and became isolated from their mummified remains. As a result, in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the portraits were valued for their ability to communicate “true personalities” determined by pseudo-scientific, prejudiced ideology, a practice largely rejected today.<sup>16</sup>

Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, mummy portrait research has flourished. Klaus Parlasca created the first comprehensive assembly of the corpus into a catalog (1969-2003), and Barbara Borg developed a now widely-accepted dating method for the portraits (1996). More recent scholarship has examined the extent of metropolitan influence in the costuming and hairstyles of

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<sup>14</sup> Petrie publications: *Hawara, Biahmu and Arinoe* 1889; *Kahun, Grob and Hawara* 1890; *Roman Portraits and Memphis* 1911; *Hawra Portfolio: Painting of the Roman Age* 1913. Roberts 2007, 29. “To my great regret I come to the conclusion that it would not be safe to travel the mummies with the portraits on them in most cases, come of the portraits are in a bad state...and none of them could be so carefully packed with a heavy mummy attached. Furthermore, for cleaning they must be removed. I must therefore cut through the wrappings and draw out all the portraits which can be replaced wheresoever they finally come to rest in a museum.”

<sup>15</sup> Petrie letter to Francis Galton: “I have the notion—Beside any special exhibition that we make of these—that it would be a grand joke to send in all the paintings I bring home to the winter exhibition of old masters at Burlington House. Most of them would go in readily for their art alone, apart from their history; and for their technical interest I should think a series of a dozen or more would be most welcome there. So I cut through the wrapping and drew out all the Portraits, which can be replaced wheresoever they finally come to rest in a museum.” Challis 2013, 108-109. Ancient portraits: Pliny *NH* 35.2: “Correct portraits of individuals were formerly transmitted to future ages by painting; but this has now completely fallen into desuetude...Thus it is that we possess the portraits of no living individuals, and leave behind us the pictures of our wealth, not of our persons...And indeed, it is my opinion, that nothing can be a greater proof of having achieved success in life, than a lasting desire on the part of one’s fellow men, to know what one’s features were.”

<sup>16</sup> Francis Galton, cousin to Charles Darwin and the friend and patron to which Petrie addresses this and several other letters, is the founder of “eugenics,” which initially began as a concept to improve humans through selective breeding. (See Challis 2013.) Often coupled with eugenics is the development of “race” as a concept, and the ability to determine intelligence and other dominant personality characteristics through physiognomic features, Arian features at the apex.

the portraits as well as the social identities of the portrait patrons and the funerary displays of the mummy cartonnages.<sup>17</sup>

As only 1-2% of all excavated Romano-Egyptian mummies feature the painted portraits, it appears that only wealthy patrons commissioned portrait mummies.<sup>18</sup> This is further evident in the use of expensive materials for their production, such as lake madder pigment, gold-leaf, and imported wood. Their metropolitan costuming also evokes luxury materials like fine silks, gems and pearls, and golden crowns. While the patronage was local, the ethnic background of these patrons could be culturally complex and diverse. As recent research has highlighted, the population of Roman Egypt was multicultural and included Ptolemaic Greeks, native Egyptians, and Roman citizens.<sup>19</sup> The chronologically limited production of these distinctive portraits no doubt stemmed from multiple influences. These may have included the contemporary mimetic naturalism of Roman portraits and Ptolemaic-Greek tradition of plaster mummy masks that were created from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE through the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. Inscriptions and craft practices indicate that Greek artisans painted the panels, and people of many ethnic backgrounds commissioned them.<sup>20</sup>

Scholarship on the mummy portraits was largely separated from the art historical study of Roman-period mummy cartonnages until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Only sixty-five extant mummy cartonnages preserve painted portraits, and of those only thirty-five have a secure provenience to originating from Hawara and Ankyropolis.<sup>21</sup> While the corpus is limited, contemporary scholars

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<sup>17</sup> On imperial coiffure, chronological development, and costuming see Bierbier 1997, 1-6, Borg 1995, 230, Corcoran 1995, Doxiadis 1995, 140, and Freccero 2000, 25. On original display context see Borg 1996, 26-32, Riggs 2005, 29-34, and Walker 1997, 15-16.

<sup>18</sup> Bartman 2001, 3. Borg 2000, 63-96. Borg 1995, 27. Corcoran 1995, 78. Doxiadis 1995, 140. Walker 1995, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Corcoran 1995, 78. Riggs 2005, 14-18.

<sup>20</sup> Leading portrait publications: Borg 1995, Borg 1996, Borg 2000, Corcoran 1995, Corcoran 1997, Corcoran 2010, Doxiadis 1995, Freccero 2000, Parlasca 1969-2003, Riggs 2005, Riggs 2015, Roberts 2007, Walker 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Number determined by analysis of portrait catalogs including Parlasca 1969-2003, Borg 1996, Walker 1995, and Freccero 2000.

including Marie Svoboda and Lorelei Corcoran (2010) have modeled practices for considering the aesthetic and funerary relationships between the panels and the decorations on mummy cartonnages. Their comprehensive case study aims to explore questions about the social identity, gender ideals, and possible religious affiliations.

If, as Borg has argued, portrait mummies were on display for public viewing, decorative and iconographic elaborations on the panels and cartonnages could signify their subjects' social status to human and divine audiences, reminding the viewers of the good deeds accomplished by the individual in life.<sup>22</sup> Recent research by Christina Riggs has redefined the painted panels as part of the larger decoration of the mummy cartonnage in connection with the desire for a beautiful burial (*E. ast nfrt*) to exalt the body in death.<sup>23</sup> Mummies of the Roman period, she argues, should be understood within the funerary ritual that included instructional iconography helped guide the deceased in the afterlife. In this way, Riggs has opened scholarship to understand the "portraits" not as naturalistic images, but as ideal, constructed, representations of beauty inseparable from the funerary cartonnage decorations. Current research increasingly combines visual analysis with scientific identification of pigment, binders, woods, and multispectral imaging revealing important insights about artistic production, cartonnage types, and provenience.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Borg 1997, 26-32.

<sup>23</sup> Riggs 2005, 2-15.

<sup>24</sup> APPEAR project 2013-2018.

## II. COSTUME AND THE BEAUTIFUL BURIAL

### Dating Mummy Portraits

The dating of the mummy portraits is a contested and ongoing issue.<sup>25</sup> It is generally thought that as in sculpted portraits, mummy portraits adopted and adapted metropolitan, fashionable hairstyles that are best known and dated by figures in the imperial court, and that this jewelry styles can also be dated using this method.<sup>26</sup> Outside of Roman metropolitan centers, like Alexandria, fashions can loosely be dated by reading the *Zeitgesicht* or “period-face” of the visage.<sup>27</sup> As Borg has convincingly argued, the private patrons of mummy portraits often had a fluid relationship between the adoption of metropolitan fashions and individual characterization, leading to a broader chronology in portrait mummies than the narrow imperial court.<sup>28</sup> Based on the abundance of metropolitan hairstyles seen in female mummy portraits, women modeled stylistic trends either in acceptance of current fashions or in deliberate retrograde modes.

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<sup>25</sup> Early excavators including Graf and Georg Ebers believed the portraits to be Hellenistic products dated to the 2nd-1st centuries BCE, while others including Petrie, Richard Graul, and C.C. Edgar argued they were Roman products mostly dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE. Heinrich Drerup in the 1930s examined individual portraits to determine date ranges to the Roman period, but his conclusions relied too heavily on coiffure types in a time when the private adoption of metropolitan styles was less defined. Klaus Parlasca, in 1969 through 2003, relied on Drerup for much of his dating, but his conclusions have been challenged by Hans Jucker and Borg. (Borg 1995, 229-233.) Scientific analysis, like wood sampling, can also help date the mummy portraits. But, in many cases, artists reused wood. Current researchers use several methods in tandem, including style, coiffure, and scientific analysis, to determine the most accurate dates. Select scholarship that uses imperial date classifications: Doxiadis 1995, Parlasca 1969-2003, Walker 1997. Scholars that use date ranges: Borg 1995, Corcoran 1995, Corcoran and Svoboda 2010, Freccero 2000.

<sup>26</sup> Walker 1997, 2. The majority of mummy portrait scholars classify coiffure styles using imperial period names, like the Hadrianic or Trajanic style, which is avoided in this assessment. While these hairstyles are to an extent reflective of these periods, classifying the portraits as “Hadrianic” creates a myopic view of the material and removes individual agency from the patrons of images.

<sup>27</sup> Fejfer 2008, 273.

<sup>28</sup> Borg 1995, 230. K. Welch argues that Roman late republic and early imperial period private portraiture in Pompeii reveals a fluidity of expression that is often not influenced by, or directly antagonistic to, the *Zeitgesicht* of contemporaneous imperial portraiture. (2007, 550-585.)

Although D.L. Thompson has previously dated the Charleston portrait to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, the hairstyle and jewelry suggest a narrower date range.<sup>29</sup> The woman's hairstyle is a modest example of a widespread style known in portraits of the empress Faustina the Elder (d. 140 CE) dated, with variations, from the 130s CE through the 180s CE (fig. 2). This hairstyle features waved hair which is parted in the middle and wraps into a tightly plaited bun on the top of the head. This style was preceded in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE by a more elaborate piling of intricate curls modeled well in portraits of empress Julia Titi (91 CE) (fig. 3).<sup>30</sup> At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, women began wearing wig and loop-like coiffures with low plaited buns as seen in portraits of empress Julia Domna (d. 217 CE) (fig. 4). The most often repeated hairstyle in female mummy portraits is the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE style, which likely reflects both a desire to communicate specific female virtues, like modesty, and a higher rate of production of panel portraits during that period.

Hairstyles are sometimes used to date jewelry styles, but such an approach often does not consider the largely fluid and standardized repertoire of Hellenic earrings and necklaces on female portraits. These Hellenic jewelry styles have comparable archaeological examples from across the Roman empire, so jewelry could be passed down and traded throughout generations, making them imprecise tools for dating (fig. 5). Three main types of earrings appear in female portraits with variations in form and shape: the ball, hoop, and bar or pendant styles (fig. 6). The woman in the Charleston portrait wears ball-earrings, which feature two large, stacked pearls on a studded gold wire (fig. 6.A).<sup>31</sup> This earring type emerged in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, and is

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<sup>29</sup> Thompson 1976, 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> Borg 1995, 230; Walker 1997, 2; Freccero 2000, 25.

<sup>31</sup> Freccero 2000, 24.



repeated throughout the production of mummy portraits; it did, however, lose popularity when the hoop and bar or pendant earrings emerged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE. Hoop-earrings are characterized by an S-shaped wire that is threaded with pearl and emerald beads, and the bar or pendant-earrings feature horizontal golden bars and dangling pearls and gems (figs. 6.B. and 6.C.). The adoption of the older earring style for the Charleston portrait could reflect a deliberate recalling of the traditional, less decorative fashion in order to match her pearl-and-emerald cloisonné necklace (fig. 1).

Necklace styles are less chronologically defined and occur in more diverse forms than earrings. Typically, the forms, sizes, and shapes of the earrings and necklaces compliment each other, and modest earrings, like the ball style, are often paired with small and subtle necklaces. Common necklace styles featured on female mummy portraits include woven gold chains, pearl-and-emerald cloisonné, and bejeweled pendants on gold wire (fig. 6.C.). The arresting pearl-and-emerald cloisonné necklace paired with large pearl earrings worn by the woman in the Charleston portrait is akin to the jewelry represented in two female portraits from the Berlin museum (figs. 7 and 8). The Berlin portraits can be dated to the early to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE as they both feature waved hair with middle parts and wide plaited buns with slight variations in hair textures. This hairstyle, though comparable to the Charleston portrait, features much wider plaits in the buns like those in portraits of the empress Sabina (d. 136 CE). This fluidity of coiffure-styles partnered with jewelry types demonstrates the difficulty in precisely dating the mummy portraits; nonetheless, the coiffure and jewelry types depicted in the Charleston portrait suggest a date range from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.

## Metropolitan Costuming: Clothing and Jewelry

The mummy portraits of men and women follow gendered conventions in costuming.<sup>32</sup> Most male mummy portraits wear elite regalia of white chitons with white or dark himatia (fig. 9.A.). The clothes were often decorated with gold-leaf clavi bands, which were broad stripes that potentially denoted senatorial status (fig. 9. B.). Other men are depicted as nude ephebes, or heroic youths (fig. 9.C.).<sup>33</sup> Women were also depicted wearing chitons and himatia, but, following gendered stylistic conventions,<sup>34</sup> their clothes are often more vibrantly colored in deep pink and purple hues and embellished with decorative gold thread (fig 10.).<sup>35</sup> Romano-Egyptian women with social mobility likely had the power to commission portraits, and sometimes added local embellishments on their chitons (fig. 11).<sup>36</sup> Following these trends, the woman in the Charleston portrait wears a dark purple chiton with a decorative gold-leaf band and a white himation (fig. 1). Women's costuming was further gendered and elevated by metropolitan jewelry which was largely absent in male portraits.

In Egyptian funerary culture, luxury materials like dyes, pearls, gems, and gold were not simply about social status and identity but were also central to securing a favorable position in the afterlife. While it is clear in the literary and archaeological sources that precious materials were worn in life, they are rarely featured on sculpted portraits, which makes their representation

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<sup>32</sup> Riggs 2005, 41-45.

<sup>33</sup> Corcoran and Svoboda 2010, 32.

<sup>34</sup> Pliny is very critical of decorations and extravagance especially for men. Unsurprisingly, the only time elaborate costuming is mentioned is with a level of disdain. While the literary evidence does not often match one-to-one to provincial archaeological records, in this case it is striking that men do not wear either darkly dyed fabrics or types of jewelry in the mummy portraits, suggesting Pliny's observations about expectations in costuming are accurate. Pliny, *HN*, 9: 60. Pliny, *HN*, 33: 29.

<sup>35</sup> Borg 2000, 72. Freccero 2000, 23. Walker 1997, 3. Walker has argued that while the outer garments display ties with Roman metropolitan identity, undergarments advertised provincial identities through decorative necklines.

<sup>36</sup> Dillon 2006, 7-10. Dillon details how female portraiture was much more idealized than male due to gendered expectations of men and woman in the Greek world. Capponi 2011, 12-17, 42-51. Capponi details women's status in Roman Egypt as well as the level and type of education offered to women. In the Roman period of Egypt, women commissioned many the mummy portraits, and likely had some agency in their mode of representation.

on most female mummy portraits an intriguing phenomenon perhaps tied to gender and funerary practices.<sup>37</sup> Communicating the deceased's physical identity after death was essential for passage into the afterlife, as deities, like Isis, provided gender-specific protection to the dead.<sup>38</sup> The costuming of the Charleston portrait including the metropolitan clothing and embellished jewelry thus aligns with larger trends within the portrait corpus and arguably reveal the desire for a beautiful burial.

The colorful metropolitan clothes and shimmering jewelry of the Charleston portrait present an elite woman, in luxurious contemporary fashion. But could the evocation and color of these materials serve apotropaic and symbolic functions as well? Materials represented on the panels such as purple dye, pearls, emeralds, and gold were valued for both their precious and protective properties.<sup>39</sup> In Roman culture, purple dye was a highly valued signifier of elite societal status,<sup>40</sup> but in Egyptians believed that red, closely associated with purple, denoted life and symbolized the sun-god Re.<sup>41</sup> The ancients valued pearls for their purity and pharaonic ritual functions,<sup>42</sup> and associated pearls with the beautiful Cleopatra who allegedly consumed the two largest and most expensive pearls in antiquity.<sup>43</sup> In both Roman and Egyptian cultures, emeralds and gold were treasured for their beautifying and healing properties, and in pharaonic traditions

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<sup>37</sup> See fig. 10 for jewelry examples with precious materials worn in life.

<sup>38</sup> Borg 2000, 63-96. Riggs 2005, 41. Smith 2009, 8.

<sup>39</sup> On Roman luxurious materials and ancient craft: Brown 1976, 53-61. and Lapatin 2015, 1-5, 182-184. On Egyptian jewelry and luxury materials: Wilkinson 2001, 200-210.

<sup>40</sup> Pliny, *HN*, 9: 60. About purple dye, Pliny says, "The official rods and axes of Rome clear a path, and it also marks the honorable estate of boyhood; it distinguishes the senate from the knighthood, it is called in to secure the favor of the gods; and it adds radiance to ever garment, while in a triumphal robe it is blended with gold. Consequently, even the mad lust for the purple may be excused..."

<sup>41</sup> Corcoran 2010, 76. Pinch 2001, 182.

<sup>42</sup> Seidel 2002, 109-110. Pearls were used to decorate mummy cartonnages at least as far back as the 11th dynasty

<sup>43</sup> For more on Cleopatra's pearls, see Pliny, *HN*, 4:58, 9: 54. "Their whole value lies in their brilliance, size, roundness, smoothness, and weight, qualities of such rarity that no two pearls are found that are exactly alike: this is doubtless the reason why Roman luxury has given them the name of 'unique gems.'

these precious materials were used as amulets wrapped with the dead.<sup>44</sup> Egyptians associated gold with the solar deity Horus, son of Osiris and Isis, who often appears as a falcon in gold-leaf on mummy cartonnages.<sup>45</sup> The flesh of Egyptian deities was thought to be golden, and some mummy portraits feature gold-leaf on areas of agency like the lips and hands suggesting a direct emulation of the deities to call upon their support into the afterlife (fig. 12).<sup>46</sup>

In short, then, while the metropolitan appearance of the costuming signifies an adoption of Roman styles and materials, the adaption of the objects into the Egyptian funerary ritual suggests more nuanced connotations beyond elite stylization. Prior to the Roman period, for example, embalmers would place amulets and jewelry on the mummified bodies of the dead which were then wrapped and entombed. Did the painted representation of jewelry on female mummy portraits replace the actual goods to prevent grave robbing and desecration of the body? The shift could also denote a new funerary ritual that reflected the growing desire for the exterior beauty of the cartonnage which was also certainly communicated through the elevated metropolitan clothing.

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<sup>44</sup> On emeralds: Pliny, *HN*, 16: 37. Pliny, *HN*, 33: 25. Meadows 1945, 51. On gold: Lapatin 2015, 1-3. Bartman 2001, 3. Pliny, *HN*, 35.2. Pliny, *HN*, 9.60.

<sup>45</sup> Wilkinson 2003, 201. Horus's epithet is the "Golden Horus" and included a divine falcon and the hieroglyphic for gold. Horus in falcon-form is often depicted in gold-leaf or stucco on mummy cartonnages in the Roman period

<sup>46</sup> Riggs 2005, 52.

#### IV. CULT IDENTITY: ISIS ATTRIBUTES AND THE CHARLESTON PORTRAIT

The woman in the Charleston portrait wears a rare, gold-leaf laurel wreath with a prominent and highly distinctive centerpiece. Approximately one fourth of male, female, and child portraits depict wreaths on the panels, but some wreaths were added in gold-leaf on the exterior of the mummy cartonnage (fig. 13).<sup>47</sup> Such wreaths likely had other multilayered and nuanced meanings depending on the wearer. Ephebes, for example, were awarded laurel wreaths, and cult initiates wore wreaths that symbolized associations with deities like Serapis (figs. 14 and 15).<sup>48</sup> Crowns or wreaths could also communicate a broad range of honorific costuming worn in life (see composite range, fig. 16). The abundance of wreaths likely represent the “crown of justification,” discussed in the *Book of the Dead*, which was awarded by Osiris to the deceased during their passage into the afterlife. As Osiris awarded the crown to the deceased’s ka after death in the Hall of Judgement, depictions of crowns likely functioned as symbolic appeals to the gods on behalf of the deceased.<sup>49</sup> Only forty-three of more than three hundred forty-three mummy portraits of women wear gold-leaf wreaths, and of those, only four feature a centerpiece akin to the one seen in the gilded headpiece of the Charleston portrait (fig. 17).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Corcoran 2010, 32.

<sup>48</sup> Montserrat 1993, 215-225. Montserrat believes Corcoran and Svoboda’s argument considers the meaning of every crown in the mummy portraits as ubiquitous which does not allow for specific interpretations on a case by case basis. His case argues that the gold-leaf wreaths on youthful males could signify their status as ephebes. Pliny, *HN* 21: 4; Here, Pliny notes the highest crown awarded was the crown of grass and that golden crowns were worn during his time. While Pliny is highly critical of the wearing of elaborate jewelry, especially by men as Pliny believed it to be effeminate, he is silent on funerary or ritualistic importance of wreaths. On Serapis priest types: Doxiadis, 1995, 48. Parlasca identifiers for images: leafy crowns: I.3.12, I.27.114, I.55.222, II.82.337, II.90.373, II.102.412; stylistic headdress: I.17.69, I.17.70, I.18.71.

<sup>49</sup> Kemp 2008, 1-22. Corcoran 2010, 32. When the deceased’s ka entered the Hall of Judgement, her heart was weighed against a feather. If the feather was heavier, she was awarded the crown of justification.

<sup>50</sup> See Parlasca: I.24.101, I.25.107, IV.162.711, IV.197.989.

Based on hairstyles, the four portraits with gold-leaf laurel wreath emblems can be dated to the early to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE making them contemporaneous with the Charleston portrait. One portrait at the Cairo museum has secure provenience to Ankyropolis and preserves its full red-shroud mummy cartonnage (fig. 17.A.).<sup>51</sup> Another partially preserved, red-shroud portrait mummy known as Isidora from the Getty museum has suggested provenience to Ankyropolis,<sup>52</sup> as do the two other portraits; one is preserved in a partial honeycomb casing in a private collection<sup>53</sup> while the other, at the Baltimore Walters Art Gallery, does not preserve its cartonnage (fig. 17. B. C. D.).<sup>54</sup> Though the headdresses of these portraits have subtle variations, the emblems likely symbolize similar funerary purposes, and may be site specific to Ankyropolis.

The interpretation of the Charleston portrait and comparative gold-leaf wreaths is ambiguous. Are they honorific, ritual, or biographical? Given the desire to maintain one's gender identity in death and present a beautiful burial for the afterlife, the wreaths may emulate the headdress of Isis, either the stepped-crown hieroglyphic or the serpent-and-bull uraeus, and may identify their subjects as cult initiates. Isis was a cosmopolitan goddess, who, with her partner Serapis imagined as the new Osiris, was worshipped throughout the Roman empire regardless of

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<sup>51</sup> Select publication history: Parlasca 1969-2003, 1: 54, 4: 106. Corcoran 2010, 78. Grenfell and Hunt excavation of Ankyropolis 1903.

<sup>52</sup> Select publication history: Thompson 1982, 32-33, 64. Doxiadis 1995, 164, 218. Corcoran 2010, 15, 35, 78. Corcoran 1995, 18, 40, 43-44. Borg 1996. Walker 2000, 60. Parlasca 2003, VI: 162, 2. Corcoran 1986, in a review of Thompson 1982, suggests Isidora is from Ankyropolis. Doxiadis 1995 also suggests provenience to el-Hibeh.

<sup>53</sup> Parlasca 2003, IVL 162.711. This portrait was acquired by a private collection in Paris in 1993. Petrie suggests the portrait is from Ankyropolis.

<sup>54</sup> Parlasca 1969, I: 25.107. This portrait was acquired in 1912 with two other portraits at the Walters Art Museum, one of which is proposed by the museum to be from Antinoopolis due to its panel shape. The early acquisition date could narrow the probable provenience, as the portrait was likely looted from an archaeological site during Petrie's 1889 or 1911 Hawara excavations, or the Grenfell and Hunt 1903 Ankyropolis excavations. Picton 2007, 295-305. Picton demonstrates, none of the "missing" cartonnages or portraits of the 146 excavated by Petrie are women, meaning it is unlikely that this portrait was excavated during the Petrie excavations (though it still could have been looted there). I propose here, therefore, that this portrait is likely from Ankyropolis.

ethnic and cultural identities. Because Isis was the first embalmer and granted immortality in the afterlife, she was an appropriate goddess for women to emulate in mummification.<sup>55</sup>

Though no extant literary evidence from the Roman period describes Isis, conventional Isis attributes include elaborate headdresses like the uraeus, red botanical wreaths, leafy sprigs, and the “Isis knot,” or gathering of fabric near the chest of the figure as in a marble example at the Louvre (fig. 18).<sup>56</sup> A panel painting of the goddess at the Getty, likely a votive diptych with Serapis, features these characteristics and dates to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE (figs. 19 and 20).<sup>57</sup> Like the mummy portraits, Isis wears metropolitan clothing including a light blue-green chiton, a white himation, gold earrings, and an emerald cloisonné necklace. She wears a traditional, pharaonic broad collar necklace, which is a feature often executed in stucco and gold-leaf on Roman mummy cartonnages, like Artemidorus at the British museum (fig. 13).<sup>58</sup> A contemporaneous panel painting that likely represents Isis at the Assiut College Museum in Egypt features the same uraeus headdress and attributes, and wears a mixture of Hellenic metropolitan and pharaonic jewelry including an ibis necklace (fig. 21).<sup>59</sup> These panel paintings provide examples of the kinds of Isis iconography that likely influenced the gold-leaf laurel wreath of the Charleston portrait.

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<sup>55</sup> Smith 2009, 6-27. Riggs 2005, 24-27. After the god Seth ripped apart his brother Osiris to overthrow him, Isis, Osiris’s sister-wife, gathered the dispersed body parts, then embalmed and wrapped them, thus restoring and immortalizing Osiris in death as the king of the afterlife. This story serves as the mythological origin of traditional pharaonic mummification practices

<sup>56</sup> A *Book of the Dead* text from the Middle Kingdom describes how priests and priestesses dressed in the costume of funerary gods like Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys while performing ritual rites. Two women, dressed as Isis and Nephthys who were of “pure body” would remove the hair from their bodies and adorn a wig, carry a tambourine, and inscribe the goddesses’ names on their arms. Willems 2014, 182-191. LIMC 1981.

<sup>57</sup> Select publication history: Parlasca 1977, II: 405.100, Thompson 1982, 46-51. Walker 2000, 21. Mathews 2016, 110. Corcoran proposes that the “doors” could be a triptych but could also be doors to a wooden shrine (1995). Parlasca argues that the panels might be doors of a *naiskos* or shrine for carrying a model of a god (2000).

<sup>58</sup> Wilkinson 1971, 30-33, 52, 65-69, 108-13, 152, 173-5, 189-90, 194.

<sup>59</sup> Mathews 2016, 103-105. The ibis, a sacred animal in Egypt that assisted Isis in the Hall of Judgement and appears on some portrait mummy cartonnages, is recognizable in its long legs and rounded body. (Corcoran 2010, 25, 69.)

As the Isis/Serapis diptych demonstrates, Isis was rarely depicted in isolation from her cult partner—Serapis. Several male mummy portraits have been identified as Serapis priests because they wear headbands with star-shaped centerpieces modeled on the headdress of the god and emulate his unique coiffure style in the hair and beard (figs. 15, 22, and 23).<sup>60</sup> One example dated to the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE at the Fitzwilliam museum in Cambridge was excavated from Ankyropolis in the same tomb as the Cairo portrait (fig. 24).<sup>61</sup> Both are wrapped in red-shroud mummy cartonnages, but the male features schematic scenes of traditional pharaonic religious motifs while the woman features a continuation of the clothing from the panel onto the cartonnage. Three other female red-shroud mummies, one of which is the partially preserved Isidora portrait, continue clothing elements in a style, based on extant evidence, exclusive to women (fig. 25).<sup>62</sup> The fully preserved cartonnages also show the women holding the red botanical crown and leafy sprigs of Isis in the right and left hands, further connecting these images to the cult (fig. 25. A. B. and C.). Juxtaposed next to each other, these portrait mummies model a representative narrative for other potential priests and priestesses like the Charleston portrait.

So, how ought we interpret these distinctive crowns? Certainly, the portrait panels represented with gold-leaf laurel wreaths with centerpiece emblems like the Charleston portrait incorporate traditional, pharaonic imagery on the largely metropolitan-styled paintings for ritual

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<sup>60</sup> Parlasca inventory for male portraits: I.14.53, I.14.54, I.37.155, I.41.171, I.42.177, I.51.206, II.92.381, II.116.480, IV.1.681. Doxiadis would disagree with identifying any man as a Serapis priest except (I.51.206). Select bibliography: Borg 1996, 78, 112, 166, 175; Corcoran 1995, 71-72; Doxiadis, 1995, 48; Walker 1997; Parlasca 1969, I: 206, 51.

<sup>61</sup> Select bibliography: Corcoran 2010, 14-21. Strudwick 2016, 240-241. Vassilika 1995, 134.

<sup>62</sup> Corcoran 2010, 78. Borg 1996, 129. Corcoran and Svoboda give the cautious caveat that more evidence may be discovered to disprove the hypothesis that the red-shroud portrait mummy type with clothing elements continued onto the cartonnage was exclusive to women. See Corcoran 2010, 78-84 for a technical and visual analysis on these portrait mummies. The Hildesheim portrait has an area of loss in the center of the gold-leaf crown; however, it is probable this portrait also featured a similar centerpiece based on the similarities to the other portraits.



purpose of a beautiful burial. But the differences in the types of emblems worn by women and men, and the rarity of emblematic wreaths, suggest more nuanced functions in their depictions. The specificity of the iconography suggests the wreaths signify priestesses of the cult of Isis as has been proposed for the so-called Serapis priests. Nonetheless, the Charleston portrait remains a rare example of a woman wearing a gold-leaf laurel wreath, and likely suggests association with the Isis cult. Further research of papyri from Ankyropolis, Hawara, and the larger Fayum may elucidate and add to our understanding of this evidently chronological and site-specific iconography.

## V. EVIDENCE FOR THE RED-SHROUD CARTONNAGE

While much is now known thanks to scientific analysis of mummified remains about the process and methods of mummification, less is known about the mummies' ritual or funerary functions.<sup>63</sup> Embalming practices declined during the Roman period, as evidenced in broken bones caused by tight wrappings and the haphazard extraction of internal organs.<sup>64</sup> The focus of mummification shifted from preservation of the physical body through exact embalming processes to the elevated presentation of the exterior body through decoration on the cartonnage and portrait. These decorative cartonnages manifest in three ways unique to the Roman period: the honeycomb pattern, the painted red-shroud, and the stucco casing, and some cartonnages combine several styles (fig. 26).<sup>65</sup> Based on the gold-leaf wreath comparisons and the condition and shape of the panel, the Charleston mummy portrait was probably wrapped in the red-shroud style decorated with costuming elements like the Cairo and Hildesheim mummies (fig. 25).

The linen red-shroud portrait mummies emerged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE in Hawara and Ankyropolis and comprise about a third of the extant corpus.<sup>66</sup> In its current condition, the Charleston portrait panel reveals three main elements that indicate a probable red-shroud wrapping type: its shape, resin remains, and surface condition (fig. 1). The panel shape aligns with the round-top panels from Hawara where several red-shroud mummies have been

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<sup>63</sup> Mummification: Pliny, *HN*, 11.70. Scholars on issues of unwrapping Egyptian mummies: Riggs 2015, 7-30.; Fagan 2004, 145-154. On mummification embalming practices: Taylor 2011, 24-59; Gessler-Löhr 2012, 664-683, David 2008, 4-10.

<sup>64</sup> Walker 1997, 13. Germer 1997, 82. Taylor 2011, 24-59. Gessler-Löhr 2012 664-683.

<sup>65</sup> Corcoran 1995, 7; Corcoran and Svoboda 2010, 20.

<sup>66</sup> Corcoran 1995, 11, 50-51. Pliny, *HN*, 33.36.111-119. The red-lead pigment that colors the shroud was first introduced into Egypt in the Roman period, and has dual curative and preservative properties.

excavated.<sup>67</sup> The ancient resin on the bottom of the panel, which acted as an adhesive for the linen bands that secured the painting to the mummy's head, forms a distinctive, rectangular shape. Ritual body handlers/wrappers likely secured the Charleston portrait to the head with two, diagonal linen bands, then applied resin to the body to attach the next layer of linen, possibly the shroud, as seen in the Herakleides portrait mummy (fig. 28). Because the portraits were intentionally left exposed and visible within the cartonnage, their framing is an important indication of wrapping style. In this case, the Charleston portrait has an oval-shaped frame consistent with the red-shroud cartonnage type (fig. 29). Based on this analysis, the Charleston portrait likely originates from the Fayum basin, more specifically, Ankyropolis or Hawara.

If the Charleston portrait was contained within a red-shroud cartonnage, what did it look like? Extant examples discussed in terms of Isis iconography wear full length purple himatia and chitons with decorative black clavi outlined in gold-leaf (fig. 25). Their arms are exposed, and they hold the red-botanical crown and leafy springs of Isis in each hand. More costuming embellishments, like gold-leaf decorative shapes on the hems of the himatia as well as bracelets and rings are as elevating as the precious and apotropaic materials in the portrait. While their heads and bodies are rendered to occupy dimensional space, their feet are depicted aurally at the bottom of the cartonnage. While many of these elements were likely included on the Charleston portrait's cartonnage, some elements, like the white himation, were certainly different. While no other extant examples of portrait mummies depict white himatia, some female funerary shrouds reveal similar costuming (fig. 27). Though the Charleston portrait will never be reunited with her cartonnage, her wholistic appearance can be envisioned through these comparisons.

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<sup>67</sup> Corcoran 2010, 14.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has argued that the Charleston portrait from Egypt of unclear provenience can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE and may represent a member or priestess of the cult of Isis based on its distinctive wreath. Examples with secure provenience to Hawara and Ankyropolis suggest that the larger cartonnage may be reconstructed as the red shroud type with a visual relationship in its beautiful metropolitan clothing and jewelry over the whole. While D.L. Thompson proposed in the 1970s that this portrait was from Hawara, his assertion was largely founded on the shape of the panel and lacked in-depth visual analysis.<sup>68</sup> Based on this analysis, Hawara remains a likely candidate for the origins of the Charleston portrait, but Ankyropolis has emerged as another, if not more viable, place of origin.

The Charleston portrait's gold-leaf laurel wreath with an emblematic centerpiece distinguishes it within corpus of over one thousand portraits. Why does this portrait feature such an element, and how did it relate to the otherwise standardized representation? As early as Petrie's excavations, questions were asked about the cultural significance of similar distinctive wreaths on male portraits that have been commonly recognized as emblems of Serapis, and those who wear them as priests. Such an interpretation applies to female representations, including the Charleston portrait, that communicated intimate associations with the cult of Isis through wreath iconography. This thesis has explored the Charleston portrait as a case study to interpreting this element as part of a larger whole that might allow us to recontextualize the mummy portraits in their cultural and historical environments.

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<sup>68</sup> Thompson 1976, 5-6.

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## IMAGES



Fig. 1.A. Detail, Charleston portrait gold-leaf wreath.

Fig.1. Mummy portrait of a woman with a gold-leaf wreath, encaustic on panel, 38 x 16.2 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, The Charleston Museum 32.98.46.

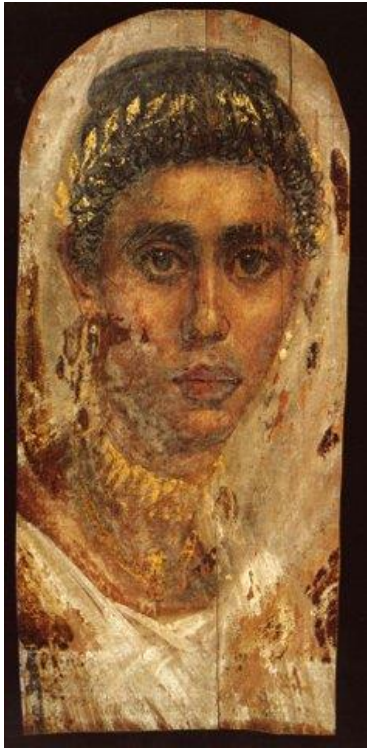


Fig. 2. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel, 38 x 17 cm, mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Saqqara, British Museum EA29772.

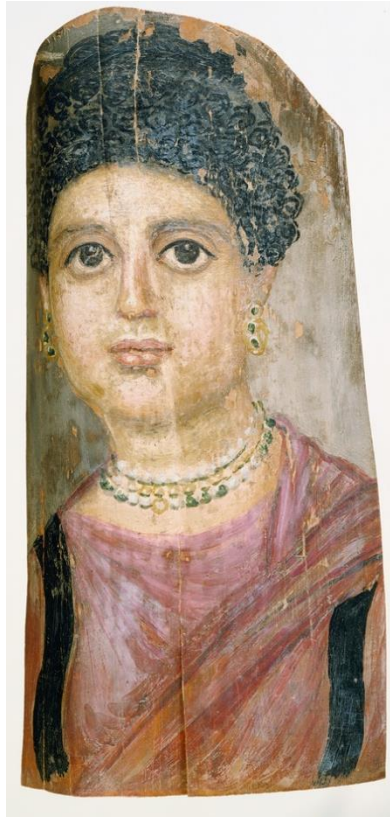


Fig. 3. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel, 39 x 15.5 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, er-Rubayat, Berlin State Museum 31161/11.

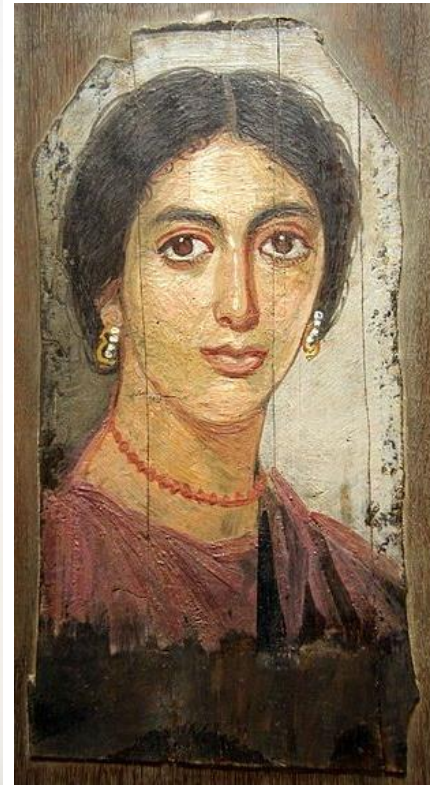
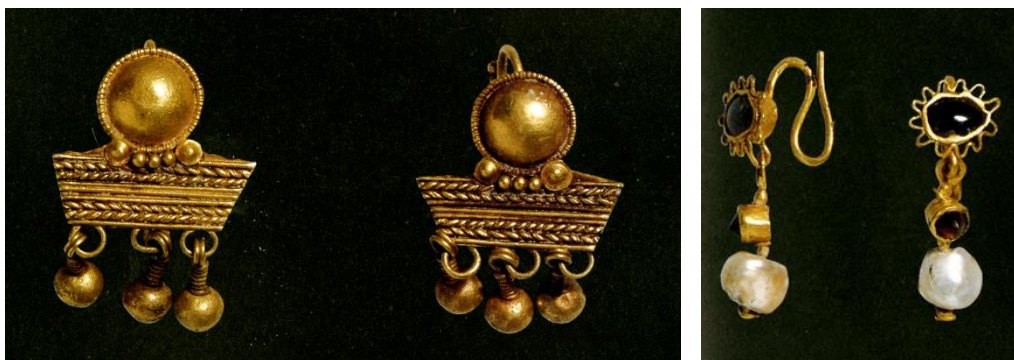


Fig. 4. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel, 34 x 17 cm, 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, acquired in 1912 unknown provenance, Private collection of William van Horne, Montreal.





A

B



C



D

Fig. 5. Examples of Earrings and Necklaces

From *Bilder aus dem Wüstensand: Mumienportraits aus dem Ägyptischen Museum Kairo*, 1999.

A. Gold earrings demonstrating the ball-earring style, 1.6 cm, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience (Egypt?) Antikensammlung Berlin VII 983.

B. Gold, pearl, sapphire, and Ruby combination ball/loop-earring style, 2.7 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience (Egypt), Antikensammlung Berlin VII b 444/445

C. Gold and granite chain necklace, l: 40 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Antikensammlung Berlin VII b 332.

D. Gold, emerald, and granite chain necklace, l: 38 cm, 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience,



Fig. 6. Common Earring Styles on Female Mummy Portraits

A. Mummy portrait of a woman with ball-earrings, encaustic on panel, 38 x 22.3 cm, mid-1<sup>st</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Metropolitan Museum of Art 2013.438.

B. Mummy portrait of a woman with loop-earrings, encaustic on limewood, 34 x 18.4 cm, 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Metropolitan Museum of Art 09.181.5.

C. Mummy portrait of a woman with bar-pendant earrings, encaustic on panel, 1<sup>st</sup> half 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Hawara, Royal Scottish Museum 1951.160.

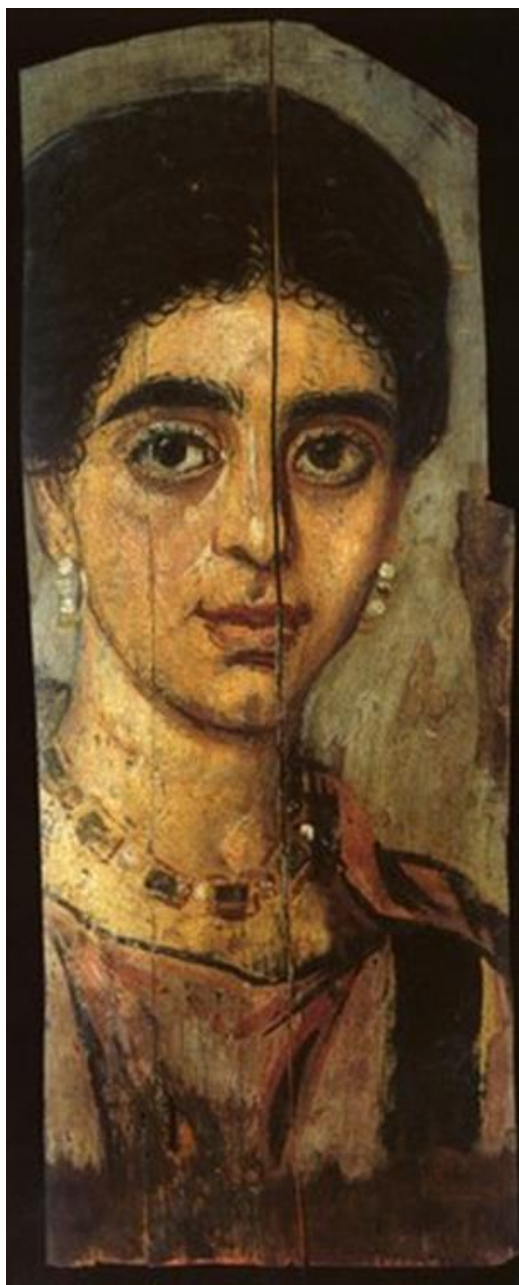


Fig. 7. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel, 39 x 15.5 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, er-Rubayat, Berlin State Museum 31161/11.

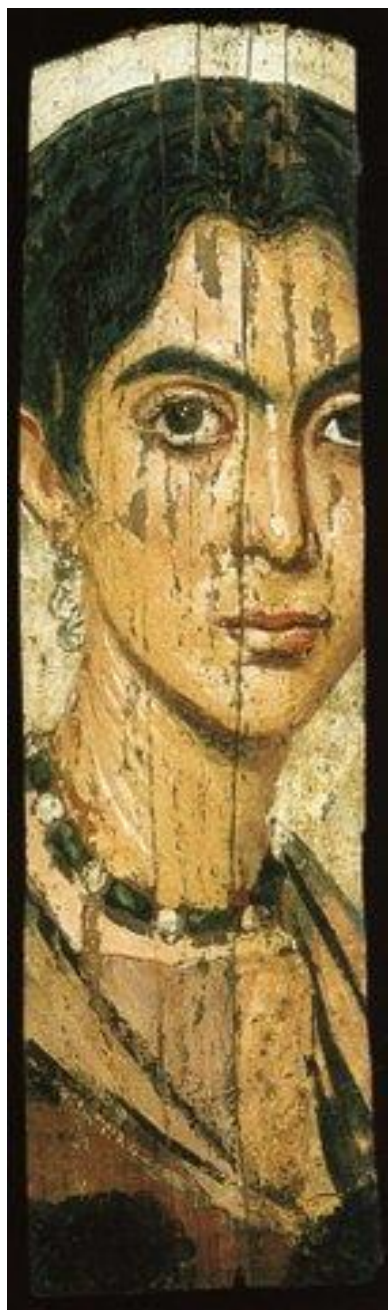


Fig. 8. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel, 39.5 x 11 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, er-Rubayat, Berlin State Museum 31161/12.



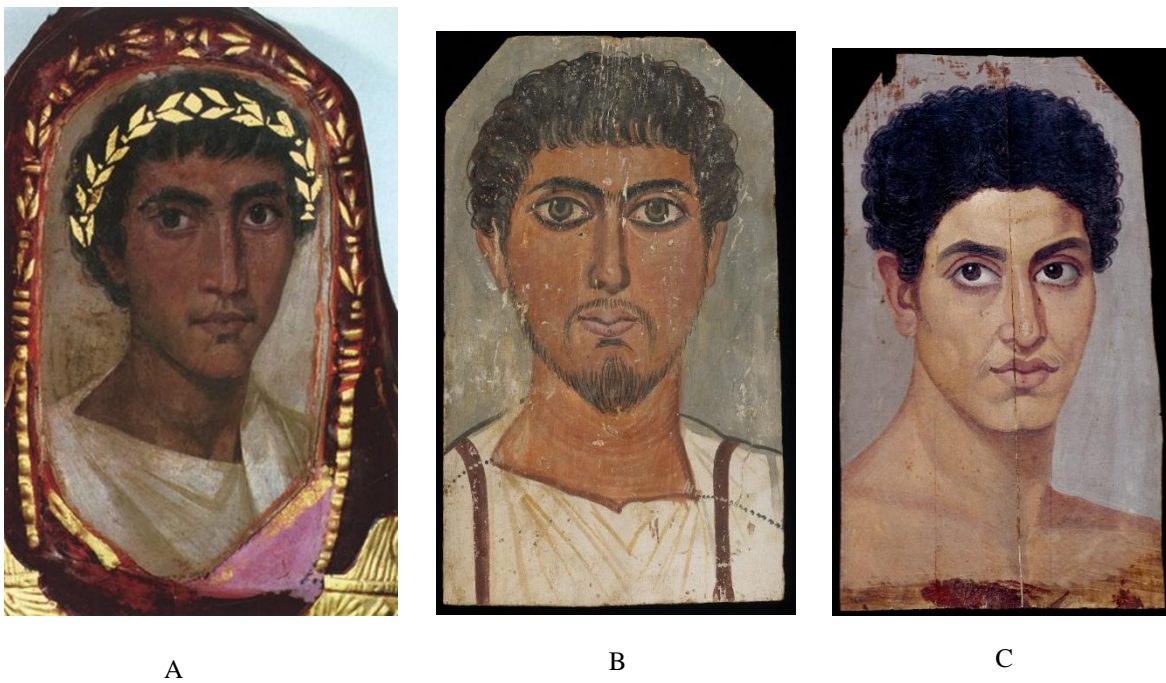


Fig. 9. Male Costuming Types

A. Mummy cartonnage and portrait of a man wearing a white chiton and himation, Artemidorus, linen, encaustic on panel, human remains, stucco, and gold-leaf, l: 171 cm, early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Hawara, British Museum EA21810.

B. Mummy portrait of a man with clavi, tempera on oak, 30.2x18 cm, 2nd century CE, er-Rubayat, British Museum EA63397.

C. Mummy portrait of an ephebate, encaustic on limewood, 35.8 x 20.75 cm, c. 80-120 CE, Hawara, British Museum EA74711.

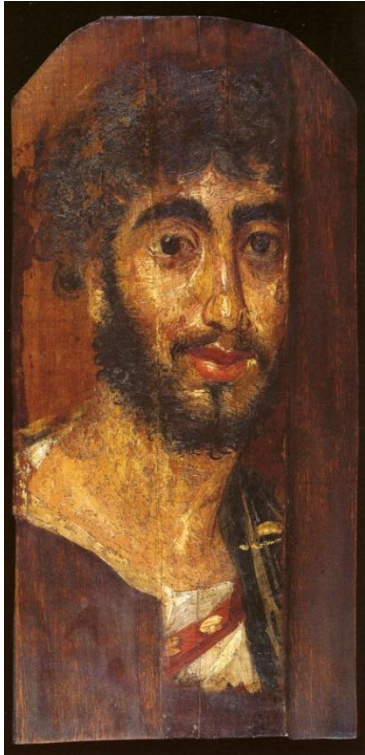


Fig. 10. Mummy portrait of a man wearing civic dress, encaustic, 43.7x16.5 cm, 150-200 CE, er-Rubayat, British Museum EA65345.

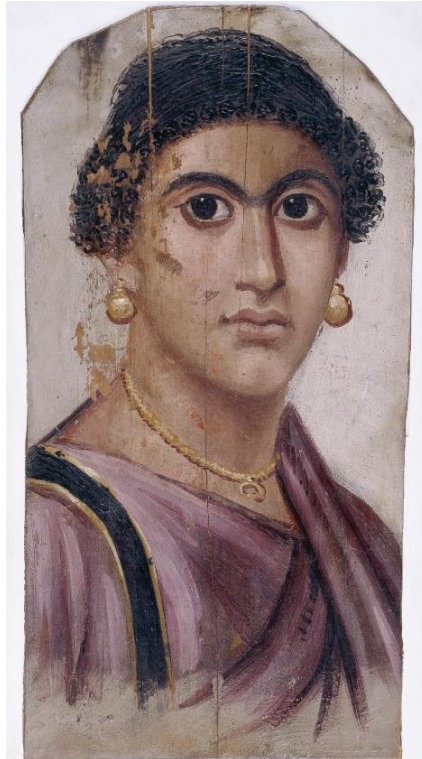


Fig.11 . Mummy portrait of a woman with a gold-leaf and black band, encaustic on limewood, 41.5 x 21.5 cm, c. 50-100 CE, Hawara, British Museum EA74713.



Fig.12. Mummy portrait of a young girl with gilt lips, encaustic on panel, 40 x 18.5 cm, 1<sup>st</sup> half 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, Hawara, Cleveland Museum of Art 71.137.

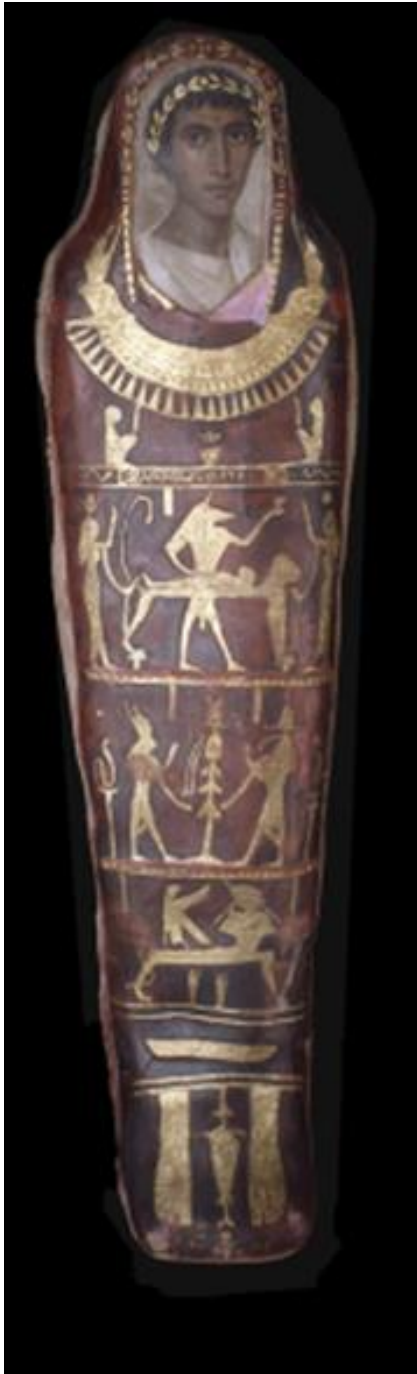


Fig. 13. Mummy cartonnage and portrait of a man wearing a white chiton and himation, Artemidorus, linen, encaustic on panel, human remains, stucco, and gold-leaf, l: 171 cm, early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Hawara, British Museum EA21810.

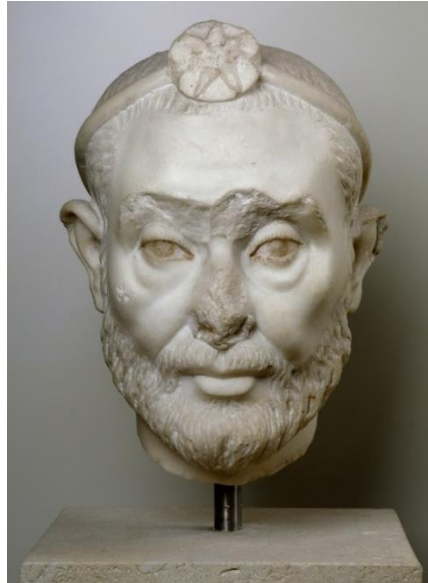


Fig. 14. Bust of a cult of Serapis priest, marble, 31 x 21.5 x 21 cm, c. mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Antikensammlung Staatliche Museen Berlin SK 1810.

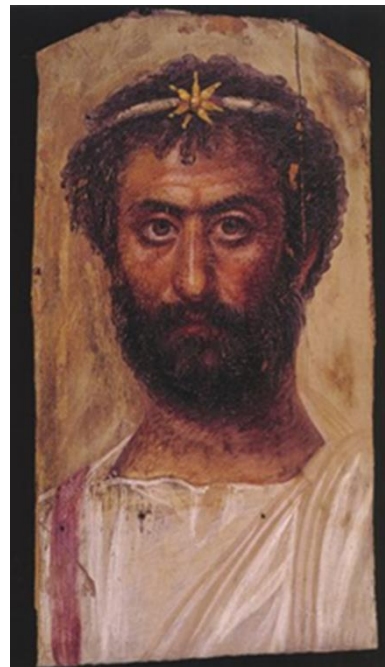


Fig. 15. Mummy portrait of a possible priest of the cult of Serapis, encaustic of wood, 42.5 x 22.2 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Egypt (?), British Museum EA74714.

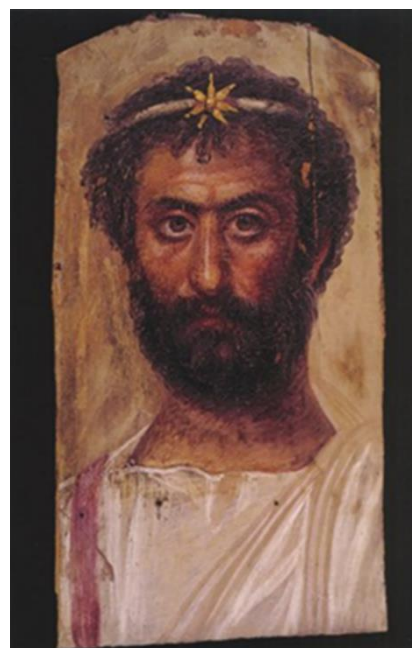




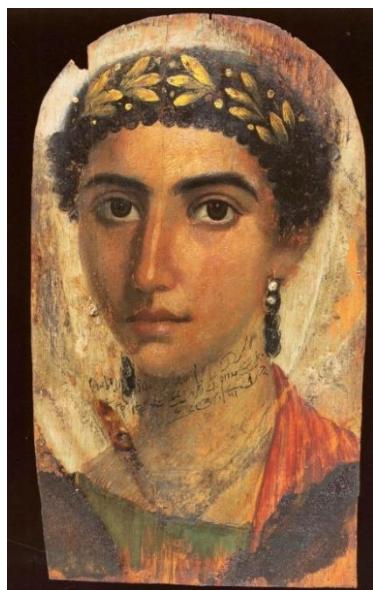
A



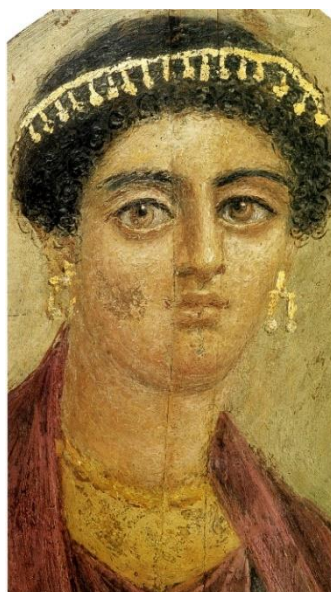
B



C



D



E



F

Fig. 16. Select variety of wreath and crown types.

A. Mummy portrait of a youth wearing an olive-wreath crown, encaustic on sycamore panel, 35 cm, mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Liebieghaus Frankfurt am Main

B. Mummy portrait of a man wearing an ivy wreath, encaustic on panel with gold leaf, 39.4 x 22 cm, early to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> cent CE, unknown provenience, Art Institute of Chicago 1922.4798.

C. See fig. 15.

D. Mummy portrait of a woman, *Eirene*, encaustic on panel, 37 x 22 cm, mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> cent CE, unknown provenience, Württembergisches Landesmuseum Stuttgart 131.

E. Mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel with gold leaf, 37.5 x 16.7 cm, mid 1<sup>st</sup> cent CE, Er-Rubayat, Collection of Classical Antiquities Berlin 31161.1.

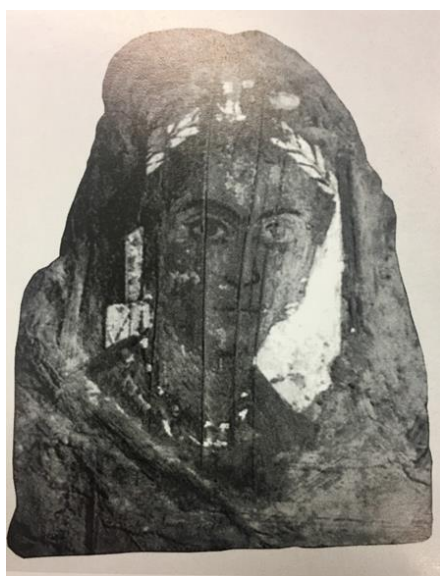
F. See fig. 17.B



A



B



C



D

Fig. 17. Composite image: Four portraits with gold-leaf wreaths with emblems.

A. Mummy portrait and cartonnage of a woman wearing a gold-leaf laurel wreath with a centerpiece, encaustic on panel, linen, mummified remains, l: 158 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, el-Hibeh, Cairo Museum 33217.

B. Casing and panel painting of a woman, attributed to the "Isidora Master," encaustic on wood, gold leaf, and linen, c. 100-110 CE, 48 x 36 x 12.8 cm, Greek: ICIDOPA, unknown provenience, Getty Museum 81.AP.42.

C. A. Mummy portrait and cartonnage of a woman wearing a gold-leaf laurel wreath with a centerpiece, encaustic on panel, linen, mummified remains, l: 158 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, el-Hibeh, Cairo Museum 33217.

D. Mummy portrait of a woman wearing a gold-leaf laurel wreath with a centerpiece, encaustic on panel, 42 cm, 1<sup>st</sup> half 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Baltimore Walters Art Gallery 32.7.





Fig. 18. Relief of Dionysos accompanied by Isis, Serapis, and Harpocrates, marble, 192 cm, early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience, Louvre Museum, no. 1912, MND 932 Ma 3128.



Fig. 19. *Isis*, tempera on panel, 40 x 19 cm, late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience (Egypt), J. Paul Getty Museum 74.AP.22.



Fig. 20. *Serapis*, tempera on wood, 39.1 x 19.1 cm, late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, unknown provenience (Egypt), J. Paul Getty Museum, 74.AP.21.





Fig. 21. *Isis*, tempera on panel (?), 19.1 x 10.2 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Assiout College Museum, Egypt 82.

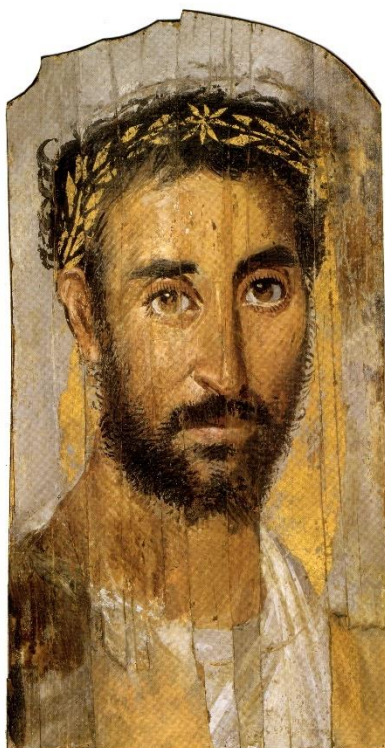


Fig. 22. Serapis priest (?), tempera on panel, 42.1 x 22 cm, early 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, er-Rubayat, London National Gallery NG 3932.

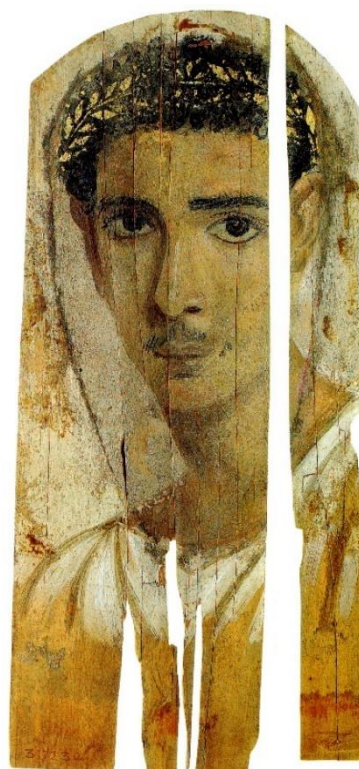


Fig. 23. Serapis priest (?), encaustic on panel, 38.5 x 18.5 cm, 1<sup>st</sup> half 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Cairo Museum CG 33230.



Fig. 24. Red-shroud portrait mummies excavated from Ankyropolis, Grenfell/Hunt 1903.

L. Red-shroud portrait mummy of a man, 162 x 34 cm, mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Ankyropolis, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum E 63.1903.

R. Excavation photograph of the Fitzwilliam and Cairo red shroud portrait mummies, Grenfell/Hunt, Ankyropolis, 1903.





Fig. 25. Red-shroud female portrait mummies with continuation of costuming.

A. Mummy portrait and cartonnage of a woman wearing a gold-leaf laurel wreath with a centerpiece, encaustic on panel, linen, mummified remains, l: 158 cm, 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, Ankyropolis, Cairo Museum 33217.

B. Red-shroud mummy portrait of a woman, encaustic on panel and linen, c. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, 160 x 40 cm, Hildesheim, Roemer-und Pelizaeus -Museum, L-SN1.

C. Portrait mummy of a woman, 178 x 47 cm, early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, from Fayum, Cairo CG 33218.

D. Casing and panel painting of a woman, attributed to the “Isidora Master,” encaustic on wood, gold leaf, and linen, c. 100-110 CE, 48 x 36 x 12.8 cm, Greek: ICIDOPA, unknown provenience, Getty Museum 81.AP.42.



Fig. 26. Diversity of honey-comb style casing.

A. Mummy casing with portrait of a male and honeycomb wrappings. c. 80-100 CE. Encaustic on limewood with gold leaf, linen, and mummified human remains. L: 169 cm, Portrait: 38.1 x 18 cm. Hawara (Petrie 1911). New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 11.139.

B. Mummy casing with portrait of a youth with a gilt and stucco button chest band. c. mid-to-late 1<sup>st</sup> through 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. Encaustic on wood, gold leaf, stucco, linen, and mummified human remains. L: 113 cm. Hawara (Petrie 1911). Boston, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 11.2892.

C. Mummy casing of a youth with a plaster painted scene of Egyptian funerary rituals (?). c. 14-54 CE. Tempera on canvas, linen, gilt, stucco, plaster, and mummified remains. L: 91 cm, Portrait: 26.5 x 14 cm. Hawara (Petrie 1887). London, British Museum, 21809.



Fig. 27. Female shroud of a woman wearing a white himation and clavus, late 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, Saqqara, Berlin Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung 11652.



Fig. 28. Red-shroud mummy portrait of Herakleides, wax tempera on panel, linen, and encaustic with gold-leaf, early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, (Ankyropolis or Hawara?), Getty Museum 91.AP.6. (Corcoran 2010.)





Fig. 29. Proposed cartonnage frame shaped based on weathering and resin lines of the Charleston portrait.